

SOCIAL RESEARCH CENTER, VYTAUTAS MAGNUS UNIVERSITY
CENTER FOR EQUALITY ADVANCEMENT

Between Paid and Unpaid Work: Family Friendly Policies and Gender Equality in Europe

Edited by Jolanta Reingardiene

ISSN

Vilnius, 2006

UDK 316.3(4)
Be 389

VILNIAUS UNIVERSITETO
BIBLIOTEKA

The book is published under the project "Modern Men in Enlarged Europe II: Family Friendly Policies" implemented within the Programme related to the Community Framework Strategy on Gender Equality (2001-2005)

Edited by Jolanta Reingardienė

Approved and recommended for publication by the Council of the Faculty of Social Sciences at Vytautas Magnus University (2006 10 09, protocol No. 2).

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ISBN 9955-9775-7-1



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Introduction: Promoting Family Friendly Policies in Gendered Perspective

“It’s cool to be a dad!” proved to be a convincing and catchy slogan for the “Modern Men in Enlarged Europe: Developing Innovative Gender Equality Strategies” project implemented in 2004-2005 in Denmark, Iceland, Lithuania and Malta with the support from the European Commission. The choice made by individual fathers in regard to paternity leave came to the heart of the project, as the inseparability of the private and public life was taken for granted.

Since progressive social change in regard to gender equality can only happen if men take due participation in the process, the latter slogan has acted well to present fatherhood as something to be enjoyed and spending more time with children as something for men to aim at. The fathers were being reminded that paternity leave is not only their obligation. It’s their *right*.

Fathers on paternity leave interviewed for the research¹ purposes revealed that being a father for them by all means meant spending more time with their children. Despite the fact that the environment was not always positive towards the fathers’ choice and they faced the burden of the prevailing gender stereotypes, these men felt that being with a child was very rewarding, although

not necessarily easy at all times.

The latter approach has made a major impact on the change in public discourse as men started being ever more often presented in their role as fathers, and this has thrown a serious challenge to the prevailing norms of hegemonic masculinity. Having attracted the decision makers’ attention, the project has also led to changes in legislation. For example, in addition to the previous rights ensured by the legislation Lithuanian fathers can now enjoy 100% paid paternity leave until their child is 1 month old.

Despite the success of the project, new aspects had to be brought to the discourse as the statistics continued to show that childcare had a very different impact on women and men. While women engage in care activities (*reproduction*), men start spending much more time at work (*production*). The latter role division paving ground for the labour market segregation also affects the possibilities for the reconciliation of family and professional life.

Although work-life balance is often considered from a female perspective, this is no less an issue for men. Therefore, the second “Modern Men in Enlarged Europe”

¹ Research reports are also available at: www.dadcomehome.org

(2005-2006) project was developed to concentrate on family friendly policies stressing men's role in the process and presenting this as an effective tool for gender equality. By the means of qualitative and quantitative research, seminars and awareness raising initiatives, Danish, Icelandic, Italian and Lithuanian partners moved their focus from individual attitudes and choices of individual fathers to social, structural, cultural, institutional factors which facilitate or prevent men's higher participation in family-professional life reconciliation processes.

No effective work-life balance is possible without a sufficient contribution from the employers. It is them who were to be persuaded during the project to become family friendly not only because this is a question of social responsibility in terms of respect to rights and needs of their employees, but because providing possibilities to reconcile family and working life to employees might bring economic benefits to the employer by ensuring a more productive working environment with less stress, more loyalty of the employees, less absenteeism and, therefore, a higher return on investment. Companies in modern economies need to work more on building and withholding best competencies. Better work-life balance possibilities ensured to men and women might well serve as an appropriate tool for that.

This book is basically based on the common research methodology developed within the framework of the project "Modern Men in Enlarged Europe II: Family Friendly Policies". The qualitative and quantitative research was carried out in all project partner countries: Denmark, Iceland, Italy and Lithuania. The research marked an attempt to focus on men's participation in work-family reconciliation processes and to develop better knowledge of how employed fathers fulfil their roles both within the family and at work and what mechanisms at political, institutional and individual levels could facilitate them to balance these roles and achieve more equal gender relationship at home. The research considered such questions as: To what extent do fathers and their partners encounter the conflict between work and family roles? What are good practices of father's role in creating gender sensitive work-family

balance? What are employers' attitudes towards gender equal family-friendly policies? More generally, why is it important for men to become involved with gender equality?

In order to discuss these questions, chapters from two to four draw on the evidence gathered from the semi-structured interviews with working men and their female partners living with at least one child aged under ten as well as with employers. The interviews with employers aimed to reveal their attitudes towards family-friendly work organization, concrete measures introduced at their organizations, obstacles that impede to implement family-friendly principles at work and how welfare system and work organization can be constructed in order to promote gender equal reconciliation. Five to ten couples as well as ten to fifteen employers were interviewed in each country.

The chapters also present the data of public opinion surveys, carried out in all countries of the project. The surveys provided data on whether having children has had any repercussions for the respondents at work (reduced working hours, change of work place, limited professional upward mobility, increase in physical and psychological stress, increase in workload to meet the family's financial needs, etc.), the respondents' opinion about employers' general response to employees' family obligations, the preferable family model in the society and the most preferable measures for the national reconciliation policies.

The first chapter by Raminta Jančaitytė provides a conceptual discussion on the definitions and types of measures of family-friendly policies within different welfare state regimes. The author develops a framework for comparing family-friendly policies in Denmark, Iceland, Italy and Lithuania. The author mostly focuses on leave arrangements, part-time work arrangements and childcare facilities in these countries, also showing how they impact women's employability and fertility rates in different countries.

In their study *Reconciliation of Work and Family Life in Lithuania: Challenges and Opportunities for Gender*

Equality” Jolanta Reingardienė and Artūras Tereškinas focus on three thematic issues: the role of welfare state on gender distribution within labour force and care at home, objectives of different cross national strategies of work-life balance on the political level and their relation to gender equality as well as changing masculinity and its relation to paid and unpaid work. The theoretical discussion goes on beyond the boundaries between public and private to show that public intervention plays a central role in the regulation of social inequalities at work and in families. The structure and the role of the welfare state are influenced by and at the same time reinforce gender assumptions. The authors analyse parents’ experience of ‘double role’ conflict and reconciliation strategies on interpersonal level as well as ideological, institutional and political obstacles of gender equal reconciliation policies.

The chapter by Giovanna Altieri, Eliana Como, Daniele Di Nunzio and Rossella Basile examines how far the Italian couples succeed in stimulating a dialogue aimed at negotiating new strategies of combining family and work roles in the changing society and how much they consider gender equality reconcilable within the old division of labour. The authors argue that significant efforts have been made to pinpoint novelties as well as critical areas in the modernization process leading to the redefinition of male and female roles in Italy. The research investigates if men have made new demands and if there are new labour division models within families, and what policies Italians demand for the diffusion of these new models.

Charlotte Kirkegaard in her article “Does Welfare State Guarantee Gender Equality?” analyses the survey results of the Danish nongovernmental organizations, labour unions and private companies about their strategies to promote family-friendly policies at work. The study also integrates the results of in-depth interviews with Danish couples, analysing how the situation at work is changing in relation to having children, what the employers’ attitudes are towards family-friendly means at work and how they can be used to distinguish between different types of organizational culture related to family-friendly

measures. The author also draws attention to the couples’ role share at home and their expectations towards work, family and childcare. She argues that despite of the fact that the Danish welfare system provides a broad range of public caring facilities, which has enabled the development of the dual breadwinner model for more than 20 years, there is gender equality neither at the labour market nor in the private homes. It is evident that an effective and strong welfare system does not in itself guarantee gender equality.

The last chapter of the book “Policies of Reconciliation of Work and Family Life: Trends and Possibilities in the EU and Lithuania” by Algis Davidavičius focuses on the development of work-family/life reconciliation policies in their shifting relation to equal opportunities policies in both the EU-level and national (Lithuanian) contexts of public policy formation. However, the study raises the problem of discontinuity between the present EU-level reconciliation policy discourse and that of equal opportunities/gender equality. The chapter also examines the patterns in reconciliation of policymaking prevailing throughout the EU that may be of influence and importance to any national member-state context. The analysis deals with publicly accessible expert evaluation of the developments in the EU and Lithuanian public policy systems and their elements, such as policy documents, networks of various policy-making actors and modes of their interaction.

Finally, the authors want to extend thanks to all who contributed to the development of this book. We are particularly grateful to Aušra Maslauskaitė (Social Research Institute, Vilnius) and Arnoldas Zdanevičius from Vytautas Magnus University (VMU) for their conceptual insights and always valuable feedback, to Raimundas Vaitkevičius (VMU) for the advanced statistical analysis of the survey data, to Nemira Mačianskienė, an English editor, for her very effective work, and the students of Sociology Department at VMU for their research assistance and high interest in the project.

Indrė Mackevičiūtė, *Project coordinator*
Jolanta Reingardienė, *Editor of the book*

Family-friendly Policies and Welfare State: A Comparative Analysis

Raminta Jančaitytė

INTRODUCTION

Family-friendly policies, assisting employees in reconciling their family and work life, seem to have become a key issue in all European countries as well as on the EU level. Starting with the UNECE 1993 European Population Conference and Cairo's 1994 ICPD Programme of Action, the importance of *family-friendly policies* has grown significantly. The 2000 Lisbon Strategy¹, broadly aiming to make the EU the world's most dynamic and competitive economy by 2010, underlines gender equality and creation of possibilities for families to reconcile work and family life as important conditioning for active labour market policies. The European Employment Strategy², aiming at strengthening the coordination of national employment policies, is based on four pillars: employability, entrepreneurship, adaptability and equal opportunities. Namely the fourth pillar - equal opportunities - underlines commitments to strengthen equal opportunities policies, to tackle gender gaps in the labour market and to reconcile work and family life. The 2002 EU Employment Guidelines³ recognize the need to reconcile work and family and stress the necessity of the member states to promote a wide range of family friendly working arrangements.

This rise of interest in family-friendly policies in the European countries is determined by a set of recent changes. At the socio-economic level, the feminization of the labour market, the intensification of work practices, and the increasing mobility of the labour force must be mentioned. The cultural changes embody the changes in attitudes towards gender roles and shifts in domestic division of labour, the shift from a male-breadwinner model to double-income households, the modern demands for self-determination and self-realization. The demographic changes involve the changes in family composition and structure, the falling fertility rates and the ageing population, etc.

Regardless the experienced common changes, all the nation states have their own development path of family-friendly policies. This means that despite the general guidelines of family-friendly policies in the EU documents, a great variety of measures are implemented on the national level. This article focuses on a cross-national comparison of the government policies in Iceland, Italy, Denmark and Lithuania that facilitate the reconciliation of paid work and unpaid care. As an in-depth analysis is clearly beyond the scope of this article, the focus is mainly on leave arrangements, part-time arrangements and childcare facilities, as part of policies supporting

parents to carry out obligations to family and work. The main aim is to examine the essential similarities and differences of these arrangements in Iceland, Italia, Denmark and Lithuania, studying relevant rules and regulations. The article is structured as follows. First, the definition and types of measures of family friendly policy are presented; then the issues of welfare state typology are discussed. This is followed by an analysis of the arrangements of family-friendly policies in Denmark, Iceland, Italy and Lithuania.

DEFINING FAMILY-FRIENDLY POLICIES

The term *family-friendly policies* is widely used in the literature, but different authors do not agree on its definition. The term is quite complicated as it involves complex and ambiguous issues, such as family, labour or gender. Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) defines *family-friendly policies* as those employment-oriented social policies that facilitate the reconciliation of work and family life by fostering the adequacy of family resources and child development, favour the parental choice about work and care and promote gender equality in employment opportunities. Hoyman and Duer (2004) point out that the definition of *family-friendly* is evolving and predicate that *worker-friendly* is now a more accurate term than *family-friendly*, as it covers all workers regardless of his or her familial status. There is another term, *work-life balance*, which is used talking about the needs of all employees and not only working mothers with young children. Leitner and Wroblewski (2006: 300) indicate that the term *work-life balance* "implies an aim that goes beyond the mere reconciliation of family life and employment and it is rather geared towards a 'balanced' relationship between these different areas". McInnes (2006) argues that the concept *work-life balance* is too vague for an adequate sociological analysis as "it reduces 'work' to employment, and confuses leisure in general, care of family members and specifically parenting with the meaning of 'life'" (McInnes 2006: 242). Nevertheless, in this article the attention is paid to the contemporary

discussion of how to remedy 'work and family imbalance'. Therefore, *family-friendly policies* are understood as those that facilitate a better work and family balance for individual employees. These policies can include rights to parental leave, childcare arrangements, flexible working hours and the opportunity to work part-time.

Family-friendly policies can be implemented in a different way, using a wide variety of arrangements, each with somewhat different implications for helping parents to reconcile work and family life. Castles (2003) distinguishes between active and passive measures that facilitate maternity among female employees: active measures include maternity and childcare leave, passive – a variety of flexible workplace arrangements. Duyvendak and Stavenuiter (2004) categorize the arrangements to support the reconciliation of paid work and care into three components: time off (such as leave schemes and flexible working time patterns), monetary benefits (including, for example, tax allowances, social security and social assistance) and services (like childcare facilities). Den Dulk (2001) distinguishes four types of work-family arrangements: leave, childcare, flexible work and supportive arrangements (such as employee counselling or availability of information about existing facilities). Hardy and Adnett (2002) also present four categories of arrangements: leave from work for family reasons (maternity, paternity and parental leave, leave to care for elderly dependants or bereavement); changes in work arrangements for family reasons (job-sharing, home-working, flexi-time working, compressed working week, term-time only contracts and a facility to switch between full and part-time working exemplify this category of flexibility); practical help with child and elder-person care (affordable and accessible nurseries and play schemes in holidays); information, training and networking assistance (assistance for re-entrants and the active promotion of family-friendly benefits and entitlements). Table 1 summarizes the measures that are important in reconciliation of work and family life.

Summarizing it can be said that the issue of reconciliation of work and family encompasses a number of facilities from different policies, such as family policy,

gender equality policy, employment policy as well as fields, such as organizational management and culture. Only the whole package of measures with great emphasis on gender equality can be an effective response to the conflict of work and family spheres.

A FRAMEWORK FOR COMPARING FAMILY- FRIENDLY POLICIES

The exploration of family-friendly policies in different countries requires an analytical framework that can help to find out similarities and differences of the way that the state supports individuals to reconcile work and family life. A good theoretical background is presented in the literature on European welfare-state regimes, where European countries are grouped into distinct regimes according to different indicators, such as social rights, expenditures on social policy, intentions and principles of social policies, etc. A very famous typology of welfare-state regimes, highly influential within the comparative policy research as well as criticized a lot, is offered by Esping-Andersen (1990; 1999). According to Esping-Andersen, welfare regimes are defined as “the ways in which welfare production is allocated between state, market, and households” (1999: 73). Exploring the link between these institutional configurations – labour market, welfare state and family, Esping-Andersen (1990) proposed a three-world categorization: Liberal welfare states (Anglo-Saxon countries: the USA, the UK, Australia, New Zealand and Canada), Conservative welfare states (continental European countries: Germany, Austria, France, Belgium), Social democratic welfare states (the Nordic countries: Denmark, Sweden, Finland and Norway), and later (1999) distinguished the fourth regime – Southern-European welfare states (Mediterranean countries: Italy, Spain, Greece and Portugal).

Many scholars have criticized Esping-Andersen's typology because of its theoretical neglect of gender. Neyer (2003) points out that feminist welfare-state research has demonstrated that this classification of welfare-state regimes becomes more diverse if the family, family policies

and (female) commodification are taken into account. The author argues that namely the availability of social care services and the gendering aspects of welfare state policies stipulate the deviation from Esping-Andersen's (1999) welfare regimes typology. Borja (2001) underlines that gender is at present recognized as a fundamental variable in shaping welfare states. Korpi (2000) used gender as a key dimension distinguishing three broad ideal typical models of gendered welfare state: general family support (Continental and Southern Europe countries), dual-earner support (Nordic countries), and market-oriented policies (Anglo-Saxon countries).

The presented typologies of Esping-Andersen (1990; 1999) and Korpi (2000) give some evidence about similarities and differences between countries. Nordic countries – Denmark, Sweden, and Finland – make a very clear distinct cluster, but it does not mean that these countries have a uniform social policy. As for Norway, Neyer (2003) points out that it diverges from the other universalistic welfare states. Typical countries of liberal welfare regime are the UK and the USA as representatives and then Australia, Canada and New Zealand. While classifying into regimes it is most difficult to classify Continental Europe countries. For example, France and Belgium have less familialism (Andersen, 1999) than other continental countries. Besides, France with the childcare facilities and reasonable support for mothers with children of all age hither Nordic countries than Continental ones (Neyer 2003). Nevertheless, these typologies of welfare regimes help to distinguish similarities, looking for good practices of reconciliation of work and family.

Liberal (Anglo-Saxon) welfare regime is characterized by three core elements – the narrow definition of who should be eligible to social guarantees, the narrow conception of what risk should be considered “social” and encouragement of the market to act as a co-provider of benefits and public services (Esping-Andersen 1999). Social welfare depends on market provisions and on familialism that is for the family as a provider of welfare. Low level of support for families is oriented towards tackling poverty and targeted at families in greater

Table 1. The work-family balance arrangements

Leave from work for family reasons	Provide employees with time off to care for dependents.	Maternity leave
		Paternity leave
		Parental leave
		Short-term leave
Practical help with child care	Help employees with their responsibilities for their children.	Childcare services
		On-site or near-site childcare centre
		School holiday/vacation service
		Get well care for mildly ill children
Changes in work arrangements for family reasons	Give employees some control in organizing their work schedule.	Shorter work week
		Part-time working
		A compressed working week
		Job-sharing
		Flexitime
Monetary benefits and services	Oriented towards the financial protection of the family.	Flex-place (work at home)
		Tax allowances
Information, training and networking assistance	Develop the human capital of the worker.	Social security and social assistance
		Assistance for re-entrants
		On-site education programs
		Seminars on family issues

Sources: Hardy, Adnett, 2002, Gornick, Meyers (2002), Duyvendak, Stavenuiter (2004), Koopmans, Schippers (2003).

needs; social benefits are usually minimal, means-tested and poverty-related. Poor qualities of benefits carry a negative public stigma. The state intervenes in family life only in extreme cases as family is considered to be a private sphere.

Anglo-Saxon countries can be described as having a market-oriented gender policy model, where families should rely on market recourses or family relationships for the supply of childcare (Korpi 2000). Poorly developed maternity and parental leave is compensated by highly flexible labour markets. Flexible working arrangements in the private sector (i.e. flexi-time work and voluntary part-time work) help women easily re-enter the labour market, after rearing children (Bovenberg 2005). Employment rates of women are high. Nevertheless, the residual social support and absence of public childcare services marginalize unskilled workers and single mothers. The possibilities for mothers to maintain employment depend on their individual capacities (Neyer 2003).

Social democratic (the Nordic countries) welfare regime is characterized by universalism and egalitarianism. Universal coverage of social risk and high replacement values of income are guaranteed and paid for by the state. Social support system underlines an individual (not a family) and policies are targeted at social equality and individual independence. Other characteristic like the aim of upholding high living standards for everyone, social benefits and extended social services are granted on the basis of individual social-citizenship rights, high commitment to gender equality, high level of decomodification⁴ and defamilialization⁵ – are all known as constitutional features of a social democratic regime.

Nordic countries rely heavily on the public sector to help parents reconcile family and work. The state supports dual earner family model encouraging not only women's participation in the labour market but also the redistribution of social care work in society and within the family (Korpi 2000), in such a way contributing to gender equality. A great emphasis is placed on public services for childcare, therefore, women do not leave

labour market for childbearing (Borja 2001). The employment rate of women is very high, as there are generous maternity programs and flexible work hours with job security and good job prospects after childbirth, well developed day care services for the children from the very young (0-2 years of age) till school age, provided on full day, full week. Active labour market policies encourage young women to be employed before bearing children, ensure an inclusive labour market, and help to exploit the reserves of unskilled labour and to prevent social exclusion (Bovenberg 2005).

Conservative (Continental) welfare states are characterized by considerable social stratification directing their welfare-state policies towards preservation of status differentials and traditional family forms. Social support is targeted at families (not individuals) and is related to work performance of family members, that is to say, benefits depend on contributions to social-security systems as well as on marital status.

Continental European countries implement general family support measures: cash child allowances to minor children, family tax benefits to minor children and economically non-active spouse and public day care services for somewhat older children (from 3 years up to school age) (Korpi 2000). Public childcare services offer half day care and are not developed for children under 3 years of age. So it can be said that the reconciliation between work and family is partially encouraged. Female participation rate is middle/low and women usually choose to work part time as their contribution to family budget is of secondary importance (Borja 2001). The state supports the breadwinner's system, leaving the main responsibility for care as women's prerogative and protecting traditional male breadwinner's career and status through employment legislation.

Mediterranean (Southern European countries) welfare-state regime is characterized by strong familialism, a mix of universal and private services and benefits. There is a lack of measures to support female employment; therefore, working mothers have to rely on informal family support. Flexible working arrangements are scarce in the countries of Southern Europe (Borja 2001), as they are

viewed as a threat to the protected position of the male breadwinner (Bovenberg 2005).

The Central and Eastern European countries (CEE) do not fit into any of these typologies. Newly emerging welfare systems of CEE usually present one cluster because of their common past, experienced in the Soviet system. These countries are considered to be more influenced by a model presented by international financial organizations such as the International Monetary fund or the World Bank than by the European Welfare Model (Manabu, 2005). Transition countries experience very similar demographic, economic and social challenges, but the way they respond to these challenges differs slightly according to their social, political and cultural context.

FAMILY-FRIENDLY POLICIES IN DENMARK, ICELAND, ITALY AND LITHUANIA

The countries compared in this particular analysis belong to different types of welfare regimes. Denmark and Iceland represent the Social democratic regime (Esping Andersen 1990, 1999) or the dual-earner support model of gendered welfare state (Korpi 2000). Italy represents Southern-European welfare states (Andersen, 1999) or general family support model (Korpi 2000). Lithuania is a post communist country from the block of the Central and Eastern European countries and, as Guogis (2002) points out, can be characterized as something in-between the conservative and liberal welfare regimes. In the following section family-friendly arrangements (family leaves, childcare services and flexible working arrangements) in Denmark, Iceland, Italy and Lithuania are compared.

Leave schemes

Leave schemes together with childcare facilities and flexible working arrangements frame the system of measures that enable parents to reconcile work and family life. Leave schemes include maternity leave, paternity leave, parental or childcare leave, sick leave and other leaves for

family reasons and vary considerably between countries. There are four key factors in comparing different leave schemes (NACEW 1997). The first is coverage and eligibility that determine the total number of people entitled to provisions. Coverage may be universal or sectoral and eligibility is often determined by the factors such as length of service and the number of hours worked. To be covered by leave provisions a parent initially needs to work in an area of the labour force where either statutory or contractual parental leave provisions apply. The second factor is duration - the length of leave that may be taken under various parental leave provisions. The third important factor is job protection, which involves provisions that allow a parent to return to the same or a similar job with their original employer. This is what makes any leave effective as if there is no job protection; there is very little effective entitlement. And the last key factor is payment that varies according to different schemes in different countries and may range from nothing to flat rate benefits to partial or full earnings replacement.

Possible objectives of leave provisions differ from country to country (Kamerma and Kahn 1991; COE 2005): protection of maternal health - allowing time off to recover from the birth of a child and establish breast feeding; protection of child health and development through parenting/parental care of child; support to the family unit as the source of ongoing child (and human capital) development; the promotions of gender balance and equity in the labour market for women and men; pronatalist policies to encourage mothers to combine employment with procreation and facilitate women remaining in the labour market; labour market interventions to reduce unemployment (by encouraging parents to exit) or increase employment (by retaining parents after childbirth); women's economic independence; involvement of fathers in family/home life.

Maternity leave

Neyer (2003) emphasizes that maternity protection and parental-leave, being the oldest family-related welfare-state policy, is the core element of family policies in Eu-

rope. Del Boca (2003) points out that maternity leave is likely to have a positive impact on women's employment rate. The generosity of compensation of maternity leave has an impact on women's economic independence.

In European countries maternity leave is granted for women in case of childbirth and may be divided in periods before and after delivery. Women are also granted a maternity allowance for the period of maternity leave; they have the right to return to the same job and are protected from dismissal. Special regulations in the case of premature or multiple births may also be applied.

Iceland, Denmark, Italy and Lithuania have quite well developed schemes for maternity leave. Table 2 provides an overview of the statutory maternity leave in the analyzed countries. Lithuania and Denmark have the same duration of maternity leave - 18 weeks. In Italy, working women have the right to five months' maternity leave (two months before and three months after giving birth). In Iceland, each parent has an independent not

assignable right to maternity/paternity leave of up to three months and additional three months which may be either taken entirely by one of the parents or else divided between them.

All the analyzed countries have payable statutory maternity leave but entitlement to maternity leave is generally based on the criteria of employment or contributions paid to social insurance. Only in Lithuania maternity leave is compensated in full amount (100%) of salary; in Denmark - 90 %, in Iceland and Italy - 80% of all the pay.

Paternity leave

Paternity leave is explicitly directed to fathers to take care of newborn children. By offering this statutory right countries seek to promote gender equality in the private sphere. Table 3 provides an overview of the statutory paternity leave in Denmark, Iceland, Italy and Lithuania. In Denmark fathers have a statutory right to

Table 2. Statutory maternity leave arrangements – end 2003

Country	Statutory /other	Maximum duration (weeks)	Paid	Paid for full duration	Payment	Paid by	Job guarantee
Denmark	Statutory	18	Yes	Yes	90 % up to maximum (3115 Dkr per week)	Employer	Yes
Iceland	Statutory	12 weeks (3 months) + 12 weeks (3 month) divided as the parent chooses	Yes	Yes	80% of all pay (for parents participating in labour market) for others - flat rate payments		Yes
Italy	Statutory	21 (5 months)	Yes	Yes	80%	HI	Yes
Lithuania	Statutory	126 calendar days = 18 weeks (in case of complicated delivery or multiple birth 140 calendar days).	Yes	Yes	the full amount (100%) of salary	HI	Yes

HI: health or social insurance

Sources: EIRO (2003); Eydal (2003); Lietuvos statistikos departamentas.

2 weeks of paternity leave to be taken within 14 weeks after birth and compensated 90% up to maximum. In Iceland fathers have quite a long paternity leave – 3 months compensated 80% of all pay. Since 2002 Italy fathers have had the right to maternity (not paternity) leave only in very restricted cases: if the mother has died, is severely disabled or has abandoned her child, or the couple has separated or divorced and the father has custody of the child. Lithuania has recently introduced a 1 month paternity leave for fathers who are married with the child's mother. This regulation has come into force since the 1st of June, 2006. The payment for the leave is 100% of compensated wages. It is really generous, but discriminates fathers who live in cohabitation.

Parental leave

The main concern of parental leave is not the health of the mother, as in the case of maternity leave, but the care and upbringing of children, making both parents eligible (COE, 2005: 16). Parental leave comes after maternity

and paternity leave. All the analyzed countries have statutory provisions on parental leave. As it has been mentioned above, the main aspects of parental leave is eligibility, duration, job protection and payment. Usually the entitlement to parental leave depends upon the employment status and period, but other aspects of parental leave schemes differ in each country. Parental leave can be organized along *family* (parents can decide between themselves who shall make use of the leave) or *individual* (both can claim the individually assigned period of leave lines), or a mixture of both (Koopmans, Schippers 2003). Table 4 provides an overview of the statutory parental leave in Denmark, Iceland, Italy and Lithuania.

Denmark offers 32 weeks per child to be shared between parents (in continuation of maternity, paternity or even another parent's parental leave), and individual right to postpone 8-13 unpaid weeks in one block before the child is 9. In Iceland each of the parents has the right to 13 weeks of leave (13 weeks for mother and 13 weeks

Table 3. Statutory paternity leave arrangements – end 2003

Country	Statutory	Criteria	Duration	Paid	Paid for full duration	Level of payment	Job guarantee
Denmark	Statutory	EMP	2 weeks to be taken within 14 weeks after birth	Yes	Yes	90% up to maximum	Yes
Iceland	Statutory	EMP	3 months divided as the parent choose	Yes	Yes	80% of all pay (for parents participating in labour market) for others – flat rate payments	Yes
Italy	Limited cases	EMP + Only if lone father or if mother is ill. Income related	Total leave or the part which mother is ill for	Yes	Yes	80% by health insurance also in case of adoption	Yes
Lithuania ⁶	Statutory	EMP + being married with child's mother	1 month	Yes	Yes	100% of pay	Yes

EMP: has to be working/employed to be eligible

Sources: EIRO (2003); Eydal (2003); Lietuvos statistikos departamentas.

for father). It is also permissible to divide the time off into individual chunks, but never less than one week at a time and till the child reaches the age of eight years. In Italy the duration of parental leave is 11 months per child to be shared between parents as follows: 6 months maximum for the mother and 6 months for the father before the child is 8. In Lithuania parental leave is called childcare leave. Both parents have the right to childcare leave and can decide between themselves who shall make use of the leave. The duration of the leave is till the child reaches 3 years of age.

The compensation of leave varies between countries. Denmark has the highest compensation rate - 32 weeks of leave are compensated 90% of pay. In Iceland parental leave is unpaid. In Italy the compensation is 30% of pay for the first 6 months but only when the child is under 3. When the child is 3 and till he/she reaches the age of 8 the leave is unpaid. In Lithuania the compensation is 70% of the compensated pay before the child is 1 year of age. Some changes in compensation have been introduced recently: from the 1st of January 2007 the compensation will be raised to 85% and in the case of multiple births when the children are under 1 year of age the compensation has already been raised to 100% of compensated wages since the 1st of July 2006. The rest of the leave is unpaid.

In all the analyzed countries parents can return to their workplaces after parental leave.

Benefits and shortages of leave schemes

The contribution of leave provisions is twofold: it helps parents to reconcile work and family life and guaranties the efficient operation of the labour market. Leave with job guarantee enables parents to return to their previous job after the birth of a child and maintains labour market attachment. There are some other benefits such as retention of skills within the labour force; maintenance of employers' human capital investment; productivity; reduced incidence of unemployment; government revenue and benefit payments; reduced uncertainty for employers; improving women's life-time earnings; en-

couraging men to participate in child-rearing; balancing the demands of work and family life; bonding parental - child relationships (NACEW 1997).

Leave is useful, but under certain conditions. A long leave, especially when it is combined with financial benefits, is particularly attractive to less skilled women or women in precarious job situations who subsequently find it most difficult to return to work (Durand 2006). An extended leave often carries opportunity cost in terms of foregone earnings, degradation of human capital and missed opportunities for promotion (Gauthier 2004). Allowances that enable mothers to stop work for a considerable time without job protection may have a negative impact on employment trajectories (Durand 2006). Leave provisions themselves (even of the best quality) may not be sufficient in assisting people to successfully combine parenting and paid work. Thus leave provisions need to be seen in the context of other policies and practices, such as childcare and flexible work arrangements, which support working families (NACEW 1997).

Childcare services

Childcare services are one of the major measures for parents to reconcile work and family life. These services can be private or provided by a state, formal or informal, either paid or unpaid. Very important aspects of childcare services are accessibility, price, quality, working hours and child's age limit. Those policies that are directed at reducing the cost of children by increasing the availability, quality and affordability of childcare may affect fertility and participation rates (Del Boca 2003).

In Denmark childcare facilities are developed very well. Parents can choose among various childcare options: public day-care facilities, subsidies to choose a private care scheme or looking after the child themselves. This enables parents to select the form of childcare that best suits them. Publicly supported crèches for children between the ages of six months and three years are mainly available in towns, but kindergartens are available all over Denmark.

Table 4. Statutory parental leave arrangements – end 2003

Country	Statutory type	Duration	Child's age limit	Payment	Other	Job guarantee
Denmark	Parental leave	32 weeks per child to be shared (in continuation of maternity, paternity or even another parent's parental leave) + individual right of 8 unpaid weeks (possibility to spread 32 weeks payment over total 40 weeks leave)	9 (possibility to postpone 8-13 weeks in one block before the child is 9)	A total of 32 weeks 90% up to maximum (3115 DKR per week) to be shared.	Only if no use of right to place in childcare Possibility to work part time with reduced payment accordingly	Yes
Iceland	Parental leave	13 weeks for mother 13 weeks for father	18 month – 8 years	No payments		Yes
Italy	Parental leave	11 months per child to be shared between parents as follows: 6 months maximum for the mother and 6 months for the father, extended to 7 if the father claims at least 3 months. 10 months if lone parent	8 (6 if adoption)	Child under 3: 30% for 6 months maximum. 30% over 6 months only if incomes below a maximum. Child aged 3-8: unpaid	Also for adoption. Duration of paid leave up to 3 years for severely handicapped child. Also 3 months 30% paid leave for self employed during first child year	Yes
Lithuania	Childcare leave	From the end of maternity leave until the child reaches 3 years of age: > Child under one year of age > When child reaches 1 year till he/she reaches 3 years of age	3 year	70% of the compensated wages (from the 1 st of January 2007 the compensation will be 85%), and in the case of multiple birth -100% (this new amendment has come into force on 1 st of July, 2006) unpaid	Also for adoption	Yes

Sources: EIRO (2003); Eydal (2003); Lietuvos statistikos departamentas.

In Iceland children can enter pre-primary schools from the age of 0 to 5 or until they start primary school at the age of 6 (Mósesdóttir 2005). Differently from other Nordic countries, there is no guarantee or universal right of children to day-care (Eydal 2003); nevertheless, more than 90% of 3-5 year old and about 38% of 0-2 year old children are in public day care. Childcare is facilitated by the municipalities (around 88% of all pre-primary schools), NGOs, hospitals and a private home care registered by the municipalities if the facilities and quality of the care meet their minimum standard (Mósesdóttir 2005). Parents pay monthly fees for each child, and this differs from one municipality to another. There are some discounts for single parents and students with children. Childcare provisions for younger age groups are less extensive and quite expensive. Public childcare is in some cases only available to two year old and older children.

In Italy services for childcare are very scarce and expensive (in comparison with other European countries prices paid by families for public crèches are the highest in Europe) (Ponzellini 2006). There are very few crèches for infants aged 0-2 and they are only part time. While 98 per cent of children from ages of three to six are minded in kindergartens, the service supply for children aged up to three is only about 9 per cent (Table 5). Besides that, priority in municipal crèches is given to certain groups (low-income families, disabled children) (Kontula, Miettinen 2005). A large proportion of Italian mothers have to rely on family support system because of low availability of childcare and limitation in daily hours

(Del Boca 2003).

Lithuania had quite a well-developed childcare system during the soviet times, but at the beginning of the transition family policy measures were turned to support a breadwinner's family model. The family policy of 1990-1994 was costly and quite complicated (Mikalauškaite, Mitrikas, Stankuniene 1999). Women were encouraged to raise their children at home and many childcare institutions, primarily in rural areas, were closed. The closedown of childcare institutions was also related with the very limited financial possibilities of the country. As a consequence, nowadays there is a shortage of crèches and kindergartens, especially in rural areas of Lithuania, necessitating difficulties for parents in reconciling family and work life. Although the number of pre-school age children has been decreasing, the number of those willing to attend pre-school establishments has been rising. One of the solutions for parents is to use family ties or take a babysitter.

Low-cost, high-quality, available child-care services are an important shift in helping parents to reconcile work and family life. Durand (2006) noticed that there is a positive relationship between women's participation rates and the availability of formal child-care arrangements.

Flexible working conditions

Flexible working conditions together with family leaves and childcare services make a package of measures

Table 5. Population of children in public childcare system

Country	Day nursery, crèche (children aged 0-2), %	Kindergartens (children aged 3 to school age), %	Compulsory education, starting age
Denmark (1999)	82	94	7
Iceland (2003)	38.0	93.7	6
Italy (2000)	8.6	98	6
Lithuania (2004)	19	63	7

Source: Kontula, Miettinen (2005); Duyvendak, Stavenuiter, 2004; Eydal, 2003; Mósesdóttir, (2005). Lietuvos statistikos departamentas.

that enable parents to reconcile work and family life. Koopmans and Schippers (2003) indicate that the reconciliation of work and family is not the only motive for working part-time, neither it is for introducing flexible working arrangements. The authors notice that flexibility has been introduced for different reasons (for example, securing the necessary operational flexibility by reducing costs and boosting productivity and competitiveness); the provisions do not always have the intention to benefit employees with children. Nevertheless, all the analyzed countries have some part-time working arrangements (other flexible working arrangements are not studied because of narrow extent of the chapter), though different in scope.

In June 2002 Denmark introduced the new legislation which abolished restrictions on the use of part-time work in collective agreements and made access to part-time work easier as well as labour market more family-friendly (Todd 2004). In Denmark a parent on parental leave may work part-time and prolong the leave from 32 to 64 weeks. The benefits are prorated during this entire period of leave. Notwithstanding the possibilities to work part-time, as Leitner and Wroblewski (2006) notice, acceptable childcare options allow mothers to go back to work in full-time jobs.

The Icelandic labour system is mainly based on collective agreements as Labour Law lays down only certain minimum rights for all employees. Mósesdóttir (2005) points out that the Gender Equality Act (95/2000) only gives recommendations to employers, what necessary measures (flexible work organization, working hours and a support to those returning back to work after leave due to family obligations) they should take to enable men and women to reconcile their occupational and family obligations. But these measures are not obligatory and this law does not offer much protection, as Icelandic employers may fire employees without stating a valid reason (Mósesdóttir 2005). Parents can take the 9 months parental leave on a flexible basis: divided into a number of periods and/or that taken concurrently with a reduced work-time ratio, until the child reaches 18 months. But this should be agreed with an employer.

Part-time work or reduced work hours is common among mothers with young children in order to reconcile work and family life.

Ponzellini (2006) points out that flexible scheduling (different forms of part-time work: half a day part-time, weekend work, annualized part-time) has become very common in Italy in white-collar environment (public administration, health care, banks and insurance, telephone companies, call centres) as well as in the fast-food and large-scale retail trades. There are also some efforts to offer company crèches and baby-parking that is usually less expensive than the existing ones, either public or private. But Ponzellini (2006) regrets that these arrangements are not enough to fill the gap with countries having welfare provision (like Nordic countries) and to ensure women a full participation to paid work and equitably shared care work.

In Lithuania flexible working arrangements (part-time, tele-working, flexible-place) are legitimated. For example, Labour Law allows pregnant women, women rearing a child under 1 year of age, breast feeding mother, an employee rearing a child under 3 years of age or employee who alone rears a child under 14 years of age or 18 if a child is disabled, to demand part-time work. This part-time can be arranged as shortened working hours per day, shortened working days per week or both. Working part-time does not have an impact on other employee's rights (the duration of sabbatical leave, promotion, etc.), but it conditions a considerable decline of income. There is some confusion in legislation regarding labour relations and this impedes its implementation.

FAMILY-FRIENDLY POLICIES, WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT AND FERTILITY

Today women have more choice and possibilities to enter labour market than they had several decades ago. Since the middle of the last century women's employment rate has increased in all studied countries. These changes have brought about new challenges for public services in adjusting to increasing requirements for reconciliation

of work and family life. The inadequacy of the welfare system in some countries has caused problems for women in reconciling work and child rearing, making them choose between a career and family. This has had a great impact on fertility. The arrangements that help parents in combining work and family belong to one of three categories of fertility policy; the others are financial incentives and broad social change supportive of children and parenting (McDonald 2000). The cross-national comparison shows a variety of options for parents to be chosen in reconciling work and family life in the analysed countries.

Denmark, that represents Social democratic welfare regime and dual-earner support family model, is far beyond other analyzed countries in implementing family-friendly policies. This country has a high female employment rate and a high fertility rate (Table 6). Todd (2004) points out that Denmark's policy approaches have supported women's and men's participation in the labour force through measures (universal childcare coverage, extensive leave rights and generous individual benefits) that accommodate parents' need to care for their children and employees' desire to take leave from work to pursue educational goals and other interests. These measures determined a high degree of equity in employment – Denmark ranks third of all the EU countries, with almost equal participation rates between men and women (Todd 2004). Regardless the equality in the labour market and that men participate more in housework and family duties than the men in other EU member states, it is still mostly women who are responsible for unpaid labour (Leitner, Wroblewski, 2006).

Iceland, which also fits into the same cluster of welfare regimes as Denmark and pursues family-friendly policies, distinguishes itself for women's high employment rate as well as high fertility rate (Table 6). This country has the longest non-transferable (not very generous) parental leave for men. With the help of relatives and as a result of extensive public childcare Icelandic women continue to have more children and to work longer hours than other women in Europe (Mósesdóttir 2005). The male breadwinner model still dominates in the

private life of family. Mothers usually choose to work part-time as men increase hours of work to compensate for the drop in the income of the partner. Mósesdóttir (2005) points out that Icelandic employees appear to enjoy considerable flexibility in terms of hours of work, temporary reduction of working hours, leave of absence and work from home, but most firms do not have a more formal reconciliation policy such that employees are often unaware of the different strategies available to combine work and family life.

Italy, as a representative of Southern-European welfare regime and a general family support model, has not well developed family-friendly policy arrangements to reconcile work and family life. Italy has a low female employment rate and a very low fertility rate (Table 6). Parents and, first of all, women have difficulties to exit and reenter the labour market. Expensive and insufficient childcare services, undeveloped leave schemes, a lack of part-time employment opportunities impede parents' reconciliation work and family obligations. Ponzellini (2006) points out that the lack of part-time jobs in Italy may be one of the obstacles for women with family responsibilities to reenter the labor market as they cannot transform their full-time job into part-time after maternity. Generous maternity leave and scarce possibilities for a man to take a parental leave supports a breadwinner model. Ponzellini (2006) regrets that in Italy the gender asymmetry in care work have not changed in recent years as well as the issue of work-life balance appears to be a private female problem rather than a real social problem. Neither public nor private sphere promotes gender equality, as a breadwinner family model is still vital in both spheres.

Lithuania, which can be characterized as something in-between the conservative and liberal welfare regime, provides some possibilities for parents to combine work and family obligations. Lithuania has a middle female employment rate and a very low fertility rate (Table 6). Stankuniene, Jasilioniene and Jancaityte (2006) underline that Lithuania has quite well developed and generous leave schemes. The lack of childcare services and underdeveloped flexible working arrangements

cause some difficulties for parents to reconcile work and family. Although working part-time is not very popular as it has a great impact on income, Stankuniene (2003) points out that usually women take care about children and choose to work part time. Women are still considered to be primary caregivers as well as work and family balance problems are still seen as women's problems. The patriarchal attitudes of employers impede women's possibilities to make a career and to reconcile work and family life (Kanopiene 1998). It can be said that economic and social environment is not favorable for flexible working arrangements. There are quite well developed leave schemes but implementation of flexible working arrangements faces difficulties in practice, partially because of patriarchal attitudes of employers.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The analysis of family-friendly arrangements like family leaves, childcare facilities and possibilities to work part-time shows that they are very important in enabling parents to reconcile work and family, but they can be insufficient to promote gender equality. While state provisions to the families are of greatest importance employers also play a crucial role in helping parents to reconcile work and family. Whiteford (2005) points out that national policies will be much less effective if firms implement them unwillingly. The analysis of family-friendly arrangements in Denmark, Iceland, Italy and Lithuania confirm some important aspects of family-friendly policies in reconciling work and family:

- The reconciliation of work and family is not only women's business. The attention should be also paid to men's possibilities to balance work and family responsibilities. Family-friendly arrangements should be "friendly" to both parents.
- Stereotypical attitude towards gender roles hampers both men and women to reconcile work and family.
- Employers play a great role in creating an organizational culture where work and family are integrated as well as encouraging men to use work-family balance arrangements more actively.
- Society and especially employers should be educated about the benefits of family-friendly arrangements.
- Dealing with the reconciliation of work and family the whole package of measures such as family leaves, childcare services and flexible work arrangements should be implemented. Leave schemes should be fairly generous, of proper length and promote gender equality; childcare services should be cheap or subsidized, flexible and available for all age preschool children. Flexible work arrangements should not penalize parents in their future perspectives.
- Inadequate conditions of parental leave can even strengthen the male-breadwinner model. Encouraging men to take parental leave it is important to give them a non-transferable right to parental leave as well as generous compensation since their income is frequently higher than mothers' income. Therefore,

Table 6. Women's employment rate and total fertility rate

Country	Women's Employment rate 15-64 years, 2005 (%)	Total fertility rate, 2004
Denmark	71.9	1.78
Iceland	80.5	2.03
Italy	45.3	1.33
Lithuania	59.4	1.26

Source: Eurostat

receiving a lower income mothers are more likely to exercise the right to parental leave than men.

- Parents, especially mothers, have difficulties in reconciling work and family in the countries where the state does not supply relevant childcare services (Italy, Lithuania). In Denmark well-developed childcare services allow mothers to work full-time, securing sufficient income and independence.

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Reconciliation of Work and Family Life in Lithuania: Challenges and Opportunities for Gender Equality

Jolanta Reingardienė
Artūras Tereškinas

INTRODUCTION

The ongoing basic social transformations of the recent period in Lithuania have brought about very important changes in the employment and family structures and gender roles within these institutions. The increasing women's participation in the labour market, decline of the traditional family model, and work intensification and extensification in an ever expanding global competitive market require new ways to regulate the employment-family relationship and to share caring responsibilities at home. The ways in which the transitions between the employment and care are handled and socially protected impact not only the employment rates of women, but also the number and timing of births. If it is difficult to reconcile work and childcare women often find themselves in a situation where they have to make either/or choices. Those who attempt to combine both are likely to be faced with discrimination. The experiences in the Central and Southern European countries have shown that higher integration of women will result in lower birth rates as long as it does not become easier to reconcile work and family life. Leitner and Wroblewski (2006, 296) argues that women – and mothers in particular – carry great potential with regard to the increase of employment and, consequently, the competitiveness of European economy and stable demographic develop-

ment, but only in favourable socio-political and working conditions that facilitate work-family balance for both women and men.

Much cross-national research on gender inequality have suggested that state policy towards women, work and childcare is one of the main explanatory variables of unequal gender relations at work and at home. A range of reconciliation strategies has been developed in post-industrial democracies, greatly reinforced by economic reasons to increase employment and population growth¹. They mostly focus on the extent to which the state can liberate women's time for employment by assuming some of their childcare duties. The division of domestic labour and parenting work between women and men is not given primary importance. Moreover, policies for combining paid work and family care are undermined by the persistent assumption made by managers at all levels, by colleagues and by many of the parents themselves, that these are primarily policies for women. The whole question of the extent to which women's participation in the labour force brings about a change in men's participation in domestic labour and parenting work, or redistribution of care at home, is a vexed one. This is despite the fact that an unequal domestic division of labour and childcare between mothers and fathers has long been acknowledged as one of the major impedi-

ments to women's equal participation in the labour force (Windebank 2001).

The overview of the research on women's and men's reconciliation of family and work roles in Lithuania shows that the increasing women's employment rates and their more active role in public life have not led to decisive changes in the gender division of unpaid work so far. During the last decade of social and economic transformations the social support that enabled women to combine paid employment with care under the soviet regime has been reduced and the double burden of women has been even increasing. The public policies mostly target at women's economic empowerment, while there has been no specific policy to develop more equal parenting roles between women and men so far. The political as well as academic discussions on how to get men involved more in caring and gender equality are generally very scarce.

This research marks an attempt to focus on men's participation in work-family reconciliation processes and to develop better knowledge of how employed fathers fulfil their roles both within the family and at work and what mechanisms at political, institutional and individual levels could facilitate them to balance these roles and achieve more equal gender relationship at home. The study considers such questions as: 'To what extent do fathers and their partners encounter the conflict between work and family roles? What are good practices of father's role in creating gender sensitive work-family balance? What are employers' attitudes towards gender equal family friendly policies? More generally, why is it important for men to become involved with gender equality?'

In order to answer these questions, the chapter draws on the evidence gathered from a qualitative study of reconciliation strategies of working men and their female partners living with at least one child aged under ten as well as employers of the private sector. The study also presents the data of the national public opinion survey, carried within the general framework of the research. The research aims to reveal the extent to which partners encounter the conflict between work and family roles, the good practices of fathers' reconciliation strategies as

well as the obstacles at political, cultural, institutional and interpersonal levels that impede to create a balance of work-family responsibilities and more gender equal distribution of roles at home.

First, the chapter outlines the conceptual approaches of the research, mainly focusing on three thematic issues: the role of welfare state on gender distribution within labour force and care at home, objectives of different cross national strategies of work-life balance on political level and their relation to gender equality as well as changing masculinity and its relation to paid and unpaid work. The following summary of the post-soviet research on reconciliation and family friendly policies in Lithuania provides the general context to grasp the severity of the problem and the national specificity of social change. Second, the findings of the qualitative and quantitative research on partners' experience of 'double role' conflict and reconciliation strategies on interpersonal level as well as institutional and political obstacles of gender equal reconciliation policies will be analyzed; and finally, the recommendations on how the welfare system and work organization can be constructed in order to promote gender equality through reconciliation will be discussed.

CONCEPTUAL APPROACHES

Welfare state, paid and unpaid work

The processes of restructuring within labour markets, the welfare state and the family have profound gender outcomes. Changes in the demographic structure and family relations, and increasing women's participation in labour market place modern welfare states and dominant 'gender contract' under growing constraints and underline the necessity of gender-sensitive welfare state policies. The rapid growth in women's employment, the popularity of dual earner families and ageing of the population imply that the demand for extra-familial care is increasing and the traditional supply of women's labour is less available for providing informal, private, and unpaid care for family members. These processes

indicate that the gendered division of unpaid family-related care and welfare provisions can not be taken for granted in the future (Boje, Leira 2000).

However, increasing women's employment rates have not led to decisive changes in the gender division of unpaid work so far. Women in Lithuania continue to carry the double-role burden they were socialized for during the soviet past. They are still doing the major part of unpaid caring work in the family and in the society as a whole. This results in their unequal career opportunities, pay gap between genders and economic dependence on their partners. Feminist analysts construct studies that show the direct connection between the dominant notions about women's alleged natural role as mother and family caretakers, the duties that come from these expectations, and women's inferior positions not just in paid labour but in all spheres of society, including social provisions (Mazur 2002). Lewis (1992) highlighted the assumptions regarding the role of women that lie embedded in welfare policies. She compares a number of welfare states on the basis of whether they recognize women solely as wives and mothers and/or also workers. According to her, the general tendency has been to conceive women's ties to welfare states in terms of their family role rather than on the basis of their status as individuals. From this framework, Lewis argued for understanding gendered welfare regimes in terms of their relation to traditional family structures of male breadwinner/female caregiver and derived three categories of European welfare states: those with strong, moderate and weak breadwinner models. She identified Britain and Ireland as strong breadwinner states by their tendency to draw a firm dividing line between public and private responsibility and to treat married women as dependent wives with low labour market participation. By contrast, Sweden's and Denmark's weak male-breadwinner regimes of post-1970s encouraged a rapid rise of women's employment through the changes in taxation policy, child care provision and support for parental leave. Diane Sainsbury (1996) proved the need to distinguish between women's welfare entitlements through marriage from the entitlements through motherhood. She uses the entitlement as wives, mothers/caregivers and paid workers to analyze

women's position in a range of welfare regimes. Pascall and Manning (2000, 242) argues that the deconstructing breadwinner/caregiver family relation in this way offers a useful strategy for Central and Eastern Europe where male breadwinner families were challenged during the soviet regime.

The emancipation of soviet women was perceived to be related to women's work outside the home, identifying women's exclusion from paid employment as a key to their oppression. The soviet emphasis on labour participation led to the social policy regime which can be seen as a system of support for women as paid employees and as mothers. There seems to be no history of social entitlements to benefits through male breadwinners. Social benefits and taxation then tended to be attached to women's own employment. But this implied neither women's economic independence nor any higher level of men's participation within the home. There was no women's movement to support women's reproductive autonomy, to challenge the state-imposed gender division of labour or to challenge men's power over women through domestic violence. And the constraints of poverty, conversely, created a relationship of extreme interdependence among family members (Pascall, Manning 2000). During the last decade of social and economic transformations, the social support that enabled women to combine paid employment with care has been reduced and the double burden of women have been certainly increasing. Declining social provisions for motherhood and the move towards the familialization of social services (cuts in social support for health, education, housing, public child care) have increased women's unpaid care work, thus dependence on their families (mostly male partners) to survive their individual low wages and the losses of social support. There has been no specific policy to develop more equal parenting roles between women and men so far. Moreover, the neoconservative forces have pushed the regulation of social welfare provisions to be more closely linked to individual family status, and to privilege those in marriage, as a reaction to the decline of a traditional family model in Lithuania. The outcomes of such regulations are most evident in the case of women outside marriages with increasing poverty among lone

parents and their children.

Paid employment remains critical to women's survival in the country. Due to economic transformations, women's labour market participation has declined, whereas pay gap and gender segregation of labour market have remained intact. Therefore, women need families and family networks to survive. The inequality of marriage is illustrated by high rates of domestic violence, division of labour at home, women's economic and psychological dependence on their partners. As noticed by several feminist analysts, the space created for women's action within the new regimes has had little impact on domestic relationship. The emergence of religious and cultural identity brings further pressures towards 'refamilialization' of care (Buckley 1997; Boje, Leira 2000; Pascall, Manning 2000). This approach does not offer a viable solution to the problems raised by the ongoing demographic change, increasing mobility of labour force or economic necessities of families (need for two incomes). However, families still do provide care and have 'successfully' sustained deeply traditional patterns of unpaid work. These pose increasing challenges for welfare states on how to solve the problem of 'caring deficit' (Hochschild 1995) and reduce the gap between official declarations and the reality of unequal relations between genders.

On the broader level there are two main questions for feminists concerning the provision of unpaid work: how to value it and how to share it more equally between women and men. These concerns brought care to the centre of analysis of welfare states. Modern welfare states have shaped the needs and rights of caregivers and care receivers and have done so in the ways that contribute to gender inequality in citizenship rights (Knijn, Kremer 1997). Welfare policies that exclude the unpaid work provided within the private sphere from the social citizenship rights contribute to gender inequality in the informal sector (care and reproduction) and maintain the inequality between women and men in the formal sector (paid work) (Boje, Almqvist 2000, 45). According to Marshall's influential conceptualization of citizenship, care-giving and care-receiving were supposed to be

provided by family and social networks rather than by welfare states. This domestication of care formed the basis for its exclusion from citizenship rights and thus contributed to gender inequality in citizenship rights. In contemporary welfare states work and care have normally been constructed as mutually exclusive and as opposites. For men this means that the concept of paid work is completely internalized in the male concept of citizenship, but for women this conceptualization leads to an irresolvable dilemma between unpaid caring work in the private sphere and their search for economic and political autonomy in the public (Knijn, Kremer 1997). Lewis (1997) argues that in recognising social rights of citizenship, based on both paid employment and care giving, women's complicated relationship to paid employment, unpaid work and welfare may be solved.

Perhaps the most fruitful direction for questioning contemporary welfare provisions is offered by the concept of 'defamilialization', which focuses on welfare regimes' impact on people's relation to families rather than on their relation to the labour market ('decommodification'). In the situation common to all industrialized countries, where family obligations rest on a smaller circle of family members and on more fragile family ties, the extent of defamilialization might be as crucial to the welfare of individuals and families as is the strength of family obligations themselves. Defamilialization does not imply breaking family bonds (Saraceno 2000, 149). McLaughlin and Glendinning have suggested that we might think about defamilialization not in the sense of simple individualization, which has often been harnessed to the aim of getting women into the labour market, but rather in the sense of the terms and conditions on which people engage in their families as well as their ability to live outside them.

The issue is not whether people are completely 'defamilialised' but rather the extent to which packages of legal and social provisions have altered the balance of power between men and women, between dependents and non-dependents, and hence the terms and conditions under which people engage in familial or caring arrangements (1994, 66).

Lister defines defamilialization as a criterion of social rights by “the degree to which individual adults can uphold a socially acceptable standard of living, independently of family relationships, either through paid work or through social security provisions” (Lister 1997, 173). This definition comes close to Orloff’s proposal to add two new dimensions to Esping-Andersen’s typology of welfare regimes that she feels will help to capture the effects of state social provision on gender relations: access to paid work and capacity to form and maintain an autonomous household (Orloff 1993). She strongly argues for the criteria for social rights to focus on the right to personal autonomy and self-determination in both the public and private domains. The consequences of welfare provisions on gender relations should also be evaluated on their capacity to give women access to paid work and to form and maintain an autonomous household (Boje, Almqvist 2000).

The concept of defamilialization promises to bring the focus back to the constituent concerns of a gender-centred approach and to promote voluntary choices for both genders. As Lewis put it:

It is possible to construe the concept in such a way that the vexed question of what is ‘good’ for women is avoided; it is not assumed (as is the case with decommmodification) that defamilialization is necessarily desirable. The aim of social policy must be to promote choice. This is recognized in the concept of decommmodification as applied to men: the extent to which they are permitted not to engage in paid work. The problem is that women’s complicated relationship to paid work, unpaid work, and welfare means that we have to consider their right not to engage in paid work (decommmodification) and by extension their right to do unpaid work, and also their right to do paid work and by extension their right to not to engage in unpaid work (1997, 173-174).

Sainsbury argues that by focusing on both decommmodification and defamilialization in defining social citizenship rights it is implied that paid work no longer has a privileged status compared with unpaid work and

care (Sainsbury 1996). This provides one uneasy answer to the questions, concerning the provision of unpaid work, we started from: how to value it and how to share it more equally between women and men.

As shown in the scholarly debate and political discussions, the restructuring of the provision of care as the main source of gender inequality is going to be multifaceted and complex. Under the complex influence of economic, political, social and cultural context factors it varies in form, content and outcomes across the region. As Saraceno (2000) observes, ‘refamilialization’ or ‘defamilialization’ might imply very different policy strategies depending on the political context. Feminist scholars advocate the necessity of examining all forms of care given together, whether private or public, formal or informal, and to study the gender effects of different forms of care provision.

Work-Family Balance and Gender Equality

Reconciliation of family and work roles has recently gained a particular popularity in research and public policy debates across Europe². The concept refers to a number of qualitative changes in contemporary societies, such as increasing labour market participation of women, changing family forms or the demographic decline, which play a crucial role in social organization of work. John MacInnes (2006) argues that the origins of the reconciliation debate in Nordic countries can be linked to the concerns about falling fertility rates and population aging. It is believed that a better reconciliation of work and family would help to increase birth rates in these countries. The feminist scholars discuss the reconciliation of work and family obligations as a gendered issue and link it with the debates about gender equality. The interplay between the welfare sector, economy, family and individual choices is particularly important in this respect as well as its gendered or generational impact. Secondly, the transformation of labour in society creates new social risks and problems on the individual and social level and, again, not without its specific gendered dimension, which gains a particular focus in this study.

The definition of the work-family balance at first sight seems obvious. In his analysis of the work-life balance in Europe, MacInnes asserts:

While this definition suggests that 'life' is no longer dominated by 'work' in the way it may once have been, it says little about work's continued importance for most people's income (either immediately or in the form of future pension or benefit rights) and verges on the vacuous. It downplays objective constraints on working arrangements and foregrounds 'choices' (2006, 225).

Secondly, the work-family balance is often normatively charged (as a family friendly strategy or a tool for women's empowerment). However, not all externalities of 'work-family balance' oriented arrangements at work are positive. For example, greater flexibility can enable parents to manage multiple roles and enhance well-being in the short-term but can also enable parents to work more, with paid work intruding into family life (Transitions 2006). Moreover, as noted by many feminist analysts, 'part time work' or 'flexible work' is not necessarily used for feminist purposes as well:

In the sixties and seventies it [the concept of reconciliation] was understood as reconciling women's roles in paid and unpaid work to promote equality. Today, it tends to be associated with work force strategies used by individual firms to promote part-time work or flexible work rather than with any larger goal of equality between men and women (Mazur 2002, 102).

It should be noted that the concept 'work-family balance' implies an aim that goes well beyond the mere reconciliation of work and family life and is rather geared towards a 'balanced' relationship between these different areas (Leitner, Wroblewski 2006). From the feminist perspective, it implies women's ability to sustain their economic independence and an equitable share of household chores between partners.

The objectives of the 'balance' or family-friendly policies that have been developed to achieve this balance are also diverse. MacInnes (2006) summarizes six rather

varied objectives. One is the reduction of long working hours incompatible with parenting and family life. Such reductions may take a wide variety of forms, be based on statutory provisions or locally bargained agreements as well as have different implications for pay, working conditions and gender. The second goal is to facilitate different leave schemes and arrangements (paternity leave, maternity leave, parental leave, etc.). These two time-related provisions imply a reduction in the labour supply (at least in the short term) and are usually granted to parents to facilitate their caring responsibilities. The next two goals of work-life balance and reconciliation policies are, conversely, aimed at increasing labour supply through provision of 'flexible' working time arrangements and childcare services. One more probably the most frequently cited goal of reconciliation policies is to overcome gender segregation of labour market and unequal share of domestic labour. Hantrais (2000) uses the term 'reconciliation' to describe feminist work and family policies that promote a more equal sharing of paid and unpaid work. She argues that there has been an important shift in the EU member countries from the measures designed to bring women into line with men as workers to gender policies aimed at tackling socially constructed gender inequalities at work and at home. The pervading feminist policies explicitly address the relationship between work and family to improve women's situation and ensure their economic independence.

Finally, the sixth goal, discussed by MacInnes (2006, 226), "has been to secure the long-term labour supply and to avoid the fiscal and economic consequences of 'population ageing' by facilitating specifically *fertility sustaining* family life. <...> states hope that WLB [work-life balance] might deliver both *more* working mothers now, and by supporting fertility, *more* workers for the future." The OECD (2001, 130) argues that "the work/family balance is also important for longer-term trends in population ... it is plausible that improvements in the work/family balance could help to increase both current employment rates and fertility rates". As several analysts have observed, these economic arguments had a greater effect than similar demands to ease women's difficulties in combining their jobs with family duties, which had

been voiced much earlier under the normative aspect of gender equality (Leitner, Wroblewski 2006, 296).

Feminist policies are striving for women's 'economic independence', which may be treated as a common ground of diverse feminist views on reconciliation policies. Mazur (2002, 104) has defined it as "any policy that seeks to promote women's economic independence within the purview of the predominant division of labour between work and family". She summarized three feminist approaches to achieving women's economic independence in reconciling work and family obligation for both men and women. All three can exist side by side in a specific country or in the same set of policy reforms. Reconciliation policy that takes a traditional gender role stance has to provide social security benefits for stay at home mothers or housewives to ensure their economic independence of husband's salary. According to the second policy approach, the traditional gender roles' model is only slightly shifted. The assumption is that women are more or less compelled to take on a primary parenting role, but it should not prevent them from entering the labour market on the same footing as men. The third approach aims to redefine traditional gender roles so that men and women share family caretaking. Nordic countries have well progressed in promotion shared parenthood through helping both parents or extending incentives to men to accept more responsibility in care giving. To sum up, policies may work within the established division in a gender neutral way, they may recognize gender inequality but put no efforts to change it or they may seek to change it through the reconstruction of traditional models and reinforcement of alternative ones.

The extent to which it is manageable to achieve social change through reconciliation policies depends on the variety of factors: state regulated provisions, the involvement of employers and labour unions, family structures as well as individual attitudes (attitudes towards gender roles, career orientation, etc.). Social norms and values also have a profound effect on women's integration in labour market, their income, employment prospects as well as distribution of roles within the family. Empirical

findings have shown that "as long as the increasing employment participation of women does not go hand in hand with re-distribution of unpaid labour, and especially care work, the pressure will always be unevenly distributed. Women will continue to be faced with greater challenges and limitations in the working world despite the fact that they may appear to have equal opportunities on the labour market" (Leitner, Wroblewski, 2006, 301). Consequently, women still bear more pressure than men in the effort to obtain the work-family balance and pay much higher price of gender inequality.

Men and Masculinities: Between Paid and Unpaid Work

For a long time, work-family issues were either ignored or considered a "woman's problem." Skepticism that family-supportive policies are relevant to men is still strong in Lithuania. However, as Fine-Davis and Fagnani argue,

The challenge which still faces even the most advanced of the EU member states is how to facilitate a more egalitarian sharing of roles, that is – how to relieve women of the double burden of employment and domestic duties, while encouraging men to take an active part in family and domestic life" (2004, 219).

Lithuania faces the same challenge. Therefore, the issue of the work-family or work-life balance must be increasingly placed in the context of gender equality that concerns both women and men. Balancing of work and family must become a problem of both women and men, families and the state in Lithuania. This calls for more attention to the issues of men and masculinities.

Focusing on men and masculinities, the following questions are usually asked: Why is it important for men to become involved in gender equality issues? What is men's relation to paid and unpaid work? Why do men resist increasing pressures to assume a larger share of the family responsibilities?

First of all, let us look at the gender equality policies

in Lithuania. Lithuanian laws guarantee *de jure* equal opportunities for men and women. In March, 1999, the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, the first of its kind in the Central and Eastern Europe, entered into force. Furthermore, in order to realize legal regulations in practice, the National Program for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men (2003-2004) was prepared and adopted on June 7, 2003, in Lithuania. This Program was fully oriented towards the implementation of a gender mainstreaming strategy and gender equality *de facto*. The main objectives of this program are to create equal opportunities for men and women in all areas of public life, e.g. to increase the number of female and male representatives in the areas in which they were underrepresented and to achieve equal redistribution of services and financial resources.³

The National Program is based declaratively on the principle of equal rights, responsibilities and possibilities for both genders in any life sphere. This program emphasizes that equal opportunities for men and women mean the absence of obstacles for both genders to participate equally and fully in economic, political and social life. The policy of gender equality strives for the equal sharing of power and influence among genders in economy, social life and decision-making processes. It declares publicly that the physiological gender differences cannot be the basis for discrimination of different genders and cannot have any negative influence for the living conditions of men and women. The above resolutions conform to the international obligations of Lithuania and the legal norms of the EU.

According to the National Program, the Ministry of Social Security and Labour took upon itself the task to improve, during 2004, conditions for women and men that would allow them to reconcile their work and family responsibilities better. One of many measures to achieve this objective was to prepare projects and legal acts establishing conditions for paternity leave and to discuss them with social partners. This measure had to encourage working fathers to take a paternity leave and share family responsibilities with their wives and partners. However, the concrete results of this measure

have not been achieved yet.

Different obstacles impede the transformation of institutional and gender relations. Gender experts treat the implementation of this program ambiguously and often very critically. During the 2004 research "The EU Enlargement and its Impact on Women in Lithuania" experts of gender policy in Lithuania (representatives of the Lithuanian Parliament, the Office of Equal Opportunities Ombudsman, international organizations, women's NGOs and scholars) were asked to evaluate the implementation of the policy of equal gender opportunities in Lithuania. Although the experts evaluated the formal side of this policy positively, its implementation received a great number of critical remarks. According to the experts of gender policy, this program is fragmentary and lacks a consistent strategy, stable financing and inter-institutional cooperation; officials that supervise this program are rather incompetent and insensitive to gender problems and to the social-structural reasons of gender inequality. Another research on gender equality and gender mainstreaming emphasizes that there are many obstacles impeding the achievement of gender equality: frequent governmental changes, the absence of solidarity among women, stereotypical and very patriarchal attitudes of responsible officials, among others, were mentioned (Taljūnaitė, Bandzevičienė 2004, 12-13). One of the major obstacles for institutionalizing gender sensitive policies is the lack of continuity since often changing political fortunes influence such policies. When governments change after the Parliament elections, gender analyses and related political processes frequently stop. Summarizing the experts' evaluations, it is possible to conclude that even if we have a necessary judicial base conforming to the EU standards and directives, in the current context, gender equality *de facto* remains a vision that is difficult to fulfil (Reingardienė 2004).

When we discuss the issues of gender equality with regard to work-family issue, the problem of paid and unpaid work comes to the forefront. First of all, work and masculine identity is closely connected. Work and "bread-winners" role is regarded as a major basis of hegemonic masculinity and masculine identity in

general. The hegemonic ideology of fatherhood reflects the “traditional” notion of the breadwinning role that defines a good father as a good provider whose wife does not have to work (Griswold 1993). A good provider has a separate role in the family and may not engage in the activities associated with child care or motherhood (Wilkie 1993).

According to Jeff Hearn, paid work for men “is a source of power and resources, a central life interest, and a medium of identity. It is also a means of ordinary *everyday yet structural resistance* to gender equality” (Hearn 2001, 11). The facts concerning male and female employment patterns in Lithuania confirm this statement. Women are still inferior to men in the Lithuanian labour market. They are discriminated against and segregated by occupation: a high degree of horizontal and vertical segregation and growing wage differential still exist in Lithuania. Men and women are engaged in different areas of activities indicating that the traditional patterns of men’s and women’s jobs are still prevailing. The dominant negative stereotypes – women’s tendency to quit their jobs, shorter career spans, greater absenteeism, preference for part time work, low availability of overtime or long working hours – differentiate women’s employment patterns from men and are based on the predominant gendered division of labour, in particular women’s obligations towards family and child care. All of the above lead to the outcome that women are concentrated in jobs with lower salaries and stability. For example, gender asymmetry is very explicit in the increasing proportion of women in part-time employment, part of the feminization of this market segment.

Men still dominate mainstream political and business organisations in Lithuania. They remain in control of the most powerful organisations, whether state, capitalist or third sector. The Lithuanian Parliament may be cited as one of the most evident examples of this male dominance: it consists of 79.43% of men and 20.57% of women. Furthermore, political and business organisations „are typically intensely gendered, by management, formal and informal hierarchies, divisions of labour, sexual structuring and the structuring of sexuality, rela-

tion to the ‘private’ and ‘domestic’ worlds, and constructions of relations of centre and margins (by membership, employment, physical space, and symbolic meanings)” (Hearn 2001, 12). Changing these patterns is a very large challenge: it is necessary not only to deconstruct the taken-for-granted gender-neutrality of organizations but also to support women and women’s initiatives in organisations and management” (Hearn 2001, 13).

Men’s paid work is closely related to domestic and family life. In Hearn’s words, “the practical arenas of gender equality are thus not just the ‘big questions’ of ‘politics’; they recur in all social life, including personal and private life” (Hearn 2001, 15). Implementing gender equality involves changing men not only at work but also at home. Here we have to talk of the distribution of childcare and household tasks among men and women in the family.

The institutions of the Lithuanian welfare state provide both women and men with the opportunities to care for their young children. For instance, the Labour Code of the Republic of Lithuania provides for childcare leave which can be used, depending on a family decision, by the mother (or foster mother), the father (or foster father), the grandmother, grandfather or other relatives that take care of the child until he/she reaches the age of three. However, men very seldom use these opportunities. According to the data of the State Social Insurance Fund of the Republic of Lithuania (Sodra) from the first quarter of 2005, 98.64 % of women and 1.36 % of men received maternity/paternity benefits, or, in other words, took a parental leave. In the previous years, the percentage of fathers on parental leave was even lower.

The most common explanation for men not taking paternity leave is financial: men usually earn more than women; consequently, women have to stay at home. However, deeper cultural and ideological factors about gender roles and parenthood are at play here too. For most men, taking such a leave is not a part of their male and father’s identity. “Child care” is usually assumed to be a gendered occupation, a ‘woman’s work.’ According to Hearn, “so often men’s avoidance of caring has been the defining feature of ‘being men.’ This is a *structural* question in terms of women doing more caring work,

both in private and in public" (Hearn 2001, 16).

The idea that a mother is a primary caretaker of children is quite strong in Lithuania. The two research projects "Woman in the Lithuanian Society" carried out in 1994 and 2000 show that Lithuanian women still carry out most child-care chores (Stankūnienė et al 2003, 117-18). According to the 2004 survey "Public Opinion about Gender Policies of the EU and Lithuania," 62% of Lithuanians thought that women had to take care of pre-school children. The similar percentage of men and women expressed this opinion (55% of men and 49% of women). On the other hand, even 32% of Lithuanians could not decide who, men or women, had to take care of children during the first years of their lives (Maslauskaitė 2004: 44-45).⁴ In this regard, one should also consider a rather sceptical or even negative employers' and co-workers' attitude toward men taking paternity leave that serves as a general disincentive. Men who take this kind of leave are considered non-masculine (Tereškina 2006, 28-29).

Another issue related to gender equality is men's involvement in household tasks at home. Lithuanian men spend less time than women on household tasks. The research on time spending conducted by the Department of Statistics to the Government of the Republic of Lithuania demonstrates that daily women spend two hours more than men doing housework and family chores (Žemeta 2004). The results of the above mentioned survey demonstrate that the absolute majority of women living with their partners most frequently prepared food, did dishwashing, bought products and tidied up the rooms (Maslauskaitė 2004, 44). Most of their time per day women spent on food making and house keeping. Care for clothing and childcare differentiate partners most.

The cultural conceptions of men's and women's roles play an important part in this division of household tasks: the Lithuanian women's orientation to family remains stronger than their orientation to work. Men's roles stay directly related to the activities of the public and "outside" domestic sector.

The above discussion demonstrates that despite quite

advanced gender equality policies in Lithuania, not much has been achieved, particularly in the sphere of men's attitude towards unpaid work. What should be done to create gender equality at work and at home?

According to gender researchers, to challenge men's dominance in the public sphere and their reluctance to be involved in the private space, it is necessary to change "men's relations to women, to children, and (reciprocally) to other men" (Hearn 2001, 10). Only by "attending to the men practices of power at home, in mainstream organisations" and challenging men's interpersonal, institutional or structural power and dominance (Hearn 2001, 11), it is possible to achieve factual gender equality. Furthermore, to end the dominance and power of men in the paid work and to increase men's family involvement, a gradual social and cultural redefinition of what it means to be a man is necessary.

NATIONAL RESEARCH ON RECONCILIATION AND FAMILY FRIENDLY POLICIES

During the last decade of post-soviet social changes, several large-scale sociological surveys have been carried out in the national context to assess the value orientations of population towards the existing gendered order, its public and private dimensions, gendered segregation of labour market and reconciliation of roles. It is important to mention that the prevailing research on reconciliation of family and professional roles during the last decade have mostly targeted women. Men's reconciliation issues have not gained any higher scientific interest in Lithuania.

In 1995 the Institute of Social Research in Lithuania carried out the representative survey "Family and Fertility in Lithuania", which served as an integral part of a larger international initiative. The survey aimed to measure the public attitudes towards gender roles, the preferable family model, and the importance of family and work in the lives of women and men. The survey also provided data on the interrelation between the professional and family roles of both genders and other issues

of reconciliation. Kanopienė (1999, 102) in her article *Combining Family and Professional Roles: Gender Differences*, based on the survey results, reveals four types of attitudes on women's role in the family and professional life. The first is characterized by the orientation towards an uninterrupted professional career (the best way for women to combine professional and family roles is being employed full-time); it was supported by only 10% of male and 12% of female respondents. The second group of people favoured the preference for part-time employment for women (12% of males and 15% of females). More than 60% of the male and nearly 60% of the female respondents preferred an interrupted professional career (women should stay at home till the children are older) or a discontinued professional career (priority is given to the housewife's/mother's role) by women. According to Kanopienė (1999, 102), the middle-aged women (between 40-49 years of age) with a family expressed the strongest support towards full-time employment and an uninterrupted professional career. She argues that in spite of the big load of domestic and professional duties, the experience of "double employment" appeared to have a positive impact on women with regards to the importance of paid work (and personal autonomy) in their lives. The strongest patriarchal attitude was expressed among the married men between 25-29 years of age with children, who are on their career way leaving all family responsibilities for their spouses. This and other studies have revealed an interesting finding related to the educational level of respondents. Women's education positively correlates with their egalitarian attitudes towards sharing of public/private roles, while highly educated men in Lithuania hold patriarchal attitudes more often than others.

An important finding of this survey is that the respondents' family obligations are an important explanatory variable of their orientations towards waged work and the significance of professional career in their lives. Among persons with family obligations a professional career plays a more significant role in the life of men than women. The understanding of public recognition and respect was also disclosed as a deeply gendered issue. For men these are very much related to their role

in the professional sphere while for women these are linked with being a good mother and fulfilling family obligations. A woman's primary identification with the role of a mother and housewife is the main reason of their subordinated position in the labour market. On the other hand, the stereotypes of "proper" male and female roles are enforced and strengthened by the gender segregation in the working place and the consequences of this phenomenon. The in-depth interviews with employers in 1996-1997⁵, carried out by the Sociology department at Vilnius University, also showed that the demands of employers were grounded on their patriarchal understanding of gender roles in the family (Kanopienė 1999). The employers openly recognized that woman's primary responsibility for the childcare and housework does not allow them to be good and reliable employees. For men, on contrary, being a father and a breadwinner were considered as a necessary precondition for his successful professional career. The above-mentioned variables could be further tested and more elaborated in the following research of this project.

The nationally representative survey *Evaluation of Population-Related Policy*, carried out in 2003⁶, revealed the attitudes of the population towards the state provided measures to enforce the reconciliation of family and professional roles. The data shows that the population basically views the growth of state provided financial support as a higher priority than other measures aimed at creating favourable conditions for family-work reconciliation. Among the most desirable measures are parental leave (until the child is one year old), childcare leave (child is 1-3 years old) and benefits paid during these leaves. The parental leave with 70% compensation of the employee's salary is desired to be longer or the benefits higher with the length of the leave remaining the same⁷. The allowances for childcare leave are very low in Lithuania and cannot guarantee the economic welfare of the family. Care services of pre-school children or opportunities to have flexible working hours are less desirable than the state provided economic measures, mentioned above, allowing to raise children, at least until the age of three, at home (Stankūnienė et al 2003; Jasilionienė

2005). The highly emphasized priority of enhancing financial support indicates the vitality of paternalistic orientations towards the state in the society.

One of the main obstacles for women to join labour market on better conditions is the lack of reliable and accessible system of childcare. The experience of other countries demonstrates that the availability, quality and variety of day care services are among the most effective measures of support for families with children.

The survey also reveals that, since 1995, the demand for care and services of school children before or after the lessons has grown significantly. The organization of this type of care has received little attention of family support policies so far.

Flexible working hours and part-time work were the least favourable measures of family support among the population, especially among men, in 2001. In general, the measures that are either not implemented in the country or of which the implementation is inadequate (like flexible working hours) were evaluated with reserve. As it was mentioned already, the untypical forms of work organization are poorly developed in Lithuania. The hardships of the national economy (high unemployment rate in the country and lack of security within the labour market) make the implementation of untypical employment forms quite unlikely. However, implementation of most of these and other measures practiced by many European countries (better pre-school child care facilities; out-of-class care for schoolchildren; flexible forms of employment; paternal leave provided on individualized basis, etc.) would permit combining family and work roles more easily and would provide alternative methods of childcare (Stankūnienė et al 2003; Reingardienė 2004).

The issue of reconciliation is not only a matter of the favourable structural and institutional conditions, but it is an issue of cultural attitudes, which are the prerequisites of the former. The values, norms and attitudes towards gender roles in the society are still very much differentiated along the dichotomy of the public and private spheres, in which men are primarily attributed

to the former and women to the latter. For example, the gendered dimension of the employment patterns has preserved more or less the same attributes since 1995. Most men with children find it ideal for a man with children to work full time while most women have no other choice except of staying at home with small kids. An attitude about a more active participation of men in newborns' care is pointed out very rarely. An opinion prevails that it is women who have to reconcile family and professional roles. These attitudes do not encourage even prevent men from getting more involved in caring and limit the employment opportunities for women.

It can be concluded that Lithuanian population give a high evaluation to the role of government in dealing with social problems and providing financial support to families. As far as the attention of the government "to the problems of working women" and "to childcare conditions" are concerned, about half of the surveyed population (in 2001) think that in recent years the government has been paying less attention to these issues than before (Stankūnienė et al 2003).

The respondents agree that better working opportunities for women are the main prerequisite for gender equality in the society and that the state has to play a principal role in securing these opportunities. The bigger part of the population also supported the ideas that the distribution of roles in the family should be changed, that a father's involvement in childcare and an equal distribution of childcare between partners should be promoted. These attitudes provide a favourable context for more radical gender mainstream and expression of political will.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The further analysis is based on the results of the qualitative and quantitative research on the reconciliation of family and work roles. During the qualitative research the interviews with the couples and employers have been carried out. There were six heterosexual couples (12 informants) interviewed in Lithuania, representing different age groups, employment sectors and positions, as well as different role-share models at home. The interviews mainly focused on the informants' work

environment (work experience, job satisfaction, work organization, etc.) and family issues (role-share at home, satisfaction with partnership, etc.). The research aimed to find out the extent to which partners encounter the conflict between work and family roles and to reveal good practices of fathers' reconciliation strategies. The brief summary of the couples' socio-demographic situation and their labour participation is as follows:

- **Couple No. 1:** The man (Valdas) is a 30 y. o. businessman who works in two jobs. The woman (Lina) is an accountant in a private company. He has a high school education, and she, a university education. They are married and raise a 7 y. o. child.
- **Couple No. 2:** The man (Edgaras) is a 24 y. o. manager and his wife Aistė is a 23 y. o. administrator and student, currently on maternity leave. They raise 11 months old child. Both have a university education.
- **Couple No. 3:** The man (Andrius) is a 24 y. o. printer. His wife Aurelija is a 23 y. o. designer in a printing company. He has a higher education, and she, special non-university education. Their child is 1.5 y. o.
- **Couple No. 4:** He is a 35 y. o. manager (Arvydas) and goods transporter (works in two jobs). His wife Genutė is a 37 y. o. operator. Both have a higher education. They raise two children: one is 11.5 y. o., the other is 8.5 y. o.
- **Couple No. 5:** The husband Almantas is a 31 y. o. engineer. His wife Rasa is a 29 y. o. dentist. Their child is 11 months old.
- **Couple No. 6:** The man (Egidijus) is a 29 y. o. telecommunications consultant, and his wife Vilija is a 28 y. o. teacher. They raise a 1.5 y. o. child.

At the time of the interviews, all respondents were employed, living in a couple with a spouse who was also employed or on maternity leave (couple No. 2).

Another target group of the research was employers. 13 employers were interviewed in total. They represent different genders, sectors of economy (masculine vs. feminine), and different size of enterprise. The interviews

with employers aimed to reveal their attitudes towards family friendly work organization, the concrete measures introduced at their organizations, obstacles at political/ideological, cultural, institutional or individual levels that impede to implement family-friendly principles at work, how welfare system and work organization can be constructed in order to promote gender equal reconciliation.

The analysis integrates the relevant data from a population survey⁸ on work-family reconciliation conducted in 2006. The survey was implemented using phone-surveying techniques. The sample size is 1000 respondents. The following sampling criteria have been used: at the time of the interview the respondents (500-women and 500-men) and their partners were employed, they were married or lived in partnership and raised at least one child up to 10 years of age. The survey instrument was prepared by the researchers of the Social Research Centre at Vytautas Magnus University. The aim of the survey was to assess the tensions between family and professional roles, the gendered character of the conflict and related factors as well as the obstacles, which prevent men from creating a better balance of their public and private roles. The survey provided data on whether having children has had any repercussions for the respondents at work (reduce in working hours, change of work place, limited professional upward mobility, increase in physical and psychological stress, increase in workload to meet the family's financial needs, etc.), the respondents' opinion about employers' general response to employees' family obligations in Lithuania, the preferable family model in the society by the respondents and the most preferable measures for the national reconciliation policy. The data have been processed using SPSS software.

BALANCING WORK AND FAMILY

Do the interviewed couples manage to balance their work and family responsibilities? The overwhelming majority of the respondents answered this question positively (6 women and 4 men). Only two men (couple No. 1 and couple No. 6) said that they were not able to balance work and family as much as they would like it.

Valdas stated that he was not always successful in doing it. Egidijus was not satisfied with his attempts to balance work and family since he worked a lot, sometimes even on Saturdays. In his words, because of his hectic work schedule his family and wife suffered. Aistė (couple No. 2) said that she was able to balance family and work only because of her mother's and husband's help. The rest saw their work and family life as well balanced. As Arvydas (couple No. 4) stated:

In some way, I am always able (I don't know how I succeed in it) to balance [my work and family]. Finally, even at times when I have less time for my family, I still manage to do it. It never happened that my work would interfere into something ...

However, if we look more closely at the interviews, we can notice the underlying evidence that despite the positive responses, the interviewed men and women experience a conflict between their work and family responsibilities. First of all, most of them emphasized the constant stress in combining work and family. The women complained of tiredness that impeded their family work. Men talked of the exhaustion and fatigue at work that did not allow them to enjoy family life. The respondents' answers demonstrate that it becomes difficult to fulfil the responsibilities of the family when one is tired and exhausted. Although Rasa (couple No. 5) balanced her family and work well, sometimes she felt tired. It can be argued that exhaustion and fatigue were the indicators that it was difficult to fulfil both work and family responsibilities.

One of the most important factors working against the work-family reconciliation was found to be time. The more hours a person worked per week the more difficulty they had combining work and family. This was particularly true with regard to the interviewed men who worked either full time or in two jobs or on non-traditional work schedules. Some women also mentioned the lack of time for the family (Aistė, couple No. 2). Although men attempted to give as much time for their families as possible, their work interfered with their attempts. Men more often than women felt that their work was an obstacle for spending time with the family (Almantas,

couple No. 5 and others). Some men indicated that they arrived home exhausted and felt that they did not have enough time to be with their children.

One of the most common difficulties faced by the couples was organizing family schedules to fit with normal working hours. Normal working hours, particularly those of men, were not as flexible as the respondents would like them to be. Genutė (couple No. 4) saw inflexible working hours as the biggest obstacle for work-family reconciliation. In her view, employers did not consider women's working hours seriously in Lithuania: if you work from 9 a. m. to 5 p. m., and your children come from school around 1 p. m., they have to stay alone for a large part of the day.

All women and most men stated that family was their priority. However, it was evident from the men's responses that the breadwinner's role was most important for them. Arvydas (couple No. 4) said that "there [would] be no family without work." According to Egidijus (couple No. 6), it was good to sacrifice oneself for the family's sake, i. e. work long hours and earn good money. For men, work and career are the most important means of their self-realization and self-fulfilment.

It is quite obvious that the interviewed men usually attempted to adapt their family responsibilities to their work, prioritizing work; and women, on the contrary, changed their work requirements to fit their family needs. In the respondents Lina (couple No. 1) and Rasa's (couple No. 5) opinion, they would like to work more but were afraid that their families would suffer as the consequence of it. Thus, in most cases, women made deliberate compromises at work because of family reasons, for instance, temporarily giving up career opportunities because of the birth of a child or working only part time until a child was small. Men usually compromised their family lives because of work. It appears that for men family encroached on work much less than work did on family.

It should also be emphasized that women were more successful in balancing their work and family because of their trade-offs with regard to work: while all interviewed

men worked full time, 3 women held the part-time jobs or were on maternity leave. Lina (couple No. 1) would like to spend more time at work and advance her career since she got tired of home. Genutė (couple No. 4) chose a job that enabled her to be at home most of the week. Even some men acknowledged that women had to sacrifice more than men in their professional life. Almantas (couple No. 5) thought that it was more difficult for a woman to reconcile work and family because she gave birth and had to take a maternity leave. Consequently, she lagged in her profession because employers in

Lithuania were not friendly to women with children. Although compromises such as part-time work or giving up education because of family were more common for women than for men, one interviewed man also said that because of his small child and family he postponed his plans to study.

The data from the population survey demonstrate that more women (69.8 %) than men (30.2 %) experience a work-family conflict. To the question whether the raising of a child and childcare had any impact on their work, women and men responded in the following way:

Figure 1. Did child-raising and childcare affect your job in any personal way?

Almost in all cases except one (men had to look for a supplementary job to fulfil the financial needs of a family), women experienced a more considerable conflict between their work and family responsibilities. Figure 2 illustrates how many of the consequences at work, inflicted by childcare (Fig. 1), have been experienced by women and men.

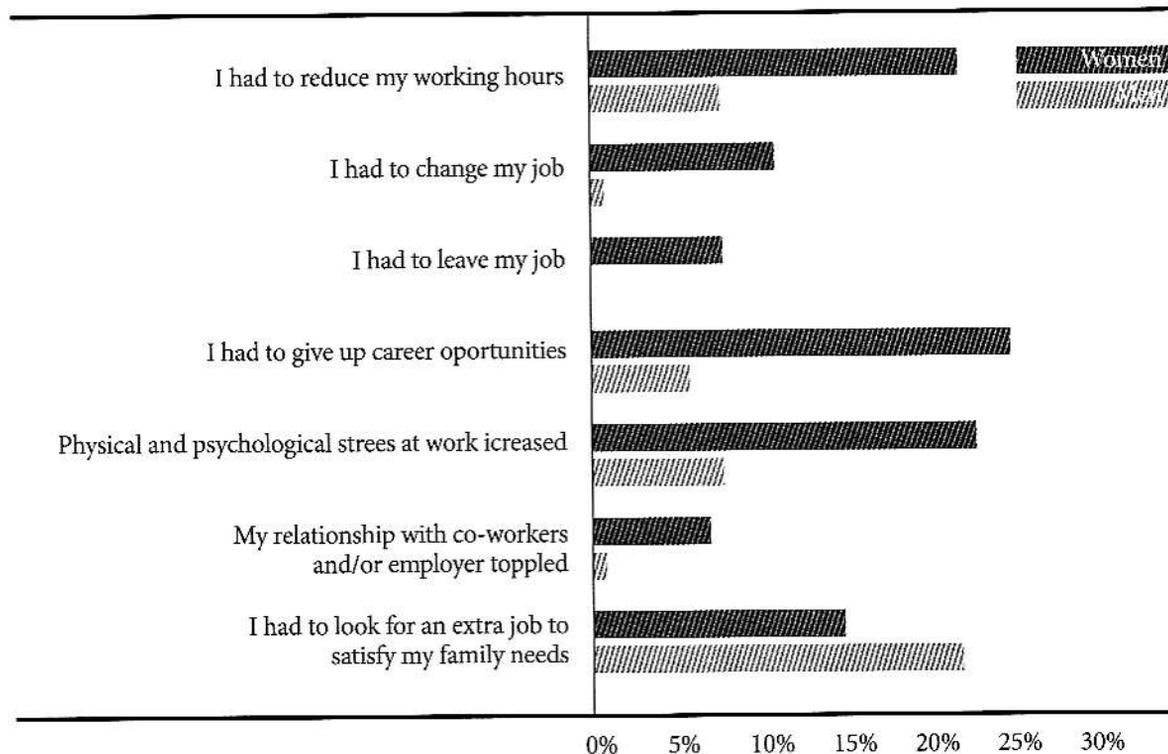


Figure 2. Number of instances of childcare impact upon women and men at work (%).

The figure 2 demonstrates that 70% of men and 50% of women did not think that child-raising and childcare affected their job in any personal way. However, women indicated that they are in a much bigger conflict of childcare and work than men. Table 1 summarizes the results of the correlation analysis for ordinal variables and indicates the differences of those who experience the work-family conflict (WFC) and those who do not. Those who endorsed at least one of the statements shown in Figure 1 were allocated to the category of people who experience the WFC. The bigger Somer d (by absolute value), the bigger is the difference in the corresponding variable between the men and women that confront the conflict and those that do not.

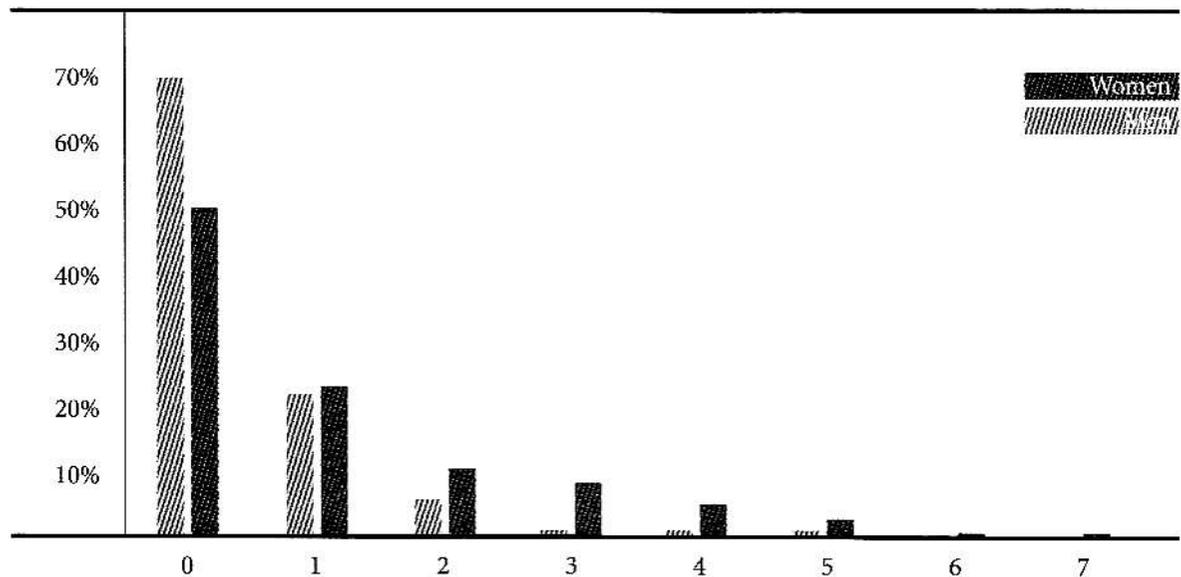


Table 1. The differences in the corresponding variable between the men and women that confront the WFC and those that do not (for ordinal variables).

Variable ^a	Men			Women		
	Somerio d	p	Difference	Somerio d	p	Difference
Used flexible working time arrangements for personal matters	-0,307	< 0,001	Those in WFC more often used flexible working time arrangements for personal matters	-0,250	< 0,001	Those in WFC more often used flexible working time arrangements for personal matters
Worked at home at work time	-0,249	< 0,001	Those in WFC more often worked at home at work time	0,210	< 0,001	Those in WFC more often worked at home at work time
Asked relatives or friends for help in taking care for the home or the children due to troubles at work	-0,229	< 0,001	Those in WFC more often asked relatives or friends for help in taking care for the home or the children	-0,328	< 0,001	Those in WFC more often asked relatives or friends for help in taking care for the home or the children
Paid somebody to tidy up the home and/or take care of the children	-0,197	< 0,001	Those in WFC more often paid somebody to tidy up the home and/or take care of the children	-0,214	< 0,001	Those in WFC more often paid somebody to tidy up the home and/or take care of the children
Used working hours to settle personal or family matters	-0,185	< 0,001	Those in WFC more often used working hours to settle personal or family matters	-0,260	< 0,001	Those in WFC more often used working hours to settle personal or family matters
Indicated that family and work responsibilities often clash with each other	-0,174	< 0,001	Family and work responsibilities of those in WFC clashed more often with each other	-0,261	< 0,001	Family and work responsibilities of those in WFC clashed more often with each other
Indicated that their partner perfectly understands and sympathizes with them, no matter what is the respondent's opinion	-0,164	< 0,001	Those in WFC more often indicated that their partner perfectly understood and sympathized with them		N.S.*	
Indicated being discontent that their partner spends too much time at work	-0,159	< 0,001	Those in WFC disliked more that their partner spent too much time at work	-0,255	< 0,001	Those in WFC disliked more that their partner spent too much time at work

Variable ⁹	Men			Women		
	Somerio d	p	Difference	Somerio d	p	Difference
Partner does not like the respondent's type of work	-0,158	< 0,002	Those in WFC more often said that their partner did not like the respondent's type of work		N.S.	
The respondent likes the way they share child raising and care chores with his/her partner	0,130	< 0,002	Those in WFC liked less the way they shared child raising and care chores with his/her partner in comparison to those not in WFC		N.S.	
Buys foodstuff	-0,129	< 0,012	Men in WFC more often bought foodstuff	0,255	< 0,001	Women in WFC less often bought foodstuff
Work is more important to my partner than family	0,084	< 0,009	Those in WFC said this less often		N.S.	
Pays the bills		N.S.		0,245	< 0,001	Those in WFC paid the bills less often
The size of the settlement		N.S.		-0,201	< 0,001	Those in WFC more often lived in larger towns
Often discuss with their partner how to better combine family and work matters		N.S.		-0,196	< 0,001	Those in WFC more often discussed with their partner how to better combine family and work matters
Number of children under the age of 3 years		N.S.		0,192	< 0,001	Those in WFC more often had children under 3: 45,6% have one child and 5,4% two.
Number of children at the age of 8-10 years		N.S.		-0,128	< 0,005	Those not in WFC more often had children of 8-10 years: 36,4% have one child and 2,6% - two children

* Not statistically significant

Table 1 shows the significant differences between those women and men who experience work and family conflict and those who do not. The male respondents who are in family-work conflict more often used flexible

working time arrangements for personal matters than those who are not, more often worked at home or asked for help from other family members to take care of home and children (see Table 1). Women that face the conflict

more often ask their relatives or friends for help with taking care of the home or the children than those that do not face it; moreover, they are more likely to live in larger towns, more often discuss with their partner how to better combine family and work matters and raise

children under 3 years of age.

Table 2 summarizes the results of the correlation analysis for nominal variables and indicates the differences of those who experience the work-family conflict (WFC) and those who do not.

Table 2. The differences in the corresponding variable between the men and women that confront the WFC and those that do not (for nominal variables).

Variable ¹⁰	Men		Difference	Women		Difference
	Cramer's V	p		Cramer's V	p	
Does your employer take into account the family problems of the company's employees?	0,257	< 0,001	Those not in WFC less often said that their employer did not take into account. Those in WFC less often said that the employer always did take into account.	0,275	< 0,001	Those not in WFC less often said that their employer did not take into account.
Do the employers in general take into account the situation of men or women when they require special arrangements at work due to family problems?	0,243	< 0,001	Those not in WFC more often thought that the employers equally took into account the family problems of men and women. Those not in WFC less often thought that the employers took women's family problems more seriously into account.	0,260	< 0,001	Those not in WFC more often thought that the employers equally took into account the family problems of men and women. Those not in WFC less often thought that the employers took men's family problems more seriously into account.
My partner reproaches me when I have to stay longer at work or do some additional work at home	0,202	< 0,001	Those in WFC more often agreed that their partner reproached them	0,169	< 0,001	Those in WFC more often agreed that their partner reproached them

Variable ¹⁰	Men			Women		
	Cramer's V	p	Difference	Cramer's V	p	Difference
Who takes care of the children at your home?	0,131	< 0,004	Those not in WFC more often said that "Always or most often another person living with us" took care of the children.		N.S.	
The office held by the respondent		N.S.		0,219	<0,008	Among those not in WFC there were more workers in physical labour.
Employment of the respondents		N.S.		0,215	< 0,001	Among those not in WFC there were more jobless women and those looking for work.
Education		N.S.		0,194	< 0,001	Those in WFC more often had higher education (57,6%), among women not in WFC higher education prevalence was 36,4%.
Whose income is higher in your family, yours or your partner's?		N.S.		0,153	<0,008	Those not in WFC did not answer this question more often. There were a bit more of those whose income was higher than their partner's in the group that faced the WFC.

In order to predict the dependent variables of the clash between the family and work roles of men and women the binary logistic regression analysis was carried out. In the case of analysis of men's answers, the Omnibus Tests of Model Coefficients are statistically significant ($p < 0,0001$), $R^2 = 0.61$, percentage of correct classification is 81.6%. Variables significant at 0.05 level that predict the conflict between the family and work roles best are: the opportunity to use the working hours to settle personal or family matters, the employers' attitude toward the family problems of the company's employees, the understanding and sympathy of the partner, the op-

portunity to use flexible work schedule, the opportunity to work at home during work time, excessive working hours of the partner, the importance of work and family to the partner as well as the ability to pay somebody to tidy up the home and take care of the children.

In the case of regressive analysis of women's answers, the Omnibus Tests of Model Coefficients are statistically significant ($p < 0.0001$), $R^2 = 0.49$, percentage of correct classification is 80%. Variables significant at 0.05 level that predict the WFC best are: conversation with the partner about how to better combine family and work matters, the number of children under 3 years of age

in the family, the employers' attitude toward the family problems of the company's employees, trust in partner (if I have to stay longer at work, my partner attempts to accommodate himself and takes full responsibility in the family), satisfaction with the distribution of household chores, excessive working hours of the partner, partner's reproaches when the woman has to stay longer at work or do some additional work at home.

EGALITARIAN FAMILIES: TRUE OR FALSE

Half of the couples thought that their families were egalitarian. The rest three couples (couple No. 1, No. 2 and No. 6) assigned themselves to the intermediary family model between traditional and egalitarian families. In this kind of family, most childcare and household responsibilities fell on the women's shoulders. Lina (couple No. 1) argued that her husband helped her at home but not enough. Her husband indicated that his family enabled him to advance professionally because his wife took care of their child and household. His involvement in family affairs was minimal. Furthermore, he also expressed the view a woman could advance in her professional career only if it did not contradict her family responsibilities.

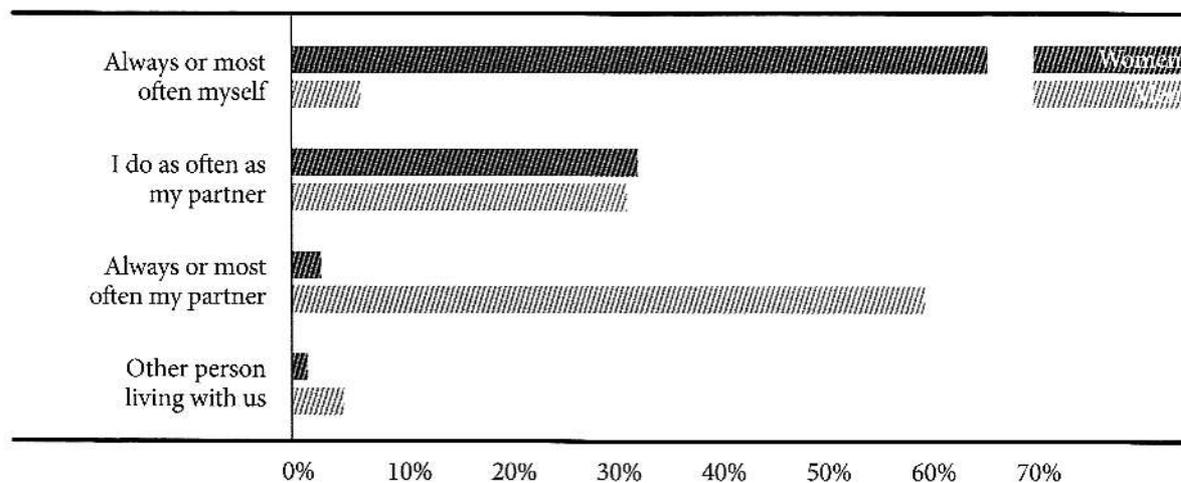
Egidijus (couple No. 6) stated that he helped his wife in her household chores although she did most of them: she cooked, cleaned, did the laundry, etc. She even had to change diapers.

However, the data of the population survey demonstrate that Lithuanian women carry on the largest load of childcare:

Egalitarian families divided responsibilities in half. According to the interviewed men and women, both parents equally shared childcare responsibilities (looked after them or took children to day-care or school). For instance, Aurelija (couple No. 3.) shared family responsibilities with her husband equally. Her husband worked in shifts, thus he spent more time with their child than she did.

However, if we look at the division of household tasks between the interviewed couples, we see that women receive only supplementary help from their husbands in their domestic affairs. In Vilija's (couple No. 6) words, "before the birth of our child, we tried to do domestic work together but largely the household tasks are my responsibility. But my husband helps me." Rasa (couple No. 5) not only worked but also organized the household tasks. Only Aistė (couple No. 2) said that she

Figure 3. Who Looks after Children?



would do most of the household tasks before the birth of their child. Now her husband did most of this work (surprisingly she described her family as an intermediary between traditional and egalitarian). Andrius (couple No. 3) indicated that he did most household tasks since his work was more flexible and he spent more time at home than his wife.

The data from the population survey corroborate the findings of the interviews. For instance, the overwhelming majority of Lithuanian women prepare food at home:

Similarly, more women clean home: 67.6% of women answered "always or most often me, myself", and 66.2% of men responded "always partner." Women most frequently shop for food (50.2% of them always did it, and 44.2% of men responded that their partners always or most frequently did it. However, 35% of the respondents, regardless of their sex, thought that both partners shared food shopping equally. The repair of home appliances was the only exclusive domain of men: 83.8% of men always repaired them; 79% of women stated that their partners did this kind of repair job at home. However, the statistical data from the same population survey demonstrate that 85% of Lithuanian women and 59.4%

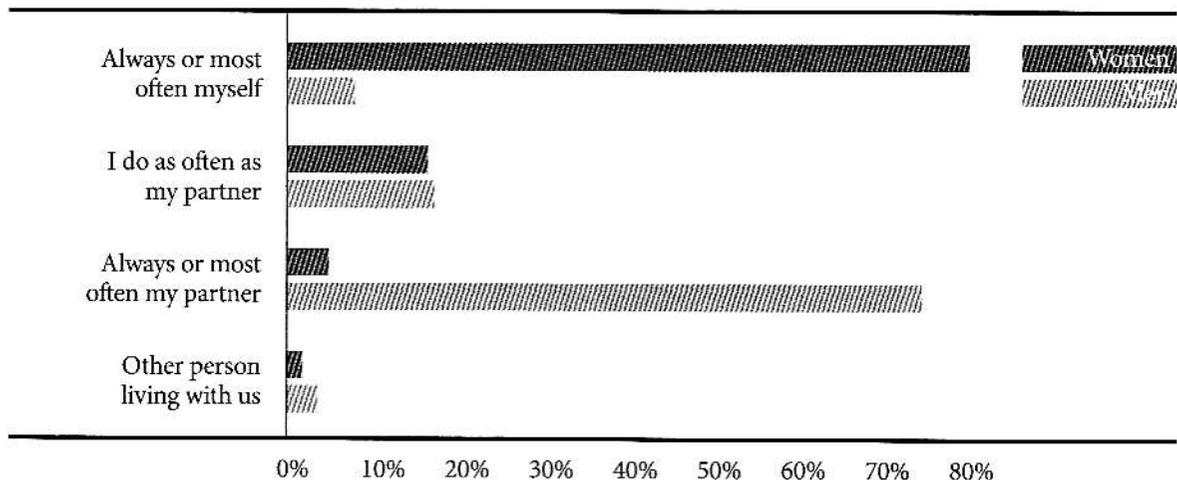
of men are unhappy about the above division of household tasks between partners.

Summarizing the division of childcare and household tasks between the women and men, we can argue that essentially only couples No. 3 and No. 4 have really egalitarian arrangements. For the rest of the families, the egalitarian family model was more a declared ideal than an accomplished reality. The presented statistical data corroborates this argument. However, in their responses about the different family models suitable for Lithuania, Lithuanian men and women "voted" for an egalitarian family model. 75.8% of women and 72.4% of men thought that the family model in which both parents had a well-paid job and equally shared household and childcare jobs was the most appropriate for the country.

FAMILY-FRIENDLY ORGANIZATIONS AND THE LITHUANIAN STATE

The respondents were asked about the potential and actual flexibility in their workplaces. Was it acceptable to arrive late or to leave early from work due to problems

Figure 4. Who Prepares Food in the Family?



regarding children? Did they consider their firms and companies family friendly? And if so, did they make use of the family supportive workplace policies: flexible schedules, parental leave, childcare supports, etc.? Did the respondents think that their employers and colleagues would find it acceptable if they left work early or arrived late due to childcare problems?

Most men (5) and women (5) indicated that their workplace was family friendly. Only Andrius (couple No. 3) was not aware whether his company was family friendly or not. Yet he could always leave his work in case of emergencies or could ask his co-workers to cover for him. Vilija (couple No. 6) was ambiguous towards her organization's family-friendliness. As a teacher, she had long holidays, and she usually finished her work early. On the other hand, she had to prepare for her lectures at home, and her pupils' parents occasionally would call with their questions and concerns. Thus, her free time at home would be diminished significantly. However, the same informant stated that the heads of her school were favourable to her raising children.

How did the respondents understand a family-friendly workplace? For most of them, the ability to work flexible hours and leave the job for personal reasons during their working time meant that their company was family friendly. Most respondents could take a leave if their children got sick or if they needed to run some family errands. They could negotiate and coordinate their working schedule with their employers. Egidijus (couple No. 6) described his company as family friendly because during holidays, his employer distributed gifts to employees' children. For him, it meant that the company cared for the family. However, it became clear from his further answers that his company was not particularly family friendly: he could not always leave in case of family emergencies: "... Sometimes it happens that they won't let me to leave at all or let me leave when I don't want to..." Once he had to take a leave to look after his child because his wife had some business to attend, and then he had to make up for his leave at work.

Most respondents emphasized the family-friendly attitudes of employers that helped them combine their

work and family. But the interviewed also indicated that family-friendly policies were usually negotiated on interpersonal level and that much depended on the employers' goodwill and benevolence. No respondents spoke of organizational policies towards family established at their workplace. The conducted interviews indicate that the respondents have a rather limited understanding of what a family-friendly workplace consists of.

Family is a strong motivation for a longer break from work for women but not for men. Although most men said that their employers' attitude towards their taking a short sick leave was positive, they thought differently about a longer childcare leave. The men did not feel as secure about the employers' view of men taking an extended paternity leave. Arvydas (couple No. 4) did not think that he could take a paternity leave, and if he did he would be replaced by another employee. He also added that Lithuanian employers were not family-friendly particularly with regard to paternity or maternity leave. It was impossible for a man to take a paternity leave because of his fear to lose the job. We can conclude, from the collected evidence, that in the workplace the attitudes towards women taking a childcare leave were more favourable than those towards men taking a leave. Men taking a childcare leave were taken less seriously than those who did not. It was assumed that men would be penalized if they took time off work to care for children. But by using family-friendly policies, men did not want their earning reduced, i. e. to weaken their role as breadwinners. They also did not want to be perceived as uncommitted to their jobs or non-masculine.

As the respondents' experience demonstrated, small companies were more family-friendly than large ones. Lina (couple No. 1) thought that her firm was family-friendly because it was small. She argued that it would be different in a large organization. Citing her friends' examples, she was convinced that there were very few family-friendly companies in Lithuania (cites examples of her friends). Her experience at her previous job in a big firm confirmed this view: there she could not leave work when her child was sick or needed to be picked up from a kindergarten. According to Edgaras (couple No.

2), in a big company less attention is paid to an employee and his needs.

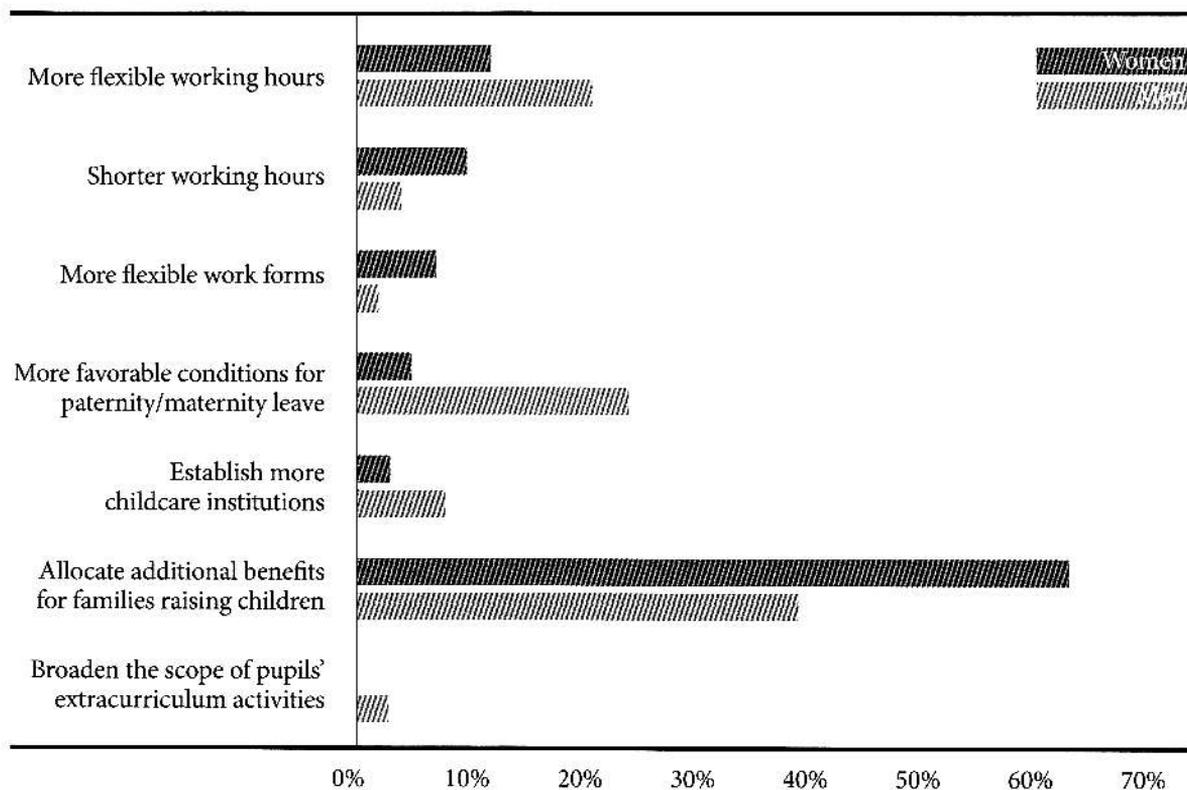
All respondents were rather negative towards the lack of good family policies in Lithuania. Most thought that the state should get more involved in the issue of family-work reconciliation. Lina (couple No. 1) wanted to have working hours shortened with a salary sufficient to survive. Aistė (couple No. 2) and Almantas (couple No. 5) thought that the Lithuanian state was not family-friendly: the state support for family was meagre, and child benefits were extremely small. In Almantas's view, "family is not a value" in our state. Because of the lack of efficient family policies, family-friendly workplace

and state support currently experienced a demographic crisis in Lithuania.

The survey demonstrates that the overwhelming majority of the Lithuanian population (62.8% of women and 39.1% of men) favour additional family benefits over flexible work forms, more favourable conditions for paternity/maternity leave or shorter working hours. It is not surprising: overall benefits for families with children remain relatively small, and women are forced to rely not on the state but on their partners or the market (Paluckienė 2000: 98).

Family policy in Lithuania lacks a long term strategy; it

Figure 5. In your opinion, which of the following measures would help parents to balance family and work responsibilities?



is often incompatible with the current social, economic and demographic situation; the cooperation of policy makers, researchers and society in formulating this policy is insufficient (Stankūnienė, Eidukienė et al. 2001, 58; Stankūnienė 2001). The family support system does not sufficiently help both mothers and fathers to combine work with family responsibilities. In our view, the above cited Lithuanian population's responses mirror the lack of consistent and well-grounded family policy in the country and a weak public awareness of the issue of work-family reconciliation.

LACK OF GOOD PRACTICES IN BALANCING WORK AND FAMILY

For most respondents, the question about their good practices at reconciling work and family was most difficult. In most cases, it remained unarticulated or in the state of aspiration. As Vilija (couple No. 6) put it, her individual strategy was based on the idea that her family was more important than her work: "You can change work but your family remains your family." Thus, a good strategy is the lack of it altogether.

Aurelija (couple No. 3) thought that her strategy of balancing work and family consisted of two things: 1) she almost never works overtime; and 2) her husband helps her considerably. Genutė (couple No. 4) kept her job separately from the family life: this way she would never bring her work problems home and her family problems to her job. The interviewed men typically pursued productive careers with marriage and children without conflict since their wives and partners took care of a large part of their family responsibilities.

As the interviews demonstrate, the Lithuanian women and men experiencing the conflicting demands of work and family roles and seeking to achieve a better balance between them are left alone in the country. No state or organizational policies helped them to do it. Both men and women wanting flexibility in their jobs and more assertive governmental policies supporting family face a limited number of choices in Lithuania. For most of them, the good practices consisted of the traditional gen-

der arrangements: women trying to adjust their careers to their family needs, and men sacrificing their families for the sake of work (in one respondent's words, "more money, better the family").

MAIN OBSTACLES THAT IMPEDE GENDER-BALANCED RECONCILIATION OF FAMILY AND WORK ROLES

The European institutions have placed special emphasis on combating gender inequalities in public and private spheres. In the course of the 1990s, the EU moved beyond its previous emphasis on equal treatment on labour markets by embracing both positive actions and gender mainstreaming. This ambitious approach confronts various national welfare systems with respect to their diverging gendered welfare paths. The specific national cultural contexts, welfare and employment systems, discussions and measures undertaken during the last decade have already transformed gendered social and employment policies and have led to divergent national paths in pursuit of equality between the sexes. The reconciliation of family and work roles is one of the major topics on the European social agenda brought to the forefront by the increasing labour market participation of women, changing family forms and the demographic pressure from ageing population (Reconciliation 2005). Yet countries differ in their policy responses reflected in ideological and cultural, institutional, political or legal arrangements.

The way reconciliation policy has been implemented reflects partly the dominant role played by the combination of different ideological, cultural, institutional, political and legal factors. The dominant patterns of gendered division of labour, gender relations and gender contract are the major obstacles to the implementation of the gender balanced reconciliation policy in the country. The dominant androcentric ideology explains that despite women's more active role in the labour market and men's increasing roles in homemaking and childcare, there is still unequal value attached to feminine and masculine jobs and this remains the core of the labour market

segregation of women. Moreover, women account for an absolute majority of recipients of parental leave in Lithuania (98.8% in 2005). The predominant models of gender relations are in most cases the result of previous conceptions of the cornerstone of society (family or single persons) and the role played by the state (Behning, Pascual 2001). In Lithuania the family has long been the cornerstone of society; the society is organized around a gender concept based on natural differences and complementarity between men and women. The dominant gender model in the country has had an impact on integration of women into the labour market through its effect on the attitudes and orientations of male and female in the working life and family matters. As many research materials demonstrate, for men the understanding of public recognition and respect is very much related to their role in the labour market, while for women these are closely linked with being a good mother and fulfilling family obligations (Purvaneckienė 2001). The policy orientations in the national action plans of equal opportunities between women and men have been exclusively focused on women alone (their integration, aspirations and socialization into public life) and have uncritically adopted standard forms of male work and traditional male roles (e. g., orientations aimed at changing men's attitudes to work have been absent). Women have been measured by male standards. The most recent initiatives¹¹ have emphasized the importance of integrating men into the efforts to achieve gender equality as well as the need to change male attitudes.

Although the national gender equality policy has concentrated mainly on equal opportunities and women empowerment, gender inequality goes further. It is, in fact, the result of the patriarchal order reflected in the gender contract and policy measures. Ideological factors, such as the predominant concepts of valued work, skills, care, public vs. private, etc., need to be addressed at the same time (Behning, Pascual 2001). The standard male concept prevailing in the orientation of national gender policy has had important undesired effects.

One way to tackle ideological obstacles is to make gender inequality more visible. Very few efforts have

been made on the political level in the country to make these inequalities visible. There are no specific policies to assess the gender impact of old and new policies, to develop good statistics and research on gender impact or to promote discussions on the issues that are taken for granted.

Gender contract model is not the result of ideological assumptions alone but also of the structure of welfare state and the institutionalized policies of social protection promoted by the state. As Behning and Pascual (2001) state, public intervention plays a central role in the regulation of social inequalities. The structure and the role of the welfare state (e. g. institutionalized care, paternity benefits' policy, single mothers' support system, etc.) are influenced by and at the same time reinforce gender assumptions. Three main governmental policies have been introduced on the EU level with a view of facilitating the reconciliation of family and work roles: the provision of public care infrastructures by the state, the provision of parental leave arrangements and the development of new patterns of working time.

Good infrastructure of public day care is the main factor for equality success in the Nordic countries. In Lithuania the number of public childcare facilities started to decrease after the collapse of the soviet system and rebirth of the retraditionalization of gender roles. It was reflected in some steps taken to reduce public childcare facilities, even family benefits. Decreasing fertility rate as well as increasing prices for childcare services also made an impact, but even more, reflected an outcome of the restructuring of public social services (Purvaneckienė 2003). Since 1990s women in Lithuania have been suffering lack of adequate and qualitative care facilities for children¹² and elderly, losing their social benefits, as well as the fertility rate has been decreasing drastically. The attendance of child care facilities is particularly low among children under 3 years old¹³ and in rural areas. The cultural norms regarding motherhood and the proper way to care for young children also limit the use of public day care centres. The nationally representative survey of 2003 *Evaluation of Population-Related Policy* shows that the population basically view the growth of state provided financial

support and other economic forms of family support allowing women to raise children up to 3 years of age at home as a priority (Stankūnienė et al 2003).

Several problems can be observed regarding this equality strategy. It takes the traditional male role model as a norm. Gender mainstreaming demands not only equal participation and representation in socially valued activities, but also the readjustment of androcentric measurements of what constitutes social value (Fraser 1994). The problems related to the financing of social security systems with a sharp decrease in fertility rates as well as stress and work overload associated with this type of work profile are often overlooked. The economic and social benefits of men's more active involvement in childcare is even less visible.

An alternative way of organizing caring work is through provision of parental leave and caregiver allowances. In many countries these policies aim to change work practices and the organization of work in order to make it more family-friendly (e. g., through the introduction of flexible parental leave schemes). In the current legal basis of Lithuania the parental leave is framed as a family right (not individual or non-transferable entitlement). Consequently, women account for the absolute majority of recipients of parental leave in Lithuania¹⁴. The main problem with this regulation is that there are no incentives for men to opt for such leaves.

Among the factors determining the take-up of parental leave the Lithuanian variant is related to traditional gender roles' model. Even though the public opinion says that the level of payment affects which of the parents will take up parental leave¹⁵, but at the same time women are still expected to care for small children, irrespective of their income. Moreover, this social role model often underlines organizational culture (Reconciliation 2005). The interviews of employers show that they have quite negative attitudes towards the men's right to take parental leave. The evidence of discrimination of young, unmarried, childless (with the prospect of having children) or pregnant women is also available in the country. Both genders suffer from unsupportive and even discrimina-

tory organizational cultures when it comes to the take-up of parental leave in Lithuania. Lack of flexibility in the take-up of parental leave¹⁶ is another factor which impedes women's career prospects and the development of a more family-friendly organizational culture. Flexibility may facilitate the parallel strategy in the sense that parents care for a child and participate in the labour market simultaneously (Reconciliation 2005). This in turn may affect a more balanced share of gender roles and more engaged fatherhood. Many countries in Europe (Iceland, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, etc.) offer parents the opportunity to take up leave in periods, usually as an individual and non-transferable entitlement, instead of taking up the leave by one person all at once. Finally, the length of leaves and take-up rates are also determined by job guarantees for employees taking up parental leave. According to the Lithuanian Labour Code, the employer has to secure the position for the employee who is on parental leave for the first year. The evidence exists that women often return to labour market before one year expires in order to preserve their jobs or lose their positions when they are back in one year. This behaviour varies according to the level of qualification. Highly qualified women leave their jobs for shorter periods than women with lower qualifications. Those also encounter more problems when they want to re-enter the labour market afterwards. The difference in labour market sectors plays a significant role as well. The public sector seems to give women and men more security during the parental leave than private labour market sectors. The research materials show that the guarantees in the private sector are often predetermined by the informal agreements between employers and employees and depend on employers' will to preserve the employee or even employers' gender attitudes or his/her sensitivity to family issues. Usually the time and costs associated with finding replacements, especially in smaller enterprises, are considered to be a costly affair for the employer of a private sector.

In some countries, the national regulations of paternity leaves are extended or supplemented by companies, with regards to the length and flexibility of the provision or the level of payment, although on a rather limited scale. In Lithua-

nia the role of employers in providing leave is not known.

The provision of parental leave arrangements as a major reconciliation strategy in the country encounters several problems related to equal opportunities. The fact that leave regulations imply by definition distance from labour market and instead facilitate care time makes these regulations sensitive to the risk of reinforcing a traditional role share related to care and work. There is a vast difference, probably the biggest in Europe, in the take up of leave between women and men in Lithuania. Secondly, the duration of the leave taken up by men is in most cases shorter, thus less pronounced in the labour market impact. Women are under much higher risk to damage their career paths and lose earnings. Thirdly, women encounter many more problems at the re-employment stage. Even though the return rate of female leave takers in Lithuania is relatively high, part of them continue on a part time basis after return, others are left outside the labour market. The economic necessity is an important determining factor of high female leave-takers' return rate in Lithuania.

The involvement of men in childcare should be promoted by specific arrangements, e. g., paternity leave¹⁷, or specific regulations with regard to fathers' take up of parental leave. Many countries rely on the fact that parental leave rights are individualized (non-transferable) and/or on the fact that parental leave is paid. The fathers' use of parental leave is particularly low if parental leave is organized along family lines and not well-paid (Reconciliation 2005).

Another institutional obstacle that impedes the moves towards better reconciliation of family and work roles is the underdevelopment of more flexible work and family-friendly working time in the country. The evidence exists that women are mostly subject to different forms of flexible working arrangement, thus are subject to economic dependence (inequality in terms of income, responsibility and power) which part time implies. On the grounds of the Western experiences it is crucial to go for such a scenario, which guarantees much better gender balance of public and private roles and stands for a dual-breadwinner/dual-caregiver model.

At the European level, the most flexible working time arrangements¹⁸ are settled at the level of the enterprise. The involvement of employers in the development of this dimension is expanding in Europe. According to the data of the Department of Statistics in Lithuania, during the first quarter of 2006, 14% of women and 10% of men worked on part-time basis in the country. In Lithuania flexible working time arrangements are regulated at the level of national legislation that applies to all employees with special provisions for working parents¹⁹. Nevertheless, the incidence of flexible working time arrangements is low in the country (higher in the more qualified positions, namely intellectual and scientific occupations). There is a limited number of jobs (mainly in the service sector) that accept part-time work. Moreover, the flexible working time is mainly seen in the patterns of shift workers. The research data show that flexible arrangements are usually not contractually agreed on or regulated by formal policies in place. In many cases specific arrangements are subject to informal agreements between employer and employees. The employers are usually more responsive to women who are in need for arrangements at work due to family obligations. Such informal regulations in a way facilitate the reconciliation of family and work roles of concrete individuals at concrete workplaces. The political strategy aiming to promote equal opportunities at work and at home does not exist.

This short overview of the institutional obstacles shows that various positive measures have been elaborated on the national level to improve women's access to employment and their role conflict, but they tend to be based on gender stereotypes that are taken for granted and fail to tackle the ideological roots of the problem, dealing more with symptoms. Moreover, they focus exclusively on women rather than taking a broader approach to individual rights. Men are only passingly targeted by policies for reconciling work and caring. According to Fraser (1994), an adequate implementation of gender mainstreaming implies dismantling the gendered opposition between breadwinning and care-giving and integrating activities that are currently separated in the relationship

of opposition. One key condition is that those roles and their cultural coding be deconstructed. As Behning and Pascual (2001) put it, ideological and institutional obstacles are thus two faces of the same coin.

The way gender equality policy has been implemented reflects partly the role played by the political obstacles as well. Adequate implementation of gender balanced reconciliation policies requires gender perspective in all decision-making processes. The participation of women at all levels is crucial for transforming the gender contract. Moreover, those who are employed to work on equal opportunities' national action plans or monitoring of programs ought to have a certain amount of knowledge on gender issues. The implementation of equal opportunities policy in the country can be identified as a top-down strategy, when government institutions and actors are taking over responsibilities related to equality between the sexes without specifically including actors from the women's movement or taking into account culturally constructed gender identities. As Novikova (2004) states, the Baltic governments have made a clear political choice by selecting an expert-bureaucratic model for implementing gender mainstreaming. Assessing gender impact is regarded as a task to be performed by administrators. Although they may be thoroughly familiar with the policy-making process and the policy area in question, they are unlikely to possess a highly developed understanding of gender relations or a proper appreciation of the exact purpose of gender impact assessment (Beverige et al 2000,390 cited in Novikova 2004). Such an expert-bureaucratic model set up a legitimate premise for marginalizing women's advocates and gender researchers in the country. According to Behning and Pascual (2001), unless women were allowed to participate in the political processes developing those strategies (bottom-up approach), a great deal of knowledge and implementation opportunities could be lost.

Moreover, the fact that gender balanced reconciliation strategies should not focus on women only but also have to address men's and masculinity issues can involve the risk of the diffusion of responsibility and the negation of specific equal opportunities' structures (if equality

becomes everybody's concern). This demonstrates the need to define gender equality aims in terms of a dual track strategy which complements existing equality strategies rather than replacing them (Pollack and Hafner-Burton 2000).

Another important aspect is the inter-connection of the above mentioned factors (ideological, institutional, political) with the prevailing regulatory framework. One of the first trends in the battle for equal opportunities has concentrated mainly on providing a regulatory framework. However, good legislation is not enough for implementing an adequate regulatory framework. The legalistic approach focusing only on establishing rights and procedures does not necessarily lead to equality of outcomes (Rees 1998). The weak results of the current legal framework in Lithuania, which basically respects the principles of non-discrimination, are the consequence of the lack of involvement of social partners, low prevalence of labour unions and their weak role, low representation of women in the decision making processes and the prevailing weight of preconceptions about gender. When considering the reconciliation policy, the country clearly lacks the adequate anti-discriminatory legislative framework for dealing with gender inequalities (e.g., vertical and horizontal gender segregation of the labour market, discrimination of pregnant or young and childless women at work, the impact of job insecurity and atypical forms of employment for women).

The discussion shows that the national reconciliation policy is quite fragmented and not based on the study of the complex circumstances, involving gender differences. Moreover, it is impeded by the lack of cooperation amongst the various departments and levels. An adequate strategy for the promotion of equal opportunities requires a multi-disciplinary approach geared to the simultaneous tackling of ideological, institutional, political and legal obstacles. According to Sjørup (2001), one of the most important problems with the implementation of gender equality policies is that the main focus on fitting women into a status quo means that no proposals are made for changing values and priorities. Gender sensitive policy requires an emphasis on socially

constructed gender inequalities at work and in the home and how to ensure women's economic independence and more equal sharing of domestic roles. As Behning and Pascual (2001, 13) assert:

The recent efforts to integrate women into the labour market stem from the efforts to safeguard the social insurance systems at a time when all European societies are facing the problem of ageing. However, unless these policies are accompanied by increased efforts to reorganize and secure the flexibilisation of working life, build up qualitatively and quantitatively sufficient care services and policies (mainly in the fiscal field) which strengthen the equal sharing of work in the private sphere, the problem will become even greater.

Many authors have stressed the importance of understanding women's and men's social rights which focus on citizenship rather than on employment or marital status related issues as well as the need to include men as the subjects of identity change in the strategies relating to gender equality.

CONCLUSIONS

As our research demonstrates, substantial number of the interviewed men and women experience conflicts arising from the intersection of work and family roles. Yet only very few acknowledge these conflicts. However, the interviews reveal a series of indicators of work-family tensions. First of all, most male respondents complain that hectic work schedules create difficulties in fulfilling family duties and household tasks. Women lack time for themselves. Men and women's exhaustion and fatigue also point to the difficulty and their stress in combining work and family roles. Some respondents state that they don't have any personal life; it becomes absorbed by either work or family responsibilities. These factors negatively affect the quality of the respondents' family life and family responsibilities. The issue of time, particularly working hours, is a significant predictor of ease vs. difficulty in reconciling work and family life. The need for greater availability of flexible working arrangements is clearly felt in the interviews.

Men and women have different strategies for coping with the demands of their lives. Women attempt to conduct several tasks at once and adapt their professional requirements to family needs while men are rather "single-tasked", separating different life spheres, work, childcare and free time. The interviewed men emphasize their breadwinner's role. The priority of work is evident in their responses, although not always explicitly stated. Because of gender roles and gendered expectations men have much difficulty in imagining that they could reduce their work load. Men do more overtime work, and more women have part-time jobs. Thus, men feel a disadvantage in the family because of their work, and women experience a disadvantage in the labour market since they have to spend more time with their children. The data from the population survey demonstrate that more women (69.8%) than men (30.2%) experience a work-family conflict.

Although half of the couples describe their families as egalitarian, women usually have a larger share of family responsibilities. Mothers carried out significantly more of the domestic and childcare tasks at home than fathers. The current unequal gender distribution of family responsibilities is treated as a given in the conducted interviews. Lithuania does not differ much from other European countries. As Fine-Davis and Fagnani argue,

... gender roles and attitudes do not keep pace with the reality of people's lives. Paternal involvement in childcare and domestic work is still low, mothers taking its largest load. Women's ambivalence towards greater involvement of their husbands or partners in family affairs should also be emphasized. The similar gender asymmetry has been noticed in other European countries (2004, 86-87).

The 2006 statistical data corroborate the findings of the conducted interviews: the overwhelming majority of the Lithuanian women prepare food, clean and look after children. Although the majority of the Lithuanian citizens (75.8% of women and 72.4% of men) favour the egalitarian family model, it remains more a declared ideal than an accomplished reality.

Another significant factor in balancing the competing demands of work and family roles is the attitudes towards

family in the workplace. Most respondents indicate that their companies are family friendly. However, the family-friendliness of their companies is usually limited to their taking a short leave from work in case of family emergencies and occasionally working flexible hours. Employers' gifts to employees' children on holidays are also considered as a sign of family-friendly attitudes in the workplace. However, the interviewed men do not feel as secure about the employers' view of men taking an extended paternity leave. They think that an extended childcare leave can endanger their careers.

The interviewed men and women defined work and family not only as their personal problem but also as a wider problem of their employers, society and state. However, currently in order to find a satisfactory balance between the family and work, they are forced to negotiate their needs only with their employers on interpersonal level (there are no coherent organizational policies in this regard). According to most respondents, the Lithuanian state does not provide families with a sufficient support. Efficient family policies are lacking in the country, and employers are not interested in creating a family-friendly workplace.

It can be argued that most of the barriers to the achievement of work-family balance are related to cultural norms and ideologies prevalent both in work organizations and the larger society. The male respondents feel a constant pressure to put work needs ahead of their personal or family needs in order to achieve career advancement. On the contrary, women feel a pressure to put family responsibilities first sacrificing, at least temporarily, their career possibilities. Both work culture and traditional gender roles prevalent in society do not provide men and women "with sufficient flexibility and authority to manage the tensions that arise at the intersection of their work and family lives" (Parasuraman and Greenhaus 1997a: 233).

RECOMMENDATIONS

Reconciling work and family responsibilities is a major concern in both industrialized and developing countries. The work-family balance is emerging as one of the most

important social issues in Lithuania. Public, social and family policies in facilitating equal opportunities and quality life for women and men play a critically important role. Employees, employers and the larger community are affected by the work-family conflict. Thus, the responsibility for developing effective ways of managing this conflict is a shared one. It is paradox that despite the publicly proclaimed importance of family in Lithuania, direct government support or government-mandated private sector support for work-family issues is minimal.

The findings of the research do not lend themselves to simple policy solutions. Rather they raise some very crucial issues that need careful consideration at many levels in order to help workers to adjust to social change and to provide new opportunities for balanced and sustainable growth and social equality. The study highlights the potential contradictions between globalization and work intensification on the one hand and the need for time to care about children and others, in gender equitable ways, on the other hand. It also brings to the forefront the ideological, cultural, institutional, political and legal obstacles that impede the smooth implementation of family-friendly policies and gender mainstreaming.

What are the ways to resolve the conflicts and challenges faced by men and women in pursuing productive careers and satisfying family lives? On the most general level, the task of elaborating new social models and standards in organizations needs to take place with the full participation of all social partners. There is a need to extend the public discourse through a focused debate and collaboration between government, employers, trade unions, NGOs and others. Moreover, the social partners need to take a long-term approach to encourage socially sustainable work to support parents in their paid work and caring work and support sustainable societies in the future. Gender mainstreaming in policy-making is essential (Transitions 2006).

Nevertheless, the following are the tentative measures emerging from the conducted research about the ways in which social policy, employers, unions or NGOs can set the necessary conditions for multi level supports for family-friendly and gender sensitive policies at work :

- Employment policies need to take into account the changing experiences of work and intensification of workloads.
- National governments, together with the social partners should develop a national vision and strategy on the importance of good and equally shared parenthood, responsibilities of mothers and fathers, needs of children and on the importance of children for long-term national welfare.
- The Lithuanian governmental agencies must realize that balancing work and family is not a women's issue but rather an issue of both sexes.
- To urge that the government should implement a variety of family-friendly programs, for instance, flexible work arrangements, alternative career tracks, place-of-work flexibility (work at home, working in more than one place), and job sharing. To extend greater flexibility for all workers, men and women.
- To insist the government to issue a regulation that family-friendly measures should be recorded in the organizations' rules and regulations. Organizations should be obliged to implement these measures and support the values of work-family reconciliation.
- Public campaigns should be organized to encourage men to get more involved in family matters. Men must overcome a sizable gender gap with regard to a division of labour within the home and must share household chores with women equally.
- Public awareness campaigns are essential in order to demonstrate that employers win in assisting their employees in balancing their work and family responsibilities. By implementing family-friendly policies productivity is increased and turnover costs are reduced. Implementing family-friendly policies can help to attract employees from a larger part of the labour force. Employer sponsored on-site day care should be established.
- More attention should be directed to regulations pertaining to the care-intensive earlier years of child development, i.e., on maternity protection, childcare leaves and institutional childcare options. The emphasis on the time immediately after birth seems necessary. However, this certainly does not mean that regulations that go beyond that (leave regulations for the care of sick children, care of school age children, etc.) are less important for a balanced reconciliation of work and family obligations.
- Better care facilities for children, especially under age of 3, in the country would promote the reconciliation of work and family life.
- More research should be sponsored on the conflicts and challenges faced by men and women in pursuing productive careers and satisfying family lives.
- Employers need to be aware of the contradictions between work intensification and the needs of parents and children. This is not just an issue of goodwill – it is crucial to the future of our society.
- Organizations must recognize that work-family issues involve work as much as family and that the resolution of work-family conflicts can improve the long-term effectiveness of the organization.
- Organizations must focus on accomplishments rather than on time in order to balance their employees' work and family commitments regardless of the location of their work.
- Employers, managers and trade unions should develop active strategies to support fathers as well as mothers in negotiating work and family boundaries.

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Policies of Reconciliation of Work and Family Life: Trends and Possibilities in the EU and Lithuania

Algis Davidavičius

INTRODUCTION

This analysis is concerned with the problem of discontinuity between the present EU-level RWF policy discourse and that of equal opportunities/gender equality, pointed out by a number of academic analysts. More precisely, the particular focus of the present analysis is on the development of work-family/life reconciliation/balance policies in their shifting relation to equal opportunities policies in both the EU-level and national (Lithuanian) contexts of public policy formation.

We will concentrate on the EU-wide policy developments in regard to this central problem and later compare them to the Lithuanian ones, analysing the scope of public policy transfer from the “central” to national level and a possibility for alternatives on both of them. We argue that the EU-level RWF policies are shifting away from their former “traditional” association with equal opportunities and, hence, gender equality policies move to a much narrower, rather instrumental, link to employment and/or workfare policies (Lewis and Guillari, 2005).

This analysis corresponds to and deepens the contextual description of RWF policies on the levels of the whole expanded EU and Lithuania’s contexts presented in Jancaitytė’s paper that is also present in this report. Since we already have a sufficient cross-national comparison of

RWF related actual policies and provisions in Jancaitytė’s paper, here we will concentrate on wider conceptual frameworks, shaping the policy building strategies that are represented in various policy documents and the EU and Lithuanian policy.

In our analysis we will primarily deal with publicly accessible expert evaluation of the developments in the EU and Lithuanian public policy systems and their elements, such as policy documents, networks of various policy-making actors and modes of their interaction. In other words, it is a meta-analysis of the already collected expert knowledge on the present trends in the EU-wide and Lithuanian public policy building trends.

The policy documents themselves as well as economic and social statistics data and their scientific interpretation used to justify public policy designs and policy strategies will not be analysed in detail. These contextual data and opinions will only be mentioned where appropriate to illustrate the expert debate. The questions regarding governance processes used to adopt and implement the policies of RWF on the EU or member-state levels will also be addressed only in respect to the generalizations made by the reviewed expert papers.

There are several reasons for this choice of topic. First of all, the connection of RWF policies to gender justice-re-

lated ones is rarely analysed, what we usually have instead is an extensive body of cross-national comparisons of RWF policies in regard to various analytical frameworks that conceptualize the so called welfare state models or regimes. Secondly, rarely we find exhaustive explanations on what patterns in RWF policymaking prevail throughout the EU that may be of influence and importance to any national member-state context. The third reason is that since arguably the very concept of RWF has a wide array of interpretations throughout national contexts in various analytical frameworks, we must have a more generalized picture of what RWF-policymaking is and what strategies in its development can be adopted or pursued both on the EU and Lithuanian level.

First, we will describe the scope and method of analysis and its conceptual framework, then we will describe public policy paradigms shaping the present EU-level RWF policies and analyse the direction of the paradigm shift in and discontinuities of those policies within the gender equality policy discourse. Later we will map the EU RWF policy actors and explore how the EU trends correspond to RWF policy discourse in Lithuania. Finally, we will draw conclusions and recommendations.

METHODOLOGY AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Our choice of the topic allows us to address the conceptual confusion in regard to RWF. That difficulty stems first from the observable nature of political RWF discourse and second – from the competition among various welfare regimes of national states within the so called “European social model” that usually serves analysts or politicians as a distinction between common traits of social policy strategies at work in EU from those in US.

Since RWF political discourse combines two historically separate areas of political interventions – “public” professional life and “private” familial or individual life of citizens – it is inevitably a cross-sectoral, mixed policy field that must combine complex solutions of economic policies (mechanisms for regulating employ-

ment conditions, labour market interactions, etc.) with social policies (various kinds of equal opportunities bolstering measures, gender mainstreaming, family relationship regulating policies), and even educational and healthcare policy systems (regulations and mechanisms *vis-à-vis* fertility of adult citizens, development of skilled workforce and so on). In other words, there are many aspects of both “work” and “family” spheres of human interactions that can be reconciled in many different ways and with wide array of policy instruments (McInnes, 2006) – hence a wide variety of explanations of RWF policy goals and measures.

But is there a coherent “EU social model” that would let us have a more coherent and “universal” explanation of the broad variety in RWF policy building practices across the EU? Indeed the attention in the EU public policy research is already shifting away from describing and comparing national welfare policy systems and more to finding the EU-wide, cross-national, general conceptual frameworks to explain historical and model future RWF policy developments, to have a “broader picture”. There are attempts among some EU- and member-state level policy makers to construct a transnational European welfare state in contrast to long-term trends in welfare policies represented by the US (Andersson, 2005). Hence the more “normativist” attempts among the public policy analysts to find and make visible those public policy developments that would be valid transnationally throughout the EU and maybe even on a “global scale”. Such developments, if found, could serve as valid examples to a possibly more federal, centralised EU-wide social policy in its classical form described by Karl Polanyi (1994) as a protective and/or pre-emptive reaction against threats posed by expansion and growing intensity of market relations.

The “EU social model”, however, is more like **mutually constraining complex interaction** between the weak EU “centre” and wide diversity of national public social/economical policy commitments made by national states and their ruling parties. In that interaction, starting from mid-90’s of the previous century, a clear trend prevails by which national governments gradually lose their

flexibility and experience, narrowing the options for reforming their welfare systems (Wallace and Wallace, 1996; Andersson, 2005). Member states still can choose various social policy blueprints, but from the menu that is increasingly restricted by central institutions. This means that the construction of national and EU-wide markets is increasingly shaped by the EU social policy (including RWF issues) intervention that validates and explains the main focus of analysis in this paper.

In that respect **Lithuanian context** of national RWF policy-building is critically significant for analysis at hand because of bearing relative contrast to wider EU developments in the first place and hence showing the sources of discontinuity and conflict between policy building and implementation in simpler terms. One of the most important features of this discontinuity is the apparent declarative nature of national social policy developments related to the EU-enlargement. Several influential national authors (Vilpišauskas, 2004; Maniokas, 2005) stated that Lithuanian social policy was virtually “rewritten” by the state’s efforts to become a member of the EU in late 90’s of the last century and the first years of the present one. And “rewritten” is certainly more appropriate than “reshaped” or “transformed”, because the impact is more on official discursive level and is not to be seen as clear large-scale change in policy implementation mechanisms. Despite the adoption by Lithuania of all EU directives and other legal provisions in respect to all welfare systems (including equal opportunities and RWF), the level of implementation severely lags behind (Maniokas, 2005).

Our **main method of analysis** is critical review of the already available investigations in trends and developments of RWF-related public policy on the EU, cross-national, and, in regard to Lithuania, national contexts of policy-making. For conceptualisation and assessment (e.g. analysis) of expert interpretations reviewed we used mixed approach, combining roughly two conceptual frameworks for understanding policy developments in question. The first corresponds to the notion of “gender division of labour” and the second can be called “public policy paradigm shift”.

The usual way of conceptualizing the policy formation and change in respect to RWF-related problems of inequality, unemployment, demographic change and alike is usually done by analysing social, economic and other policy-related parameters of various “welfare regimes” in particular national contexts, what refers to seminal work by Esping-Andersen (1999). Since welfare systems are a combination of all those policy factors and processes from different areas of human economic, social and political agency, this approach seems reliable and valid.

Nevertheless, there is a growing feminist attack on this analytical framework as being too gender neutral and insufficient for explaining the impact of various RWF policies to clearly observable and universally remaining gender inequality throughout the EU. In contrast to Esping-Andersen (1999) who views the family as a unit, feminist research distinguishes between the two different relationships that may make up a family, namely, partnership and parenthood. Then, welfare-state classifications in the context of feminist research deviate from Esping-Andersen’s classifications, if cross-national comparisons include the ways in which family policies regulate partnership and parenthood, on the availability of social care services, and on the gendering aspects of welfare-state policies.

Scholars such as Fraser (1994), Lewis (2001, 2002) and Langan/Ostner (1991) are more inclined to deal with questions of formulating and implementing RWF public policies in various particular contexts, not as with questions regarding the changes in quite gender-neutral “welfare regime”, but as with the ones that explain/control the change in family-work balancing patterns. For these experts, the main focus of analysis is the shift from policies sustaining the family-work balance model of “male breadwinner/female carer” to, ideally, egalitarian dual-carer/dual earner (“universal breadwinner”) model.

The approach that adopted in this research can be called “**gender division of labour**”, it allows us to reliably connect RWF policy issues with social justice issues like gender equality and not to drown the analysis in the sea of narrow-scope economic and social data supporting

observable policy-designs. At the same time various feminist analysts have convincingly argued that the way in which policies are represented is underpinned by normative assumptions regarding the gender order and gender differences (e.g. Lewis, 2001; Mazey, 2000; Bacchi, 2004), so what should we use in order to define those main directions and shifts in normative thinking?

For this aspect of our analysis we can use the notion of a “**public policy paradigm shift**” (Hall, 1993, pp. 278-9). A “policy paradigm” is a generalization of core beliefs shared by policy-makers in any given context. In other words, such a “paradigm” is a more or less connected set of ideas about the goals of a policy, the problematic issues addressed by a policy, then explanations of why those problems arise and what solutions should be provided, in what way and with what outcomes. Finally, there should be also general descriptions of the appropriate roles of various policy actors (governmental institutions, civil society bodies and business, for example).

Hence a shift of such a paradigm is a clear change through some time at least of several of its elements – goals, problems addressed, measures to be applied and political roles to be enacted. Since the public policy paradigms are not nationally specific, the paradigm shift can happen regardless of local context in which a paradigm is manifested through particular policy-building practices. This allows us to discern the EU-wide policy paradigms and their shifts.

A valid example of application of this conceptual framework is presented by the EC funded WRAMSOC (2005) project. In it the EU-wide social policy shift, e.g. in regard to RWF-policies, is described as a clear move from the policies oriented to “old social risks” to those corresponding to “new risks” (based on Bonoli (2004), Esping-Andersen (1999)). The “old social risks” driven paradigm for public policy building was developed during the “golden” years of sustainable economic growth and manufacturing-based economy with relatively huge, stable labour markets mainly in Western European countries, meaning the “old” EU member states during 1950-1970. In regard to RWF, the issues represented traditional gender divisions of labour/care and were

understood as needs which were not adequately met through the market, namely:

- interruption of income (retirement, unemployment, sickness or disability)
- mismatch between income and need during the life-cycle (for example, child endowment)
- Or there were needs where state provision was widely recognised as desirable (for example highly-valued services in the areas where the costs of privately checking professional expertise are high such as health care or education).

However, social care (for children, elderly or those with disabilities) was to be provided by the nuclear family system with women playing the absolute lead role. What kind of change occurred and what new risks the present EU-level political discourse sees? Through a number of EU documents explaining the EU Employment strategy we find the same view that:

- First, **technological developments virtually rule out stable long-term employment** in the manufacturing sector on a mass scale and this heavily endangers job-security of semi- and un-skilled workers and for the political interactions associated with it.
- Secondly, stricter competition promoted by economic globalisation has **advanced labour market flexibility and mobility**. Flexible working hours as well as worker migration both create much bigger tensions in workers’ social relationships, especially with dependant family/partnership members such as children.
- Third, the fact that women have succeeded in gaining greater advancement in education and in employment and are continuing to press for more equal opportunities means that **traditional unwaged social care based on a gender division of labour imposes strains on the family**.

Unlike the welfare-state regimes analysis the combination of the abovementioned conceptual approaches allows us to discern and explain the change in the

main RWF policy-building patterns on the EU-scale in relation to the gender equality issues without getting lost in national peculiarities. It also allows avoiding sometimes over-optimistic impression of “successful” policy-making in terms of document-production and governance activities both on the EU and national levels (Zeitlin, 2005) gained through comparative descriptions of welfare regimes.

Furthermore, if we take into account the developments (“shifts”) of wider conceptual frameworks (“paradigms”) underlying the present political status quo in the EU and member-states, we will have a more sobering picture of discontinuity, conceptual contradictions and other challenges that are presently inherent in RWF policy building processes on both the Union and national levels, everywhere (Lewis and Gullari, 2005)

However, we also must keep in mind that there is a universal tendency in the accessible literature on any particular policy field to depict developments as coherent and linear, for example, towards “ever greater” subordination to employment policies in the case of work/family reconciliation policies (Stratigaki, 2004), or the “expansion of the meaning” of equal opportunities to include work/family issues (Hantrais, 2000).

PUBLIC POLICY PARADIGMS SHAPING PRESENT RWF POLICIES AT THE EU LEVEL

In the context of generally vague “European social model” that we mentioned before, throughout the EU the spreading understanding of new social risks and erosion of male breadwinner system they bring is evoking three different public policy building strategies or paradigms for answering the challenges that arise. These can be called “neo-familialism”, “social investment” (or “third way”) and “gender justice”.

The common ground for all these strategies is the main tendency in the EU-level policy discourses towards what Andersson (2005) calls “enlightened capitalism model” – a strategic coupling of various EU and member-state

level economic and social policies that aim at controlling potentially socially destructive effects of the needed expansion of markets. Exactly this general direction of policy-making allows us to pose the “European social model” as distinct from, for example, the “American model” in which the market and the family are the main providers of people’s welfare, with little role for national social policies.

In regard to RWF policy-making and its relation to the issues of gender equality this means that the widespread objective is undoubtedly to increase women’s labour market participation, widely seen as a key to the long term EU-wide economic growth in the face of shrinking European workforces due to population ageing and falling fertility rates across the whole enlarged Europe. And exactly in that regard we can point to three internationally competing paradigms that interpret this common objective differently¹.

The first paradigm that we call “**neo-familialism**” draws on, while seeking to modernise, traditional views of gender difference. It is more likely to be found among the conservative welfare regimes of continental, esp. southern Europe, but there are also signs of this approach in “social democratic” Finland or new member states such as Lithuania or Estonia. This paradigm shares with the US neo-liberalism an emphasis on the “choice,” but here the choice is understood not in terms of markets for care but as women’s right to choose between a temporary housewife-mother role and labour force participation, with the balance tipped in favour of the former.

In the neo-familialist view, women should be encouraged to return to work when the child enters public preschool, but in fact rarely to their former job and most usually on a part-time basis. Thus, in effect this paradigm allows policy makers to provide incentives for working but not necessarily professional women to withdraw from the labour market. The needs and rights of children are associated in this view mostly with maternal care, and the involvement of men into work-life balance of a partnership/family is largely ignored. In regard to gender division of labour this strategy clearly promotes a dual breadwinner/female carer model and puts double

workload on women.

Meanwhile the other paradigm that we call “**Social investment**”² is more complex and is driven by primary concerns about work-force mobilisation and economic competitiveness. It interprets RWF issues in terms of the extent to which women can be attracted into paid work by enabling them to balance employment and domestic responsibilities (mostly regardless of behaviour of men) by relative “marketisation” of care services. In other words, this paradigm advocates a “gender sameness” view, according to which equality of the sexes is defined as encouraging women to remain in the labour market.

Largely ignoring the unequal division of care work within the home, the “third way” of policymaking focuses on short duration, but funded, parental leave and public support for childcare, to “preserve human capital” of usually gender-neutrally described workforce. The state is not to play the role of provider and works in “partnership” with the private (commercial and non-profit) sector, usually on the local level. Although the third way advocates do not endorse long care leave schemes as destructive of human capital (women’s in the first place), they see part-time work as a good “bridge” back into the labour market. In this sense, they share with their neofamilial counterparts an acceptance of one and a half earner model.

The children are seen here as a “future investment”, hence the accessibility and quality of childcare services is promoted. The need to involve men into equal participation of work/care sale is of secondary importance, though can be mentioned. In practice this means though, again, support for dual earner/female carer family and work responsibilities sharing system between men and women and, in effect, double workload for women.

The third alternative paradigm for RWF policy building – that we can call “Gender justice” – is mostly met in Nordic countries, though starting to appear in national debates elsewhere. It is based on the agenda of equal rights and opportunities and addresses the extent to which RWF policies actually succeed in giving women

equality with men in paid work by using these policy-implementation strategies:

- Parental leave structured to foster an equitable sharing of domestic childcare between mothers and fathers;
- Provision of universally accessible, affordable, quality childcare non-parental care services;
- Children have the right to early childhood education and care, whether or not their parents are working or involved in some form of training;
- Care is provided by skilled providers and the value of their skills is recognised through equitable wages, good working conditions and in-service opportunities to improve their skills;
- Provision is made for democratic control, including a strong element of parental and community voice.

The children are seen here not only as “future investment” but almost as “active citizens” with respectable needs here and now. Men are viewed as necessary and equal partners in actual implementation of reconciliation provisions and so a gender just division of family and work responsibilities is encouraged between women and men in families or partnerships, what effectively embodies egalitarian double breadwinner/double carer model.

So this brief overview allows us to discern between the paradigms of RWF policy building that seek to conservatively/moderately sustain a work-life balance (to combine paid work with domestic responsibilities) principally for women (“neo-familialism” and, in its effects, “social investment/third way”), and the paradigm that urges policy makers to go further in promoting full gender equality and social inclusion, i.e. address positive involvement of men in combating gender-segregation of labour and care, correcting gender pay-gap, meeting basic needs of children, and etc. – the “gender justice”.

Needless to argue that the “gender justice” paradigm seems ideal for the advancement of RWF policies and their effectiveness in the EU and it is supported by a wide array of positive policy design and implementation

examples from Nordic countries (also those that are not actual EU members). Now the question remains about the dynamics and interactions of these paradigms at the EU level and how this corresponds to our “control” national context of Lithuania? First of all, we will analyse the factors contributing to and directions of change in EU-wide RWF policy building.

PARADIGM SHIFT IN RWF POLICIES AT THE EU LEVEL

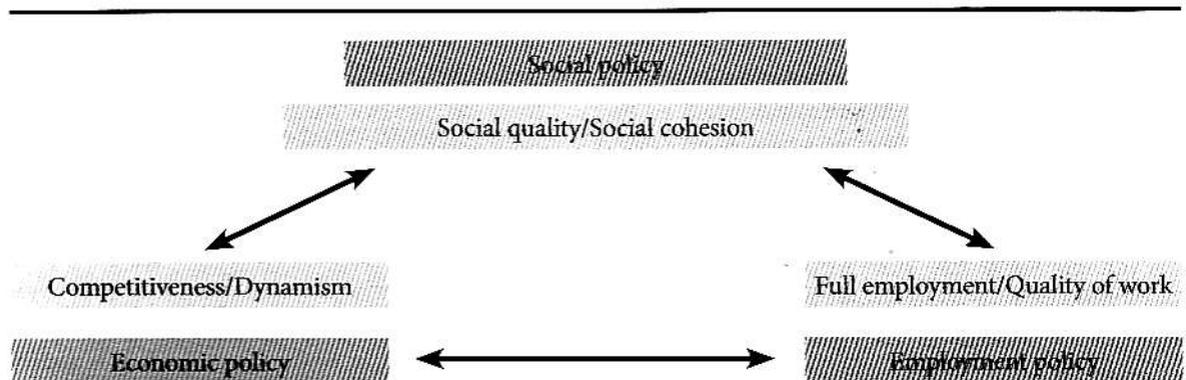
The three paradigms of RWF-related policy-building that we described before are, to repeat themselves, representing a paradigm shift: they address “new social risks” and correspond to widely acknowledged challenge of decline of male breadwinner system of sharing work and family responsibilities. Is there any discernable shift in these paradigms and what is the relationship between the three in EU-level policy building?

Generally, after the analysis performed by Lewis and Giullari (2005), we can state that the erosion of male breadwinner /female carer labour division system and

policy responses that try to strengthen the positive economic effects of this societal change (like growing female employment and productivity) are also met by obvious inertia and even conservative backlash from adherents of older welfare systems, and this creates the EU-wide predominance of neo-familialist or third way approaches. There are only regional Nordic exceptions from that trend and also we have systemic, long-term discourse on gender equality in central EU institutions and public policy processes which still has limited influence on the rest of the EU member states. Hence one can argue that the main trend in the change of the EU/national RWF policies is being into direction of instrumentally bolstering „defamilization”³ of women through employment and less toward gender desegregation of work and life balance.

This general trend is also influenced by, if not depending on, the loose structure and market-dependence of the EU-level policy building practices. The EU institutional support for the successful operation of the EU-wide and national open markets takes priority over global and local advance of equal (primarily in gender terms,

Figure 1. Interdependence of policy goals throughout social, economic, and employment priorities.



The policy mixes to be established to create a virtuous circle of economic and social progress should reflect interdependence of these policies and aim to maximise their mutual positive reinforcement.

but not only) social citizenship. Hence the appearance of a separate area of the EU-level policy-making called “employment policies”.

Actually, employment is also strongly economy-oriented policy field, so this scheme is only proving subservience of social policy issues to the ones aimed at markets-development and control. That model is direct consequence in the EU-level policy-making since 1999 EU Treaty of Amsterdam that created a “separate” policy category of “employment” as combining monetary, economic and social policy measures. Here we can see this separation in the schematisation (created by the EC) of policy goals’ interdependence throughout social, economic, and employment priorities, where a mutual interdependence “to maximise mutual positive reinforcement” is stressed (see figure 1).

Exactly this elevation of employment priorities into a separate area of policy, as Lewis (2002) argues, opened a new EU-level commitment to RWF policies as being subsumed into employment policies with the elaboration of the European Employment Strategy. Hence the RWF measures, on the EU level policy-making, became integral part of employment policies.

The administrative mechanism by which those policies are transferred to member states has also significantly changed into the direction of weaker interaction. After Amsterdam Treaty the “Open Method of Coordination”⁴ replaced more demanding (to member states) EU Directives with “softer” pressures on member states to reform their welfare systems and related economic policies by adapting to the EU-wide “common objectives”, while monitoring the progress of adaptation by the means of expert peer-review.

On the one hand, the “soft” nature of OMC from and a clear shift of employment policy towards the economically understood policy goals and needs on the other creates a public policy making trend that is further complicated by three main qualities of loose general EU policy-making system as it is now (WRAMSOC, 2005). These qualities concern both the EU-member state political discourse and interaction patterns:

1. Different national welfare regimes, especially in “old” EU-15 seem remarkably resilient to new pressures for regional or EU-wide public policy convergence (or cross national “transfer”) in regard to their welfare systems and remain locked more or less in the “regional competition” situation. Only Nordic countries seem to be adapting best to these pressures.
2. In the assessment of the importance of different factors in generating pressure for social and economic policy change, internal factors (demographic, labour market and family change) seem more important than external ones (globalized economy, trans-national governance problems).
3. The general scope of the development of national welfare states in both old and new member states is narrowing: although agendas for reforming national welfare systems vary quite substantially across regime types prevalent in various EU regions, all of them make the containment of the cost of RWF and related policies asb their first priority. In other words, the general development is towards fiscal “austerity”, emphasising tighter public control over state expenditure, and this creates a harsh climate for efforts to improve the measurable effectiveness of social provision systems and so address the newly recognized risks.
4. The main bearers of “new social risks” and those in most need in developing RWF policies are at the same time of weaker political influence. As it follows from our previous analysis of expert opinions, the most interested in RWF policies are women (as finding themselves in misbalanced earner-carer position) and middle or small size businesses (who lack resources to tackle labour and global market volatilities in social just and hence sustainable way). This makes the national RWF policymaking in the EU member states, where this policy field is underdeveloped (and with some Nordic exceptions that count for all of them), quite problematic and makes it again dependant on EU-level developments.

And exactly these observable trends of the EU-wide so-

cial policy building, certainly influenced by the introduction of OMC, especially in regard to policy transfer from "central" level into national welfare systems, have ".../ arguably made it more difficult to address the broader issues of systemic gender inequality arising from the unequal division of work, paid and unpaid, and the fact that a majority of women workers enter the labour force on terms that are different from those of men." (Lewis and Giullari, 2005: 78). This raises a question whether present OMC system really can provide effective means for the "gender justice" paradigm to take wider roots than its present "confinement" to Nordic countries?

Although previously the EU has relatively succeeded in widening its approach towards equal opportunities and gender de-segregation in regard to RWF policies, this success is of pre-Amsterdam era: for example, in the shape of the Directive on parental leave. Newer, OMC-related EU policy documents have only, though consistently, declared the importance of the 'balanced participation' of men and women in the member states, possibly because of the visible role played by specific women's lobby groups (the European Women's Lobby and the Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men).

Indeed, following a review of the European Employment Strategy in 2002 and strengthening the gender mainstreaming principle, the employment guidelines for 2003 postulated that (emphasis by me – A.D.):

"Member States will, through an integrated approach combining gender mainstreaming and specific policy actions, encourage female labour market participation and achieve a substantial reduction in gender gaps in employment rates, unemployment rates, and pay by 2010. The role of the social partners is crucial in this respect⁶. In particular, with a view to its elimination, policies will aim to achieve by 2010 a substantial reduction in the gender pay gap in each Member State, through a multi-faceted approach addressing the underlying factors of the gender pay gap, including sectoral and occupational segregation, education and training, job classifications and pay systems, awareness-

raising and transparency. Particular attention will be given to reconciling work and private life, notably through the provision of care services for children and other dependants, encouraging the sharing of family and professional responsibilities and facilitating return to work after a period of absence. Member States should remove disincentives to female labour force participation and strive, taking into account the demand for childcare facilities and in line with national patterns of childcare provision, to provide childcare by 2010 to at least 90 % of children between three years old and the mandatory school age and at least 33 % of children under three years of age".

However, as our previous analysis has shown, the abovementioned EU-level policymaking factors that hinder successful transfer of such priorities to policy-implementation level in particular member-states, such as "weakness" of OMC, narrowing of RWF policies to employment issues, and political weakness of "new social risk bearers", persist and are not addressed by policy documents like this. Further we will overview the document-level development of the EU RWF policy discourse up to date and show this discontinuity in a greater detail.

THE DISCONTINUITIES OF EU RWF POLICY-MAKING

The EU policy-making has followed an uncertain trajectory in regard both to RWF and gender equality, with bursts of interventionist activity in the mid-1970s, late 1980s, and following the Maastricht and Amsterdam treaties and later "slow-down" after the introduction of OMC, as we showed above. Quite often gender equality policy is seen as an area in which EU-level policy-making activities, in response to pressures from organised lobbies as well as from labour market and social change, have been relatively effective.

However, although article 119 of the Treaty of Rome stipulated equal pay for equal work, no action followed until the mid-1970s, when equal pay and equal treatment

in working conditions and in social security directives were issued. Gender issues next emerged prominently as an aspect of Delors' 'social dimension' in the mid-1980s, and figured in the Social Chapter and the 1993 Green Paper on Social Protection in relation to work/life balance and labour market desegregation.

A series of ECJ judgements from 1986 onwards expanded the competence of the directives into occupational benefits and work-related areas. The principal concern of the third and fourth Equal Opportunities programmes of the 1990s has been 'mainstreaming' gender issues, so that concern expands beyond specific policy areas. In this some success has been achieved (Geyer, 2000, pp. 125-7). Gender issues are prominent in EC reports and policy documents and information on inequalities is increasingly available. For example, the discussion of all four of the 1999 EC social protection objectives ("making work pay", sustainable pensions, social inclusion, high quality, sustainable health care) in the 1999 report includes gender, although the emphasis is universally on policies to help women participate fully in paid work (EC 2000, p.5).

Article 137 of the Amsterdam Treaty included equal treatment in 'labour market opportunities and treatment at work' as an area falling under qualified majority voting, and gave the Council powers 'to take appropriate action against discrimination on grounds of sex' (Article 13). Directives on parental leave, the treatment of part-time workers and the burden of proof (falling on employers in discrimination cases) were issued in the mid-1990s. Thus emphasis in this area has shifted from equal pay to a broader conception of gender equality and from directives and ECJ rulings on specific topics to policy mainstreaming in which the EC has powers to initiate actions and in which information on a wide range of issues is distributed. However, issues of women's position and treatment in the labour market remain central, proving our analysis of prevailing paradigms and directions of their shifts as happening in this narrowing direction.

So the orientation of the EU gender equality policy discourse towards integration with RWF and other gender-related employment issues is obvious. Less clear

is the opposite -- connections of the emerging RWF discourse with gender equality issues. It must be stressed, first of all, that RWF is a "more recent" theme in the EU policy-making that began to expand and gain attention only with OMC-induced documents and a couple of directives. European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (EFILWC), 2006) analytic paper review makes the following listing (apart from Employment Strategy document quoted earlier) of RWF-related EU policy initiatives and documentation:

1. The issue of reconciling work and family life was one of the main points tackled under the **Portuguese Presidency**. Thus, the Member States adopted a resolution on 6 June 2000 on the balanced participation of men and women in family and working life. As part of the Beijing+5 follow up process (referring to the June 2000 review of the 1995 UN World Conference on Women in Beijing), the **French Presidency** developed a set of indicators on reconciliation. Among the issues covered by the indicators were flexible working schemes, parental and other forms of leave, and care-service opening hours.
2. **European Council Guidelines for Member States:** In January 2001, the European Council, in the Guidelines for Member States about employment policies for 2001, emphasised that (EC, 2003):

"Policies on career breaks, parental leave and part-time work, as well as flexible working arrangements that serve the interests of both employers and employees, are of particular importance to women and men. Implementation of the various directives and social partner agreements in this area should be accelerated and monitored regularly. /.../ there must be an adequate provision of good quality care for children and other dependants in order to support the entry of women and men into, and their continuing participation in, the labour market. After an absence from the labour market, they may also have outmoded skills, and experience difficulty in gaining access to training. Reintegration of women and men into the labour market after an absence must be facilitated. In order to strengthen equal opportunities, Member States and the social partners will:

- design, implement and promote family-friendly policies, including affordable, accessible and high-quality care services for children and other dependants, as well as parental and other leave schemes;
- consider setting a national target, in accordance with their national situation, for increasing the availability of care services for children and other dependants;
- give specific attention to women and men considering a return to the paid workforce after an absence and, to that end, they will examine the means of gradually eliminating the obstacles to such return.”

This was also later repeated in Lisbon strategy revised.

3. Temporary agency work: In October 2001, a joint declaration was concluded between the EU-level sectoral social partners in the temporary agency work sector. The signatory parties hoped that the 13-point declaration would serve as a basis for an EC directive regulating this area, following the breakdown of EU-level intersectoral negotiations on the issue. The Commission proposal in 2002 for a directive on temporary agency work has been blocked several times due to continuing divergent views among national delegations.

4. Working time directive: In November 2003, the European Parliament and the Council adopted a consolidated version of the directives on certain aspects of working time, combining Directives 93/104/EC and 2000/34/EC. In September 2004, the Commission adopted a draft directive amending the working time directive. No decision has been reached on this at the time of writing.

It must be added that in 2004 the European Commission proposed to combine in a single text seven directives in the gender equality area. That should certainly not only add to clarity and certainty, and reflect developments in the EU case law over the past 20 years, but also would allow to connect RWF policies more closely with gender equality ones, thus balancing out the macro-economic agenda of “female employment” and creating more space for the “gender justice” paradigm in other than Nordic EU member states.

Still this is not the case. We can also notice yet another

direction of tying RWF policies to economic goals and not with gender equality: demographic risk of falling fertility. High Level Group on the Future of Social Policy in an enlarged European Union also promotes reconciliation, but mainly as a means of allowing couples ‘to have the number of children they desire’ (Commission, 2004). This is also repeatedly stressed in the Commission’s Green Paper on the need to address demographic change (Commission, 2005).

This overview gives us a more detailed picture on how the emphasis on RWF policy, as a tool for female employment goal in these documents and initiatives, evokes a common effect of the partial substitution of formal services for women’s domestic work and not a measurable shift in gender roles. Next obvious conclusion is the fragmentarity of these initiatives and documents that is reinforced by already mentioned weaker administrative power of OMC that creates more but weaker pressures on member states, so the societal and economic changes that the EU-level RWF policies are opting for become more of recommendations and “general priorities”, not binding directives.

Thus, all cross-national researchers state that gender inequality in access to employment, in incomes, in services and in the capacity to form an independent household at an equivalent standard of living remains clearly prevalent throughout most of Europe and even to some extent in Nordic countries. Hence the remaining and even strengthening feminist criticism or the EU-level RWF policy discourse as being too gender-neutral or narrowly conceptualizing gender equality in “employment” and other economic terms regardless of persisting gender inequality in work/care and pay-level divisions. Defining women as “untapped labour reserve” and at the same time “citizen workers” on a par with men in “adult worker model family” (Lewis, 2002) only contributes to the “one and a half” earner model sustained in the “neo-familialist” and “social investment” paradigms presently prevalent throughout the EU. It is not clear that orienting RWF policies to the challenge of falling fertility will do any more for the pursuit of gender equality than the strong link to employment has done.

The present discourse on RWF and on equal opportunities / gender equality policies, as the feminist argument goes, was already for a long time and in large measure separate and remain unintegrated (Lewis and Giullari 2005), while the relationship between these “separate” areas of policy development is crucial for any effective application of the “gender justice” paradigm: “.../ gendered divisions in paid and unpaid work have long been recognised [in social sciences] as being central to the issues of gender inequality” (Lewis and Giullari, *ibid.*).

In fact, this situation resembles another “cross-sector” policy approach that appeared in the recent EU equal opportunities policy developments – “gender mainstreaming” – that most notably appeared in the EU political discourse after Beijing Women’s Conference in 1995. Recent internal feminist criticism of this concept (Woodward, 2003) points out vagueness of what “mainstreaming” should mean and too technical, “checklist” approach again induced by OMC that arguably narrows implementation of gender mainstreaming policies to “gender impact studies”, “gender-proofing” of documents and “gender monitoring” of organizations/institutions (Shaw, 2002). Content-wise this concept and equality policy approach based on it have a very important function that should be integrated into the present EU-level RWF policies: development and implementation of

measures that promote change in behaviour and position not only of women but of the very “mainstream”. In other words, there could appear a gender-mainstreaming strategy for every set of RWF measures designed and this is yet clearly lacking in any of the EU policy documents accessible to this analysis.

In this section of our analysis we established that the common EU public policy focus on female employment after Amsterdam Treaty gains weight and creates the EU-wide side-effect of sustaining gender inequality. This means that narrow and fragmented formulations of RWF policies, as a tool for increasing female employment or fertility, when disconnected from gender equality goals, only contribute to containment of gender imbalance. This also explains why, as we stated earlier, the “third way” or even “neo-familialist” paradigms prevail in shaping RWF policies throughout the EU.

Further we will analyse how these developments are influenced by the existing patterns of EU-level and Member state policy actors.

EU RWF POLICY ACTORS

Although some influential EU policy analysts, such as Wallace and Wallace (2000), argue that in regard to social (and employment) policy both autonomy and

Table 1. RWF policy processes and key actors.

Processes	Key actors	Illustrative examples
„Positive“ social policy initiatives to construct areas of competence for uniform social standards at EC level	Commission, expert committees, EJC (background actors: European Parliament, ETUC, UNICE, ESC)	Gender equality (Art. 119, EEC); health and safety (Art. 118a, EEC); 1989 Social Charter; 1992 Social Protocol („Maastricht“)
„Negative“ social policy reform via imposition of market compatibility requirements	European Court of Justice, Commission; Council (national governments)	Labour mobility: „coordination“; regulation (Reg. 1408/71, 574/72); freedom of services (Arts. 7a, 59-66, EEC); regional as well as sectoral subsidies
Indirect (<i>de facto</i>) pressures of integration that force adaptation of national welfare states	Market actors (employers, unions); Council (national governments)	„Social dumping“; harmonization of tax systems; stages of EMU

sovereignty of national welfare states are eroded in emerging a multi-tiered system of EU policy-making, there are also no signs of common welfare regime emerging either before or after the last EU enlargement in 2004. To repeat, what we still have in the EU-member state interaction regarding social and employment policies is a fragmented and administratively weak pressure on member states through OMC and in the common direction of raising female employment and bolstering fertility. It is true though that minimal gender equality standards and RWF provisions like statutory parental leave are enforced throughout all of the member states.

To illustrate how this weak pressure to the member states is asserted, we can use a table representing how national welfare systems can be transformed through the EU level policy building and interaction (Wallace and Wallace, 1996: 187).

Here “positive” pressures are the central initiatives taken by the European Commission and then usually accompanied by extensive explanations by the European Court of Justice (ECJ) and exerted in forms of directives from the beginning of the EU (see table 1). Then “negative” pressures are ECJ’s imposition on the member states of market compatibility requirements that restrict and redefine social policies of member states. Then what is called here “indirect pressures” is exactly what corresponds to “softer” effect that OMC system is able to produce through “recommendations”, “guidelines” and documents alike.

Since the present EU-level RWF policy development is going into the direction of obviously exerting indirect pressure, we can state that the policy players that really shape the extent and ways how RWF policies are adapted and implemented in the member states then become not central level institutions and expert groups, but the EU and national “market actors” – employers and unions that can achieve particular, enforceable agreements on RWF provisions other than minimal parental leave. On the EU level, such main players are the European trade union confederation (ETUC) and the Union of Industrial and Employers’ Confederations of Europe (UNICE) that indeed shape the extent and content of flexible work and

telework policies of multinational corporations active in the EU (EFILWC 2006):

1. The EU-wide cross-industry (or intersectoral) social dialogue that began in 1985 with the initiative of the President of the European Commission, Jacques Delors, was further developed in the social partners’ decision (Laeken European Council in 2001) to develop a more autonomous social dialogue through a multi-annual work programme. This work programme covered issues that have a bearing on the reconciliation of family and work life debate – gender equality, forms of employment (e.g. telework), lifelong learning, etc. The sectoral social dialogue has also encompassed flexible forms of working, equal opportunities and the lifelong learning/training debate.
2. A number of agreements have begun to emerge globally that transcend the national and the European level – the so called global agreements signed between multinational companies and unions. Rhodia is a case in point. In late January 2005, a global social responsibility agreement was concluded at the French chemicals multinational Rhodia. The agreement encompasses labour rights texts relating to equality of opportunity and treatment, the prevention of discrimination in employment and occupation, equality of opportunity for male and female employees with family responsibilities, and for pregnant and nursing women.

However, since we established the discontinuity of RWF discourse with that of gender equality, it is more difficult to say what public policy players are crucial in bringing more gender balance to such agreements. OMC system obliges the Commission and member states to consult not only with companies and unions, but also with NGO’s while defining common goals and their benchmarks⁶. It seems though that the European Women’s Lobby and the Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men and other similar pressure groups can only achieve some minor discursive change at the EU-level RWF policy-making like mentioning the need for balanced participation in the labour market of women

and men in the member states. Does this mean that trade unions again are the best policy actor to ensure gender mainstreaming of national/local RWF provisions and thus the promotion of “gender justice” paradigm? We will further try to answer this question by using outcomes of recent academic researches on relevant policy actors in various member states.

In 2000-2005 two EC-funded wide-scale trans-national academic research projects dealt with the question on identification of political actors involved in RWF policies and their power-resources (abilities and tools to exert influence over policy-building/implementation processes), namely IRPROSEC and WRAMSOC. The earlier project IRPROSEC (Improving Policy Responses and Outcomes to Socio-Economic Challenges: Changing Family Structures, Policy and Practice) was started in 2000 and led by Louise Appleton and Linda Hantrais from the European Research Centre, Loughborough University (UK). One of the aims of the IPROSEC project was to analyse the family policy process in eight EU member states (France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Spain, Sweden and the UK) and three (then) candidate countries (Estonia, Hungary and Poland), by investigating the role of different policy actors and their contribution to the policy process.

The project established (IPROSEC, 2002) that all Western and Central/Eastern European countries investigated had shared one of the two possible modes for political interaction between different level policy actors: there are roughly only two extreme kinds of “family policy networks” and there is a scale of national variations “in between”. One extreme is “integrated” and the other is “segregated family policy network”. In the first case, the different public policy agency sectors (namely political, economic and civil society sectors) contribute collectively and co-operatively to family policy, while in the second, different sectors operate independently from one another, with no co-operation. Tellingly, South-European and Central/Eastern European countries showed clear signs of “segregated” networking, while Western countries, especially France, had a more or less integrated way of public policy building in regard of diversity of

policy actors involved.

The project reports also stated that nowhere in the countries reviewed was the public prepared to accept any heavy-handed intervention in family life. Prohibitive and proactive policies were universally and overwhelmingly rejected in favour of a more conciliatory approach that should go with the grain of socio-economic change, while political parties were noted as crucial in defining national RWF-related policies (with the help of social partner organisations in “integrated” networking contexts, i.e. Western Europe). This explains very well the adoption and prevalence of OMC as a tool for public policy transfer from the EU level to the member states.

Meanwhile, a more recent WRAMSOC (Welfare Reform and Management of Societal Change) project is being led by Kent University (UK) team and also encompasses researchers from Finland, Sweden, France, Germany, Spain and Switzerland. The project is aimed at researching the factors influencing policy direction in Europe, reforms under way in the European Welfare States, the best way to advance the European Project in Welfare and alike. The team’s report has more arguable points to make than IRPROSEC. The aggregated project conclusions from the countries investigated are briefly as follows (WRAMSOC 2005):

1. Internal (i.e. national or EU-level) rather than external pressures continue to be of the greatest importance in influencing welfare state reform processes across Europe. Needs associated with the new social risks of the transition towards a post-industrial society are emerging alongside traditional social needs. Policy responses are shaped primarily by national regime differences, but some convergence is taking place in isolated areas (delineated by the EU Directives on employment and related issues).
2. Attention to new social risks is a key element in the shift away from welfare state policies based on neo-familialism and towards the modernising paradigms in social policy (social investment and/or gender justice). This approach stresses the pursuit of welfare goals via the mechanisms which promote labour market flexibility,

enhance human capital and expand individual opportunities. It is understood to link economic and social goals in a 'virtuous circle' and to match the direction of current economic and social change.

3. The politics of welfare state reform to meet new social risks differs from that in more traditional areas. Old social risks directly affect the interests of substantial groups in the electorate, but new social risks tend to exert immediate impact on minorities. Social partners and, particularly, employers, are especially important in new social risk policy-making, and 'modernising coalitions' between political parties and groups drawn from the social partners are often important. Since actors other than the immediate new risk bearers are heavily involved in reforms, outcomes tend to reflect the interests of such actors to a greater extent than is typically the case with old social risks.

4. The EU has strong opportunities to involve itself in the new policies, particularly in relation to changes in labour markets and to women's access to and position in paid work, because activity at national level in these areas is less well developed, and national policy actors have not developed entrenched positions.

5. Progress in these areas is difficult to achieve since the balance of interests involved is typically complex. While it is difficult to establish whether the EU OMC system in social policy has a strong impact, it still contributes legitimisation resources to particular actors and advances issues on the political agenda. It should therefore be pursued and expanded.

Obviously, the stress in these conclusions is on political weakness of the "new social risk bearers" that are in the first place women, who, as a rule, are placed into double earner/carer position, without actively addressing the involvement of men, by predominant "third way" and neo-familialist trends of RWF policy-making in non-Nordic part of the EU. Since, as IPROSEC conclusions point out, political parties are very significant in defining the national extent and implementation mechanisms of RWF policies, then indeed OMC procedures is the only way for NGO's advocating for gender equality and

mainstreaming to address this issue. In that respect we can only agree with other IRPROSEC conclusions that the influence of the national or EU-level women organisations (NGO's) is dependent on the pattern of public policy networking ("segregated"/"integrated") and that "integration" or "networking" of gender justice oriented NGO's with social partner organisation can create more balance in predominant RWF policy-making paradigms.

Finally, we must ask how all these identified general trends and developments correspond to the Lithuanian situation.

RWF POLICY DISCOURSE IN LITHUANIA

In addition to what is already delineated in Jancaityte's paper regarding the trends of RWF policy development in Lithuania it must be stressed that Lithuania clearly represents a situation, where the "third way" policy paradigm with some neo-familialist elements is rhetorically challenged by the "gender justice" one, but the perspective of implementing more gender balanced RWF provisions is hampered by a "segregated" mode of policy-networking when political parties and governmental institutions have the most say in the design and implementation of any policy with rather formal involvement of social partners and NGO's in respect to OMC requirements.

The long term trend of desegregated networking between various and sustained multipolar gender inequality policy actors is in fact unchallenged by the admittance of Lithuania into EU in May of 2004. Although the analysts of eurointegration processes in Lithuania such as Maniokas (2005) and Vilpišauskas (2005) are formally claiming that Lithuanian social policy was virtually "rewritten" by this state's efforts to become a member of EU and was fully integrated into present OMC system, it does not mean that Lithuania achieved any significant measurable results in actual implementation of already mentioned EU-level policies. As extensively demonstrated elsewhere in this project's

report, Lithuania remains a clearly gender-segregated and conservative society in regard to work/care division of human activities.

In the framework of the present analysis this is most easy to demonstrate by referring to the main social and employment policy documents used by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of Lithuania. Namely we refer to the "Governmental programme of equal opportunities for women and men 2005-2009", "Lithuania's employment action plan for 2004", "Single programming document" for the EU structural support to Lithuania during 2004-2006, "EQUAL community initiative programme for Lithuania 2004 – 2006" and project-document of "2007-2013 Human resources development action programme". Most of these documents have clear references to the European Employment Strategy and other OMC related documents. However, only in some of them are there direct statements on reconciliation of work and family or its importance. The usual "universally valid" priorities are female employment that is understood as encouragement of re-employment of women that are outside of labour market because of their care activities as well as education of workforce in different ways of using flexi-work and part-time work provisions that are largely unpopular due to much lower income provided by them.

The first mention of clear RWF policy goals is in "EQUAL community initiative programme for Lithuania 2004–2006" that was produced by the EC funded foreign experts. There we find a direct mentioning of RWF concept and priority setting in developing both social science knowledge and innovative measures bolstering RWF public policy building in Lithuania. This is also repeated in the project-document of "2007-2013 Human resources development action programme" because of incorporation of EQUAL objectives in the new European Social Fund programme in Lithuania.

The RWF goal setting is more developed in the "Governmental programme of equal opportunities for women and men 2005-2009" and also it is clearly connected to gender equality issues and involvement of men into (or at least education on) RWF provisions, especially

concerning parental leave. This is a clear landmark for official RWF policy discourse in Lithuania, signifying the first clear "gender justice" paradigm elements in it. In this programme, the importance of educating social dialogue partners on gender balanced RWF provisions is also stressed. The programme focuses on educational and awareness raising activities mostly and traditionally calls for greater involvement of NGO's. However, this programme will not be of a measurable direct impact due to limited financing that is more nearly thirty times lesser than expected investment in less gender balanced, more "third way" style European Social Fund structural support for human resources development in Lithuania during 2007-2013 (1,4 million Litas compared to almost 3,7 billion)⁷.

Both in existing Labour Code and in measures envisioned in "Governmental programme of equal opportunities for women and men 2005-2009" and ESF supported human resources development measures in 2007-2013 there is sufficient room for strengthening and exerting influence upon social dialogue partners, although presently nothing measurable is happening in that respect, mainly because of the remaining weakness of trade unions and related social partner organisations that are still struggling with the soviet legacy of autocratic male administrative culture.

In regard of the programmes of two most important, "systemic" political parties – Lithuanian Conservatives and Lithuanian Social-Democratic Party – it must be stressed that there is a very clear division between strongly neo-familialist and even "traditionalist" rhetoric in the Conservative party's programme⁸ and mixed, quite general "gender justice" priorities with some "social investment" elements in the LSDP's programme⁹. However, none of the programmes mentions RWF priorities clearly, although the social-democratic programme has much greater clarity on gender equality goals. It is hard to tell now whether social democrats will develop a more specific approach to RWF issues with the majority of trade unions – one of their main bases of electorate – being quite passive and ignorant in that respect. We can also state that the recent initiative by social democrats

to grant working fathers of newborns a full paid month of statutory paternal leave that is non-transferable to mothers was met by successful conservative initiative to limit that provision only to fathers that are in official wedlock with mothers of their children. Next to this, there was a recent initiative of Lithuania's business employers association to legalize overtime in private sector, what goes directly against the notion of RWF. Whether this neo-familialist trend will be met by more focused "gender justice" initiatives by social democrats, not to mention active NGO's and trade unions – is to be seen. Obviously the government and systemic parties remain the main active force in shaping RWF discourse in Lithuania.

It is clear that the "virtual remaking" of Lithuanian social policy system after the end of Eurointegration process shows how superficial OMC-induced pressures upon local welfare regimes still are. The lack of legitimate (in a broader sense of civic participation) mechanisms for the implementation of socially innovative policies means shallow formality of EU-level policy goals transferred to the post-soviet, socially conservative context of Lithuania and calls for greater investigation into and effort for ways of making OMC system measurably work on local level, especially in new member states.

All these considerations point to the need to deepen social and political scientific research on factors shaping policy paradigm shift in Lithuania and other new member states with a possible effect of efficient recommendations for correcting OMC system in respect to RWF policies.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

After discussing the prevailing paradigms of RWF public policy-making at the EU-level and in Lithuania, related policy actors and modes of their interaction, we can state, that:

1. The present trends at the EU-level RWF policy-making show unnecessary narrowing of its goals to meet economic or demographic challenges, while ignoring an

important gender balance priority for achieving sustainable effects of dual earner/dual carer family/labour sharing between men and women. This means that a socially conservative neo-familialist strategy is not essentially replaced but complemented with more innovative "third way" and "gender justice" paradigms.

2. The OMC system for social and related public policy transfer from the EU central to national levels does not exert sufficient pressures upon national policy systems for RWF policies to be actually implemented, especially in new member states like Lithuania.

3. At the same time, OMC is the only tool accessible to most interested and least politically empowered political actors – working parents, especially women – by means of party, NGO and trade union representation in national debates with political decision makers and employers.

4. The "integration" model for interaction of diverse non-governmental political actors, especially the social dialogue partners, within the constraints and opportunities of different systems plays a crucial role in ensuring the possible future effectiveness of OMC in regard to RWF or any other social policy both at the EU and national levels.

Based on these conclusions we can recommend any public policy actor on the EU or national level the following:

1. Any RWF policy project whether on the EU or national level should be clearly gender-mainstreamed: a narrow economic and/or demographic goal setting should be balanced out with a clear strategy for positively involving men in bolstering dual earner/dual carer culture of family/labour responsibilities sharing between men and women.

2. OMC-procedures should be reshaped so that consultations of governmental bodies and businesses with social partners would be obligatory for any RWF measure policy project at national or local level. The effective policy transfer in regard to RWF thus must happen primarily between experienced social partners from the "old" EU member states and the emerging ones in the

new member states.

3. In order to create effective implementation mechanisms of RWF policy goals shared throughout the EU, but especially in the newer member states like Lithuania, by means of OMC, primarily social partners and political parties should be empowered to understand new social risks and needs of bearers of those risks. At the same time, the "Integration model" of political interaction between the governmental and non-governmental policy actors should be promoted both on national and local levels in these member states.

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STATEMENT

The Undersigned:

JOLANTA REINGARDĖ, Head of Social Research Centre of Faculty of Social Sciences at Vytautas Magnus University

Street address: K. Donelaičio g. 52-310,

Postcode, town, city, etc.: LT-44244 Kaunas, Lithuania.

Hereby states in respect of the book „Between Paid and Unpaid Work: Family Friendly Policies and Gender Equality in Europe”, 2006.

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