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State-of-the-art report

**The new roles of men and women
and implications for families and societies**

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State-of-the-art report

The new roles of men and women and implications for families and societies*

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Abstract:

This report presents the main research findings relevant to the research in Work Package 3: “The new roles of men and women and implications for families and societies”. It first depicts the development of family forms in Europe, with a focus on the de-standardization of the family life course and the interplay between the changes in family forms and in gender roles. It proceeds to describe the relationship between women’s and men’s new roles and family dynamics, and the implications of the changes in gender structures on the transition to parenthood. This is followed by two chapters which focus on the implications of these changes on intra-family organization, namely on changes in gender roles in doing family and on coping strategies of families under conditions of uncertainty and precariousness. Each chapter provides an overview over the main theoretical approaches, complemented by a review of the main empirical findings. Each chapter thus identifies the theoretical and empirical knowledge gaps and research needs essential for WP3. The report concludes with a summary of the research conducted in the work package and its relation to well-being in families.

Keywords: family life course, gender roles, transitions, reconciliation of work and family, doing gender, doing family

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1 Introduction

The major trends in family structures and their shifts over the past decades are well known: Fertility rates have declined and childbearing occurs later and more often outside marriage; marriage, too, has been postponed and is more often foregone, and couple relationships - both marital and non-marital ones - have become more fragile. These changes have led to increasingly complex family compositions and to a growing diversity of family forms and relationships over the life course. The new family trends and patterns have been paralleled by changes in gender roles, especially an expansion of the female role to include economic provision for a family, and lately also transformation of the male role with more intense involvement in family responsibilities, especially care for children. We recognize that the family is a dynamic entity, with increasing complexity with respect to decision-making processes regarding transitions over the family life course and organization of family life. Indeed, the family cannot be described simply as a set of well-defined roles any more, it is negotiated on a daily basis, constructed by interactions between partners at the micro-level and influenced by macro structures in the political and economic sphere. Work and family lives increasingly influence each other as both women and men engage in earning as well as caring activities, often reinforced by employment instability and precariousness. Gender relations and related values and attitudes have become more fluid, changing dynamically over the life course in the context of blurring boundaries of family and work life. In this work package we also aim to shed more light on the impact of different policy contexts on new constructions of gender in doing family. In the report we present an overview of the main research findings, as well as both theoretical and empirical advances, relevant to our research in this work package.

2 De-standardization of the family life course

2.1 Changes in family patterns

Family patterns in Europe underwent extensive changes in the past fifty years. The early 1960s marked the end of the so-called “Golden Age of the Family” in Europe, with high marriage and birth rates, an relatively young ages, few divorces and low prevalence of non-traditional family forms. By the late 20th century, fertility rates declined well below the replacement level of 2.1 children per woman on average, marriage and parenthood have been delayed to more mature ages, new forms of couple relationships emerged while the propensity

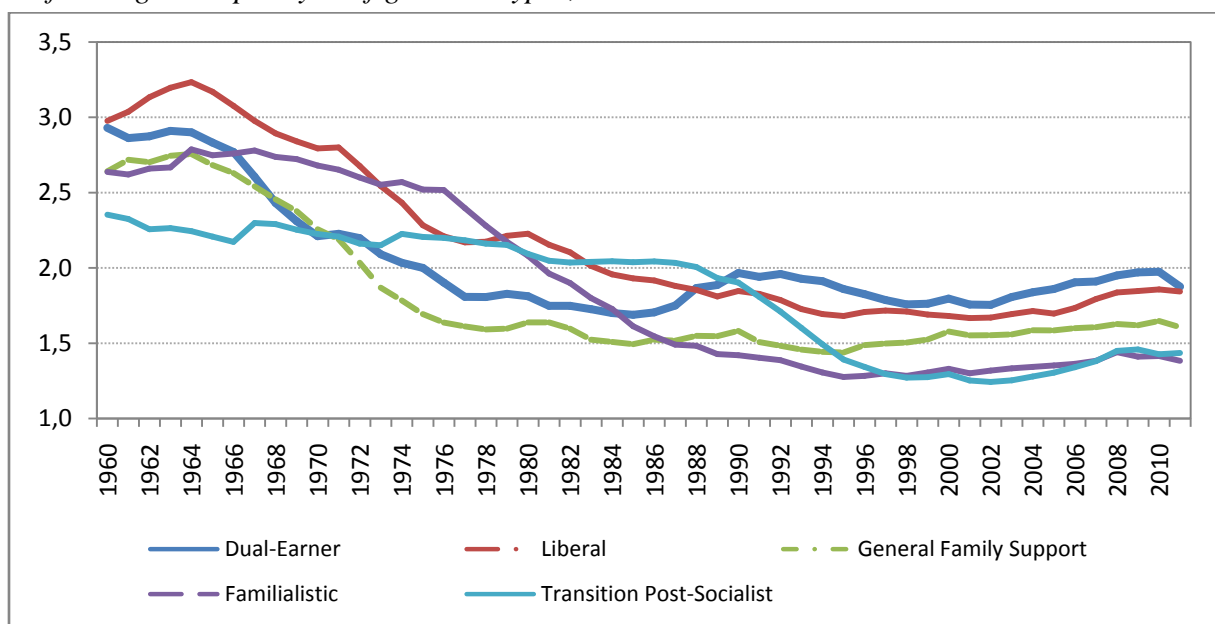
to marry decreased, and family dissolution became quite frequent even among couples with children (Frejka et al., 2008). People are increasingly refraining from long-term commitments in respect of partnership formation and childbearing, which indicates a de-standardization of the family life course (Jokinen & Kuronen, 2011) but may lead to a re-standardization of family patterns in the long run (Huinink 2013). Yet, there is a considerable diversity in the extent of and the pace at which these new patterns emerged across Europe (Neyer, 2013).

Acknowledging the importance of the social context for family dynamics as suggested in the literature (see e.g. Hobson & Oláh, 2006; Frejka et al., 2008; Jokinen & Kuronen, 2011; OECD, 2011), we display below the trends by welfare regime/policy configuration types highlighting the details of changes in family patterns. We distinguish between the Dual-Earner policy configuration type or Social Democratic welfare regime with extensive policy provision facilitating work-life balance for both women and men ; the Liberal or Market-Oriented regime with limited and usually means-tested state support to families and the dominance of market-based solutions regarding welfare provision; the General Family Support policy configuration type or Conservative welfare regime in which men's primacy at the labour market has not really been questioned while the range of state support to families and to women to combine paid work and family responsibilities varies greatly across countries; the Familialistic or Mediterranean welfare regime with nearly none or extremely limited policy provision to families and pronounced gender role differentiation; and the Transition Post-Socialist cluster which is also rather heterogeneous in terms of state support to families and to women to combine labour market participation and family life (Esping-Andersen, 1990; Korpi, 2000; Hobson & Oláh, 2006; Saraceno, 2008; Neyer, 2013).

The de-standardization of the family life course in Europe started with the decline in childbearing (van de Kaa, 1987; Lesthaeghe, 2010). As shown in Figure 1, the baby boom of the 1950s-early 1960s was followed by a dramatic decrease of fertility rates, reaching historically unprecedented low levels in the 1990s. Period fertility rates declined below 2.05 children per woman (the level necessary for the simple reproduction of the population). This occurred first in the Dual-Earner and the General Family Support clusters (in the early 1970s). Countries of the Familialistic regime entered the low fertility path in the early 1980s, followed by the Liberal regime and the Transition Post-Socialist cluster in the same decade. Fertility rates continued to decline in all but the Dual-Earner and the Liberal regimes to and even below the so-called critical level of low fertility, that is 1.5 children per woman on average,

known to accelerate population ageing if sustained for a longer period (McDonald, 2006). The German-speaking countries in the General Family Support policy configuration type also have shown very low levels of childbearing, more or less counterbalanced though by reasonably high fertility rates in the other countries of that cluster. Fertility levels increased somewhat in the early 21st century but the increase stopped and/or reversed in recent years, with childbearing trends at or somewhat below the critical level in the majority of European countries.

Figure 1. Period total fertility rates (average number of children per woman) in different welfare regimes / policy configuration types, 1960 – 2011.



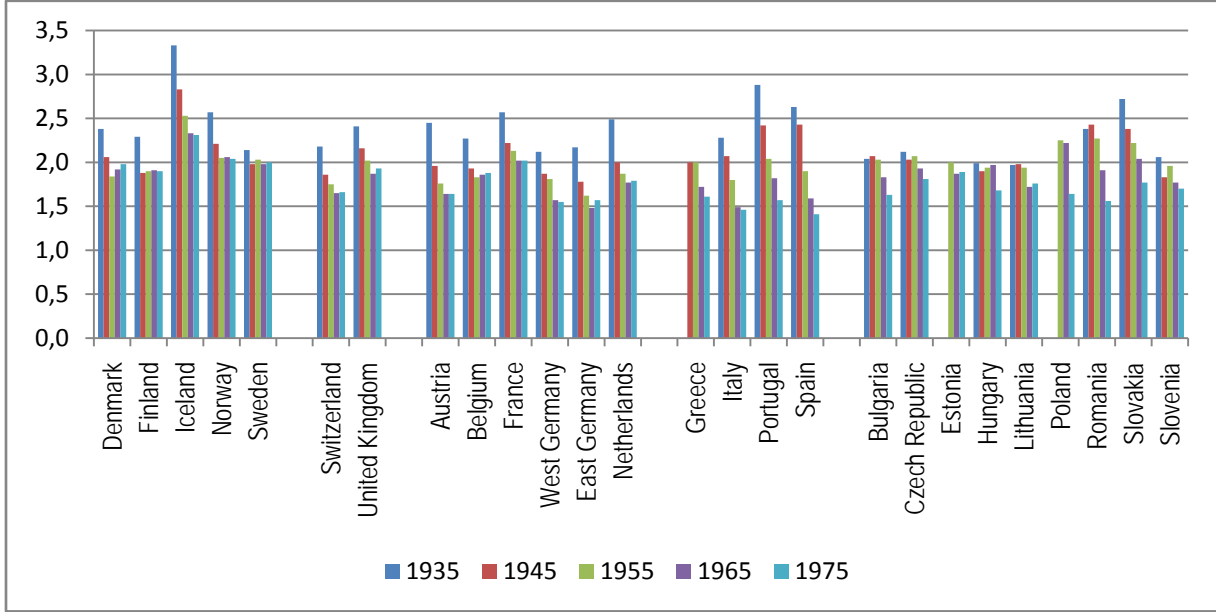
Source: INED (2013) for the years 1960-2008; Eurostat (2013) for the years 2009-2011.

Note: Means for each group. Countries are grouped as follows: Dual-Earner: Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden; Liberal: United Kingdom, Ireland and Switzerland; General Family Support: Austria, Belgium, France, Germany [for the years 1960-1989 West Germany only], Luxembourg and the Netherlands; Familialistic: Greece, Italy, Portugal and Spain; Transition Post-Socialist: Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, East-Germany (1960-1989); Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia.

Period rates are, however, not seen as an optimal measure of fertility, being much influenced by variations in timing and spacing of births (Sobotka & Lutz, 2010). Therefore, cohort fertility or completed family size is considered to be more reliable. Figure 2 shows variation in cohort fertility not only across countries but over female birth cohorts, that is, women born in the mid-1930s, 1940s, 1950s, 1960s and 1970s (the latter based on predicted cohort fertility). In all countries we find higher fertility levels for the older cohorts, reinforcing the decline seen for period fertility rates. Focusing on women born in the second half of the 20th century (the 1960s and 1970s), we notice that the picture is more diverse (Figure 2). For these

two cohorts, fertility did not decline for countries of the Dual-Earner cluster, nor for France, Belgium, or the UK, where even the youngest cohorts display fertility levels of about two children per woman on average, unlike in other countries and clusters. We see completed family sizes at or slightly above 1.5 for the 1965 and 1975 cohorts for Switzerland and the German-speaking countries, and for the 1975 cohort for the Familialistic cluster, Bulgaria, Poland and Romania, and only slightly higher levels for other countries in the Transition Post-Socialist cluster. Taken together, Figures 1 and 2 thus indicate that the European policy agenda should continue to be concerned about demographic sustainability given low fertility (see also Oláh & Fahlén, 2013 for a more detailed discussion).

Figure 2. Total completed cohort fertility (average number of children per woman) of selected birth cohorts



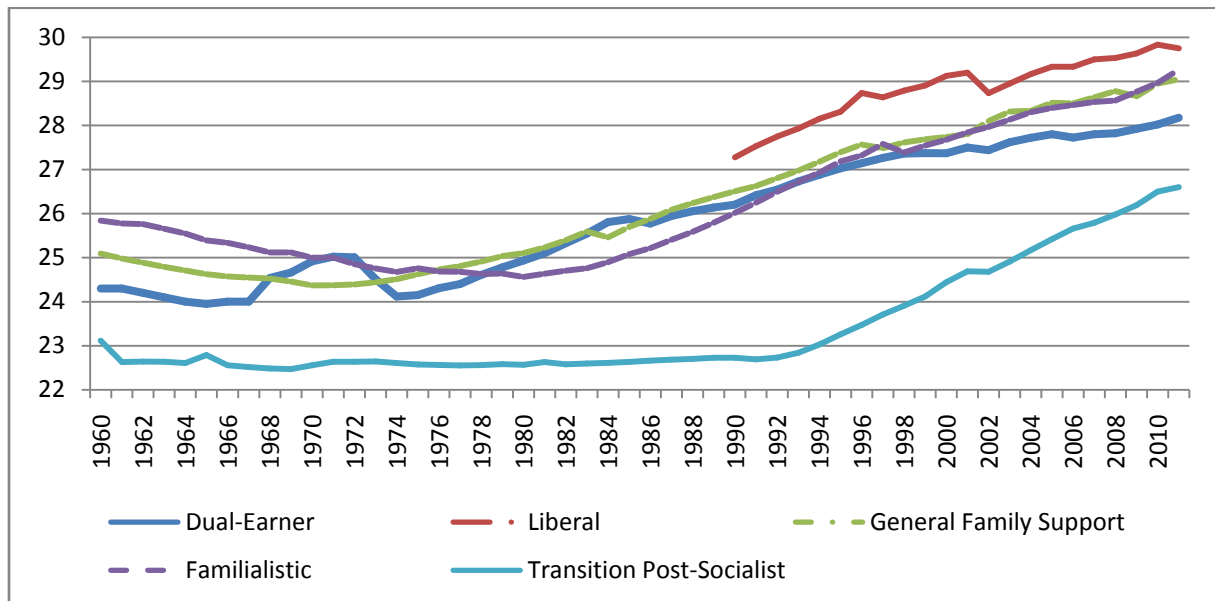
Source: INED (2013) for cohorts: 1935-1965; Myrskylä et al. (2013) for cohort 1975.

Note: For Belgium the cohort 1960 is displayed instead of 1965, for Lithuania the cohort 1940 is displayed instead of 1935; for Poland the cohorts 1950 and 1960 are displayed instead of 1955 and 1965.

The decline of period fertility rates has been accompanied by the ageing of fertility, that is, a rising mean age at first birth, as seen in Figure 3. In the 1960s and 1970s, women in Europe had their first child in their early to mid-twenties, with the youngest first-time mothers in the Transition Post-Socialist cluster and the oldest ones in the Familialistic cluster. The postponement of first birth started during the 1980s in all but the Transition Post-Socialist policy configuration type where such trend emerged first in the early/mid-1990s. In the beginning of the 21st century, motherhood is entered at around age thirty in Liberal regime countries and at the late twenties in other clusters. However, as we have seen in Figures 1

and 2, early entry into motherhood, as in the Transition Post-Socialist cluster, is not necessarily accompanied by high fertility levels whereas a late start of childbearing may not be a hindrance for achieving reasonably high fertility rates, as seen for the Dual-Earner and the Liberal regimes.

Figure 3. Mean age at first birth in different welfare regimes / policy configuration types, 1960-2011.

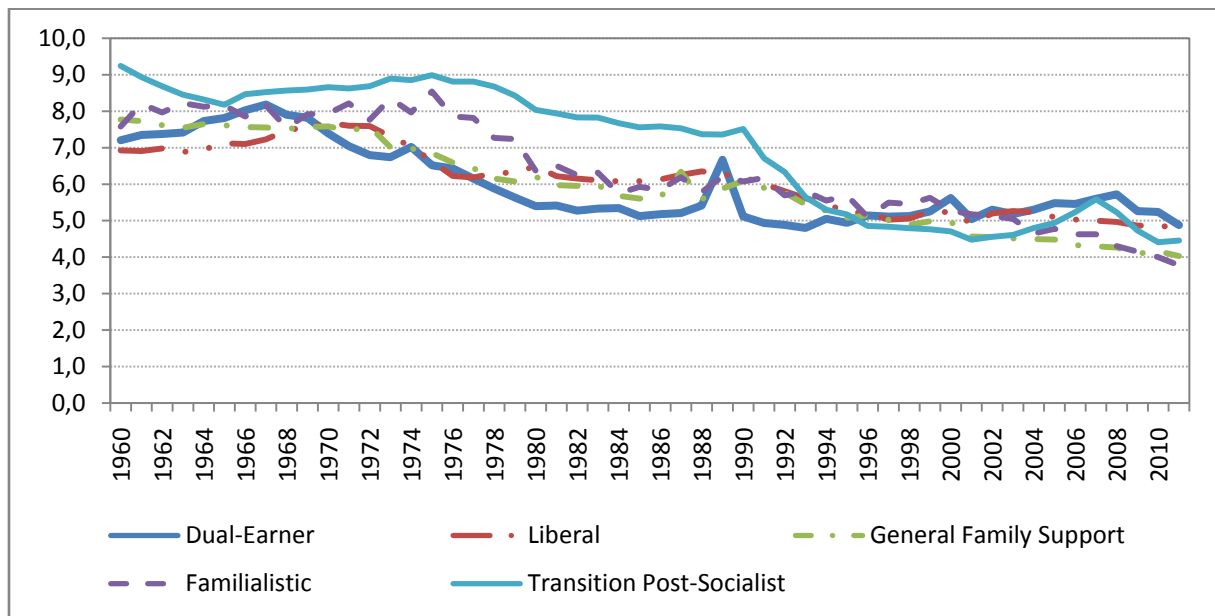


Source: Council of Europe (2004) for the years 1960-2001; Eurostat (2013) for the years 2002-2011.

Note: Means for each group. Countries are grouped as follows (years for missing data listed in brackets): Dual-Earner: Denmark (2006-2011), Finland (1960-1981), Iceland (1960-2001), Norway (1960-1985) and Sweden; Liberal: United Kingdom (1960-1989, 2011), Ireland (1960-2001) and Switzerland (1960-2001); General Family Support: Austria (1960-1983), Belgium (2010-2011), France (2007-2011), Germany [for the years 1960-1989 the data refer to West Germany only], Luxembourg (1960-2001) and the Netherlands; Familialistic: Greece, Italy (1998-2011), Portugal (1960-1979) and Spain (1960-1973); Transition Post-Socialist: Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia (1960-2001), Hungary, Latvia and Lithuania (1960-2001), Poland (1961-1964; 1966-1969), Romania (1960-2001), Slovakia and Slovenia (1960-2001).

An important dimension of changes in fertility behaviour is the upsurge of extramarital childbearing, in connection with new partnership patterns. Marriage nearly ceased to be the dominant form of couple relationships in the Dual-Earner, the General Family Support and the Liberal clusters by the late 1970s, as non-marital cohabitation has become increasingly prevalent (Figure 4). The Familialistic regime joined the trend in the early 1980s, and the Transition Post-Socialist cluster followed from the early 1990s. In these latter groups, the decline in marriage rates was suggested to be strongly related to growing economic uncertainty and housing shortages (Sardon, 1993; Philipov & Dorbritz, 2003).

Figure 4. Crude marriage rates (number of marriages per 1000 inhabitants) in different welfare regimes / policy configuration types, 1960-2011.

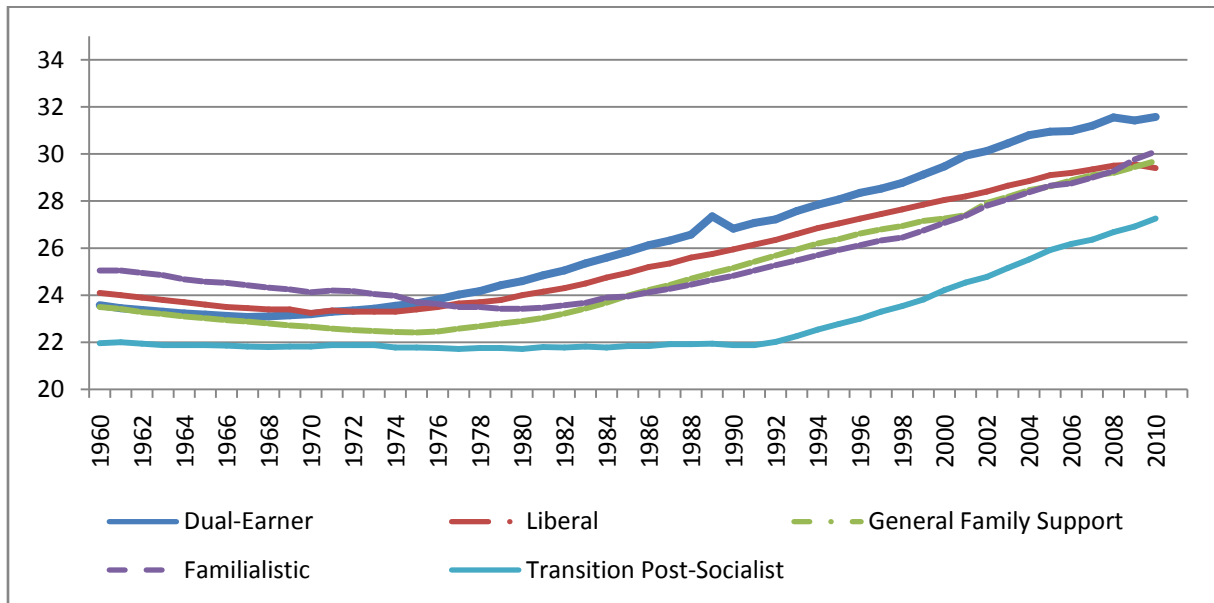


Source: Eurostat (2013).

Note: Means for each group. Countries are grouped as follows (years for missing data listed in brackets): Dual-Earner: Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden; Liberal: United Kingdom (2011), Ireland and Switzerland; General Family Support: Austria, Belgium, France, Germany [for the years 1960-1989 the data refer to West Germany only], Luxembourg and the Netherlands; Familialistic: Greece, Italy, Portugal and Spain; Transition Post-Socialist: Bulgaria, Czech Republic, East Germany [for the year 1960-1989], Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia.

Independent of the cause, marriage formation has been increasingly postponed from the early-/mid-1980s in most regime types, and since the mid-1990s even in the Transition Post-Socialist cluster. By the early 21st century, first marriage is entered by women at around age thirty, but somewhat earlier in the Post-Socialist cluster as seen in Figure 5. Comparing the trends with those in Figure 3, we notice that the mean age at first marriage has been above that of first parenthood in the past two decades in the Dual-Earner policy configuration type as couples entered marriage after the birth of their first or second child. A similar pattern has emerged lately also in the Liberal and the General Family Support clusters.

Figure 5. Mean age at first marriage for women in different welfare regimes / policy configuration types, 1960-2010.

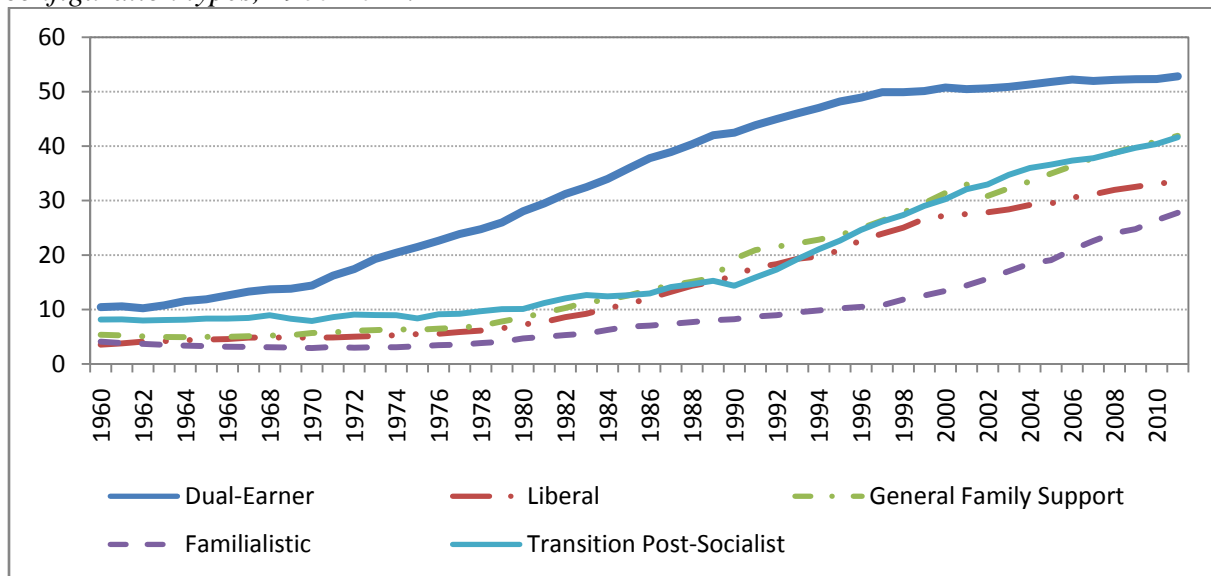


Source: Council of Europe (2004) for the years 1960-2001; UNECE (2013) for the years 2002-2010. For Switzerland, Statinfo.biz (2013) for the years 1960-1969 and Swiss Statistics (2013) for the years 1970-2010.

Note: Means for each group. Countries are grouped as follows (years for missing data listed in brackets): Dual-Earner: Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden; Liberal: United Kingdom (2010) and Switzerland; General Family Support: Austria, Belgium, France, Germany [for the years 1960-1989 the data refer to West Germany only], and the Netherlands (2004-2009); Familialistic: Greece (2009-2010), Italy (2010), Portugal and Spain; Transition Post-Socialist: Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia.

As the propensity to marry declined, births have increasingly occurred in consensual relationships. The proportion of out-of-wedlock births was around 10% or less in European countries in the early 1960s, when marriage rates were still high (Figure 6). Their share has increased rapidly in the Dual-Earner cluster since the 1970s, currently accounting for about half of all births there. The other clusters displayed moderate levels of non-marital childbearing up until the late 1980s. Since then, the share of such births has nearly doubled. The Familialistic regime joined the increasing trend during the early 2000s. In recent years, nearly one-third of births occurred out-of-wedlock even in these countries. However, we find quite large variations across countries in the different clusters with respect to non-marital childbearing, and the association with fertility levels is also far from clear-cut.

Figure 6. Extramarital births per 100 live births in different welfare regimes / policy configuration types, 1960-2011.

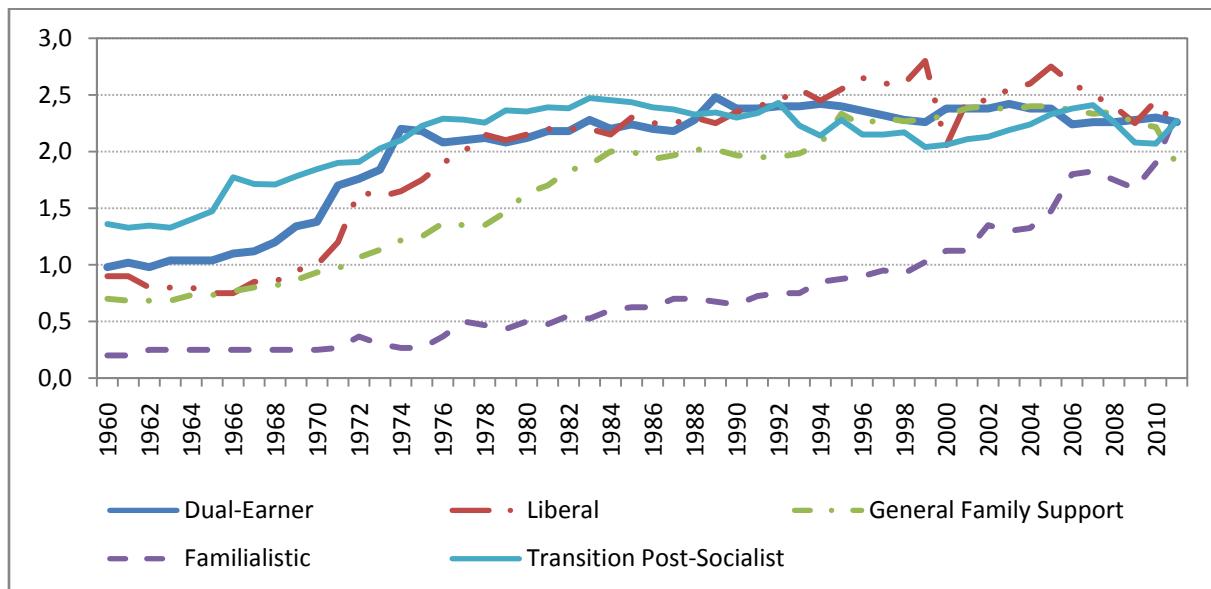


Source: INED (2013) for the years 1960-2008; Eurostat (2013) for the years 2009-2011, for the UK 2007-2011, for East and West Germany 2002-2011.

Note: Means for each group. Countries are grouped as follows (years for missing data listed in brackets): Dual-Earner: Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden; Liberal: United Kingdom, Ireland and Switzerland; General Family Support: Austria, Belgium, France, Germany [for the years 1960-1989 the data refer to West Germany only], Luxembourg and the Netherlands; Familialistic: Greece, Italy, Portugal and Spain; Transition Post-Socialist: Bulgaria, Czech Republic, East Germany [for the year 1960-1989], Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania (1960-1969, 1971-1974, 1976-1979, 1981-1983), Slovakia and Slovenia.

In addition to influencing fertility, the new partnership patterns have had implications for family stability. Couple relationships have become less stable over time as consensual unions, which are more fragile than marriages, have spread and divorce rates increased (Figure 7). The propensity to divorce doubled between the early 1960s and the late 1990s, and divorce rates remained modest only in the Familialistic regime cluster, where it increased mainly during the last decade. Declining relationship stability can also affect childbearing. On the one hand, it can reduce fertility as the time people spend in couple relationships shortens, and as women and men may choose to have fewer children because of the prospect of either having to raise their children alone or of becoming separated from their children given high separation and divorce rates (Lillard & Waite, 1993). On the other hand, high rates of family dissolution can raise fertility rates as second and higher-order partnerships are increasingly formed during the reproductive ages, and couples may opt for joint offspring even if having children from previous relationships (Thomson et al., 2002). In any case, the high and/or rising instability of partnerships contributes to the increasing diversity of family forms and relationships. It is thus another important dimension in the de-standardization of the family life course in Europe.

Figure 7. Crude divorce rates (number of divorces per 1000 inhabitants) in different welfare regimes / policy configuration types, 1960-2011.



Source: Eurostat (2013).

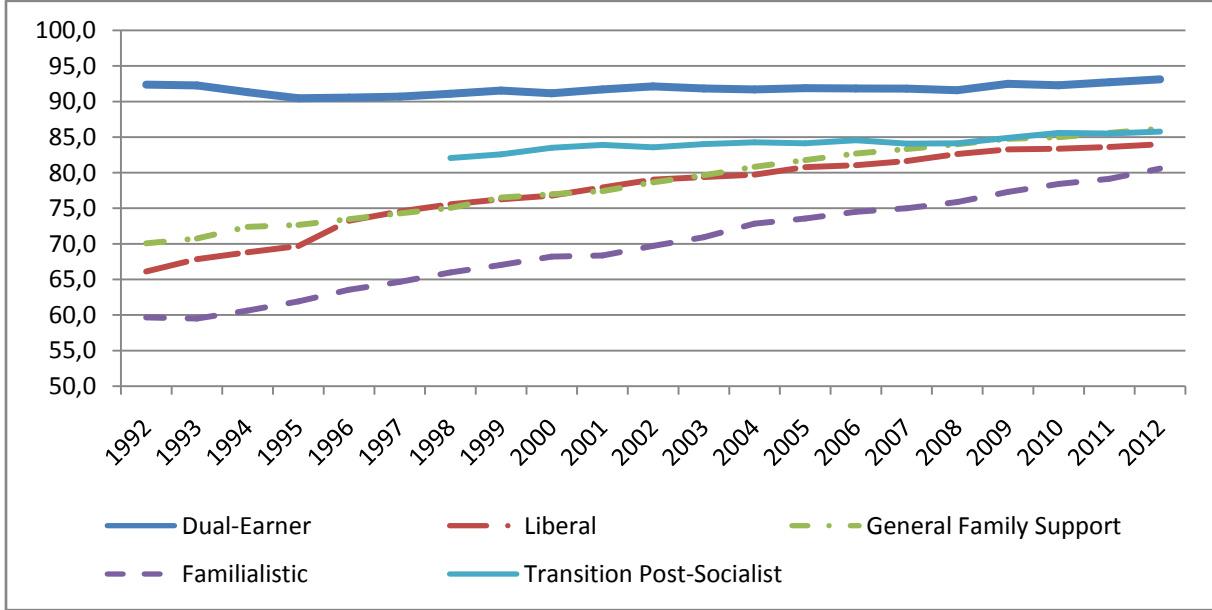
Note: Means for each group. Countries are grouped as follows (years for missing data listed in brackets): Dual-Earner: Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden; Liberal: United Kingdom (2011) and Switzerland; General Family Support: Austria, Belgium, France, Germany [for the years 1960-1989 the data refer to West Germany only], Luxembourg (2011) and the Netherlands; Familialistic: Greece (2010-2011), Italy (1960-1970, 2011), Portugal and Spain (1960-1980); Transition Post-Socialist: Bulgaria (1960), Czech Republic, East Germany [for the year 1960-1989], Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia.

2.2 Gender roles in transition

The changes in family patterns outlined in the previous section, especially the decline of fertility rates below or far below the replacement level, have been paralleled by a substantial increase in female labour force participation over time (Bernhardt, 1993; Jokinen & Kuronen, 2011; OECD, 2011). In Central-East European countries (i.e. the Transition Post-Socialist cluster), high female and maternal employment levels were common in the state-socialist period. In Western Europe, the increase in female labour force participation and in mothers' employment occurred first in the Nordic countries (i.e. the Dual-Earner cluster), where the new family patterns also emerged first. These countries were also the first ones to experience a change in women's employment aspirations resulting in the new female work pattern according to which women do not withdraw from the labour market upon marriage or motherhood, but remain employed until reaching retirement age (Gornick & Meyers, 2003; Hobson & Oláh, 2006). Countries of the Liberal and the General Family Support clusters joined the trend during the late 1980s, followed by the Familialistic cluster in the mid-/late 1990s. Anomalously, the end of the state-socialist era brought a substantial decline in female

labour force participation in the Transition Post-Socialist cluster. This occurred as a result of the dramatic economic restructuring and increased difficulties of work-family reconciliation, due to cuts in family policy provisions, especially childcare for the very youngest (i.e. children below age three). In any case, gender differences in labour market participation had greatly diminished in Europe by the early 21st century, as seen in Figure 8. The gender gap is rather small in the Dual-Earner cluster and quite limited in the Transition Post-Socialist regimes. More recently, the gender gap has decreased greatly in the Liberal and the General Family Support regimes. The largest gap appears for the Familialistic cluster, where gender role differentiation has been most pronounced and traditional gender norms have had a strong hold (Lewis, 2006; Plantenga et al., 2009).

Figure 8. Gender differences in labour market activity [women’s activity rate in proportion of men’s rate; ages 20-64 years] in different welfare regime /policy configuration types, 1992-2012.



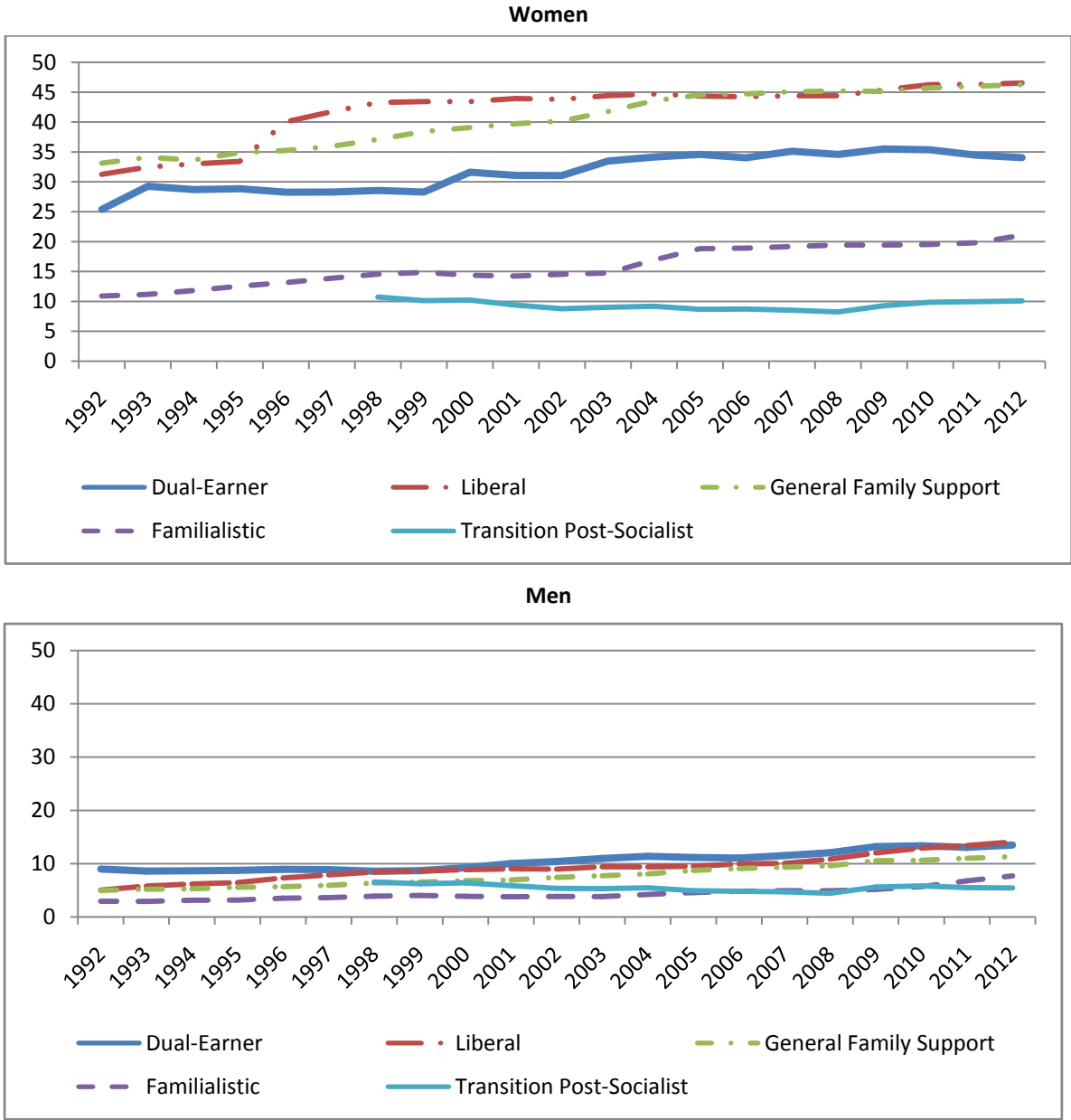
Source: Eurostat (2013).

Note: Means for each group. Countries are grouped as follows (years for missing data listed in brackets): Dual-Earner: Denmark, Finland, Iceland (1992-2002), Norway (1992-1999) and Sweden; Liberal: United Kingdom, Ireland and Switzerland (1992-1995); General Family Support: Austria (1992-1993), Belgium, France, Germany, Luxembourg and the Netherlands; Familialistic: Greece, Italy (1992), Portugal and Spain; Transition Post-Socialist: Bulgaria (1992-1998), Czech Republic (1992-1997), Estonia (1992-1997), Hungary (1992-1995), Latvia (1992-1997), Lithuania (1992-1997), Poland (1992-1996), Romania (1992-1996), Slovakia (1992-1997) and Slovenia (1992-1995).

Although the gender gap in employment had diminished greatly by the early 2000s, women still earn on average 16% less than men and the difference is even larger among top earners, about 21% (OECD, 2012). The female disadvantage is strongly related to their weaker

position in the labour market as women have continued to bear a disproportionately large share of family responsibilities in terms of household work and care, despite their increasing involvement in paid work. As seen in Figure 9, part-time work is much more common among women than men.

Figure 9. Part-time employment (per cent of total employment), in different welfare regimes / policy configuration types, 1992-2012.

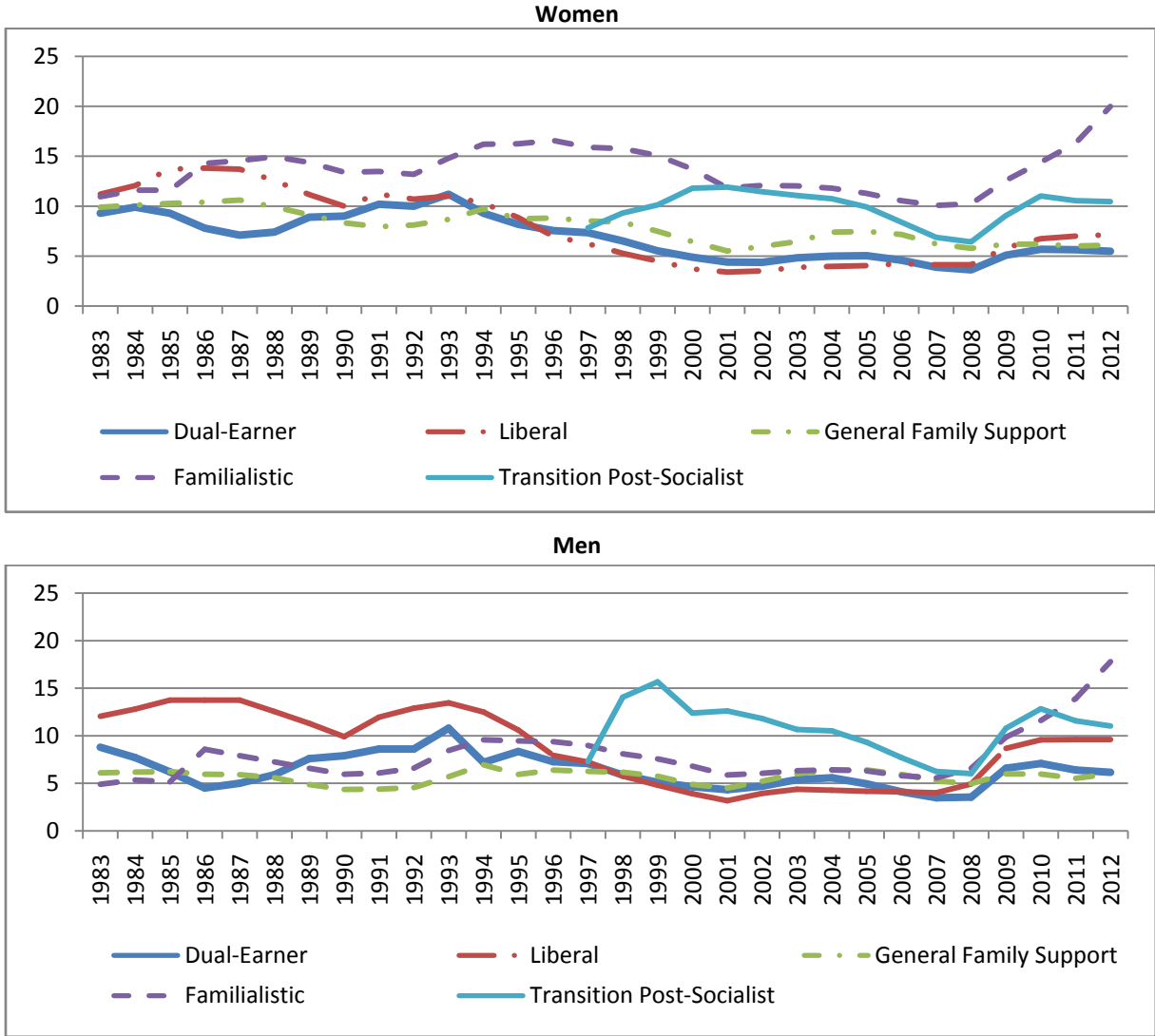


Source: Eurostat (2013)

Note: Means for each group. Countries are grouped as follows (years for missing data listed in brackets): Dual-Earner: Denmark, Finland, Iceland (1992-2002), Norway (1992-1999) and Sweden (1992); Liberal: United Kingdom, Ireland and Switzerland (1992-1995); General Family Support: Austria (1992-1993), Belgium, France, Germany, Luxembourg and the Netherlands; Familialistic: Greece, Italy (1992), Portugal and Spain; Transition Post-Socialist: Bulgaria (1992-2000), Czech Republic (1992-1997), Estonia (1992-1997), Hungary (1992-1996), Latvia (1992-1997), Lithuania (1992-1999), Poland (1992-1996), Romania (1992-1996), Slovakia (1992-1997) and Slovenia (1992-1998).

Currently, about 45% of employed women work part-time in the Liberal and the General Family Support clusters, and one-third in the Dual-Earner cluster, whereas only 10% in Transition Post-Socialist countries and 20% of employed women in the Familialistic regime. Given more rigid labour market structures in the latter policy configuration types, part-time options are less likely to be available there. The share of part-time working men varies between 5 and 15% across clusters.

Figure 10. Unemployment rates (ages 20-64 years), in different welfare regimes / policy configuration types, 1983-2012.



Source: Eurostat (2013)

Note: Means for each group. Countries are grouped as follows (years for missing data listed in brackets): Dual-Earner (data missing 1983-1994, except for Denmark): Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden; Liberal: United Kingdom, Ireland and Switzerland (1983-1995); General Family Support: Austria (1983-1994), Belgium, France, Germany, Luxembourg and the Netherlands; Familialistic: Greece, Italy, Portugal (1983-1984) and Spain (1983-1984); Transition Post-Socialist: Bulgaria (1983-1999), Czech Republic (1983-1996), Estonia (1983-1996), Hungary (1983-1995), Latvia (1983-1997), Lithuania (1983-1997), Poland (1983-1996), Romania (1983-1996), Slovakia (1983-1997) and Slovenia (1983-1995).

Gender differences are more modest regarding unemployment levels, which vary between 5 and 20%, as seen in Figure 10, with the highest rates displayed in the Familialistic and the Transition Post-Socialist clusters where economic problems have been pronounced since long before the recent economic crisis. Unemployment levels are much higher among youth (not shown here). This can hamper family building, especially among the less educated, both men and women (Mills et al., 2005; Oláh & Fraczak, 2013).

As labour force activities have been increasingly incorporated into the female gender role, women's enrolment in higher education has also grown (Blossfeld, 1995). By the mid-1990s, women's educational attainment surpassed that of men in the main childbearing ages in all regime clusters, and reached the same level as men in the broader working age population, as seen in Figure 11. The new female educational advantage is most pronounced for the Familialistic cluster, notwithstanding their lowest but rapidly increasing labour market activity rates across regime types (Figure 8).

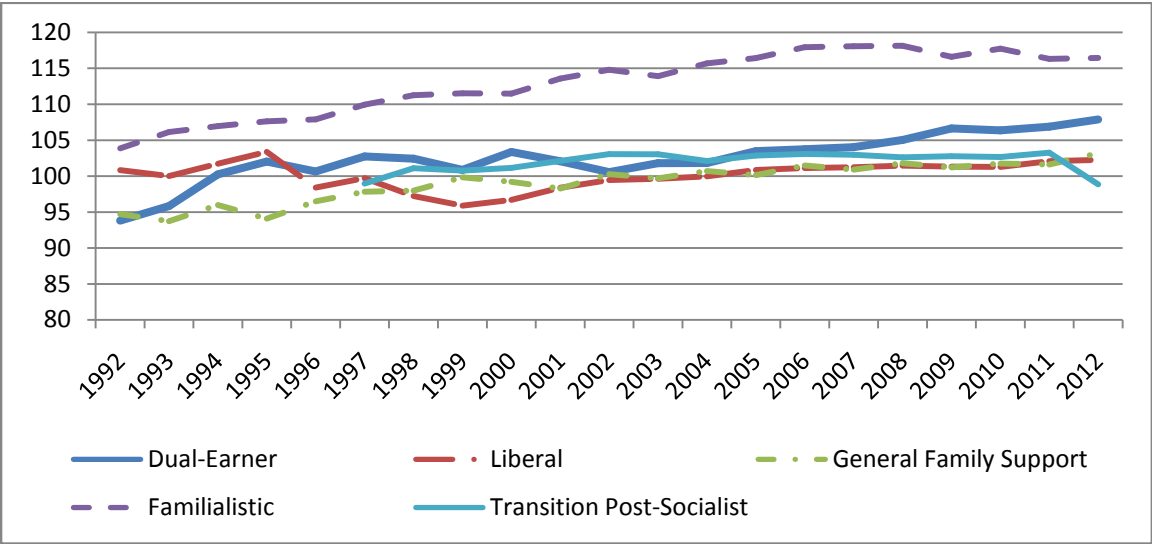
The new female gender role has thus increasingly incorporated dimensions of economic independence and support responsibilities that until quite recently belonged to the male domain, and promoted a more equal distribution of responsibilities for the economic provision to a family. This transformation has not been accompanied, however, by new patterns in the gender distribution of household- and care work, as the division of unpaid work among women and men has changed relatively little in many countries (Bianchi et al., 2000; Anxo et al., 2011; OECD 2012). Much of the decrease in the gender gap for unpaid work is due to women investing less time in domestic duties, given their greater involvement in paid work, than due to a substantial increase in men's household- and/or care work contribution (Sayer et al., 2004; Craig & Mullan, 2010; 2011).

Among younger cohorts however, more and more fathers seem to embrace the idea of active parenting and are willing to engage in the care for their children (Seward et al., 2006a and 2006b; Hobson & Fahlén, 2009; Smith Koslowski, 2011). Their efforts have received increasing policy support at both the national and European levels (Hobson, 2002; Moss, 2008, 2012), but employers' and co-workers' attitude may be a more important aspect for the transformation of the male gender role (Brandt & Kvande, 2002; Haas & Hwang, 2009; Behnke & Meuser, 2012). Also, mothers need to accept fathers as their equals when it comes to parental care for children for the new male role getting established (Allen & Hawkins

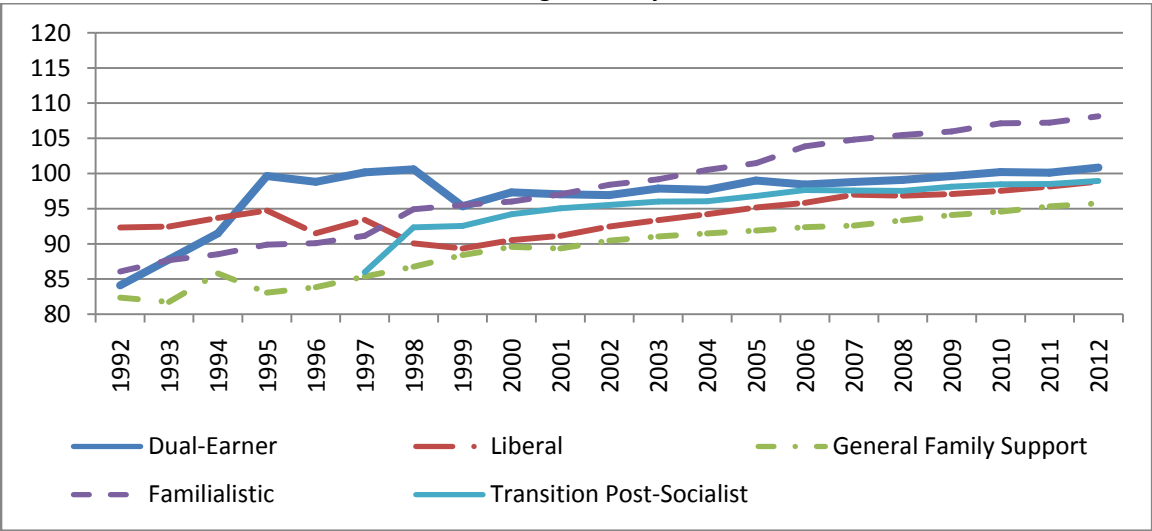
1999). Until men’s contribution to domestic tasks and care work can match that of women in paid work, the gender revolution remains incomplete (Esping-Andersen, 2009; Goldscheider et al., 2010).

Figure 11. Gender difference in education (proportion of women with upper secondary and tertiary education in proportion to men with similar educational attainment) in different welfare regimes / policy configuration types, 1992-2012.

At ages 25-34 years



At ages 25-64 years



Source: Eurostat (2013)

Note: Means for each group. Countries are grouped as follows (years for missing data listed in brackets): Dual-Earner: Denmark, Finland (1992-1994), Iceland (1992-1998), Norway (1992-1995) and Sweden (1992-1994); Liberal: United Kingdom, Ireland and Switzerland (1992-1995); General Family Support: Austria (1992-1994), Belgium, France (1992), Germany, Luxembourg and the Netherlands (1992-1995); Familialistic: Greece, Italy, Portugal and Spain; Transition Post-Socialist: Bulgaria (1992-1999), Czech Republic (1992-1997), Estonia (1992-1997), Hungary (1992-1996), Latvia (1992-1997), Lithuania (1992-1997), Poland (1992-1996), Romania (1992-1996), Slovakia (1992-1997) and Slovenia (1992-1995).

2.3 The interplay between the increasing complexity of family forms, relationships and new gender roles

Contemporary scholarship of economics, demography and gender studies has since long recognized that changes in family patterns and gender roles are interlinked. Given declining birth rates and marriage rates, increasing instability of couple relationships and a nearly simultaneous growth of female labour force participation, women's increasing economic independence has been seen as a main cause of family changes in economic theorizing, which identified gender role specialization as one of its main paradigms (see Becker, 1991). In sociology, it has been argued that ideational changes, such as the spread of individualism and thereby greater emphasis on self-realization, together with changing aspirations for paid work, are the main driving forces behind the postponement of family formation (both marriage and childbearing) and the increasing fragility of couple relationships in modern societies. See, particularly, the Second Demographic Transition theory (van de Kaa, 1996; Lesthaeghe, 2010). Less attention has been paid to other factors affecting men, even though the decline in male wages and men's labour force activity, together with growing labour market uncertainty, have been recognized (Oppenheimer et al., 1997; Booth et al., 1999; Mills et al. 2005), and the importance of risk aversion and of gender equity with respect to family patterns have been pointed out (Beck, 1999; McDonald, 2000, 2006). The role of social context in the interplay of gender and family changes has been addressed in the Capability approach, focusing on gendered agency and capabilities to forming and maintaining stable relationships and having and caring for children (Sen, 1993; Hobson & Oláh, 2006; Hobson, 2011).

In addition to theorizing about transitions over the family life course and their interlinkages with gender role changes, another major topic of scholarly attention has been the organization of family life. Studies of families and the division of work within them show that household members do gender as they do housework and childcare (Fenstermaker Berk, 1985). Acts are performative in the sense that they construct, corroborate and reconstruct identities in relation to jointly agreed-upon definitions. The performativity makes it possible to create and maintain an illusion of two essential and polar gender identities, at the same time enabling the reconstructions of gender (Butler, 1990). The 'doing gender' approach emphasizes that we are assessed and held accountable for on the basis of gender in nearly everything we do (West & Zimmerman, 1987). This accountability, in turn, influences the social constructions of husbands and wives, mothers and fathers. Rooted in the concept of doing gender, the 'doing

family' approach (Morgan, 1999; Smart, 2000; Nelson, 2006) takes into account the fact that social habits are reproduced through everyday interactions. It argues that family life is not a given *per se* but a social construction, as families embed their everyday family lives in internal daily routines, practices and external social activities, interlinked with changes in gender roles and family relationships.

Following upon the logic of the interplay between demographic changes and transformation of gender roles, outlined above, we address in the following sections both transitions as well as the organization of family life. These are interpreted in the context of the de-standardized family life course and the growing complexity of family forms and relationships. In our overview of research, we focus first on women's new role and its implications for family dynamics, considering both women and men as main actors. Next we turn to the topic of gendered transition to parenthood, a borderline issue between family transitions and family life organization. The latter aspect is more thoroughly addressed in the discussion of new gender roles in doing families. Finally, we focus on coping strategies in family and work reconciliation under conditions of uncertainty and precariousness, an issue of growing importance for understanding transitions in family life. The report ends with a brief overview on how the research gaps will be addressed in the course of this work package and with concluding thoughts on well-being in families.

3 Women's new role and implications for men's role and family dynamics

3.1 Prevalent theoretical approaches

The transformation of female gender role and its linkages with changes in family patterns has received substantial scholarly attention in the past decades. The most commonly used approaches to address this relationship originated in the field of micro-economics, with the New Home Economics (e.g. Becker, 1991), and in sociology and demography, the latter focusing on the roles of social norms and ideational changes, with the Second Demographic Transition theory (Lesthaeghe, 1983, 2010; van de Kaa, 1987, 1996) as a prominent example. In addition, the on-going gender revolution in higher education, that is, that women are now outnumbering men in European universities and that they are also graduating more successfully (Lutz et al., 2008; Vincent-Lancrin, 2008), has inspired some new conceptual developments in research on family formation (see Van Bavel, 2012).

Both in sociology and in economics, it has been argued that the preference structure of men and women tends towards educational homogamy (“like marries like”) in the absence of gender role specialization. Until relatively recently however, labour market and domestic activities were more or less divided by gender, making gender-role specialization a basic paradigm in micro-economics (see Becker, 1991). In a traditional marriage market, a good education has been considered particularly important for men because their income and occupational prestige largely determined the socio-economic status of the family. Therefore, women have tended to prefer men with a high(er) level of educational attainment (Kalmijn, 1991; Kalmijn, 1994; Blossfeld & Timm, 2003; Blossfeld, 2009; Dykstra & Poortman, 2010). Men have ambiguous preferences. On the one hand, they are prone to prefer spouses with a similar level of education as they have. On the other hand, from the perspective of the traditional division of labour, they prefer wives who assume the bulk of domestic tasks and who would therefore not invest too much in their own career resources. Hence, women would tend to marry upwards (hypergamy) in terms of education while men are expected to marry downwards (hypogamy). This was confirmed by the empirical record (Kalmijn, 1991; Kalmijn, 1998; Blossfeld & Timm, 2003; Schwartz & Mare, 2005; Blossfeld, 2009; Dykstra & Poortman, 2010). Until recently, this marriage pattern was compatible with the gender-specific distribution of the levels of education. There were more highly educated men than highly educated women in the population. However, this has changed in recent decades. Also, marriage has become a less prevalent family form, as new types of living arrangements, especially non-marital cohabitation, have become established. The new gender imbalance in educational attainment in recent cohorts of age to start a family is incompatible with the traditional patterns (Van Bavel, 2012). Something will change, the question is: what?

Van Bavel (2012) suggested that the concept of marriage market and the related notion of marriage squeeze should be extended in order to investigate the implications of the reversal of the gender imbalance in education for union formation. The latter refers to the hypothesis that marriage prospects are lower if the number of unmarried persons of the desired age, who constitute the marriage market, is low. Given the increasing importance of non-marital cohabitation and a growing proportion of children being born outside marriage (see Section 2.1), the concept and idea of the "marriage squeeze" should be broadened to include the effects of age-specific sex ratio imbalances on the "mating market" rather than on the marriage market only. Also, education should be added to the dimensions of age and sex (cf. Lutz et al., 1998) to quantify the mating squeeze in a more meaningful way. The expansion of

higher education among women implies that women who want to find a male partner with the same or a higher level of educational attainment would increasingly suffer an education-specific mating squeeze. From the perspective of gender roles and the division of labour in the male breadwinner-female homemaker family model, it has been argued that highly educated women would be less prone to form a partnership because their education has given them the human capital resources to be independent. Also, they may be considered less attractive for (some) men because of being less inclined to abide by the role expectations for female homemakers. This has been the classic rationale for expecting lower marriage rates for highly educated women (Blossfeld, 2009). On similar vein, low-educated and less well-off men will also be affected, having difficulties to find enough women with the same or lower level of education than themselves, to form a family with (van Bavel, 2012).

Most research focusing on the relationship between educational attainment and fertility considers the New Home Economics in some form or other as a starting point (Becker, 1991; Cigno, 1994; Hotz et al., 1997). The micro-economic theory posits that as women receive more education and gain access to better positions in the labour market, the costs of childbearing may increase. This primarily relates to opportunity costs, in the form of foregone earnings, slower human capital accumulation and depreciation of professional skills, because raising children requires considerable parental and especially maternal time and may force women to take time away from employment. The scale of opportunity costs is revealed by studies on the motherhood wage penalty (Kühhirt & Ludwig, 2012; Gough & Noonan, 2013). Assuming that education reflects income potential, the theory predicts that women with higher education will have fewer children than less-educated women, as the former have more to lose in terms of foregone earnings and career opportunities. In addition, it has been suggested that higher educational attainment entails a stronger preference for the “quality“ of children that is associated with an increased expenditure in children’s human capital, thereby further reducing fertility among the highly educated (Willis, 1973; Gustafsson and Kalwij, 2006).

In the diffusionist perspective, highly educated women are often regarded as trendsetters with regard to family formation and partner relations (Salvini & Vignoli, 2011). Research has indicated that a stronger commitment to the labour market exposes women with higher education to a stronger conflict between work and family life than their less educated counterparts. For instance, the largest discrepancy between ideal and actual family size occurs among the highly educated (Testa, 2012). If well-educated women are considered as

trendsetters, their childbearing behaviour is likely to influence fertility levels for the rest of the society. Hence, their behaviour may be related to overall fertility levels, which indeed seems to be the case. In countries where highly educated women have high progression ratios to second births, total fertility tends to be relatively high, unlike in countries with low progression to a second child among the more educated (Van Bavel & Rózańska-Putek, 2010). This implies that better knowledge of educational fertility differentials can improve our understanding of the diversity in fertility regimes observed in contemporary Europe.

As for marital stability, the role of women's social and economic independence has been of interest for social scientists in response to growing female labour force participation and increasing divorce levels. Economic models of marriage assume that women's employment destabilises marital unions because it endangers role specialisation within a couple (Becker, Landes, & Michael, 1977). Recently, however, as women have been increasingly present in the labour market, the negative effect of women's employment on marital stability is less clear. It has been argued that in modern societies, decisions to remain married depend more on the satisfaction with the quality of the union and that similarity of economic activities and interests may improve the understanding between spouses (Jalovaara, 2002; Schoen et al., 2002; Sigle-Rushton, 2010; Simpson & England, 1981). Moreover, the additional income provided by a woman leads to higher living standards and thus should reduce marital strains (Cherlin, 2000; Raz-Yurovich, 2012; Stevenson & Wolfers, 2007). Also, the change of the gender norms leaves men who adhere to gendered work-family views with fewer possibilities to find a partner who would be willing to specialise in household production (Sigle-Rushton, 2010).

3.2 Empirical findings and research gaps

Concerning family formation, most research confirms that men with higher socio-economic status exhibit higher marriage rates than men with lower status, in line with theoretical expectations (Jalovaara, 2012). Unexpected and remarkable, however, was the very recent finding that university-educated men in the Netherlands are more likely to remain single than men with less education (Dykstra & Poortman, 2010). Research results about the marriage prospects of recent cohorts of women, differentiated by level of education, are even more mixed. A number of studies do not find the expected negative effect of women's socio-economic status on marriage rates (Dykstra & Poortman, 2010; Jalovaara, 2012). In the US,

the increased earning potential of more highly educated women is associated with later ages at marriage, but not with lower marriage chances compared to the less educated (Goldstein & Kenney, 2001; Isen & Stevenson, 2010). Overall, the recent literature about the educational gradient in partnership formation has reported inconsistent and unexpected findings, particularly for women. According to Van Bavel (2012) this may have to do with the fact that the literature has insufficiently distinguished between two components underlying cohabitation as well as marriage rates: the probability of ever making the transition on the one hand and the timing of the transition on the other hand. Van Bavel also argues that the reversal of gender inequality in education and the ensuing new education-specific mating squeeze will probably have a different impact for women as compared to men. He offers a number of specific hypotheses that have yet to be investigated (van Bavel, 2012).

It is well documented that contemporary fertility in Europe is characterised by sizeable contrasts. Although the level of childlessness has been gradually increasing over the past decades, analyses suggest that this is not the main driving force behind low fertility (Billari & Kohler, 2004; Frejka & Sobotka, 2008). Fertility differences today are due to a large extent to variation in second (and third) births. In this context, the relationship between second births and women's educational attainment has attracted considerable scholarly interest. Empirical studies did not provide unequivocal support to predictions derived from micro-economic theory. In line with them, a negative association seems to prevail between women's educational attainment and second birth intensities in Eastern Europe (Koycheva, 2006; Rieck, 2006; Perelli-Harris, 2008; Muresan & Hoem, 2009; Gałężewska, 2011; Billingsley, 2011). In contrast, elevated second birth intensities among highly educated women have been found in all Nordic countries (Hoem & Hoem, 1989; Oláh, 2003; Vikat, 2004; Gerster et al., 2007; Kravdal, 2007) and in several countries of Western Europe (Kreyenfeld & Zabel, 2005; Köppen, 2006; Neels, 2006; Mathews & Sear, 2013). Similarly, recent studies of Estonia (Klesment & Puur, 2010) and Hungary (Bartus et al., 2013) have indicated a positive gradient in second birth risks for women with higher education, and a similar finding is reported for younger generations in Italy (Kertzer et al., 2009).

In the existing studies, the observed educational gradient in fertility is commonly interpreted as an outcome of contextual features that shape the opportunities and constraints people face in their childbearing decisions, such as availability of public childcare, parental leave programs, labour market flexibility and gender equity, as well as reduce the opportunity costs

of parity progression, particularly for highly educated women. The existing research has some important limitations. Evidence for many countries is still missing, preventing a comprehensive EU-wide account. Reported associations between education and childbearing depend to an important extent on how and when educational characteristics and fertility are measured (Hoem, 1996; Kravdal, 2004). Variation in target populations, time references, methodological approaches, and statistical models limit the comparability of results across various studies. Finally, the overwhelming majority of studies proceeds from a single-country perspective or compares just a few countries. In such an analytical framework, the observed educational differentials can be linked to the societal context only theoretically, at the level of interpretation.

The importance of context has also been pointed out in most recent studies of women's increasing economic independence and marital stability (Cooke, 2006; Cooke & Gash, 2010; Kaplan & Stier, 2010). Consequently, it is important to be aware of spatial and temporal variations in the association between woman's labour market participation and stability of partnerships. Demographic and sociological studies have identified three context dimensions, particularly relevant in such research. These are: i) gender roles, which define the extent to which a deviation from the gendered division of work is feasible and socially accepted (Sayer & Bianchi, 2000; Cooke, 2006; Evertsson & Neramo, 2007; Cooke & Gash, 2010); ii) the economic situation of households, which determines the extent to which the material aspirations of the couple are satisfied (Cherlin, 2000; Stevenson & Wolfers, 2007); and, iii) the institutional context, which defines the extent to which the state supports women's economic independence from their partners, if at all (Orloff, 1993; Iversen, Rosenbluth, & Soskice, 2005; Kaplan & Stier, 2010). Based on these dimensions, it is assumed that women's employment is more likely to threaten marital stability in country contexts which are characterised by more traditional gender roles, where men's earnings on average are sufficient to satisfy a couple's material aspirations, where the barriers to labour market entry for women are particularly high, and where the state offers little support for working parents and for the economically dependent spouse in case of divorce.

Empirical research has focused on testing the moderating role of the cultural and institutional dimensions of the country context on the relationship between women's economic resources and marital stability. For example, by comparing seven European countries with similar levels of economic development and different institutional and cultural settings, Kaplan and Stier

(2010) demonstrated that women's economic resources tend to destabilise marriages in countries with welfare policies promoting women's dependence on the partner or the market, while in more gender-neutral settings, i.e., in countries with policies promoting dual earning and/or providing more generous welfare support to the economically disadvantaged spouse, women's contributions to the household budget tend to strengthen marriages. Similarly, Cooke (2006) and Cooke and Gash (2010) demonstrated that the negative effects of women's employment on marital stability are most prevalent in Germany and less prevalent in the UK and US. They attributed these findings to differences in the gendered division of labour between the German-speaking and Anglo-Saxon countries.

An important shortcoming of existing research regarding transitions over the family life course is the relatively limited attention paid to men, even though it has been argued that the mechanisms concerning men are quite different from those concerning women (Forste, 2002; Oppenheimer, 2000, 2003). In contrast to the rather unilateral focus on women both in economic theories and in the Second Demographic Transition theory, Oppenheimer (2000, 2003) offered another important dimension for understanding the decline of marriage, by bringing men back into the debate. She pointed out that in times with poor and uncertain economic prospects, men who are unable to fulfil the role of the breadwinner will not be attractive marriage partners and/or fathers. She also argued that employment uncertainty for men impedes assortative mating and may therefore delay marriage (Oppenheimer, 1988). In such times, cohabitation becomes a less binding living arrangement, more suitable to the uncertain times (Mills et al., 2005). The effect of men's economic resources on the timing of marriage and parenthood has only been studied in a few West-European countries (Blossfeld et al., 2005; Kalmijn, 2012), but rarely in Eastern Europe.

There is a huge literature examining fertility trends and their determinants in low-fertility societies, but studies on men are rare (Balbo et al., 2013) even if there is a general acceptance that the de-standardization of family life especially concerns men (Widmer & Ritschard, 2009). Existing research on men indicate that disadvantaged men have little chance to become fathers and to have multiple children in stable unions (Lappegård & Rønsen, 2013) or as single fathers (Guzzo & Hayford, 2010). Studies of men's fertility in connection with their current union status usually deal with delay in entering fatherhood (Dariotis et al., 2011; Vignoli et al., 2012). Those addressing multiple parenthood (Schober & Scott, 2012) or men's completed fertility (Pailhe & Solaz, 2012) often ignore their partnership status, focusing

mainly on the effect of economic resources and employment, similar to studies of men's fertility intentions (Beets, 1997; Tolke & Diewald, 2003). Concerning the relationship between men's gender attitudes and fertility across European countries, opposing results were found. This may be partly attributed to the use of different datasets and different measures of gender attitudes (Puur et al., 2008; Westoff & Higgins, 2009), but it also suggests a need for further research and theorizing on the links between men's gender attitudes and fertility (Goldscheider et al., 2010).

4 Gendered transition to parenthood: Defining mothers and fathers

4.1 Prevalent theoretical approaches

In the literature related to the gendered transition to parenthood, the 'doing gender' approach has a prominent position. It is built on the notion that household members do gender as they do housework and childcare (Fenstermaker Berk, 1985). Acts are performative as they construct, corroborate and reconstruct identities in relation to jointly agreed-upon definitions. The performativity makes it possible to create and maintain an illusion of two polar gender identities, also enabling the reconstructions of gender (Butler, 1990). Doing gender means engaging in behaviour at the risk of gender assessment (West & Zimmerman, 1987). In nearly everything we do, we are assessed on the basis of gender. This in turn influences even the social constructions of mothers and fathers.

The good mother is expected to be guided by the ethic of what is best for the child, while the father has greater leeway in following individualistic moral imperatives (Ribbens McCarthy et al., 2000). The construction of the good mother is coloured by ideals of intensive mothering as described by, e.g., Hays (1996). Intensive mothering means being child-centred and committed to spending considerable time, money and energy to benefit the child while sacrificing one's own individual needs.

This is not to say that fatherhood ideologies are unaffected by norms about what is best for the child. In fact, it is no longer enough to be the rational, goal-oriented father who brings home the bacon. Today, the good father needs to be ready to engage in childcare. Hegemonic masculinity is changing and new fatherhood norms are emerging (Plantin, 2001; Hearn, 2002; Johansson & Klinth, 2008; Miller, 2011b). However, norms about what constitutes a good

mother and a good father not only vary over time but also across social contexts. Being a good father at work is often not the same as being a good father at home. Being a good father in Germany is not the same as being a good father in Sweden. By assuming that men are made into fathers, we acknowledge that "...fatherhood is bound up with institutions, embedded in law and shaped by policy" (Hobson & Morgan, 2002, p. 9). The same goes for motherhood. Thus, the study of gendered inequalities in the symbolic meaning of parenthood and its consequences needs to take as its starting point the variation and fluidity of motherhood and fatherhood ideologies.

In fact, the concept of the 'new father' became a crucial issue in the public and scientific discourse on gender equality in family life (Lammi-Taskula, 2008; Merla, 2008; Doucet, 2009). However, although Europeans value equality highly and are in favour of increased involvement of fathers in the care for children, the actual practice is lagging behind (Wall & Arnold, 2008; Höfner et. al., 2011). Thus, the gendered division of labour in families prevails. In Western societies, but less so in Sweden, the transition to parenthood is generally associated with a re-traditionalization of gender positions (Merla, 2008; Dribe & Stanfors, 2009; Katz-Wise et al., 2010). Rosi Braidotti calls this phenomenon, when categories are displaced and refixed at the same time, a '*schizoid double-pull*' (Braidotti, 2006, p. 49). Contemporary societies contain both a certain degree of gender equality and an emphasis on growing segregation between the sexes. Transgression and amplification of gender concepts can be observed simultaneously. During the transition to parenthood we can discover such schizoid double-pulls in general discourses about parenthood, family policies and actual behaviour. There are increasing options to achieve equality between partners, e.g., to divide family work in a non-traditional way. However, the transition to parenthood usually triggers a reinforcement of traditional gender positions. Some couples intentionally adopt traditional gender roles, whereas this re-traditionalization comes as a surprise for many (Deutsch et. al., 2007; Höfner et. al., 2011; Biehle & Mickelson, 2012; Schadler, 2013).

In investigating the relationship between parental leave policies and gender equality, more specifically how parental leave policies contribute to shape gender relations, the 'gender structure' (Risman, 1998, 2004, 2011) appears a useful approach. The gender structure is defined as a multidimensional system, which creates a differentiation between men and women and organizes unequal social relations on the basis of that difference. It has consequences on three levels: the institutional level (laws, rules and ideological discourses

distribute resources and constitute men and women differently), the interactional level (men and women face different cultural norms within social interactions) and the individual level (men and women develop and construct gendered identities and selves). At the institutional level, scholars argue that parental leave schemes are based on ideological assumptions about motherhood and fatherhood and that they contribute to define what is considered a normal or good family organization (Hojgaard, 1997; Rostgaard, 2002). At the interactional level, leave uptake by fathers is expected to increase fathers' involvement with their children both in the short and longer run. At the individual level, the focus is on the variety of experiences fathers have related to their leave uptake and their solo care for the child, and its impact on their fatherhood identity (Brandth & Kvande, 1998; Trelly, 2007; 2010; Höfner, Schadler & Richter, 2011). In turn, leave uptake can be associated both with the challenge of hegemonic masculinities as well as their reproduction. In order to negotiate the tension induced by the challenge of gender norms, men have been found to develop different strategies and discourses, which were often both transgressive and complicit with hegemonic definitions (Merla, 2008).

4.2 Empirical findings and research gaps

In the literature, the topics that are addressed as consequences of the transition to parenthood include changes in relationship quality, parents' time use and division of labour and gendered perceptions of parents' roles. Findings in family and life course research indicate major changes in women's and men's lives as they enter parenthood (Moller et al., 2008; Doss et al., 2009; Ahlborg et al., 2009). Both parents have less time for leisure and personal interests (Nomaguchi and Bianchi, 2004; Claxton and Perry-Jenkins, 2008) and they have more contact with close kin and less with friends (Gameiro, et al., 2010; Kalmijn, 2012). With regard to the division of labour, the transition to parenthood is a period where parents are likely to experience a reinforcement of their gender. Mothers are more likely to take parental leave and for much longer periods than fathers, which contributes to their acquiring main responsibility for care and housework, while fathers tend to work longer hours after the birth of the first child (Sanchez & Thomson, 1997; Evertsson & Neramo, 2004, 2007; Geist, 2009; Geist & Cohen, 2011; Schober, 2013), but there are variations in these patterns (see e.g. Kaufman & Uhlenberg, 2000; Dribe & Stanfors, 2009). Most often, however, even couples who practiced a non-traditional division of labour before pregnancy show a more traditional gendered division after the birth, usually attributed to traditional gender norms prevailing more or less

under the surface (Kuehrt, 2012). Ethnographic research on the transition to parenthood suggests that parents seem dissatisfied with these developments as fathers complain about a lack of closeness to the child, while mothers complain about the lack of leisure and stalled career developments (Walzer, 1998; Höfner, 2003; LaRossa & Sinha, 2006; Fox, 2009; Schadler, 2013). Also, research of the FamilyPlatform (FP7 project) identified a knowledge gap concerning transition processes, pointing out the lack of qualitative panel data that can enhance our understanding of the mechanisms related to the transition to parenthood (Stauber, 2011).

The literature showed that gendered labour processes that structure women's and men's lives after the birth of the first child are decisive for gender inequality in the household and also have long-term consequences for gender inequalities in the labour market (Ruhm, 1998; Mandel & Semyonov, 2005; Krüger, 2009), unless such effects being mitigated by comprehensive work-life balance policies at the state and/or workplace level (see Hobson et al. 2011). Yet, whereas men gain career and wage benefits from being parents, women's careers are unaffected while their wages are negatively related to parenthood (Gash, 2009; Smith Koslowski, 2011; Bygren and Gähler, 2012). Research points to the importance of women's family obligations as a main factor behind the gender wage gap, at least among individuals in the upper part of the wage distribution and in middle- to highly qualified occupations where the wage gap is particularly pronounced (Magnusson, 2010; Boye, Halldén & Magnusson, forthcoming). Labour market absence due to parental leave is, however, negatively related to men's as well as women's careers and wages and the association with wages is stronger among men (Stafford & Sundström, 1996; Albrecht et al., 1999; Boye, forthcoming). Hence mothers in general seem to suffer penalties in the labour market from parenthood whereas fathers suffer only when their parenthood does in fact affect their labour market participation. However, the influence of care-related career interruptions appears to vary by institutional context for women, with negative consequences for the career of even very short leaves in the US, where family leave is less institutionalized, but only for those taking longer leaves (15 months or more) in Sweden, where parental leave is comparatively long and provides substantial income replacement. Taking a care leave greatly destabilizes women's careers in Germany, where they can take a very long break (up to 3 years) partly due to generous parental leave regulations but also due to significant tax reductions for married men with dependents (Aisenbrey, Evertsson & Grunow, 2009).

Studies concerned with the link between leave policies and gender equality have also pointed to the importance of this relationship in the constitution of fatherhood. The research showed that the main obstacle to leaves that promote gender equality is its gendered use, as mothers are the predominant leave recipients and those who use the biggest portion of parental leave days (Bruning & Plantenga, 1999; Anxo et al., 2007). Fathers' statutory leave uptake is influenced most importantly by the leave design, such as whether it is transferable and whether the access is universal or conditioned, the level of earnings compensation and flexibility, together with additional incentives like extra days or tax rebates if the father uses a certain portion of the leave (Moss, 2008; Ray, Gornick & Schmitt, 2008; Haas & Rostgaard, 2011). Workplace characteristics also affect men's leave uptake. His position, sense of entitlement, perception of the management's receptiveness, the type, size and sector of activity of the work organization; the extent of father friendliness in the corporate culture, the attitude of co-workers and the existence of other company work-family balance policies were found to influence leave uptake by men in several industrialized countries (Haas & Hwang, 1995, 2007, 2009; Hojgaard, 1997; S. Lewis, 1997; Brandth & Kvande, 2002; Haas et al., 2002; Kirby & Krone, 2002; Anxo et al., 2007; Bygren & Duvander, 2006; Whitehouse et al., 2007). Finally, individual and family variables such as being part of a younger cohort, being married, having a first child, men's egalitarian gender attitudes, partners' willingness to share leave, as well as men's and women's high level of education and income were shown to have a positive association with men's leave uptake (Hyde, Essex, & Horton, 1993; Haas et al., 2002; Sundström & Duvander, 2002).

An increasing body of literature analyses the effects of men's leave uptake on fathers' involvement. Although all results are not consistent (Hosking et al., 2010; Kluve & Tamm, 2013), and authors are cautious about making causal interpretations, several studies show a significant positive association between men's leave uptake and their subsequent involvement in childcare (see Tanaka & Waldfogel, 2007 for the UK; Duvander & Jans, 2008; Haas & Hwang, 2008 for Sweden; Pleck, 1993; Seward et al. 2006a, 2006b; Nepomnyaschy & Waldfogel, 2007 for the US; and Meil 2011 for a comparative analysis of 27 countries). Results from qualitative research provided a better understanding of the patterns. In Norway, the UK and France, leave policies were found to prompt some fathers to spend more time in childcare than they would have if the leave opportunity had not existed, and to some extent to "undo [this component of] gender" (Brandth & Kvande, 2002; Trelu, 2007, 2010; Miller, 2011b). However, authors also highlight the fact that there is some resistance to fully blurring

gendered parental roles. Men tend to perform traditionally male activities in the home, to retain power over the tasks they decide to do (ignoring housework) and to develop masculine forms of childcare (Brandth & Kvande, 1998; Trelu, 2007, 2010). Some men on leave did “bring fatherhood” to work, but with limited effects on the workplace; managers and men tried to limit the impact and visibility of leave uptake, instead endeavoring to reproduce male work norms (Hojgaard, 1997; Murgia & Poggio, 2009). At the individual level, leave is more likely to be positively experienced among the better educated men, those who have the strongest ties to work during leave uptake, and when childcare is integrated as another facet of masculinity (Brandth & Kvande, 1998; Trelu, 2007, 2010; Höfner et al., 2011).

This overview of the literature shows that parental leave policies, and related workplace practices, may have a challenging potential for gender relations. To a certain extent, they can prompt more gender egalitarian representations and practices of fatherhood.

5 New gender roles in doing families

5.1 Prevalent theoretical approaches

In the literature addressing reconciliation of work and family life, “blurring boundaries” is a frequently applied concept (Gottschall & Voß, 2003). It is closely linked to de-traditionalizing gender relations, that is, the changing meaning of paid work and its spilling over to private life. This may further challenge gender relations, especially as increasingly uncertain occupational biographies for men (Oppenheimer, 1997), seen in more precarious forms of employment and in a decline of the male breadwinnership (Cranford, Vosko & Zukewich, 2003), may force more women to become breadwinners (Crompton, 1999; Maetzke & Ostner, 2010). This in turn challenges traditional distributions of power and money in intimate relationships (see Wimbauer, 2003; Ruiner, Hirsland & Schneider, 2011; Lennon, Stewart & Ledermann, 2012).

Increasing maternal employment also challenges the gendered division of childcare. Although one would expect that increases in mothers’ employment lead to a more equal sharing of childcare responsibilities between mothers and fathers (Bergmann, 2005), mothers still spend much more time on these tasks than fathers do (Bianchi & Milkie, 2010; Sayer & Gornick, 2011), even though in recent decades fathers have become involved in care activities more than ever before (Bianchi et al., 2000; Craig, Mullan & Blaxland, 2010). According to the

“doing gender” approach (West & Zimmermann, 1987), women and men can perceive the problem of reconciliation between paid work and family responsibilities differently. For men, work activities can be an instrument to exercise their role of “providers” in line with prevalent social norms. For women, as social norms have traditionally ascribed the role of family carer to them, time spent on paid work outside the family often conflicts with that spent for the family at home. Other theories focus on the role of individual resources in the allocation of time for childcare. According to the theory of “relative resources and bargaining power” (Lundberg & Pollak, 1996; Lundberg & Rose, 1999), the higher the job position and the professional success of an individual, and the higher his/her share of (household) income, the greater is his/her bargaining power within the household with regard to unpaid domestic work (Thomson 1990). Hence, roles are not solely predetermined by gender, but are also strongly influenced by the relative earning power of each partner.

In increasingly prevalent non-traditional family forms, especially stepfamilies, family management is an even more complex issue. The “doing family” approach, which is an extension of the “doing gender” approach, is considered useful when studying such complex family forms (Morgan, 1999; Smart, 2000; Nelson, 2006). Similarly to the ‘doing gender’ approach, the ‘doing family’ approach stresses that family life is socially constructed. It focuses on how families embed their everyday family lives in internal daily routines such as doing meals and (e.g. bed time) rituals, including activities and time with children, housework, and external social activities such as work as well as unexpected events e.g. illness of a child or frequent business trips (Jurczyk et al., 2009). It is assumed that the organization of family life poses greater challenges for stepfamilies than for traditional nuclear families since their family network (internally and externally) is much more complex. For example, although former partners live separated they may still be linked together in many ways; children whose parents live apart may move between the homes of the parents; (step)grandparents may become essential in creating family, that is managing everyday family life. Thus the increase of non-traditional family constellations calls for a closer exploration of “doing family” in such multilocal family types (Schier & Proske, 2010).

5.2 Empirical findings and research gaps

Despite the growing tendency towards blurring boundaries in modern societies, we know fairly little about its consequences for gender roles and gender practices in families, which

may interact with changing working conditions. There is some research in the U.S. which looked at certain dimensions of flexibility and their impacts on families (Hochschild, 1997; Presser, 2003). For Europe, the Globalife Project examined the consequences of globalization on the life course of men and women (Mills et al., 2005). Literature on breadwinning women in western societies is rather limited. The few quantitative studies on the topic usually have a national focus (see Eggebeen & Knoester, 2001; Bloemen & Stancanelli, 2007 for France; Kanji, 2013 for the UK; for the US see Brennan, Barnett & Gareis, 2001; Winkler, McBride & Andrews, 2005). Qualitative studies from the US focus mostly on gender-identity in relation to breadwinning women (Macmillan & Gartner, 1999; Medved, 2009; Meisenbach, 2010; Chesley, 2011).

Findings on the relationship between the work status of women and the division of household work are somewhat mixed. Many studies suggest that women still do the bulk of housework regardless their working arrangement (see Grunow et al., 2012; Zabel & Heintz-Martin, 2012; Bianchi et al., 2000). There is no uniform evidence that full-time working women have a more egalitarian division of household duties than part-time working women do (Wengler, Trappe & Schmitt, 2008; Keddi & Zerle-Elsäßer, 2012), nor is there consistent evidence that breadwinning women refuse to follow a traditional role segregation with regard to household tasks (Klenner, Menke & Pfahl, 2012; Klammer, Neukirch & Weßler-Poßberg, 2012). So far, there are still research gaps as to how they deal with the multiple burden of work and household, family life and/or fertility decisions, in particular under conditions of new forms of family life and multilocal families, and how they handle the every-day challenges in practice (Knijn & Smit, 2009; Rijken & Knijn, 2009).

As women are more active in the labour market and are increasingly highly educated, their expectations about fathering and fathers' behaviour concerning the reconciliation of work and family are changing. Studies on "new fathers" suggest that young families strive for an equal (or more equal) division of labour (S. Lewis, 1997; Fthenakis, 1999; Bianchi et al., 2000; Zulehner, 2003; Matzner, 2004; Zerle & Krok 2008; United Nations, 2011). Parental leave uptake by fathers, flexible work practices and how they include care-giving in their construction of masculinity have been studied by Brandth and Kvande (1998, 2001, 2002) and by O'Brien, Brandt and Kvande (2007).

Empirical evidence of how mothers' employment is associated with fathers' time with children is inconclusive (see studies reviewed by Craig, 2007; Pailhé & Solaz, 2008). Similarly, there are mixed findings on the extent to which fathers' own employment schedules are associated with their time with children (Sayer, Bianchi & Robinson, 2004; Romano & Bruzzese, 2007; Pailhé & Solaz, 2008). Conversely, in a recent comparative study Craig and Mullan (2011) find that parent's work arrangements and education relate only modestly to shares of childcare, but this relationship depends on the context. Other European studies find a higher degree of participation in childcare among more educated fathers with more children and with a working partner (Di Giulio & Carrozza, 2003; Smith, 2004; Tanturri, 2006; Tanturri & Mencarini, 2009).

The different theories typically used to explain gender imbalance and negotiations within the couples seem not to be completely adequate to explain the division of childcare between partners (Hofferth, 2001; Bittman, Craig & Folbre, 2004; Craig and Bittman, 2008). Unlike housework, which is reduced as paid work hours increase, mothers maintain their childcare time by cutting back on their own leisure, personal care, and sleep (Craig, 2007). This suggests that employed mothers may actively limit fathers' care through gate-keeping and hampering their involvement with the children. Mothers might do this because they wish to retain control of a domain they feel expert in, or they do not trust fathers to deliver as high a standard of care as they themselves provide (Bianchi & Milkie, 2010; Craig & Mullan, 2011). Father's time with children may reflect parents' different values, resources, and opportunities (Coltrane, 2007). In addition, father's time with children varies across countries according to welfare regimes, family and employment policies and the tax and benefit system, as well as social norms (Gornick & Meyers, 2009; Lewis, 2009; Anxo et al., 2011). Interesting examples of comparative research in European countries can be found in Gauthier, Smeeding & Furstenberg (2004), Sullivan et al. (2009), Anxo et al. (2011), Craig & Mullan (2011), Smith Koslowski (2011); Hook & Wolfe (2012). Yet little research has examined cross-national differences in how childcare is shared between partners within various types of households in different welfare regimes and very few studies have explored in detail which type of childcare fathers perform compared to mothers.

The complexity of everyday family life is even more pronounced in stepfamilies. The division of housework in such families (Snoeckx, Dehertogh & Mortelmans, 2008), their socio-demographic characteristics and their economic well-being are quite well documented

(Kreyenfeld & Martin, 2011). However, little research exists on how such families live their lives (Daly, 2003; Rönkä & Pirjo, 2009). The subjective well-being of children in stepfamilies is one indicator of fulfilled family life, because children are also an important part of the construction of the family life and the “success” of stepfamilies could depend on them. McDonald and DeMaris (2002) showed that stepchildren who have a strong relationship with the non-resident biological parent are most likely to have a poor relationship to the stepfather, if he strongly demands conformity. The relationship between the absent father and the child depends on the contact with him and the age of the child at separation (e.g. Weiss, 1982; Ainsworth, 1982; Cherlin & Furstenberg, 1994; Pasley & Moorefield, 2004). Stepfamily research often focuses on child and/or adolescent outcomes such as emotional and behavioural problems (Najman et al., 1997; Dunn et al., 1998; O’Connor et al., 2001) or emotional well-being (Sweeny, 2007). An overview of empirical literature showed little evidence that children in stepfamilies differ from children in other family types (Ganong & Coleman, 1984; Amato & Keith, 1991; Amato, 1994).

A further important aspect is the relationship between grandparents and grandchildren, which has not been studied broadly until recently (Uhlendorff, 2003). Since people are living to older and older ages, multigenerational bonds are becoming increasingly important (Bengston, 2001). A large body of studies has focused on the frequency of contact and the relationship closeness between grandparents and grandchildren (e.g. Uhlenberg & Hammill, 1998) but not on specific interactions (Mueller et al., 2002). Within the context of stepfamilies grandparents can have a stabilizing role during the separation process (Lussier et al., 2002). In other cases, when a separated partner does not support further contact to the “ex” parents-in-law, they might even lose contact to their grandchildren (Cherlin & Furstenberg, 1992). Grandparents in turn can also become step-grandparents and the question how they deal with such non-biological relatives might be an important research question. Studying grand parenting in stepfamilies can be very complex as a variety of relationships might be of interest, such as biological grandparenthood versus step-grandparenthood (Hagestad, 2006).

6 Coping strategies in family and work reconciliation under conditions of uncertainty and precariousness: Gender differences standardized

6.1 Prevalent theoretical approaches

In the large body of literature on childbearing decisions and behaviour, variations in fertility across and within countries have been increasingly seen as outcomes of coping strategies in work and family reconciliation under economic uncertainty and precariousness (Balbo et al., 2013). Micro-economic explanations consider reproductive decisions as part of a “utility maximizing” strategy, influenced by the costs and benefits of children (Becker, 1991). The model distinguishes between the income effect, indicating that those with higher incomes and (usually) higher education are able to have more children, and the cost (or price) effect, also known as opportunity cost, that implies higher cost of childbearing for the more educated in terms of foregone earnings while caring for a child, which in turn suppresses their fertility. Under conditions of gender-specific role division, the income effect has been seen prevalent among men, whereas the cost effect appeared stronger among women (Oppenheimer, 1994; Gustafsson, 2001; Rondinelli et al., 2008; Kalmijn, 2011). It has been pointed out though, that the negative impact of female employment on fertility, given rising female wages, should be more pronounced in countries that lack family policies designed to support successful reconciliation of motherhood and paid work (Bernhardt, 1993; Rindfuss et al., 2003; Engelhardt et al., 2004; Adsera, 2004, 2005; Mills et al., 2005; Del Boca & Wetzels, 2007; Matysiak, 2011). Also, as labour force participation has become an increasingly common aspect of the female role, the idea of gender role specialization has been increasingly questioned and a shift to income pooling within couples has been suggested (Cherlin, 2000). Economic uncertainties can further promote such a shift. Hence, while employment uncertainties, associated with lower income and less predictable future prospects, are expected to reduce couples’ willingness to enter parenthood or further extend a family (Adsera, 2005; Kreyenfeld et al., 2012), the increasing income effect of women’s wages can limit and perhaps counterbalance the negative impacts on fertility.

The theory of planned behaviour (TPB), from the field of social psychology, has also been applied in the literature of reproductive decision-making. It can provide important insights concerning the impact of uncertainty on family formation. As suggested by Ajzen (1991), people integrate past experiences such as occupational uncertainty, family relations and living conditions as major background factors into their reproductive decisions. These in turn can be

well approximated by the use of childbearing intentions, especially on short term, that is, to have a child within 2-3 years (Schoen et. al, 1999; Morgan, 2001; Morgan & Rackin, 2010). The intention-behaviour link is influenced by background factors, including economic uncertainty, constraining realization of births intended (Philipov, 2009).

Sociological explanations are frequently drawn upon when addressing childbearing decisions. One strand focuses on the value of children as a means of uncertainty reduction (Friedman et al., 1994), based on which poor economic prospects may push people to seek other ways of stability in life, such as having children. Another strand has focused on the idea of role incompatibility, more specifically on occupational factors and their compatibility with family life (Voydanoff, 1988; Bernardi, 2003; Bernardi et al., 2008). The work-family conflict and gender literature emphasizes that different occupational conditions aid men and women in the development of individual strategies to reconcile work and family (Hochschild & Manchunk, 1989; Bittman et al., 2003). The Capability Approach in turn has highlighted that a person's resources, including educational attainment and labour force attachment, can be considered as an indicator of her well-being, shaping her capabilities and agency to achieve valued functioning (Sen, 1993), such as having and caring for children even under prevailing economic uncertainty (Hobson & Oláh, 2006).

6.2. Empirical findings and research gaps

The relationship between women's labour market participation and fertility is complex, as was pointed out in the discussion above and in the empirical literature. Existing empirical evidence regarding economic security, in terms of employment and income, and fertility is far from consistent, partly because of varying institutional contexts and the use of different measures and methods. For instance, Adsera (2005; 2011) have found that a larger gender gap in aggregated unemployment has been associated with a delay in the transition to motherhood and to a further birth across Europe. Other studies have shown that women's income is positively associated with the transition to motherhood in Sweden, Denmark, Finland (Andersson, 2000; Vikat, 2004; Andersson et al., 2009), but not in West Germany (Andersson et al., 2009) or Norway (Kravdal, 2002). Vignoli et al. (2012) and Santarelli (2011) have found that permanent employment of both partners in Italy is associated with higher fertility, while less stable employment suppresses fertility. Yet Santarelli (2011) also showed that working women in Italy have lower first birth rates than non-working women. De la Rica and

Iza (2005) have shown that women in Spain who hold a fixed-term contract delay entry into motherhood compared to women with indefinite contracts. Kreyenfeld (2005; 2010) found no clear indication that economic uncertainty leads to a postponement of parenthood in Germany, yet she showed that highly educated women tend to postpone the transition to motherhood when unemployed or if they perceive their economic situation as insecure. Pailhé and Solaz (2012) have shown that male unemployment in France delays the transition to fatherhood, and that periods of insecure employment delay the first birth for women.

Research regarding economic uncertainty and childbearing intentions is less comprehensive, and rarely addresses men. Berninger et al. (2011), studying intentions in Germany, find a direct effect of income and an indirect effect of job security satisfaction on childbearing intentions, whereas for women no direct and only a weak indirect impact of precarious work could be observed. A book by Oláh and Fratzak (2013) addresses the association between insecure labour force attachment and childbearing intentions in five European countries with different work-life balance policies. The findings indicate that childbearing choices are related to perceived uncertainty and risk. However, the book relies on separate country studies using somewhat different approaches, methods, and data. To more clearly understand the linkage between the institutional context, economic uncertainty and childbearing intentions, more cross-national comparative studies are needed which take into account variations in family policies and prevailing gender norms. Taking this approach, Fahlén (2013) has shown how employment status and education interact in regard to first child intentions across ten European countries, and that perceived economic uncertainty (job and income insecurity) has a negative impact on intentions to have a first and additional child. This association is most salient among less educated women in countries with weaker work-family reconciliation policies (Fahlén, 2013).

As for the effect of women's wages on fertility, most studies showed a negative association (see Heckman & Walker, 1990 on Sweden; Merrigan & St Pierre, 1996 on Canada; Blacklow, 2006 on Australia; Andersson et al., 2009 on West Germany). There are, however, exceptions to this rule. For instance, Ronsen (2004) found no significant effect of women's wages on third births in Norway and Finland, while Tasiran (1995) established a positive effect of women's wages on first birth in Sweden and on first-third births in the US. The most recent study conducted for Denmark and Germany provides some evidence for the shift towards income pooling as the barriers to work and family reconciliation fade away (Andersson et al.,

2009). It shows that women's wages exert a clearly negative impact on first and second birth risks in Germany, while in Denmark these effects are positive.

One of the major impediments to the empirical research on the effects of women's wages on fertility has been the lack of data that would provide longitudinal information on women's wages and fertility. Due to these data shortcomings, empirical studies have tended to focus on investigating the effect of women's employment on fertility. Women's participation in paid work, in fact, usually provides the monetary basis which enables a person to set up a household, ensures her own and her family's livelihood and grants economic independence and welfare protection over the life course (Neyer et al., 2013b). These studies in general show that women's paid work has a negative impact on childbearing, but the magnitude of this effect is most pronounced in Southern European countries and insignificant in Nordic countries (Matysiak & Vignoli, 2008). This finding is consistent with the one of Andersson et al. (2009) suggesting a shift toward the income pooling with an improvement of the public support for working parents and an increase in gender equality. An insignificant effect of women's employment on first birth was also established in numerous post-socialist countries (see Kantorova, 2004 for Czech Republic; Kreyenfeld, 2004 for East Germany; Robert & Bukodi, 2005 for Hungary; Matysiak, 2009 for Poland). This is surprising, given that the collapse of state socialism led to the disappearance of public support for working parents, and to an increase in work-family tensions (Saxonberg & Sirovatka, 2006; Glass & Fodor, 2007). A possible explanation for this finding is that, consistent with the income pooling hypothesis, women in Eastern Europe might already have been established as income providers as a result of the longer periods of women's integration in the labour market in Eastern than in Western Europe. The latter effect might be additionally reinforced by aspirations to achieve Western living standards, which may be difficult to satisfy with one salary only.

7 Concluding thoughts

The de-standardization (and possible re-standardization) of the family life course in Europe (and elsewhere in the industrialized world), the significant knowledge gap on new forms of family life, transitions between old and new family forms and within-family relations, and the lack of explanations for the new patterns pose considerable challenges to policy-making. As pointed out by the FamilyPlatform, much remains to be known of the multiple ways in which women's increasing educational and economic attainment and men's declining economic

position in many European countries shape family lives, the decision-making processes about work and family, parenthood, the use of time in families and the daily and biographical practices of ‘doing family’ in old and new family forms in different policy contexts (Uhlendorff et al. 2011). In WP3 in the FamiliesAndSocieties project, we will address the research gaps discussed above.

We investigate the complex interplay between the new social roles of women and men and the diversity of family life in contemporary Europe in terms of (a) family formation and dissolution as well as parenthood, that is, transitions over the family life course, and (b) the organisation of family life (reconciliation of work and care). Increasing diversity of family forms is rooted in more diverse demographic behaviours, constitutive for the family life course, and in a gender divide of paid and unpaid work at the household level, both strongly related to changing gender roles. Besides in-depth studies on these processes, our focus is also on the parent-to-child relationships within diverse family forms, evolving family patterns of work and care, and strategies adopted to deal with insecure work conditions. Within this complex frame of research it is possible to explore how these processes intervene with well-being, on a macro-level (macro-level well-being - MBW), on the micro-level (subjective well-being - SBW) and in addition how macro-level and subjective well-being are interconnected.

Macro-level well-being is operationalized as *general socio-economic conditions*, measured in terms of, e.g., welfare regime, job security or gendered division of labour. Therefore, WP3 investigates the influence of (a) economic uncertainty/stress, (b) unequal division of labour by gender, and (c) transformation of welfare regimes on the family related processes under consideration. In particular, the following will be examined: (a) the influence of precarious work conditions on fertility intentions, union formation, and family life, (b) the influence of (socio-material) living conditions on gendered division of labour, and (c) the impact of policy transformation and general political perspectives on family transitions.

To operationalize subjective well-being (SWB) in survey-based research one can apply three concepts proposed by Zhou (2012): (a) the concept of *revealed preference or decision utility*, which focuses on whether expectations and desires are met, (b) *life satisfaction* or (c) *happiness*, which both focus on perception of satisfaction and/or happiness in process. Making use of survey data (e.g., ESS, EU-SILC, GGS) WP3 investigates individual expectations and desires towards gender roles at certain life course stages like becoming a

parent, doing stepfamilies, and balancing work and family life, incorporating aspects of general life satisfaction and of satisfaction in connection with transitions to partnership and parenthood, work, division of household work, and so forth. Perceived happiness and the transformation of happiness in everyday processes can be observed within our qualitative research on the transition to parenthood and stepfamily practices.

Interconnections between macro-level indicators and individual subjective well-being can be measured (a) via comparative research on family dynamics within several welfare regimes and socio-economic settings and (b) via individual resilience against conditions with the potential to threaten well-being, e.g., economic stress during precarious work situations, family dissolution or the transition to parenthood. Since research on families and gender roles under WP3 refers to several countries, comparisons of possible impacts of economic performance, working conditions, and family policies on subjective satisfaction or expectations will be done.

The qualitative research in WP3 allows assessing complex conditions for activities and practices that create well-being, decrease, or increase well-being. We aim to identify everyday practices that boost stress or decrease satisfaction. In addition, we want to investigate how and when wellbeing is meaningful to individuals. Being well off may have a different meaning under different settings. We also aim to disentangle how everyday well-being is intermingled with an overall life satisfaction. Short-term happiness may be not always related to long-term satisfaction and wellbeing is maybe not expected in every situation. We seek to explore on a more complex level how individuals build their expectations towards economic well-being, relationship satisfaction or happiness and how those expectations influence people's family behaviours and lives. Concerning new roles of men and women, we try to trace how the transformation or also the re-traditionalization of gendered positions affect hierarchies between the sexes, the stability of relationships, the intensity of family ties or the creation of new family forms. These processes are interlinked with the happiness or unhappiness of individuals. By analyzing the development of family forms and essential transitions in the family life course in different social, economic, and institutional contexts, and by substantiating these processes through in-depth ethnographic research WP3 will be able to depict and disentangle the processes of the production of well-being within family life course of different social groups and across different European contexts.

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