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EDITORIAL

Dear readers,

The last years have been characterised by important changes in people's lives and lifestyles and by strong evolutions in society, social structures and values. Eastern Europe has been recognized as a region that has experienced major socio-political and economic changes in the last decades. The impact of these transitions on families and their functioning has also been significant. The societies are witnessing a number of key changes in family structures – postponed parenthood, low fertility, single parenting, increased divorce rates, more births outside marriage etc.

This issue of thematic series provides a timely and comprehensive analysis of family issues in Eastern Europe. It brings together scholars from Eastern European countries. The authors explain family processes in particular countries or in a cross-national perspective, focusing on the historic, social and economic contexts and the impact they have on families.

Beáta Nagy focuses on how the (female) employment rate and willingness of becoming parents could be increased in welfare states. The article argues for the correlation of the developments on these two areas according to the results of recent researches: high employment rate – high fertility rate; low employment rate – low fertility rate. Vlada Stankuniene gives an overview of the two decade fluctuation of fertility rates in Lithuania in the context of the selected Eastern and Central European countries, which turned to the market economy and democratic society in the beginning of the 1990s, and of the Western countries, where similar changes had taken place earlier, but less dramatically. In terms of future trends of fertility in Slovakia, Michaela Potančoková sees a further increase of the total fertility rate. TFR is expected to rise to about 1,5 – 1,6 children per woman within upcoming 5 years purely due to the recuperation of postponed births. Despite the recuperation, TFR will not recover back to the previous levels of about 2 children per woman. The author indicates that although Slovakia has one of the youngest populations in Europe at the moment, this will change to the one of the fastest ageing ones in the upcoming decade. Alexey Pamporov discusses in his contribution the demographic developments, value shifts and the public policies concerning the family issues in Bulgaria. Dana Hamplová indicates the fact that non-marital fertility has been increasing in Czech Republic in the last decades. This phenomenon is especially significant among lower social classes, which creates an important polarization between relatively well-off and well-educated two-parent families and relatively poor and low-educated mother-headed families. Thus, the author assumes that such polarization will lead to increasing social inequalities within the next generation. The paper by Alena Křížková, Hana Maříková, Radka Dudová and Zdeněk Sloboda focuses on organisations and the conditions for working parents in terms of combining work and care and how those conditions are set up and negotiated in organisations. The research draws on three case studies comparing pairs of companies active in the Czech Republic and in one of the following countries – Germany, France, and Sweden – in the field of engineering. Mare Ainsaar and Pirjo Paajanen analyse three prevailing types of reasons of the postponement of births – resources, life stage, partner-related in Estonia and Finland. Maria Avdeeva compares the efficiency of French and Russian family policy and examines such measures of the French family policy that can be applied in Russia and positively influence the fertility. The paper by Cristina Rat investigates how family policies in post-socialist Romania maintained unfavourable conditions of entitlement for parents with irregular participation on the formal labour market. It argues that the regulations on maternity benefits, childcare leave, and means-tested child allowance targeted primarily the fertility behaviour of women, and failed to meet the quest for "social investment" welfare and support for balancing workplace and domestic duties.

Additionally, the publication offers information (including contact information and links to homepages) on universities, research institutions, academic networks and scholarly journals focusing on family research.

Editorial team

CONTRIBUTIONS

Beáta Nagy¹

The Paradox of Employment and Fertility: an Introduction²

In recent decades, studies focused on how the (female) employment rate and willingness of becoming parents could be increased in welfare states. This paper outlines the matter of features characterizing the relationship of these two aspects. The main question is which factors influence if employment and fertility rates strengthen or weaken each other. This article argues for the correlation of the developments on these two areas according to the results of recent researches: high employment rate – high fertility rate; low employment rate – low fertility rate. On which part of the scale a society can be found, is influenced by various factors, such as: whether the welfare system supports the expansion of high quality child care institutions for children up to the age of 3; how long it alienates young mothers from the labor market (including even on the level of expectations or norms); and how well-balanced the division of tasks is at home between the partners (e.g. the importance of the active role of fathers). Finally, the study outlines some arguments aiming that the increasing equalization and parallel expansion of female employment can be considered as important factors contributing to economic development and social integration.

Two large, long-term challenges face the countries of the European Union: they need to increase their employment rate (one of the goals set by the Lisbon Strategy), and promote and encourage fertility, the willingness to have children. Women are clearly in the focus of both goals: in one case as the main source of labor supply and in the other as adults capable of giving birth to children. In this short paper, we wish to look at how these two areas are related and at how these two exceptionally important areas for society can be harmonized. Many more questions could be raised and it is worth mentioning a few of the issues that have been widely discussed in Hungary in recent years. What labor market theories can explain women's appearance in the world of paid work (Belinszki 1997)? Why are far fewer children born than the number that young people of child-bearing age consider ideal (Kapitány and Spéder 2009)? How can families be encouraged and supported so that the planned children are born? How could the labor market discrimination against couples having children and raising children be revealed and brought to public notice? What influence do family policy supports have on the presence of women with young children in the labor market (Bálint and Köllő, 2008; Scharle 2007)? What attitudes does society have towards women's employment (Blaskó 2005; Pongráczné 2005), and what do the women themselves who are in the focus of this debate want? Finally, why do these questions still not arise in relation to men too? Do the changing male roles have an influence on these social processes? To say that only women can give birth is now a weak argument. Giddens points out that if we reverse the statements, expectations and stories referring to the genders and they then appear as strange, ridiculous or hurtful, we are dealing with gender stereotypes (Giddens citing research by Statham 1995).

This long list of questions could be continued. This is an area where interest has greatly increased over the past decade in Hungary too, but there has been little research giving a comprehensive picture that could be accepted by representatives of all disciplines. The reason for this could be the strongly normative attitude that can be encountered. However, positions and approaches burdened with value considerations are not conducive to reaching a consensus in scholarly debate. Since the issues are complex and it cannot be the task of a brief introductory text to give a comprehensive analysis, I shall focus in the following mainly on the connection between employment and childbirth as two important transitions in the life career.

Today a young Hungarian woman – let us call her Anna – completes her (higher) studies on the average at the age of 23-24 years, enters her first marriage at the age of 27.5 years and is 29 when she has her first (in many cases only) child (Eurostat 2009). Because of the increasing number of years spent in education, the difficulties in finding employment, and the diversification of individual goals these stages in the life career are occurring later. Anna moreover is pondering how to solve the dilemma of having a child but still being present in the labor market. This is a question that her parents or her mother did not yet have to face in this way. Is Anna (and her partner) alone in solving this question or do they have support from someone outside the family? Moreover, the

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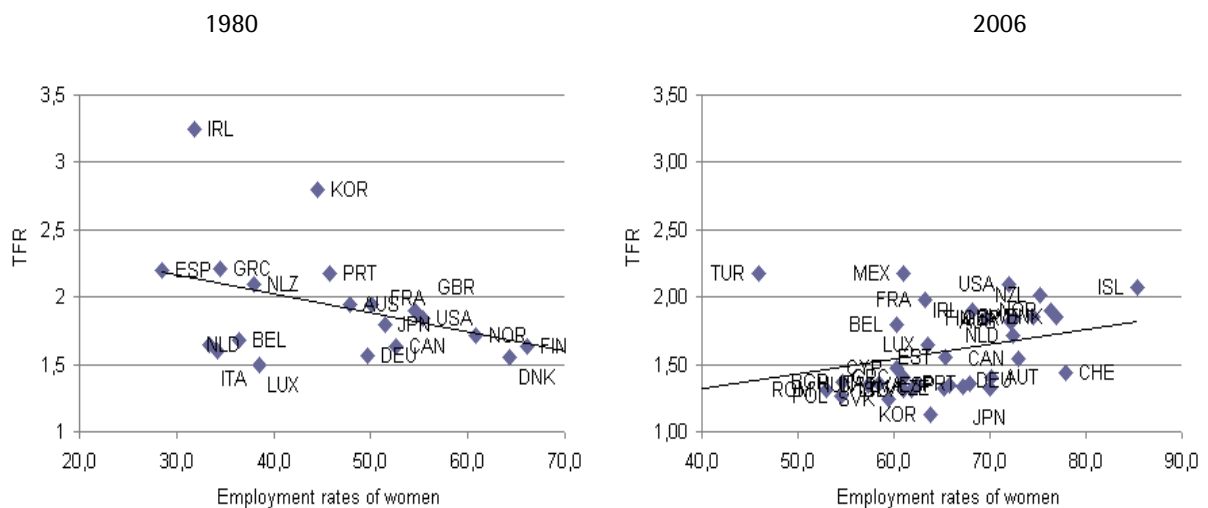
² This paper was originally published in the *Review of Sociology*, Vol. 15 (2009) p. 47-56 (Hungary).

majority of young women have to see that because of the global changes practically all young people (men and women alike) face a high degree of uncertainty. In the midst of so much uncertainty, how can they decide on such major questions as setting up a family and becoming a parent?

Researches show that young men are postponing the decision to set up a family and have children; this behavior obviously influences young women's prospects of becoming mothers (Blossfeld et al. 2006b). Blossfeld and co-authors regard young people as the losers of globalization because their labor market positions are considerably weaker than those of the middle-aged and even of the older age group. The research examining the developed countries found at the end of the process the phenomenon that can also be observed in Hungary, namely that young women with a low level of schooling opt to have children relatively early because they regard this as a suitable role or alternative, while highly qualified women only have children if they receive suitable support from the welfare state (Blossfeld et al. 2006a).

In the economically developed countries, a close negative connection could be observed over a long period between women's employment and fertility. It was quite clear in most countries that the consequence of women's employment was a decline in the willingness to have children, and if women decide to enter the labor market in large numbers there is a high price to be paid: a decline in the number of children. OECD data revealed this fundamental correlation already in 1980 – as the figure below also shows – and economic analyses also examined this connection (see, for example, Fuchs 2003).

However, the situation changed radically over the last two or three decades, and now the two variables typically move together: in countries with a higher rate of female employment fertility is higher (these countries are typically the Nordic countries and the United States), while in contrast in the Mediterranean countries both variables have low values.



A number of Central European countries, including Hungary and Poland are close to this pattern: public policy cannot be satisfied with the levels of either fertility or employment. As Table 1 also shows, the employment level for Hungarian women is 50.6%, and for Polish women 52.4%, although while the Polish figures showed a rise, Hungarian female employment declined up to 2008. It was only in Hungary and Romania that the female employment rate declined in the last two years.

Table 1. Female employment rate (15–64 years)

	2006	2008
EU27	57.3	59.1
EU15	58.8	60.4
BE	54.0	56.2
BG	54.6	59.5
CZ	56.8	57.6
DK	73.4	74.3
DE	62.2	65.4
EE	65.3	66.3
IE	59.3	60.2
EL	47.4	48.7

ES	53.2	54.9
FR	58.8	60.7
IT	46.3	47.2
CY	60.3	62.9
LV	62.4	65.4
LT	61.0	61.8
LU	54.6	55.1
HU	51.1	50.6
MT	33.4	37.4
NL	67.7	71.1
AT	63.5	65.8
PL	48.2	52.4
PT	62.0	62.5
RO	53.0	52.5
SI	61.8	64.2
SK	51.9	54.6
FI	67.3	69.0
SE	70.7	71.8
UK	65.8	65.8

(Source: EC 2009.)

The view that if women were to withdraw/be forced out of the world of paid work the fertility level would raise has been without foundation for a long while. This prediction was never proved true in the developed countries and in Sweden even led to the so-called feminist paradox. Examining the period 1960–1997 Chesnais reached the conclusion that: "feminism and pronatalism work together; in societies that alleviate the burden of working or potentially working mothers, the fertility rate is higher than in societies where traditional roles prevail" (Chesnais 1998: 83). Although the Swedish birth rate has declined somewhat since then, it is still well above the European average. It would therefore be a mistake to think that women's absence from the labor market will bring positive results reflected in an increase in the number of births because no sign pointing in this direction could be seen in recent decades.

The feminist paradox thus shows that the growth of employment in the developed countries has not had a negative influence on the birth rate, but it cannot be said that having children does not have an impact on employment. In an overview of the relevant literature, Scharle (2007) states that the presence of young children reduced women's participation in the labor force, but it is not clear that a cause and effect relationship can be found behind this. Almost certainly a big role is played by a third factor comprising social norms, social institutions and financial incentives (the arguments of Engelhardt et al. 2004, cited by Scharle 2007: 160).

The seemingly trivial connection between births and employment rates can also be examined by focusing on the way in which benefits related to childbirth affect the labor market behavior of women with young children. A few studies have explored the impact of the system of family supports in the labor market activity of women with young children (Bálint and Köllő 2008; Scharle 2007). Now also based on economic analyses, these have pointed out that the Hungarian child-raising supports in cash represent a strong counter-incentive to (re)integration of women into the labor market. Bálint and Köllő also showed that for a long while now the present system of child supports not only serves the purpose originally attributed to it, that is, to make up for earlier lost income, but functions as unemployment and welfare aid for women with a low level of schooling and with only weak or no ties to the labor market.

On the subject of the dysfunctions of the system of child supports in general the authors write: "The present system encourages or forces working women to be absent (for an unnecessarily long period from the viewpoint of child welfare), while it does not assist (or does not assist well) those in a poor situation in the labor market to return to work or enter the labor market." (Bálint and Köllő 2008: 24–25). An important condition for making this return possible is support for the system of child care institutions, making the labor market flexible, and expanding the demand for labor.

In her analysis Scharle (2007) added social norms to these factors, which in the case of Hungary are still strongly characterized by the separation of gender roles, sending women to the household and men to the labor market and which appears in the uneven distribution of housework (Pongráczné 2005). We already knew that Hungarian women do far more housework than in any other country of the EU (Bukodi 2005), and those who appear in the labor market practically perform as 'superwomen' simultaneously in both areas. Scharle uses even stronger terms

in this connection: "the average couple in Eastern Europe may renegotiate the allocation of household duties when the man works longer hours, but not when the woman takes up paid job" (Scharle 2007: 166). In contrast in the Nordic countries the institution of active fatherhood has appeared in which the father has not only a biological role but also a social role: for a long while now the focus of women's equality has not been giving women rights and their participation in the labor market but involving men in family life (Nagy 2008).

If we examine the employment figures for 2007 we find at least two things: one is the continued exceptionally high negative impact of childbirth (or more precisely the presence of children aged 0–6) on the employment rate of women, and the opposite but considerably smaller effect of the same factor in the case of men. Within the European Union Hungary is the second after the Czech Republic (43.2%) in this respect. In the case of Hungarian women, raising young children means a 33.5 percentage point lag in employment. It can be seen that this is far below the EU average and the results of the old member states where absence from the labor market as a consequence of having children is much smaller. The extremely high impact in the Czech Republic can be attributed to the same factors as in Hungary but there a fourth year has been added to the three-year child care leave. This fourth year does not offer any protection in the labor market and those who take advantage of the opportunity receive a very low cash support during this period. This means that we have to do with hidden unemployment of women with low qualifications. They find themselves in a trap that often leads to prolonged unemployment (Křížková et al. 2009). These findings coincide with the results cited above of the analysis by Bálint and Köllő (2008).

Table 2. Employment impact of parenthood 2007*

	Men	Women
EU27	-9.5	12.6
EU15	-8.9	11.6
CZ	-5.9	43,2
HU	-9.1	35.1
SK	-7.9	33.5
PL	-14.8	9.9

(Source: EC 2009.)

*The difference in percentage points in employment rates (age group 20–49) without the presence of any children and with presence of a child aged 0–6

It can be seen from the Table that the Central European countries are characterized by a similar tradition: the system of child-raising leave keeps women absent from the labor market for years while in the case of men the presence of a young child intensifies labor market activity. In Poland the benefits in cash represent a relatively small share of GDP and so provide less incentive for absence (Scharle 2007: 168).

The reason why we selected these four countries is that in recent years Saxonberg and Sirovátka (2006) have studied changes in family policy in the post-socialist countries through the example of these same four countries. As we know from the article by Bálint and Köllő (2008), child-raising support that acts as social aid is a counterincentive to women's employment. Saxonberg and Sirovátka found that the question of men's role did not even arise in the family policy of the post-socialist countries, there was a strengthening of re-familization away from the earlier de-familization, that is, the tasks related to reproduction are being gradually shifted and returned to the family. There were both explicit and implicit signs of re-familization, which together increased the burdens on women within the family, thereby reducing their chances of appearing in the labor market. Such explicit signs were the conservative family policy and the strong separation of gender roles. An implicit sign could be if maintenance of the child care institution was not a state or community task but was placed on a market basis, making it inaccessible for large masses of the society so that it became 'taken for granted' that women remain at home to make up for the inadequacies of the welfare system.

The long parental leave and the universal, low benefit (such as the child care allowance – gyes – in Hungary) result in explicit re-familization and also encourage the continued existence of separate gender roles. In these cases it will be the women who leave the labor market to raise children and the men will be the main breadwinners. It is quite clear that while the system of child-raising supports has been created in a gender-neutral way, i.e. it is available for both men and women it is almost exclusively women who take child-raising leave. According to Frey's analysis, in 2007 10,000 men and 235,000 women were receiving child care allowance or child care benefit (gyed) and a further 45,000 women child-raising support (gyet) (Frey 2009: 35). It is only marginal to our topic, but the attitude to retirement reveals a lot about the social norms. In this connection Frey wrote the following: "The increase of 40,000 in the number of persons of working age on pension was made up almost entirely of women." (Frey 2009: 35) This increase occurred between 2005 and 2007 and could be related to the raising of the retirement age for women to 62 years.

It can be said that in all the post-socialist countries access to child-raising supports is formulated in a gender-neutral manner, but the focus is still on women and on strengthening the male breadwinner model, an aspiration that coincides with the society's attitudes (Blaskó 2005; Pongráczné 2005). In short, the parental leave system, the access to and the quality of child care institutions, and labor market policies all act in the direction of re-familization (Saxonberg and Sirovátka 2006).

Thoughts for further consideration

The above reflections on the post-socialist countries almost exclusively reported that the change to a conservative direction that followed the change of system – that had actually already been prepared by the socialist family policy of the 1980s (Ferge 1999) – defined the economic and social role of men and women in a traditional way. While the international examples cited increasingly indicate that in the mean time the appearance of women in the labor market (*dual earner families*), and even the active role taken by men within the family (*dual earner-dual carer families*) has become a key question.

It is in itself a value for society if its members participate more actively in the labor market processes: the yield from investment in human capital rises, the number of taxpayers increases, the number of dependants, i.e. the proportion of those in a (long-term) dependent situation, declines. A recent report of the World Economic Forum, for example, explicitly pointed to two connections related to the gender gap index: one is the competitiveness index, the other the volume of per capita GDP (WEF 2007). These connections show that the countries that are growing dynamically are the ones that are making use of the human capital, capabilities and skills of both genders and are shaping a society that is democratic also from the viewpoint of the genders.

In addition, activity in the labor market provides protection against poverty, especially the poverty of families with children. Employment is the most effective help in avoiding the poverty trap; earning activity by the parents can also protect the children from poverty, as the figures in Table 3 show.

Table 3. Key indicators on birth rates, female employment and child poverty

	Total fertility rate	Employment/population ratio by group				Child poverty	
	2005	Women, 2006		Mothers, 2005		Sole parents, 2005 or latest year	around 2000 per cent
	Children per woman	All	Part-time	Youngest child <2	Youngest child aged 3–5		
Australia	1.81	65.5	40.7	48.3		49.9	1.6
Austria	1.41	63.5	3.4	6.5	62.4	75.0	1.3
Belgium	1.72	53.6	34.7	63.8	63.3	62.0	4.1
Canada	1.53	69.0	26.2	58.7	68.1	67.6	13.6
Czech Republic	1.28	56.8	5.6	19.9	50.9	63.0	7.2
Denmark	1.80	73.2	25.6	71.4	77.8	82.0	2.4
Finland	1.80	67.3	14.9	52.1	80.7	70.0	3.4
France	1.94	57.1	22.9	53.7	63.8	70.1	7.3
Germany	1.34	61.5	39.2	36.1	54.8	62.0	12.8
Greece	1.28	47.5	12.9	49.5	53.6	82.0	12.5
Hungary	1.32	51.2	4.2	13.9	49.9	..	13.1
Iceland	2.05	81.6	26.0	83.6		81.0	..
Ireland	1.88	58.8	34.9	56.3		44.9	15.7
Italy	1.34	46.3	29.4	47.3	50.6	78.0	15.7
Japan	1.26	58.8	40.9	28.5	47.5	83.6	14.3
Korea	1.08	53.1	12.3	..	..	..	..
Luxembourg	1.70	53.7	27.2	58.3	58.7	94.0	..
Mexico	2.20	42.9	27.6	..	..	..	24.8
Netherlands	1.73	66.0	59.7	69.4	68.3	56.9	9.0
New Zealand	2.01	68.4	34.5	46.6		53.2	14.6
Norway	1.84	72.3	32.9	..	..	69.0	3.6
Poland	1.24	48.2	16.3	..	..	..	9.9
Portugal	1.40	62.0	13.2	69.1	71.8	77.9	15.6
Slovak	1.25	51.9	4.1	23.1	46.6	..	..

Republic							
Spain	1.34	54.0	21.4	45.1	47.9	84.0	15.6
Sweden	1.77	72.1	19.0	71.9	81.3	81.9	3.6
Switzerland	1.42	71.1	45.7	58.3	61.7	83.8	6.8
Turkey	2.19	23.8	17.8	..	..	..	21.1
United Kingdom	1.80	66.8	38.8	52.6	58.3	56.2	16.2
United States	2.05	66.1	17.8	54.2	62.8	73.8	21.6
OECD	1.63	56.8	26.4	..	..	70.6	12.0

(Source: OECD 2007)

The above examples, as well as social opinion, almost always focus their thinking and analyses on dual earner families. However, the rate of divorces per thousand inhabitants is increasing and the proportion of remarriages within all marriages is declining. According to the latest figures, 45% of marriages in Hungary end in divorce (Eurostat 2009: 35). There is a steady increase in the proportion of one-parent families for whom the question of whether women (and men) should work is not a real issue. More and more the real question is how family policy helps young parents to place their children under three in good quality and affordable child care institutions and whether it recognises that conservative family policy has not fulfilled the hopes placed in it.

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Vlada Stankuniene¹

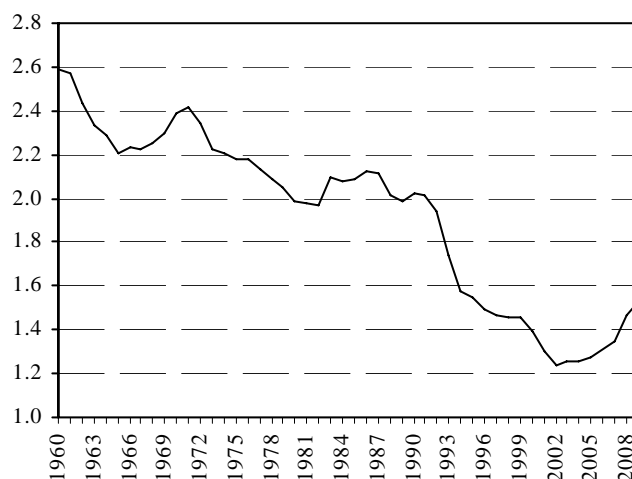
Changing Fertility in Lithuania during the Last Two Decades

During the last twenty years, fertility has changed noticeably in Lithuania. Since the early 1990s, period fertility rates have been rapidly and markedly dropping in Lithuania. A swift decline of fertility rates lasted until the beginning of 21st century touching down at a very low level. Although recently total fertility rate has turned off to a slow increase, still, it remains on a very low level until now. The first childbirth is put off for a later period. More and more children are born out of wedlock. Similar trends however, have been observed in the other Eastern and Central European countries during this period as well. This article gives an overview of the two decade fluctuation of fertility rates in Lithuania in the context of the selected Eastern and Central European countries, which turned to the market economy and democratic society in the beginning of the 1990s, and of the Western countries, where similar changes had taken place earlier, but less dramatically.

Trends of fertility in Lithuania

Prior to the onset towards the lowest-low fertility: a sketch of long-term childbearing trends. As it is demonstrated by the dynamics of period total fertility rate², a trend towards decline of fertility has actually been typical for Lithuania throughout the whole post-war period. The increases in the total fertility rate observed in the late 1960s - early 1970s, and mid-1980s were rather inconspicuous and too weak to reverse the overall downward trend of fertility (Fig. 1).

Figure 1. Total fertility rate in Lithuania, 1960–2009



(Sources: Statistics Lithuania 2008, 2009, 2010.)

In the post-war years while Lithuania was intensively moving towards an industrial society, the changes in the patterns of demographic trends were going on including as a component, a shift of fertility from the high level typical of an agrarian society to the level sufficient to ensure a normal replacement of population (where total fertility rate is close to 2). Since the beginning of 1990s however, fertility in Lithuania has gone down to a very low level that is far below the level assuring population replacement (Fig. 1). What is a likely outcome of this extremely rapid and large-scale drop in fertility rates that started in Lithuania during the last decade of the 20th c.?

Change of fertility level during the last two decades. The main indicators of the demographic statistics illustrating the decrease in fertility in Lithuania in the 1990s reveal a really high speed and scope of the ongoing changes.

The absolute number of children born decreased from 56,900 in 1990 to 30,000 in 2002 (the lowest value of the indicator). In the later years, births advanced slightly with 36,600 children born in 2009 (Statistics Lithuania, 2010).

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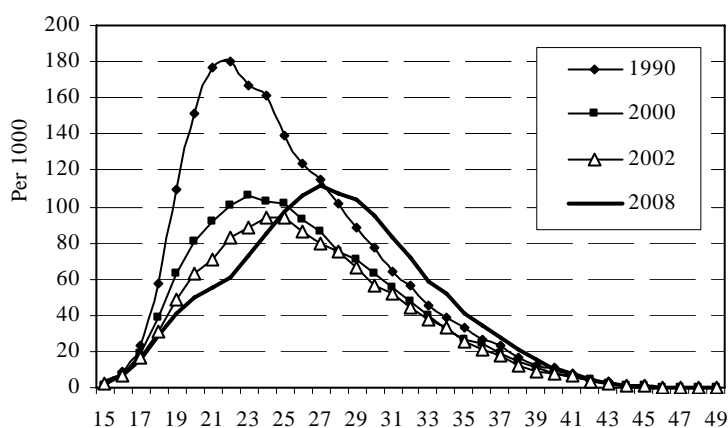
² *Total fertility rate* is statistically defined as the average number of children that would be born to a woman over her lifetime if current age-specific fertility rates were to continue.

The total fertility rate was still close to 2 or above in the early 1990s (in 1990–2.03). Later, from 1992 it started decreasing rapidly, and over the years 2002–2005 dropped below 1.3 (1.24–1.27), i.e. during a single decade fertility fell from the level ensuring population replacement³ to a very low fertility level labelled by Kohler et al. as “lowest-low” fertility (Kohler, Billari, Ortega, 2002).

Although in 2006–2009 the total fertility rate was slightly rising in Lithuania (Fig. 1), it still remains on a very low level—total fertility rate is close to 1.5 (according to the preliminary data, the total fertility rate was 1.53 in 2009; Statistics Lithuania, 2010).

Changes of fertility by mother's age. During the period of rapid decline of fertility (until 2002, where the lowest low level was reached) the pattern of fertility by the age of women was changing significantly and the age-specific fertility rates were also going down for all the groups of fertile age of women, and notably, for the young-aged women. In 1990–2002, the age-specific fertility rate of 18–35-year-old women dropped significantly and even more so for women aged 20–25 (Fig. 2). The fertility rates of women at the age of 21–22 were falling down drastically. The age-specific fertility rate of women in this age-group, which was at its highest prior to the onset of the recent drop in fertility (in 1990 it stood at about 180 childbirths per 1000 women of this age), has decreased by more than twice (in 2002 it was about 80). Later, since 2006, the signs of fertility recuperation appeared but only in the older age-groups: age-specific fertility rates of the 26–39-year-old women are showing a trend towards increase. During the nearly twenty-year-period the intensity peak of childbearing behaviour has shifted from the 21–22-year-old group to the 26–29-year-old group (Fig. 2). Thus a significantly lowered fertility at the young age was somewhat replaced by its growth at an older age. This demonstrates not only a decline of fertility, but also that childbirth is being postponed for an older age.

Figure 2. Age-specific fertility rates in Lithuania, 1990, 2000, 2002, 2008



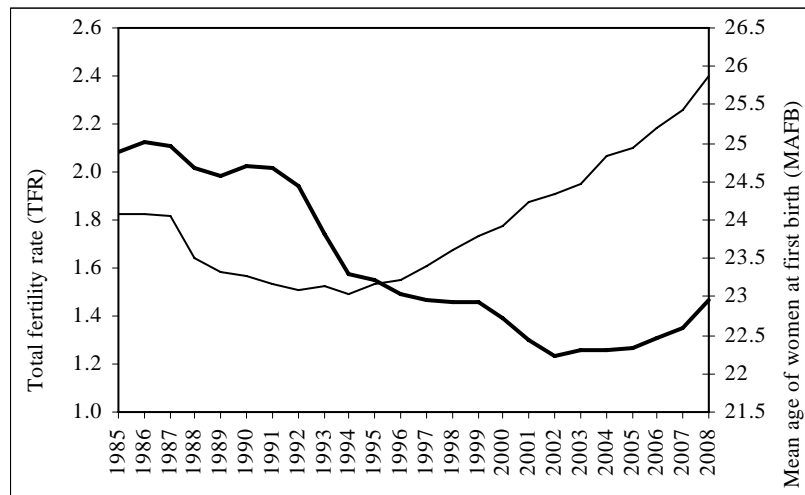
(Sources: Statistics Lithuania 2008, 2009.)

The same is demonstrated by the change in the mean age of women at first childbirth. At present women at first childbirth are about 3 years older than they were at the beginning of the past decade, i.e. before the turn to the postponement of childbearing to older age. In 1994 the mean age at first childbirth was 23 years (the lowest ever level), and in 2008 - 25.9 (Fig. 3).

Both the age-specific fertility rates and the mean age of women at first childbirth indicate that fertility ageing has been observed since the mid-1990s in Lithuania, i.e. children are born to the women of an increasingly older age.

³ In the developed countries, total fertility rate of 2.1 ensures a replacement of population and is referred to as the replacement fertility rate.

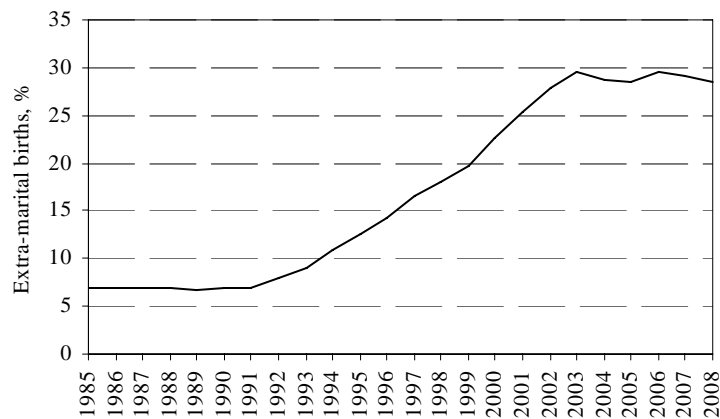
Figure 3. Total fertility rate and mean age of women at first birth in Lithuania, 1985–2008



(Sources: Statistics Lithuania 2008, 2009, 2010.)

Increase of extra-marital births. Since the early 1990s, the rate of extra-marital births started to change its long-term trend in Lithuania. For a long time the percentage of extra-marital births has been low in Lithuania—around 5–7% to the total number of births. However, this indicator has risen from 7% in 1990 to nearly 30% at the moment (in 2008—28.5%; Statistics Lithuania, 2010) (Fig. 4). It was pushed upwards the most specifically by the rapidly growing proportion of the children born to cohabiting couples (children registered at the application of both parents), which rose from 2% in 1990 to 20.5% in 2008. Over the period, the percentage of children born to single mothers (children registered at the application only of the mother) increased from 4.6% to 7.9% (Statistics Lithuania 2006, 2009). These indicators of the vital demographic statistics demonstrate a spread of cohabiting couples, a new type of family for Lithuania.

Figure 4. Extra-marital births, 1985–2008, percentages



(Sources: Statistics Lithuania: Demographic yearbooks of different years.)

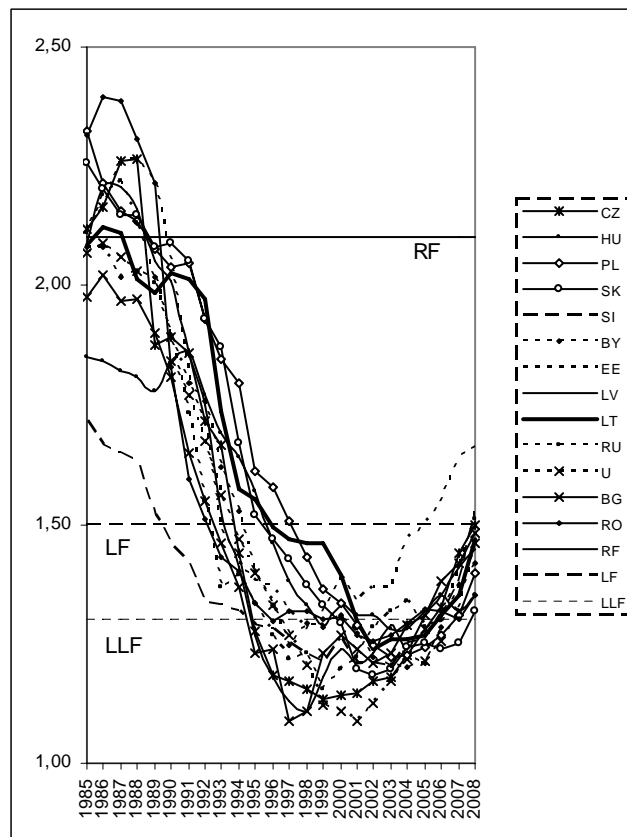
A conclusion could be drawn that over the past two decades the pattern of childbearing behaviour has essentially changed in Lithuania: not only significantly fewer children are born, but also childbirths are being postponed for an older age. Besides, more and more children are born out of wedlock. Moreover, it should be noted that the fertility below the replacement level has been fluctuating as well, by going down and up the lowest-low fertility mark (total fertility rate - 1.3). Furthermore, the mean age of women at the initial stage of the birth rate drop, i.e. in the early 1990s, was still maintaining the post-war fertility rejuvenation trend with the births given at an increasingly younger age, but from the mid-1990s the trend shifted towards fertility ageing and has maintained the course since (Fig. 3).

Are such changes of the fertility pattern typical for Lithuania only?

Changes of fertility pattern in Lithuania in comparison to other European countries: a brief overview

In most Eastern and Central European countries likewise in Lithuania, a rapid drop of fertility rates from the level close to the replacement fertility (RF), where total fertility rate is close to 2, to the level far below this level, started around the year 1990. Over the period of 5-10 years fertility rates in the countries fell to the lowest-low level (LLF) (Fig. 5). The Czech Republic, Belarus, Latvia and Slovenia were the first to hit the lowest-low fertility as early as 1995, with Lithuania closing the cycle in 2002. The lowest-low fertility remained the longest (10 years and over) in the Czech Republic, Slovenia, Latvia, Belarus, Ukraine, Bulgaria, and Latvia, whereas Estonia only just touched the lowest-low fertility in 1998 and got away from such a state. Estonia stands out among the other Eastern and Central European countries by fertility recuperation (as early as 1999) from its rapid and large-scale drop in the early 1990s. At the moment, total fertility rate of the country is far higher than in the other countries of the region.

Figure 5. Total fertility rate in the selected Eastern and Central European countries, 1985–2008 (the EU member countries and Russia, Ukraine, Belarus)



(Sources: Eurostat 2010; Federal 2010; Naselenie 1988, 1989; Otchiot 2009) Recent 2004; State 2010; Statistics Lithuania 2010.

Thus during the last 20 years fertility indicators (TFR) in the Eastern and Central European countries were moving in waves: a sudden drop to the lowest means, then a slow rise, negligent although and persisting on a very low level far below the replacement fertility (around 1.5, specified as very low fertility level – LF), with the exception of Estonia.

A similar fluctuation of fertility, i.e. a drop far below the replacement level and a subsequent increase was observed in the majority of the Northern and Western European countries. However in these countries a decline of fertility started considerably earlier (as early as in the 1960s-1970s), and was not so sudden, steep and extensive (did not fall to the lowest-low level), while the recuperation which has been going on at a rather slow pace and not in all the countries, has been bringing the total fertility rate to the replacement level (in Denmark, France, Sweden, United Kingdom etc.). Recuperation of fertility has not yet been registered in such conservative welfare states as Austria and Germany. In the latter countries fertility has not reached the lowest-low level, however total fertility rate has fallen below 1.5 and has persisted at the level for about two decades (Recent 2004; Eurostat 2010).

Fluctuations of fertility have been observed in the Southern European countries too, but they are of a specific shape: a decline of fertility began later than in the Northern and Western European countries, it fell much lower

(total fertility rate dropped under 1.3 or slightly above 1.3), while the recent recuperation is slow and of a limited scope (Recent 2004; Eurostat 2010).

Actually in all the European countries (not only European, but other industrial countries as well), the swing of total fertility rates to the low or even the lowest-low level and its partial recuperation has been observed during the recent decades. True, in different regions the changes have their own specifics. The fertility changes of Lithuania fit into the common change pattern of the Eastern and Central European countries, where the changes of fertility rates began around 1990, the progression toward the lowest-low level was very rapid and broad-scope with a turn back to recuperation in the recent years. Only in Lithuania as in Poland and Slovakia the changes started a couple of years later.

Of late, a number of authors have been linking the changes of fertility indicators (decline and subsequent growth) the strongest with a delay of childbearing for an older age (Bongaarts 2002; Frejka, Sobotka 2008; Goldstein et al. 2009; Sobotka 2004; Sobotka, Lutz 2009). In the initial phase of transition to childbearing at an older age total fertility rate declines, but later, at the time when the postponing women start giving births at an older age, recuperation of fertility begins. In his analysis of the lowest-low fertility and its association with a delay of childbearing, Sobotka (2004), specifies it as a transient phenomenon.

Factors of fertility fluctuation

As the numerous investigations and publications show, the fluctuation of fertility of the countries that were the first to step onto the path of these changes (Northern and Western countries) should be first related to the transformation of the family and the changing strategy of family formation: families are formed later, childbearing occurs later, the number of cohabiting couples grows, etc. At the initial stage of the changes when timing of partnership and childbearing starts changing, the total fertility rate declines, but later, after a certain level of the changes is reached an upward trend begins known as the transitional fertility changes (Goldstein et al., 2009; Sobotka 2004). These changes are the components of the Second demographic transition the preconditions of which have been identified by the authors of the theoretical approach as individualization, the strengthening orientation towards the right of choice and self-expression of an individual, as a strive for emancipation, and technological innovations in contraception (reliable modern contraceptives have enlarged the chances of an individual to satisfy the growing ambitions) (van de Kaa, 1987, 1997).

Nevertheless, is it likely that these prerequisites of demographic changes might have already been at work in the Eastern and Central European countries of the early 1990s after they had just stepped onto the road of market economy and democratic restructuring? Not, for sure. This has been noted by the Western, Eastern and Central European countries scholars (Macura et al. 2002; Lesthaeghe, Surkyn 2002; Philipov, Dorbritz 2003; Billari, Kohler 2002; Stankuniene 1999; Stankuniene, Jasilionienė 2008). Thus quite naturally, economic and social transformations and complexity thereof have been frequently mentioned as the push factors of the initial drop of fertility. At a later period, with the drop of fertility still in progress and with the onset of family transformation in the Eastern and Central European countries, different scholars identified a number of factors typical for the entire region, and the others which are only specifics of certain countries (Zakharov 2008; Muresan et al. 2008; Speder, Kamaras 2008; Katowska et al. 2008).

As seen from different studies, extremely rapid family changes and the decline of fertility observed in Lithuania since the beginning of the 1990s have been predetermined, as in other Eastern and Central European countries, by a great variety of different factors that have manifested themselves at different times, sequences, and scopes and with varying effects on the change in childbearing and matrimonial behaviour. These include the factors with the greatest responsibility for the transformation of family, postponement of partnership and childbearing, drop in fertility to a low level that were identified in the Western countries as the factors of the second demographic transition (van de Kaa 1987). Among the factors there are the specific elements which are only typical for the post-communist countries in transition to the market economy and acquiring the features of the democratic societies, and the factors at the national level that are at work the during periods of intensive societal transformations and have specific features.

The variety of factors is great, and they are closely interrelated, whereas exposure to them has still been rather short-lived. The assessment of the strength of their effect on fertility changes is therefore a highly complicated task. The available theoretical and empirical information enables the factors to be structured and the main groups of factors to be selected (Stankuniene, 1999, 2009; Stankuniene, Jasilionienė 2008):

- *Economic factors* (economic transformations, economic crises, unemployment, low income, poverty, etc.);
- *Factors of the negative effects of the economic and social transformations* (deprivation, anomie, etc.);
- *Factors inherited from the Soviet system* (shortage of housing, orientation to paternalistic family policy of the state, etc.);
- *Demographic factors* (family transformation, intensive migration of youth, high mortality rate of young and middle-aged males, etc.);

- *Cultural and new technologies factors*—factors of values, of changing lifestyles, and of new technologies, defined in demographic theories as the *factors of the Second demographic transition*, manifesting specific features in the transforming post-Soviet environment;
- *Political factors* (social policy, family policy, etc.).

The influence of the *economic factors* on fertility changes in Lithuania was unmistakably strong at the beginning of the transformation period and during the crises (a sharp drop in living standards, a sudden decrease of employment opportunities, etc.), particularly in 1990–1995. At that time, notably these had the strongest influence on family changes (not marrying, postponing marriage, not assuming long-term partnership obligations, etc.) and on the drop in fertility mostly, due to postponement of childbirth (Stankuniene, 1999, 2009).

Later, economic factors remained important, too, but they were selective. The segmentation of the population (in territorial/regional, social, demographic aspect) according to the potential to satisfy the essential needs has been pushing some segments of the public (e. g. rural residents and employees of some underpaid professions) to the periphery of economic welfare (in terms of income, housing, upbringing of children, etc.). The huge gap between the needs and the chances to satisfy the needs has forced significant numbers of people to change their childbearing intentions (Stankuniene, Jasilioniene 2008).

In the current economic crisis likewise that of 1998–2000, the childbearing behaviour of Lithuanians has been undergoing significant corrections due to economic factors.

In Lithuania like in other post-communist countries, some groups of the society (more passive ones) are under the influence of the factors that restrict matrimonial and childbearing behaviour and that are identified as persisting *effects of transformations* manifested through deprivation or anomie (Philipov 2001, 2002; Philipov, Dorbritz 2003; Speder, Kamaras 2008), i.e. the loss of some former social guarantees (e.g. the guarantee of employment, education, etc.) and the inability to adjust to the conditions of the market economy and the new values and norms.

Highly important are the economic, structural and cultural *factors inherited from the Soviet system* that curb the childbearing behaviour: a huge shortage of dwellings has inflated prices and restricted the opportunities to acquire a dwelling; in the society (or at least in certain segments) the perpetuating orientation towards the paternalistic social policy of the state still has a restraining effect on the activity of individuals/families in tackling problems; the conflict between the traditional/patriarchal attitudes (in public and private spheres) and the emancipation of women; etc.

A crucial *demographic factors* which adjust childbearing behaviour is a very high migration of the youth in Lithuania (large emigration flows of different types: short-time, non-declared, circular migration, etc.). The ongoing transformation of the family (postponement of marriage and childbirth for an older age, the spread of cohabitation, etc.) is in its own way an important demographic factor with a negative effect on fertility level especially at the beginning of these changes. Furthermore, fertility rates in Lithuania are influenced by the high mortality of young males conditioning growth of female widowhood already since the young fertile ages.

The above factors are highly significant for Lithuania. Nevertheless, at the moment these are only complementary factors that augment the transformation of family and predetermine a very low fertility level. At present, family changes in Lithuania are affected the most by *cultural factors (changing values) and new technologies (modern contraceptives)*, which have been identified, in the theory of the Second Demographic Transition, as the key factors predetermining family changes and fertility decline (van de Kaa 1987; 1997). These include the increasing individualisation of the society, emancipation, liberalising attitudes and standards of behaviour, and spread of modern contraceptives (van de Kaa 1987; Lesthaeghe 1995; Surkyn, Lesthaeghe et al. 2004). Four decades ago these factors gave rise to family transformation in the Western countries (first in Northern Europe, followed by Western Europe, and later Southern Europe), and in the last decade of the 20th century they became visible in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. Currently, these factors are clearly manifesting themselves in Lithuania. The consolidating market relations have resulted in a more individualistic society, the democratisation of the society is accompanied by increasing opportunities for self-expression and choice, multiplying living styles, and by consolidating modern values and standards of behaviour. Contraceptive behaviour, which modifies the partnership and childbearing behaviour strategy and relations with the partner, is itself experiencing essential changes.

In Lithuania, the state-run *family policy*, which, given a relevant set of means and priorities could become an important factor for positive changes in fertility, has not yet played a positive role in changes of childbearing behaviour due to inconsistency, fragmentation, and priorities inadequate to the situation. It is mostly oriented to financial support, extension of child care leaves and very scarce consideration to expand the public services for the children and families.

Conclusions

During the last two decades fertility in Lithuania has decreased from the level close to replacement fertility (total fertility rate around 2) to an extremely low one and has even hit the lower than the lowest-low fertility in 2002–2005 (total fertility rate below 1.3). And although fertility of the latest few years has been demonstrating a reversal trend, still, it remains very low, with total fertility rates close to 1.5. The scope of fertility in the other Eastern and Central European countries has been following a similar path and experienced similar changes. Furthermore, a similar fluctuation of fertility indicators has been observed in the countries of Northern and Western Europe, only the drop of fertility below the replacement level started earlier by two decades, it was progressing at a slower pace and stopped short of the lowest-low level, furthermore, the recuperation started earlier and in the meantime some countries (e.g. France, Sweden, Denmark, etc.) are already approaching the replacement fertility, i.e. in the region, the fluctuation of fertility indicators has been less pronounced and softer.

Different studies show that such changes of fertility rates should be primarily linked to the delay of childbearing for an older age, which starts as part of the family transformation process and which in the North and West Europe countries has been primarily responsible for the fluctuation of the total fertility rates. In the initial stage of the fertility changes of the last two decades, the postponement of childbearing in the Eastern and Central European countries was induced by the difficulties of transition from the centralized economy to the market economy and by the specific transformation period factors of the post-communist countries. At a later period to these were added the cultural factors (changing values) which brought about family transformation. Altogether, both the powerful factors of the economic difficulties and of social transformations typical for the post-communist countries and the cultural factors (changing values) which predetermine family transformation have been responsible for postponement of fertility and a rapid and vast decline of fertility indicators in the Eastern and Central European countries including Lithuania, while a growth of fertility parameters observed in the countries during the last few years should be primarily attributed to the childbirth postponement effect which has been at work for almost twenty years.

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Michaela Potančoková¹
Fertility Trends in Slovakia in the New Millennium

Recent fertility trends in Slovakia and other CEE countries

After more than a decade-long decrease to very low level, fertility rates in post-socialist countries have been recovering from the historical lows at the turn of millennia. Slovakia has not been an exception. Total fertility rate (TFR) recorded an upswing in 2008 and the upward trend is expected to continue for some years. Transformation of reproductive behaviour in Slovakia shows traits similar to the changes experienced in other post-socialist countries. To sum them up, fertility rate measured by the most common indicator – total fertility rate – declined rapidly during the 1990s and has been on the rise in the past couple years. Among other prominent trends, we witnessed postponement of family formation and de-institutionalisation of childbearing and marriage accompanied by the rising proportion of non-marital births. In Slovakia, the correlation between childbearing and marriage used to be strong during the state socialism and it was supported by the state's pronatalist and housing policies. Non-marital childbearing has risen from about 7,5% in 1990 to 31% in 2009. Spreading cohabitation, changing behavioural strategies of resolution to non-marital pregnancy, diminishing stigmatisation of single motherhood and increasing divorce rate contributed to this trend.

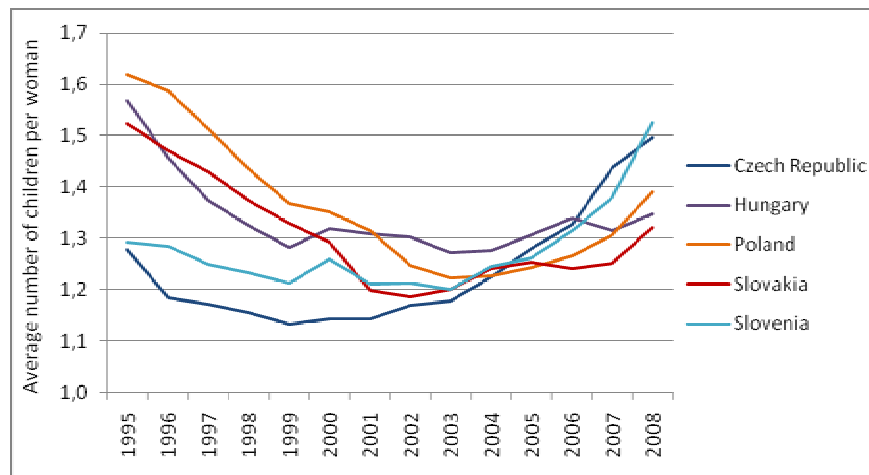
In order to comprehend recent fertility trends, it is necessary to look back to the 1990s. Changes in fertility rate over the past several years are closely linked to the developments witnessed until the early 2000s. Slovakia counted among the countries having highest TFR in Europe in 1990 (2,09 children per woman, i.e. at about replacement level) and became one of the lowest fertility countries in recent years. The lowest TFR of 1,19 children per woman was reached in 2002. To frame these values within the broader context, TFR fell to historical lows in all CEE countries in the late 1990s and in the early 2000s (Figure 1). Low period fertility rates were a Europe-wide phenomenon, which has not been restricted to post-socialist societies. TFR has never dropped below 1,5 children per woman in only few European countries². At the turn of millennia, ever increasing number of European countries recorded TFR below the lowest-low fertility threshold³. Fifteen out of 25 EU countries experienced lowest-low fertility during the past 15 years (author's computations based on the Eurostat online database). The phenomenon peaked in 2002–03 when 16 European countries recorded TFR below 1,3 children per woman (comprising countries of Southern, Central and Eastern Europe and Germany) (Goldstein et al. 2009). Kohler, Billari and Ortega (2002) predicted persistent lowest-low fertility in Eastern Europe for at least a decade to come. However, in 2008 only one European country, Moldova, reported TFR below 1,3 (Goldstein et al. 2009). All CEE countries witnessed an upturn above the lowest-low fertility threshold after 2005. Moreover, only a few countries experienced more than a decade long period of extremely low period fertility rate (for example Italy and East Germany, Goldstein et al. 2009). The duration of the lowest-low fertility in the CEE region ranged from 3 years in case of Hungary to 11 years in the Czech Republic and Slovenia. In the two latter countries TFR dropped from lower level and declined more rapidly, however, the trend reversal has been more swift and in 2008 these two countries had TFR of about 1,5 children per woman (0,1 to 0,2 child per woman above the level of other countries in the region).

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² Iceland (1,93; 2002); Ireland (1,83; 1994), Norway (1,75; 2002), Finland (1,70; 1998), France (1,65; 1993), Great Britain (1,63; 2001) Luxembourg (1,61; 2007) (Eurostat online database, author's computations).

³ TFR below 1,3 children per women was labeled lowest-low by Kohler, Billari and Ortega (2002).

Figure 1: Total fertility rates in CEE countries



(Source: Eurostat online database [1.4.2010], author's computations)

Goldstein, Sobotka and Jasilioniene (2009: 666) argue that "lowest-low fertility should be seen as a transitional phenomenon closely linked to the postponement of childbearing to older ages" and hypothesise about the end of this phenomenon in Europe. All low fertility countries display increasing ages at motherhood, in particular if we consider transition to first birth. Changes in timing of childbearing (fertility tempo) significantly influence total fertility rate and any other cross-sectional measures of fertility (Ryder 1964, Bongaarts and Feeney 1998). Therefore, the postponement of childbearing results in delay of births and depresses TFR, even if completed fertility of the cohorts of women, who are in their prime childbearing age during the era of low fertility, does not change. Postponement of parenthood set off in post-socialist countries after the change of political regime. Family formation used to be early and, thus, the transition towards later childbearing has been abrupt. The postponement transition took place over a shorter period of time compared to longer-term and smoother shift to later motherhood in the Nordic countries and in Western Europe. Women in the CEE countries normally had their first child when 20–23 years old, while their counterparts in Western Europe were becoming mothers aged 25–27 years in the early 1990s. In Slovakia, the mean age of mother at first birth has increased in 3,76 years since 1990 and reached 26,42 years in 2008 (Table 1).

Postponement of childbearing and low fertility

Postponement of childbearing has been a response to the changed economic, social and institutional context. In order to explain these phenomena, the debate on the fertility decline and postponement of childbearing in the Central and Eastern Europe has focused on a number of factors: economic constraints during the transformation period, and particularly during the 1990s; problems of young adults to establish themselves at the labour market, increasing importance of investments into person's own human capital, including higher education resulting in educational expansion; insufficient transformation of welfare systems after the collapse of the political regime and planned economy; increasing uncertainty and social anomie in the 1990s; and ideational and value changes (Frejka 2008, Potančoková et al. 2008, Philipov, Spéder and Billari 2006, Kantorová 2004, Kotowska 2004, Sobotka 2004, Philipov and Dorbritz 2003, Sobotka, Zeman and Kantorová 2003, Philipov 2002, Lestaeghe and Surkyn 2002, Rychtaříková 1999). Since multiple elements of the context of reproduction were changing simultaneously, it is difficult to disentangle the impact of individual factors. The interplay of the ideational and structural factors has led to the profound transformation of family formation process. Furthermore, the impact of some factors varied over the phases of the transformation process.

The upswing of fertility from extremely low level was inevitable, as it was provoked by changing timing of childbearing. Much of the recent rise of total fertility rate is a consequence of the recuperation, a 'catching-up', of previously delayed births. The pace of the postponement of childbearing translated into the pace of fertility decline and its consequent recuperation. Thus, countries in which TFR dropped earlier and to lower level (Slovenia and the Czech Republic) show higher TFR in 2008 than those where TFR declined at slower pace (Slovakia and Poland). In case of Slovakia, improving economy accompanied by decreasing unemployment rate were influential on the increase of fertility quantum (Goldstein et al. 2009). The country has recorded unusually high growth of GDP of about 6–10% annually in 2005–2008 (OECD statistics) due to successful economic reforms, which were implemented in 1999–2005. Unemployment fell from one of the highest levels within the EU of about 18% at the turn of millennia to 11% in 2007 (ibid). In Slovakia and Poland youth unemployment rates were highest within the EU countries before the EU accession (OECD 2006). Economic migration of young Poles and Slovaks to other EU countries, on the one hand resulted in decreasing unemployment rate, but on the other hand, the absence of

about 10% of people in prime reproductive age have probably slowed down the recuperation process to some extent. Migrants are young (80% younger than 35 years, 40% younger than 24 years, Jurčová (2008)) and the extended periods of time spent abroad very likely contribute to longer postponement of family formation⁴.

At its onset, the postponement of childbearing typically manifests itself by declining fertility rates at young ages. Since ever more young childless women delay motherhood during this starting phase of the postponement process, fertility rates drop, the mean age of mother at first birth rises and it also can happen that the mean age at childbearing decreases (since women who give higher order births do so at young ages since they behave according to the previous model of earlier childbearing). Later fertility rates at higher ages start increasing and the rise gets more pronounced when the recuperation starts. At this time fertility rates in younger ages should be more or less stable. Fertility rates at older ages increase and contribute more to the total fertility rate. Towards the end of the postponement transition the rise in mean ages at childbearing slows down. The transition typically takes about 20 years to complete (Goldstein et al. 2009).

Table 1: Indicators of period fertility quantum and tempo, Slovakia

	Age-specific fertility rates					% on TFR	% on TFR1	TFR	Mean age at 1 st birth
	15–19	20–24	25–29	30–34	35+	30+	30+		
1990	242,0	936,5	582,6	234,2	89,4	15,5	4,6	2,085	22,66
1995	161,7	622,9	453,6	200,0	83,9	18,6	6,2	1,523	23,00
2000	118,2	420,6	438,3	220,2	94,6	24,3	9,7	1,293	24,15
2005	98,7	304,3	440,1	288,3	121,0	32,6	18,1	1,254	25,68
2006	99,0	282,6	422,6	306,9	127,7	35,0	20,9	1,240	25,93
2007	101,1	269,5	416,2	324,4	140,0	37,1	23,0	1,252	26,19
2008	105,5	272,9	429,3	356,3	155,7	38,8	25,0	1,321	26,42

(Source: Statistical Office of the SR, author's computations)

Note: All measures are computed at age interval 12–55 years. Age-specific fertility rates for 5-year age categories are a sum of age-specific rates at single ages.

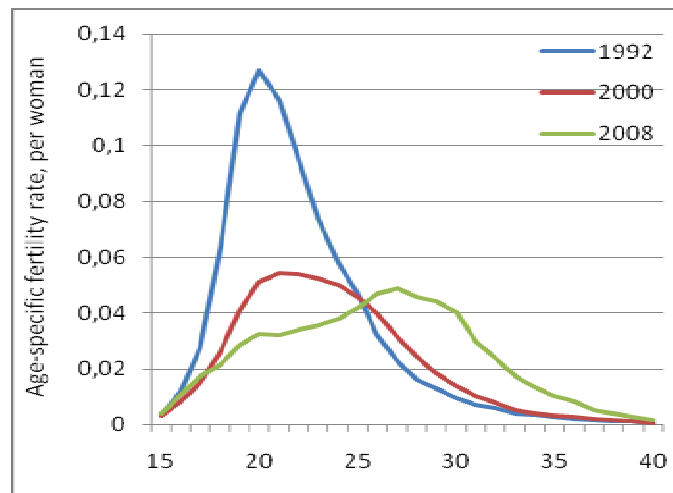
Slovakia, as well as other CEE countries, is in the recuperation phase of the postponement transition. In Slovakia, fertility used to be cumulated into women's 20s and peaked at age 20–24. More than 50% of women had their first child by age 22 and women completed their family size by age 30–35 in the early 1990s. Fertility rate at age 20–24 dropped to 30% of the previous level by 2008 while the rates increased at age 30+ and the rise gets more pronounced in recent years. Childbearing after age 30 becomes ever more common and it does not consider only higher-order births. Women aged 30+ contributed 25% to the total fertility of first birth order in 2008 compared to less than 5% in 1990. Fertility rates also increase at more advanced ages and the largest proportional increase of fertility rate has been recorded among women aged 35+ years (for all birth orders combined).

The postponement of childbearing has become a dominant reproductive strategy and most women prefer entering motherhood after age 25. However, the age pattern of fertility of first birth order shows that the population does not behave in uniform way as it was the case until the early 1990s. We can see two co-existing models of transition to motherhood: the dominant one of the postponement and the strategy of early family formation at about age 20. These two distinct reproductive strategies are very likely typical for different social strata and subcultures. In our opinion, the persisting early childbearing pattern should not be interpreted as continuity of the previous reproductive model. The reason is that different mechanisms result in early motherhood nowadays compared to the state socialist era and the population with early childbearing pattern is probably selective. Especially Roma women⁵ stick to early childbearing and typically have their first child by age 20 (Kumanová and Džambazovič 2002, Šprocha 2007). The strategy of early family formation may not be exclusive for Roma, it is probably widespread among low-educated population strata and the phenomenon requires thorough investigation and careful interpretation.

⁴ We do not know much about migrants' reproductive behaviour and fertility intentions because of lacking data and specialized research projects tackling this problem. However, we assume that migrants postpone family formation and parenthood for later (when they return to the country of origin or until they get established and settled in the receiving country) since the migration is of economic purpose. Pregnancy during the migration process and stay in the receiving country may make the situation of the migrant more complicated, especially in the early stage of the process.

⁵ We speak of women living in segregated and separated communities, which comprise about 80 % of Roma population in Slovakia. Moreover, not integrated Roma women tend to drop out of the educational system at an early age, often due to their motherhood and rarely attain higher than incomplete secondary education (Kumanová and Džambazovič 2002, Šprocha 2007).

Figure 2: Age-patterns of childbearing, first births, Slovakia



(Source: Statistical Office of the SR, author's computations)

Slovakia is strongly regionally diversified and this applies also to the disparities in childbearing patterns (Jurčová 2006). Women living in rural areas tend to form their families at younger age compared to urban women (Šprocha 2008). Urban women delay childbearing longer and women living in the capital Bratislava become first-time mothers at on average highest age of about 30 years. Different reproductive strategies of urban women are a result of more opportunities competing to family formation, their higher educational attainment as well as unfavourable housing situation in the bigger cities. Women interviewed in the capital Bratislava for the purpose of an in-depth study frequently mentioned long waiting time to obtain own housing (not rented, shared with friends and independent of the family of origin) being one of the main reasons for the postponement strategy (Potančoková 2009a). Strikingly different structure of female population in terms of educational attainment in rural and urban regions also plays an important role. University-educated population is highly concentrated in the capital Bratislava: about 1/3 of women aged 25–35 living in the capital completed tertiary education, compared to about 10% and less in other regions according to census 2001. It is well-known that highly educated women delay childbearing longer than their lower-educated counterparts (Kantorová 2004, Skirbekk et al. 2004, Blossfeld and Huinink 1991). Highly-educated women tend to seek self-realisation within not only the family, but also want to make use of their human capital and face problems reconciling work and family.

Furthermore, the age norms have been re-articulated in favour of postponement of motherhood. Changing labour market, demanding qualified and flexible workers, and a significant educational expansion play an important role in this process. Results of the qualitative case-study bring evidence that urban middle-class women prefer starting a family after graduating from the education, establishing themselves at the labour market and having own housing (Potančoková 2009a). Educational enrolment and parenthood are perceived competing roles in most post-industrial societies. With respect to postponement of life transitions sociologists speculate about new emerging life course phase – postadolescence (Bynner 2005, Vaskovics 2001). Slovak urban women regarded motherhood within age 25 (at age when most young adults are mostly not fully independent from the family of origin, often co-resident with parents or their peers, study or at the onset of their professional career) irresponsible behaviour and thought it ought to be avoided and postponed to later age (Potančoková 2009b). These women did not see many benefits of the postponement substantially after age 30. Age 35 is a commonly perceived age limit to first motherhood, due to emphasised health and social risks associated with higher age. However, as experience with childbearing at higher ages becomes more common, perceived age limits may get re-interpreted. This situation may cause that postponement of childbearing will continue longer.

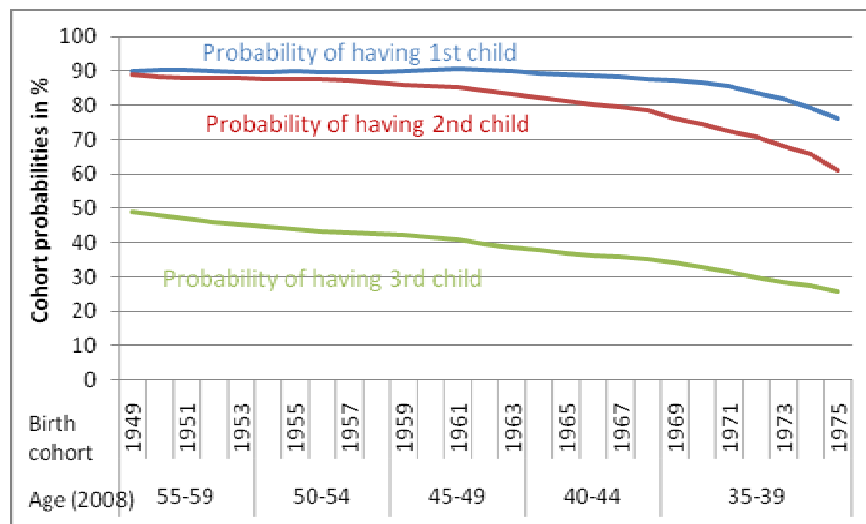
Childlessness and changing family size: a decline of two-child family model?

Postponement of childbearing is a cohort-driven process: ever higher proportion of women born since the 1970s and early 1980s delays childbirth and ever higher proportion of first and higher-order births is realised after age 30. This behavioural strategy has been gradually becoming dominant across birth cohorts as social actors abandoned and re-shaped behavioural strategies of family formation established in and the socialist context and developed new strategies in order to cope with the newly emerged opportunities and obstacles.

Cohort perspective is helpful to understand extremely low period fertility rates at the turn of millennia and its consequences in terms of changing family size and childlessness. Total fertility rate is a period indicator – it is a sum of age-specific fertility rates of women of different birth cohorts, who often have very different reproductive histories. In the late 1990s and early 2000s population of women in reproductive age consisted of older women,

who have completed their family size mostly within age 35 (women born till the mid 1960s); younger women (born in the mid and late 1960s) were delaying their transition to second and higher order births; and women (born since the early 1970s) were postponing birth of their first child. The result was extremely low period fertility rates at turn of millennia. Postponement of transition to motherhood became a dominant reproductive strategy among those born since the mid-1970s. A large proportion of women born in the late 1960s (who were about 20 years old at the time the political turnover) had their first child already. The transformation process impacted on the progression to second and higher order births among these women, but their childlessness remained low at 9–10%. (Potančoková 2008)

Figure 3: Cohort probabilities that a woman has a child of respective birth order, Slovakia



(Source: ODE-INED, Statistical Office of the SR, author's computations)

Note: The value gives a percentage of women of the corresponding birth cohort, who gave birth to a child of respective birth order. The difference between 100 % and probability of having 1st child returns the percentage of childless women. Youngest cohorts have not completed their reproduction yet and it is expected they will recuperate some proportion of births. The data correspond to fertility rates in 2008.

Increasing childlessness became a prominent issue when fertility rates hit the bottom and a massive increase of childlessness has been a feared consequence of the fertility postponement. Some demographers warned it can exceed 30 % among younger cohorts. However, these worrying scenarios usually stem from misinterpretation of extremely low period fertility rates. In case of first births, period TFRs were extremely misleading indicator suggesting 30–40% women would remain childless⁶ if low fertility was to persist. The indicator was distorted due to postponement (tempo effect) and increasing share of childless women at younger ages. Comparison of TFR of first birth order to the index of parity-adjusted fertility of first birth order (PATFR 1)⁷ shows that TFR1 overestimates expected childlessness (Table 2).

Table 2: Period measures of fertility, Slovakia

	1990	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008
TFR1	0,878	0,570	0,524	0,570	0,576	0,642
PATFR1	0,897	0,738	0,695	0,718	0,717	0,747
TFR	2,085	1,293	1,186	1,242	1,240	1,321
PATFR	2,108	1,360	1,235	1,299	1,293	1,380
Tempo effect*	-0,018	-0,345	-0,419	-0,445	-0,409	x

(Source: Statistical Office of the SR, author's computations; Human Fertility Database (PATFRs))

* Tempo effect indicates the extent of the fertility postponement. It has been computed as difference between TFR and adjusted TFR computed by Bongaarts-Feeney method.

⁶ The difference between TFR1 or PATFR1 to 1 gives an estimate of maximum proportion of childless women given the childbearing pattern of a given year would persist for the whole reproductive period of women.

⁷ PATFR is also a period measure of fertility – it is a summary indicator from the fertility tables. Ordinary TFRs do not take into account parity composition of female population (proportions of women by number of children they already gave birth to). Due to fertility postponement proportion of childless women at younger ages increases and parity structure changes. In this case PATFR is more accurate measure of fertility quantum. However, both indicators, TFR and PATFR, are distorted by tempo effect.

Looking at cohort data it is clear that progression to first birth decreased to some extent from about 90% to about 80% among women born in the mid-1970s (Figure 3). However, women born in the mid-1970s are still in their childbearing age and their progression to first and higher order births is expected to increase to about 85%. Childlessness was at extremely low levels up to 10 % in the socialist countries and among married women it was even lower at about the level of infecundity of about 3 %. Estimated increase to at most 15–17% childless among women born in the late 1970s means that a dramatic increase of childlessness will not be the consequence of the postponement of childbearing (Sobotka 2004, Potančoková et al. 2008). This notion is supported for persisting strong social norms. According to these motherhood is closely linked to female identity, it is highly expected and it still is a normative part of adult female biography (Potančoková 2009c, Šalingová 2003, Hašková and Zamykalová 2006).

More significant impact of the postponement of childbearing can be expected on completed fertility of cohorts of women who were in prime childbearing age during the transformation period. The composition of women by number of children they will have at the end of their reproductive period (by age 50) will change a lot compared to the generations of their mothers. Completed fertility rate will decrease below 2 children per woman for cohorts born in the early 1970s. The extent of the decline of family for younger cohorts is estimated at about 1,6 – 1,7 children per woman (Potančoková 2008). Level of completed fertility of these women is conditioned on the extent of the recuperation we will observe in the upcoming several years. Not all postponed births will be realised and much depends on the progression to second child in the family. Recuperation of second birth has been very weak so far and if the trend does not change in the near future, as much as 30% of women born in the late 1970s will have only one child. Adding up to the estimated 15% of childless, only about half of women of these birth cohorts will have two or more children. This would lead to the profound change in families and it will have broad consequences for the whole society and the labour market.

Expected consequences of low fertility

Fertility decline will also change families and it will have an impact on social networks in the long-run. Model of marital family with two children became predominant in Slovakia over the 1970s and 1980s and it is very likely that it is going to change. Figure 3 shows that nearly all women born during the 1950s (who had their children mostly in the 1970s and early 1980s) had a second child if they had the first child. During this era one-child families were unusual (only 11% of women had single child, mainly those with university education (18–20%), Potančoková 2009a). Unprecedented increase in single-child families and decline of larger families will change the whole society. Lower fertility means less kin and decrease in social capital. This will influence intergenerational support and potential of help from the kin or siblings with care for the dependent family members and childcare.

In terms of future trends of fertility in Slovakia, we will see a further increase of the total fertility rate. TFR is expected to rise to about 1,5 – 1,6 children per woman within upcoming 5 years purely due to the recuperation of postponed births. This estimate is based on the extent of the tempo effect at the time TFR was at the minimum level. Adjusted total fertility rate (computed by Bongaarts-Feeney formula) estimated fertility level of 1,6 children per woman in 2002, when conventional TFR dropped to the minimum level of 1,19 children per woman. That means that if most postponed births are recuperated, we can expect TFR to reach similar level in the future. Fertility increase above this level will depend on other factors than recuperation. Family-friendly policies targeting work-family balance, family-friendly environment, stable economy and low unemployment can bring TFR to levels above 1,5–1,6 children per woman. However, sustained increase of fertility further towards the level of 1,8 – 2 children per woman will be a challenge to the governments and their family and labour-market policies. Under current conditions it is unlikely that TFR would keep on increasing to the levels of about 1,8 children per woman we see in the Nordic and some Western European countries.

Speaking of short-term horizon, it is possible that the financial crisis would temporarily influence TFR. Period fertility rates are sensitive to any temporary fluctuations and it is well possible that the pace of recuperation will slow down in 2009–2010. Unemployment rate has been increasing in the past 2 years in Slovakia and it did so at higher rate than in the other CEE countries (OECD statistics 2010). Unemployment rate rose among young people and also labour migration to other EU countries slowed down since 2009. However, we expect that these factors can influence fertility trends only temporarily and in short horizon of couple years. A decrease of TFR back below the lowest-low fertility level is rather unlikely. We also assume that recuperation will prevail over these unfavourable developments and TFR will keep on increasing. Thus, about a decade long era of extremely low fertility will most likely remain only a short phase linked to rapid postponement of family formation.

The change of reproductive behaviour of the population has been profound and will have several consequences. Uneven population structure causes problems also to educational system and social services at the local level. During the era of population decline, municipalities restricted number of schools, kindergartens and other services for families with small children. The number of children in preschool age has been on the rise since 5 years and it is becoming a problem especially in the bigger cities. Kindergartens accept children aged 3, in case of free capacity since age 2, and have to accept all applications of children aged 5 and older. Due to increasing numbers

of children, limited capacities in kindergartens and very few childcare facilities for children younger than 3 years, parents face problems with childcare and work and family reconciliation⁸. While kindergartens will have to cope with increasing number of applications, high schools and universities start facing problems to attract students as baby-bust cohorts graduate from secondary schools.

Despite the recuperation, TFR will not recover back to the previous levels of about 2 children per woman. Completed fertility rate, number of children a birth cohort of women has at the end of their reproductive period, will decrease below 2 children per woman among women born in the early 1970s. Among women born in the late 1970s it is likely to drop to 1,7 children per woman if the recuperation does not intensify in the near future. Thus, generations of women born in the 1970s will not be replaced with adequate number of daughters and this fact will have long-lasting consequences on population size and structure. Even if fertility of women born during the 1990s and later increases, due to small cohort size of these birth cohorts the numbers of children born to them will be small. This means that even if younger women would have fertility rate of about 2, it will not stop population ageing and the predicted population decline. Although Slovakia has one of the youngest populations in Europe at the moment, this will change to the one of the fastest ageing ones in the upcoming decade. Population of working age will start decreasing and number and proportion of elderly aged 65+ is likely to rise from 12% in 2008 to about 20% in 2025 (Bleha and Vaňo 2007).

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⁸ The duration of parental leave is maximum within three years of age of the youngest child.

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Alexey Pamporov¹

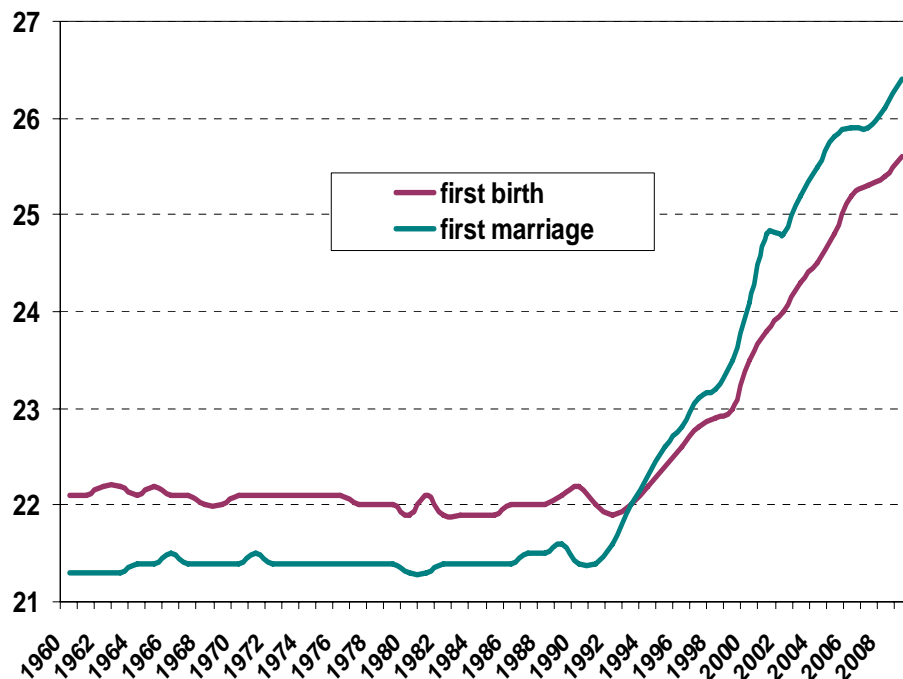
Family, Marriage and Childbirth Developments in Bulgaria after 1989

The marriage used to be nearly universal practice in Bulgaria since the end of the Ottoman rule (1878) until the last decade of twentieth century. In 1965, Hajnal presented the population statistics about the year 1900 and pointed out Bulgaria as a typical representative of the countries lying to the east of the line St. Petersburg – Trieste, and belonging to a non-European marital pattern. In fact, until quite recently Bulgaria fitted the description of the so called “Eastern European Marriage Pattern” as defined by John Hajnal – relatively low age at marriage together with low proportion of people who never marry at all (Hajnal, 1965). Moreover, it differed little in this respect from other Eastern European countries, including Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Romania and the European part of Russia (Engelen, 2003). In the present article, we are going to discuss the demographic developments, value shifts and the public policies concerning the family issues.

Overview of the demographic patterns

Bulgaria is amongst the countries with the lowest mean ages of women at first marriage not only in EU but compared to all member states of the Council of Europe. However, alongside the social transformations, which occurred at the end of the socialist regime, the state has experienced some serious demographic changes since 1989. For example, the trend line of the past twenty years indicates a permanent increase of the mean age at first marriage. It rises from 21.4 in 1990 to 26.4 in 2009. An increase in the mean age at childbirth from 22.2 in 1990 to 25.6 in 2009 is observed in parallel with the increase of the mean age at first marriage. It is a little bit lower increase and therefore, since 1994, the mean age of women at first birth is lower then the mean age at first marriage (Graph 1).

Graph 1. Mean age of women at first birth and first marriage in Bulgaria, 1960–2009



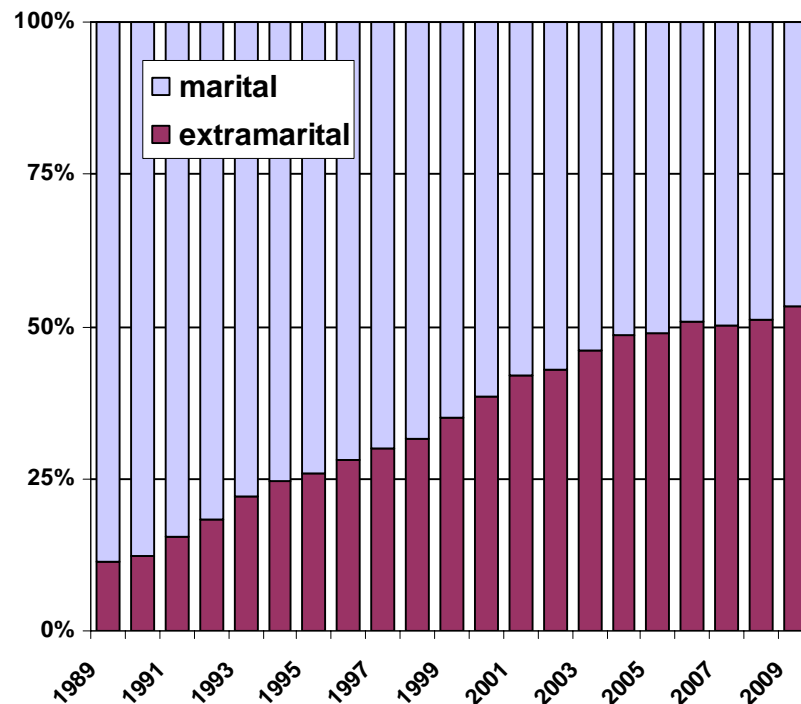
(Source: Eurostat, NSI)

This sharply started specific postponement of the marriage and childbirth affected some other demographic developments and reflected in all other demographic indicators. The lower mean age at childbirth in comparison

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with the mean age at marriage led to an enormous proportion of births given out of wedlock. In fact, for the period 2006–2009 the proportion of the children born out of marriage is slightly above 50% (graph 2).

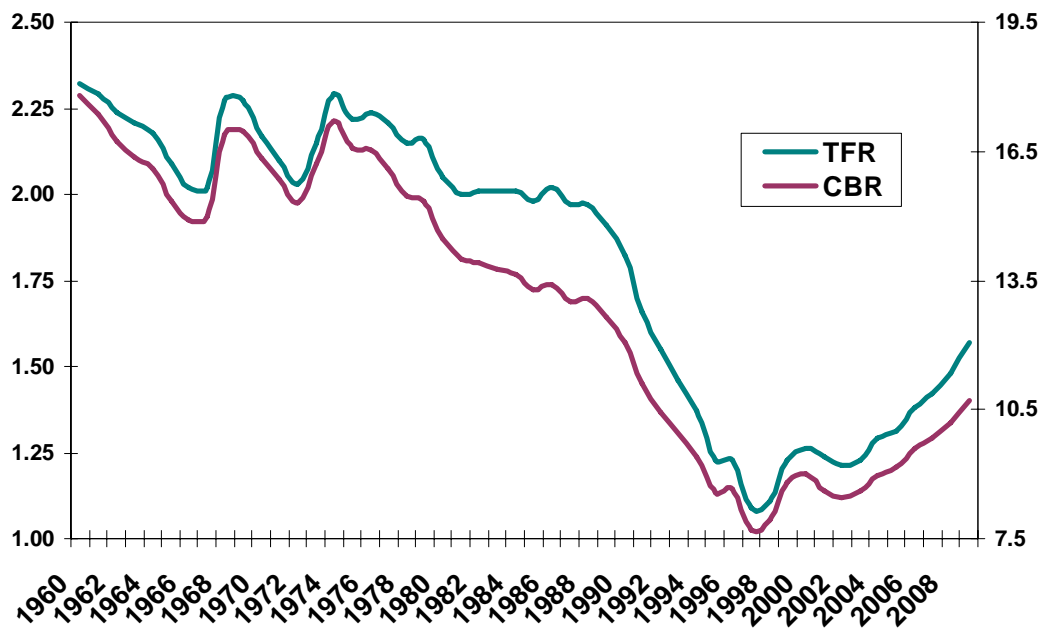
Graph 2. Proportions of marital live births and live births out of wedlock in Bulgaria, 1989–2009



(Source: Eurostat, NSI)

The postponement of childbirth strongly affected the birth rates. The crude birth rate (CBR) decreased from 12.1‰ in 1990 to 7.7‰ in 1997. In the period after 1997, it marked a slight increase to 10.7‰ in 2009 that is the same as the average level of CBR at the very beginning of the 1990s. The crude birth rate is the number of live births over a given year divided by the mid-year total population. It is expressed as number of births per 1,000 persons. Following the drop of the CBR, the Total fertility rate (TFR) went down below the replacement level. TFR is a synthetic rate based on the age-specific fertility rates of women at age group 15–49. It indicates the number of children a woman would have if she was subject to prevailing fertility rates at all ages from a single given year, and survives throughout all her childbearing years. Similarly to CBR, the lowest fertility level was in 1997, which coincides with the peak of inflation and social crisis in Bulgaria during the transition. The value of TFR measured up 1.09. This is the "bottom" peculiar to the lowest-low fertility in Bulgaria, reached for the first time in 1995. The "lowest-low fertility" is a "period total fertility rate below 1.3". The effect of the lowest-low fertility is "an annual decline of the population size by 1.5% in a stable population with an overall mean age at birth of 30 years. A TFR of 1.3 also implies a reduction of the birth cohort by 50% and a halving of the stable population size every 45 years." (Kohler, Billari & Ortega 2001: 2-3). With a slightly fluctuating but increasing trend in the next years, the fertility in Bulgaria kept the lowest-low level up to year 2004. However, in 2009 it reached 1.57, which was the average about EU in 2008.

Graph 3. Total fertility rate (left scale) and Crude birth rate (right scale) in Bulgaria, 1960-2009

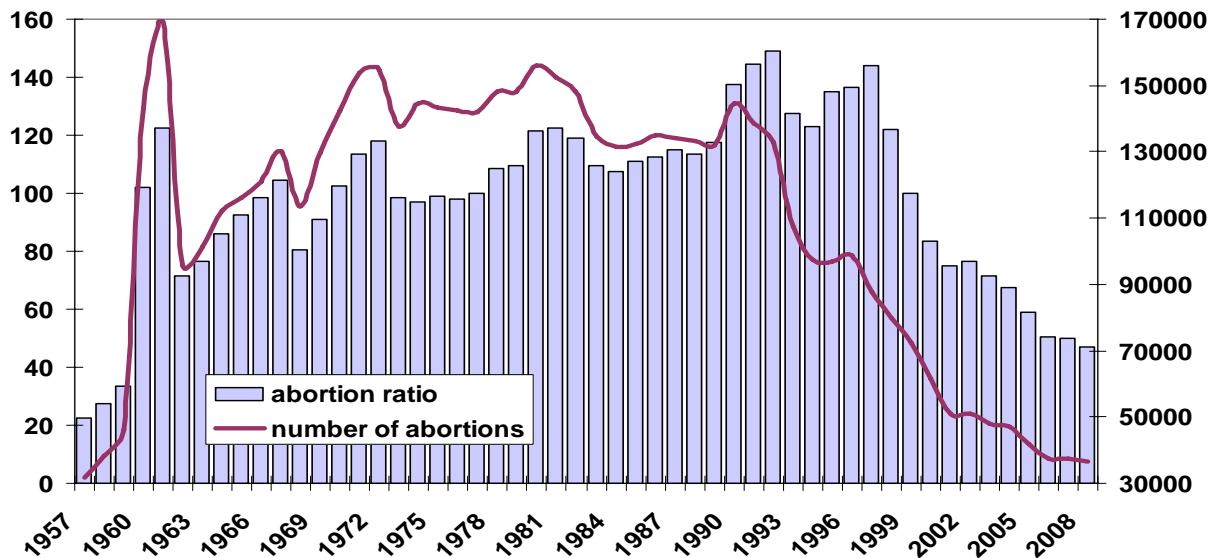


(Source: Eurostat, NSI)

On one hand, the increase of the TFR and CBR in the past five years is mainly due to fact that the first "postponers" (birth cohort 1970-75) reached age 35-40 that in Bulgaria is perceived as a kind of "a last train" to having a child so far. The women from these cohorts will probably never catch up to the replacement level (2.1 children per woman's life time) but their first births have an impact on the birth rates. On the other hand, despite of the postponement process, for the period 2000-2007, Bulgaria is the European country with highest adolescent fertility rate (AFR) that measures up 38‰ (WHO 2009). The AFR indicates the number of live births per 1000 females aged 15-19. Although the National statistical institute does not officially publish data on AFR, it could be provisionally estimated about 50.6‰ in 2009; based on the fact that there are 202710 females aged 15-19, which delivered 10251 births. On account of that, it should be said that currently there are two fertility processes in Bulgaria, running in an opposite directions but both having a positive impact on the birth rates.

The number of induced abortions had an impact on the fertility rates as well. Bulgaria had a bit restrictive policy towards the induced abortions but it was a legal and quite common way of birth control yet before 1989. Therefore the crude abortion rate (as the number of induced abortions per 1,000 mid-year total population) since the 1970s was about 16-17‰. Since the mid-1960s the abortions towards live births ratio was around or above 100%. In fact, the first drop in the birth rates and the lowest-low fertility levels coincide with the two peaks in the abortion ratio. The abortions towards live births measured up 149.1% in 1992 and 143.9% in 1997. The abortion ratio went down under 100% since 2000 and an unprecedented decrease in abortions is recently observed. The abortions ratio about 2008 is 47.1% and the crude abortion rate is 4.8‰. From that point of view, it is quite confusing that the adolescent abortion rate (as the number of induced abortions per 1,000 females aged 15-19) about 2008 is 38.5‰. It should be mentioned here that some Bulgarian non-government organizations claim that the data published by the National statistical institute is not relevant because the abortions in the private medical institutions are underreported. Through a press release, in 2009 some NGO activists claimed that their estimation of the abortion ratio is 138‰. However, they did not provide a clear methodology of their estimation and thus it is a disputable issue too.

Graph 4. Abortions towards live births ratio (left scale) and number of declared induced legal abortions (right scale) in Bulgaria, 1957-2008

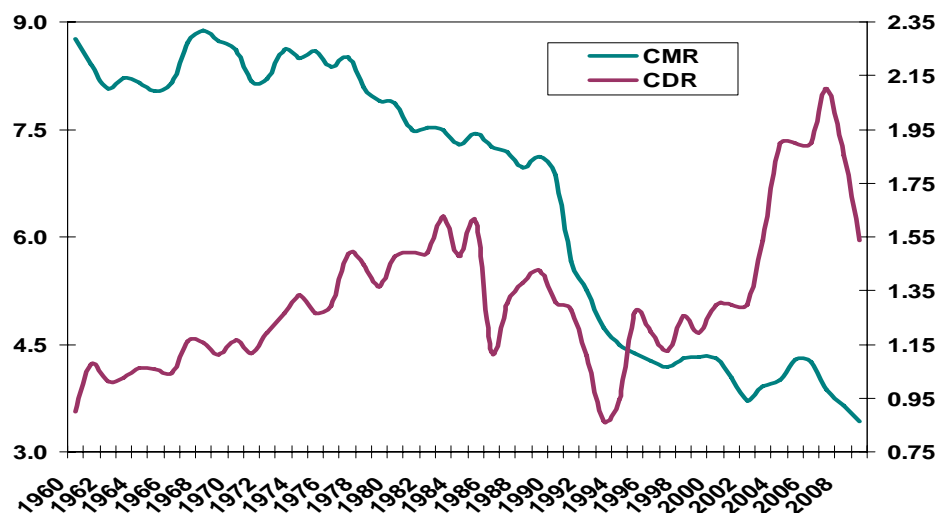


(Source: Johnston 2010)

The postponement of marriage has an impact on the marriage rates. The crude marriage rate (CMR) reflects the number of marriages occurring during a given year, per 1000 persons of the mid-year total population. In Bulgaria, it sharply decreased from 7.13‰ in 1989 to 4.18‰ in 1997. With some further fluctuations CMR went down to 3.42‰ in 2009 that is the lowest value of this rate ever since there are statistical records about Bulgaria and one of the lowest in Europe, except for the CMR trend in Slovenia. However, despite the drop in the CRM, the proportion of ever married women stays at relatively high level – about 87% for the birth cohort 1970 (at age 40) and seems to be universal for the older generations – over 95% for the birth cohort 1960 (at age 50) and other earlier birth cohorts. In that respect Bulgaria differs significantly from all other EU countries, except for Czech Republic (Sobotka, Toulemon 2008).

The divorce is another process that goes along with the extramarital births and postponement of the marriage. The crude divorce rate (CDR) reflects the number of marriages occurring during a given year, per 1000 persons of the mid-year total population. Unlike the most Eastern European countries, the CDR in Bulgaria sharply decreased in the very first years of the transition and from 1.42‰ in 1989 dropped to 0.86‰ in 1993. Nevertheless, it "jumped" from 1.3‰ in 2002 to 1.9‰ in 2004 and reached even 2.1‰ in 2007. Suddenly, it dropped down to 1.54‰ in 2009, reaching the average values of the rate in Bulgaria from the late 1970s and early 1980s. For the period 2005-2009 in Bulgaria, the average duration of the marriage before the divorce is 14 years.

Graph 5. Crude marriage rate (left scale) and Crude divorce rate (right scale) in Bulgaria, 1960-2009

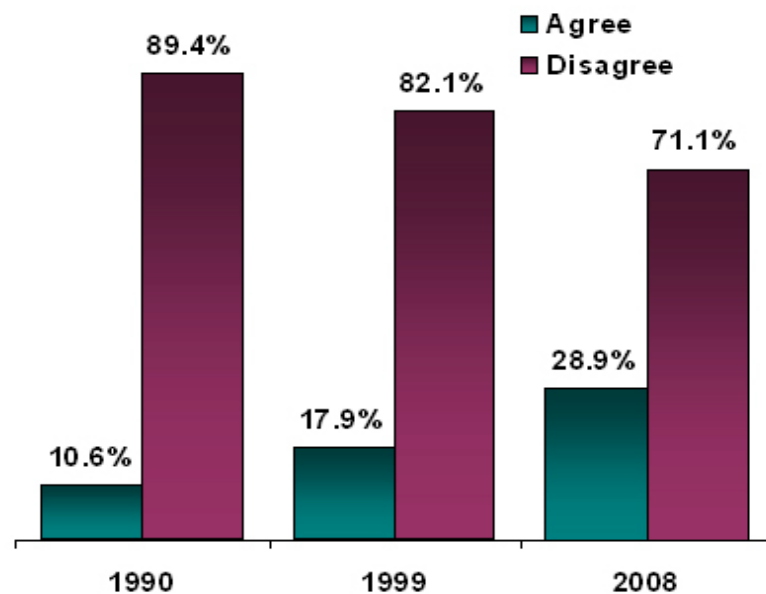


(Source: Eurostat, NSI)

Value shifts and the Second demographic transition

Alongside changes in the demographic indicators, a significant value shifts is observed concerning the marriage and childbirth. The outcomes of the last three waves of the European value survey conducted in Bulgaria are very indicative in that respect. The proportion of agreement with the statement "The marriage is an outdated institution" increased from 10.6% in 1990 to 28.9% in 2008. Although two-thirds of the respondents disagree with such a statement, one could expect that during the next survey wave (2017), the proportion of those who agree that marriage is "an outdated institution" would reach about 40%. This expectation bases on the fact that there is a big difference in the responses of the different age groups. Among individuals aged 70 and above, those who agree are as few as 11.6%, whereas those who disagree are 85.7%. At the same time, in the youngest age group (18-24) those who agree measure up to 37.9%, whereas those who disagree are 55.1% (Pamporov 2009).

Graph 6. Proportions of agreement and disagreement with the statement. 'Marriage is an outdated institution' for the time period 1990-2008



(Source: Pamporov 2009: 155)

The abrupt decrease of the marital rates and the rise of the divorce rates in Bulgaria occur in the context of a quite high current tolerance towards the practice of divorce. A representative survey in 2008 shows that only 22.6% of the Bulgarians consider marriage as "a lifelong commitment", which should not be terminated, but about 73.8% of the respondents disagree with this statement. Moreover, even the presence of children in the family is not considered an obstacle to the dissolution of the marriage. The proportion of agreement with the statement "A couple whose marriage is unhappy has the right to divorce even if they have children" measures up to 82.5% (Pamporov 2009: 159). There is a certain shift from more altruistic toward more individualistic values. In some cases, it is more apparent in Sofia in comparison with the countryside but in other cases, it concerns whole Bulgaria, regardless urban or rural areas (Pamporov 2008).

Putting together the recent demographic trends and the value changes, the first sights of the Second demographic transition (SDT) in Bulgaria are seen. The SDT concept stresses the importance of the Maslow's "higher order needs" and value and attitude change about certain family and fertility behaviours, e.g. single living, pre- and post-marital cohabitation, postponed fertility, non-marital fertility, and an increase of union dissolution (van de Kaa 1987). As far as we need some indicators to observe the developments, there is a brief checklist to do so: 1) rise of the age of first marriage; 2) rise in both cohabitation and out-of-wedlock fertility; 3) rise in divorce rates; 4) long-term trend of sub replacement fertility rates. At last but not at least stays 5) the value hallmark: an accentuation of individual autonomy and self-actualization (Lesthaeghe & Neels 2002). Currently Bulgaria fulfils the definitive characteristics of the SDT and therefore, the recent demographic developments and value changes should be regarded as a part of the common recent trend in the European demographic development (Pamporov 2008).

Family policies

As all of the countries from the Eastern Europe, the Bulgarian government before 1989 had a large scale of natalistic policies. Using "the carrot and the stick", the state introduced some encouraging policies such as paid maternity leave and "just married loan" (with an extremely low interest and a remission option if a second child is delivered soon after the marriage) on one hand. On the other hand, there were some restriction in the abortion law, and also the so called "bachelor tax" was in power since 1951 with an "Edict of births encouragement". According to it, all childless men aged 21-50 and women aged 21-45 should pay up to 15% of their gross monthly income. The "bachelor tax" was abrogated in 1990 but the "Edict of births encouragement" was in power until April 2002. The edict was replaced by Law on Family assistance for children that is one of the main pillars of the family policies together with the Family code, Labour code, and Social insurance code. The present family policies are also natalistic but only encouragement strategies are in use.

Maternity leave

Since January 1st 2009, the maternity leave covers 410 days. 45 day could be taken before the expected delivery term and 90 days after the childbirth. Those parts of the leave are based on the medical certificates. The next 275 days could be taken by handling an application to the employer. The maternity benefit is measured as 90% of the personal mean daily wages for the past 12 months before the leave. The paid maternity leave could be prolonged to the second year but then the benefit equals the minimum monthly salary for the current period. According to the new law, six months after the childbirth, the father or a grandparent can take the rest of the maternity leave instead of the mother. As well as, the father has right of 15 days paternity leave, counted from the baby's discharge from the maternity hospital.

Child benefits and social assistance

The mother has right on one-time benefit for childbirth, regardless of her employment, income, and social and health insurance status. There is a difference in the amount of the benefit related to the number of childbirth, which is quite disproportional – highest for the second child and lowest for the third and each after (Table 1). In fact, it is a quality of reproduction policy. On one hand, it is a natalistic one and encourages the second births. On the other hand its goal is to limit the chance of the lowest income groups (considered as unemployed and uneducated) to live on social benefits and to depend on social assistance.

The other family social benefits are means tested. In 2009, a given family had to have monthly average income no more then 350 BGN (approx. 175 EUR) per capita in order to apply for such benefits. The means tested social assistance comprises one-time benefit for pregnancy; monthly financial assistance for children up to the end of the secondary school enrolment but no more then age of 20; and monthly financial assistance for up to the one year old child rearing. They are very limited and insufficient as an amount. It is because they also aim at avoidance of social benefits dependency.

Table 1. The amount of the assistance's benefits and minimum monthly salary for 2009

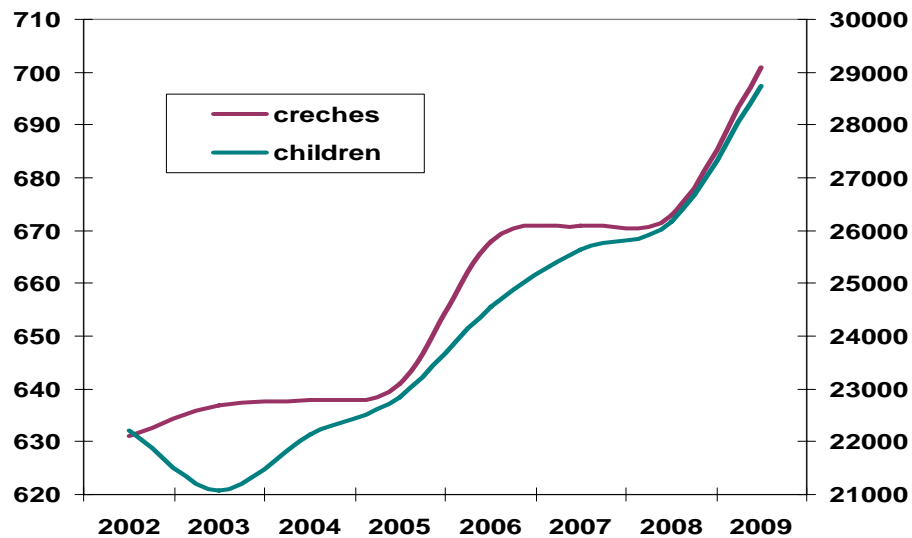
Type of assistance	Amount
one-time benefit for pregnancy	150 BGN (approx. 75 EUR)
one-time benefit for childbirth	
- first child	250 BGN (approx. 125 EUR)
- second child	600 BGN (approx. 300 EUR)
- third and each after	200 BGN (approx. 100 EUR)
financial assistance for children up to the end of the secondary school enrolment	35 BGN (approx. 18 EUR)
monthly financial assistance for up to the one year old child rearing	100 BGN (approx. 50 EUR)
Minimum monthly salary	240 BGN (approx. 120 EUR)

Crèches and kindergartens

Inherited from the communist past, being a housewife is not very common practice in Bulgaria. The social surveys usually measure around 4% women with such a status. In the general case, the grandparents and especially the retired grandmothers are responsible for the daily care of the children. The babysitting is not a common practice due to the fact that the price is two to four times the minimal salary that is some times more then a half of the monthly household income. In fact, most of the families cope with that situation due to another practice

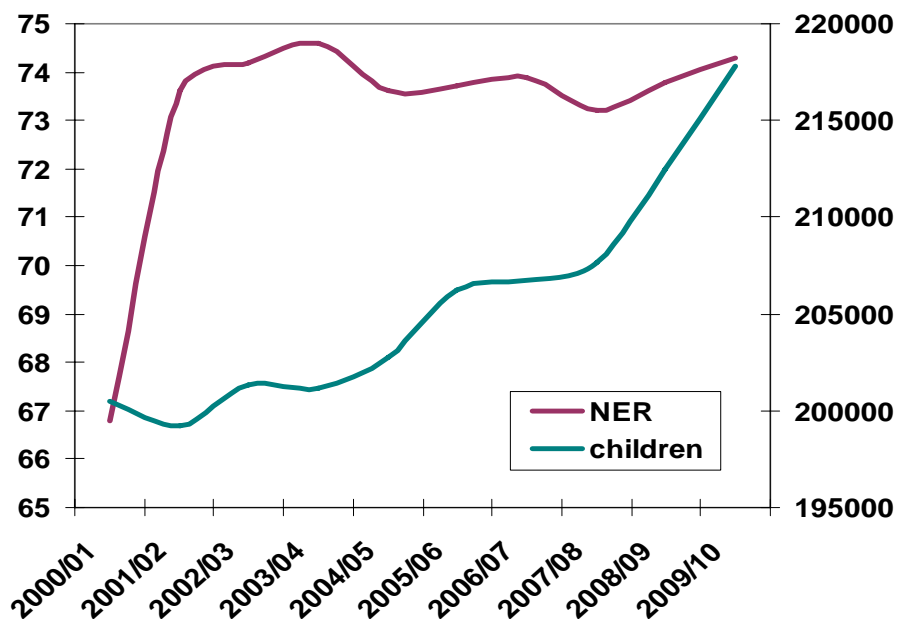
inherited from the past – the well developed system of crèches and kindergartens. Following the raise of the fertility rates, the number of children enrolled in crèches and kindergarten constantly increases since 2003. The number of crèches also increased in order to meet the needs of population. Unlike the crèches, the number of the kindergartens decreased due to the reforms in the educational system. As far as the state and the municipal institutions are concerned, their number is fluctuating and there is no stable trend in the past 10 years. In fact, the biggest cities in Bulgaria, and especially Sofia, suffer from a lack of places in the municipal crèches and kindergartens. Thus, there is an open niche for the private kindergartens, which increased in number from 33 in the school year 2000-2001 up to 157 in the school year 2009-2010. The curious fact is that the net enrolment rate since 2001-2002 stay almost stable measuring around 74% of the children aged 3-6. In the context of increased birth cohorts and decreased number of kindergartens, it is a sign for the "overloading" of the existing institutions.

Graph 7. Number of crèches (left scale) and number of children enrolled in crèches (right scale), 2002-2009



(Source: National Statistical Institute)

Graph 8. Net enrolment rate (left scale) and number of children enrolled in kindergartens (right scale), 2000-2010



(Source: National Statistical Institute)

Abortion

The induced abortions are legal in Bulgaria on request since April 1956. The higher increase of the abortion rates led to some restrictions, which significantly affected the birth rates for several years after. Since 1968, the abortion was forbidden for the childless married couples. Since 1974, it was legal only in case of rape, incest or if the unmarried woman became pregnant but only before 10 weeks gestation. Since 1990, the abortions are legal on request before 12 weeks gestation (first trimester). Girls under age of 18 accompanied by a parent pass a medical test by a check-up committee before the abortion. Girls aged 12 to 16 has right to terminate their pregnancy up to 20 weeks gestation (fifth month). The induced abortion is considered being a crime after the given weeks gestation, regardless whether it is performed by a medical doctor or not. The induced abortion out of the specialized medical institution is treated as a crime. Coming back to the decreasing abortion rates in the past years, some NGOs in Bulgaria blame that the private medical clinics often break the rules about the check-up committee, 12 weeks gestation and the specialized institutions and therefore the real number of abortion is underreported.

Assisted reproduction

Developments in reproductive technology over the past 20 years have given infertile couples new opportunities to have children. Although assisted reproduction does not appear to lead to negative consequences with respect to parent-child relationships or the socio-emotional development of the child, some research findings indicate greater difficulties in parental adjustment and child behavior in assisted conception families in Bulgaria. The Bulgarian parents were rather uncertain about whether they would tell the child, and quite secretive with respect to telling others (Cook et al., 1997). One of the main reasons for that was the absolute lack of a state policy towards the assisted reproduction until 2007. According articles 129-136 of the Law on Health the assisted reproduction apply when the health state of man or woman does not allow the implementation of the reproductive function naturally. The assisted reproduction is additionally set up under medical standard adopted by the Ministry of Health as Regulation 28 of 20.06.2007 on activities in assisted reproduction. After "The protest of the empty perambulators", organized by some female NGOs and private In-vitro clinics in December 2008 - January 2009, the Government established an Assisted Reproduction Fund (ARF). According to a press release of the Health Ministry from April 2010, during the first year of ARF's functioning, about 7,300 childless couples have applied. ARF council have reviewed over 6,930 applications and have referred 4,629 women for in vitro fertilization (IVF) procedures.

Summary and Conclusions

After 20 years of liberal transformations, the value changes and demographic developments in Bulgaria brought the Second demographic transition, which seriously challenges the "Hajnal line" concept. In some demographic trends, Bulgaria already stays as an opposite of the other Balkan and Eastern European countries. For example, the extramarital births rate is comparable with the one of the Nordic countries and France (Pamporov 2008). On the other hand, the family and fertility patterns in Bulgaria are still a kind of a bricolage between the Eastern and Southern patterns. Despite the change of some traditional values and norms, the country keeps a high level of familism, where the marriage and childbirths are postponed but still remain a must.

Inheriting the totalitarian past, all governments since 1989 keep the natalistic and pro-marital way of decision making. Therefore, Bulgaria still lacks of adequate policing of the non marital cohabitations, extramarital births, adolescent fertility, adolescent and criminal abortions control. The current education reforms are intend to solve the problem with the insufficient number of kindergartens in the biggest cities by moving the start of the school enrolment at age of 5, and moving towards a full day classes. Unfortunately, the elementary schools have not sufficient number of class rooms, in-school dormitories and canteens to face the new requirements. Having in mind the recent social history, one could expect that all of the policy issues will find a proper solution by the active position of the civil society, as it already happened in the past couple of years with the maternal leave, and the assisted reproduction.

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Dana Hamplová¹

Non-Marital Fertility as a New Form of Social Inequality? Transformation of Czech Families after 1989

After the fall of communism in 1989, dramatic transformation of fertility patterns has taken place in the Czech Republic. The fertility rates have fallen rapidly, childbearing has been postponed to higher ages, cohabitation has become more common, and the proportion of children born to unmarried mothers started to grow (Sobotka et al., 2003). In this article, we focus on the last mentioned trend and we will show that the increase of non-marital fertility represents a major shift in the Czech family life (Hamplová et al., 2007, Hamplová and Řeháková, 2006).

Non-marital fertility in the Czech Republic: an overview of trends

The number of children born out of wedlock has been growing in the Czech Republic since 1974 when non-marital fertility reached its historical minimum (Zeman, 2007). However, despite the fact that the proportion of unmarried mothers was growing in the late 1970s and in the 1980s, the increase was only moderate. Until the end of the communist era, the proportion of unmarried mother never exceeded 10 per cent. In 1990, in the first year after the political change, only 8.6 percent of children were born out of wedlock. In contrast, the proportion of unmarried mothers increased to 36.3 percent by 2008 (see Table 1). Concurrently, marital status of unmarried mothers has been changing. In 1990, never married women represented 70 percent of all unmarried mothers and this proportion grew to 81.8 percent in 2008. We must also note that the proportion of premarital conceptions decreased at the same time (Zeman, 2007).

Some authors interpret the increase in non-marital fertility in terms of the Second Demographic Transition theory (STD) (Sobotka et al., 2003, Lesthaeghe and Surkyn, 2002). They argue that as younger cohorts become "westernized" and individualized they embrace the new post-materialistic values and emphasize gender equality, non-conformism, and expressiveness. As a consequence, they do not feel necessity to legitimize their relationship through formal marital arrangements (Lesthaeghe and Surkyn, 2002, Van de Kaa, 1993).

Table 1: Number of life birth and proportion of unmarried births

	1990	1995	2000	2005	2008
Life births	130,564	96,097	90,910	102,211	119,570
Life births in marriage	119,397	81,150	71,118	69,802	43,457
% of unmarried births	8.6	15.6	21.8	31.7	36.3

(Source: Czech Statistical Office)

The SDT perspective implies that cohabiting couples and unmarried mothers are well-educated and relatively well-off. They are selected from those who are able to define their own life style independently of traditions and social expectations, who embrace "modern" liberal values, and who do not face an economic pressure to get married (Katrňák, 2006). However, such a picture of unmarried mothers is radically in odds with empirical data. Czech non-marital fertility is typical for women with low education and risk of an unmarried birth significantly drops with every additional educational level. For example, in 2008, 71.1 percent of mothers with the lowest educational level gave a birth outside of marriage. In contrast, only 18.3 percent of university educated women were unmarried at the time of birth in the same year (see Table 2).

Table 2: Non-marital fertility by mother's education

Education of mother	1990	1995	2000	2005	2008
Primary	26.6	44.5	55.9	67.6	71.1
Vocational training	7.7	14.4	23.1	37.2	44.9
Secondary	4.1	7.8	13.5	23.8	30.0
University	3.3	5.7	8.0	13.7	18.3

(Source: Czech Statistical Office)

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Educational differences in legitimacy become even more vigorous if we take into account subsequent behaviors of unmarried mothers. Using data from vital statistics and the Czech population register, Polášek (2006) studied woman's probability of getting married after a non-marital birth. His analysis suggests that various educational groups experienced different trends from 1991 to 2001. Women with university degree had relatively stable probability of a subsequent marriage in this period. This probability however declined for all other educational groups. As a consequence, university graduates – who had the lowest probability of subsequent marriage at the beginning of 1990s – became a group with the highest probability of getting married after an out-of-wedlock birth. This means that well-educated women are currently not only the most likely to be married at the time of birth but if they are not, they are the most likely to get married subsequently.

Besides large educational differences, Czech non-marital fertility is accumulated in areas with high unemployment and poor economic prospects in general. Prague – the richest region in the country – belongs among districts with the lowest levels of non-marital fertility (Zeman, 2006). In 2008, 32.5 % of Prague's mothers were not married at the time of birth. On the contrary, in some districts of Northern Bohemia with high unemployment and generally high levels of anomic behaviors (Možný, 2002), more than half of children is born out of wed-lock. Multilevel analyses of register data show that disadvantaged socioeconomic conditions of the region increase the risk of non-marital birth especially for very young women (Hamplová and Řeháková, 2006). Given the very strong negative association between socioeconomic situation of the region, woman's education, and non-marital fertility, the Second Demographic Transition arguments do not seem to be a plausible explanation for the growth of non-marital births in the period 1990-2005. Therefore, two alternative explanations have been advanced in the literature. The first one links the rising levels of non-marital fertility with social policies that makes unmarried motherhood beneficial for poorer families (Katrňák, 2003, Katrňák, 2006). The second perspective emphasizes that the change cannot be fully explained only as a response to incentives offered by the social system but that it is also a sign of low income men's retreat from their families (Hamplová, 2007).

Non-marital fertility as a rational response to social benefits?

Several authors suggested that the increase of unmarried motherhood and its concentration among lower socioeconomic strata and in regions facing economic hardship is an unintended consequence of poorly designed social policies. This "rational-choice" perspective is vigorously supported by Soukupova's (2006, 2007) and Soukupova and Sunega's (2006) empirical analyses of the Czech social systems. Using The Model Family Method that estimates social benefits for various family types depending on the number and age of children, household income, and economic and marital status of parents, these authors repeatedly showed that low income families can significantly improve their financial situation by not getting married. Based on the benefit level in 2005 and 2006, they estimate that some families can increase their income by 30 percent if the couple does not marry and pretend not to share a household. However, as they also showed, the advantage of single motherhood rapidly diminishes as the family income increases. The conclusion from their analysis that some families might use unmarried motherhood as a strategy to increase the family income was further supported by a specialized survey *Social and Economic Condition of Motherhood 2006*² (Institute of Sociology, ASCR, Prague). For example, its results showed that the intensity of entering into marriage increase at the end of maternity leave when potential advantages of being a single mother decline.

Men's' withdrawal from parenthood?

The second explanation of growing non-marital fertility and its concentration among lower social classes does not reject the idea that social policies might create very strong incentives for poorer families to avoid marriage. However, it argues that financial gains and rational choice are not a sole reason why an increasing number of women deliver their babies out-of-wedlock and why women with low education are especially at risk. It suggests that the decline in marital births can be also attributed to men's withdrawal from families (or women's unwillingness to include them), which is significant especially among lower classes. Arguing this, this perspective indicates that the increase in non-marital fertility signals a more radical transformation of family lives than "rational reaction to social benefits" implies. While the latter perspective concentrates on a shift from procreation within marriage to childbearing within unmarried unions, the former suggests a shift from two-parent to single-mom families.

Our argument that low-income families are increasingly becoming fatherless families is based mainly on the survey data as Czech vital statistics record only legal marital status of a mother at the time of giving birth and do not collect any information about her living arrangements. The only information that we know from the vital statistics is that around one third of unmarried mothers do not report child's father on the birth certificate (27.7 % in 2008). If we assume that these women are not in a stable relationship with the child's father and that even

² It is a quota sample that consists of mothers with at least one child. Only women whose oldest child was 10 years of age or less were interviewed. Region (NUTS), the size of community, current marital status, and education from 2001 census data were used as quota controls. Data were collected in two-waves. In total, we have information on 1160 women.

not all fathers who are written on the birth certificate live with their children, it seems that the proportion of single mothers among all unmarried mothers is rather high. This conclusion is confirmed by the SECM 2006 survey (see above). Its results suggest that approximately half of unmarried mothers indeed did not live with the father at the time of birth of their oldest child. This survey thus does not support the view that procreation within cohabiting unions is the most important factor in raising non-marital fertility. Moreover, it seems that the proportion of women who deliver a baby out-of-union has been increasing in recent years.

Importantly, presence of the father varies significantly by mother's education. The lower woman's education, the higher is the probability that the father of her child is not present in the household at the time of birth. The same survey indicated that nearly two fifth of women with primary education who delivered their babies in the period 1995–2005 were single moms in the traditional sense of the word and did not co-reside with the father of their child at the time of birth. Contrary, less than 10 percent of women with university degree do not live with the father of their child at the time of birth. Although women from all educational groups have been facing a rising risk of lonely motherhood³, it seems that women with primary education experienced the biggest increase (Hamplová, 2007).

Why not to get married?

Three factors were identified in the SECM 2006 survey and all of them are intuitively appealing. The first factor referred to financial consideration (it was financially beneficial, wedding was too expensive, and marriage has no advantage). The second factor comprised of variables associated with relational insecurity (doubts about future of the relationship, worries to lose freedom). The last factor pointed to partner's unwillingness to marry.

A simple distribution of answers shows that partners' reluctance to marry and doubts about future of their partnership were – subjectively – the two most important reasons for an extramarital birth. The fact that their partner refused to get married was the main explanation for becoming an unmarried mom for one fourth of interviewed women. However, while financial considerations do not seem to be the most important reason to avoid marriage for most women, relatively high numbers of respondents were taking financial benefits into account.

The SECM 2006 data do not suggest that financial considerations (it was financial beneficial, wedding was too expensive) and relationship quality (doubts about future of the relationship, worries to lose freedom) are more important for a specific educational group. However, the proportion of women who did not get married because their partners did not want to is highly contingent on education of the woman and her partner. While majority of women with primary education strongly agreed that they were not married at the time of birth of their oldest child because their partner refused to get married; only one in ten women with university degree expresses the same.

Conclusions

The goal of this paper was to draw our attention to the fact that non-marital fertility has been increasing in Czech Republic in the last decades. The Czech non-marital fertility is typical especially for younger women with low education and with generally low economic prospects. Therefore, we argue that the standard explanation, i.e. reference to the Second demographic transition, is not adequate. Instead, this paper suggests that the demographic shift from marital to non-marital births is more essential and should not be viewed only as a change in legal form of union, i.e. shift from the married to cohabiting families, but that we witness a shift from two-parent to one-parent families. This phenomenon is especially significant among lower social classes, which creates an important polarization between relatively well-off and well-educated two-parent families and relatively poor and low-educated mother-headed families. Importantly, we can assume that such polarization will lead to increasing social inequalities within the next generation.

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The Conditions of Parenthood in Organisations: An International Comparison²

The paper focuses on organisations and the conditions for working parents in terms of combining work and care and how those conditions are set up and negotiated in organisations. The research draws on three case studies comparing pairs of companies active in the Czech Republic and in one of the following countries – Germany, France, and Sweden – in the field of engineering. The goal is to explore in depth the conditions that Czech working parents are faced with and that derive from the organisational processes and means and dynamics of negotiating conditions for working parents, and to compare them with the conditions in other countries and identify the sources of variability of these conditions. Important differences between a company's family-friendly practices in its home country and in its Czech branches are primarily determined by the differences in the way in which welfare regimes are set up in individual countries. In addition, the authors identify the following five main interlinked factors explaining the variability of family-friendly policies and practices in organisations: parental (maternity) ideologies, the organisational culture of non-discrimination and equal opportunities, the actors' activity in work relations, the role of trade unions in negotiations, and the given organisation's experience with employees-parents.

Introduction

Demographic changes and changes in European labour markets have increased the need for European societies to address the issue of work-life balance and to introduce family-friendly policies. A typology of the ways and variations in which individual countries deal with this issue has stirred a major debate in sociology [Esping-Andersen 1990, 2000; Orloff 1993; Lewis 1992]. However, the issue of family-friendly policies and practices at the level of organisations and how they are intertwined with the policies of individual countries has received much less attention in sociological research.

In this article, we focus on organisations, the conditions for working parents trying to combine work with caring for their children, and how these conditions are created and negotiated in organisations. Our research is based on three case studies comparing pairs of companies active in the Czech Republic and in Germany, France, or Sweden, operating in the field of engineering. The goal is to explore in depth the conditions that Czech working parents are faced with and that derive from the company's organisational processes and the means and dynamics of negotiating conditions for working parents. We chose to conduct qualitative sociological case studies as the method of achieving this goal. Case studies of companies that operate in several countries give us the opportunity to capture the links between the level of state social policy and the level of policies and practices in organisations. The basic premise of this article is that family-friendly policies and practices in organisations and the working conditions for working parents are not and cannot be identical or similar within one company operating in two countries because they are crucially influenced by state social policy. The goal of the paper is to suggest a potential answer to the related questions: 'What is the source of variability in family-friendly policies and practices in organisations, and what other influences give rise to this variability on top of state social policy?'

The research was also intended to reflect upon another dimension of the contemporary labour market – the injection of foreign capital into Czech companies and the operations of branches of foreign companies in the Czech Republic. We questioned whether and how the policy of a Czech company changes when foreign capital becomes dominant or when a foreign owner buys a company and thus becomes the buyer's subsidiary. In what ways do the working conditions for working parents differ in the different branches of one company operating in two countries?

In order to find answers to these questions, we selected two companies that have a long tradition of operating abroad within Europe and that in the past decade established distribution branches and began operating in the Czech Republic (see case studies 3.2. and 3.3. below). We selected one company in the same industry that had a long history of operating in the Czech Republic as the largest production and distribution firm in its field and was

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then taken over by a foreign owner, thus creating an international concern (see case study 3.1. below).

In the first and theoretical part of the text, we start with welfare state classification theory and feminist arguments for the introduction of the gender dimension, especially those focused on family-friendly policies. Then we turn to the organisational level and to how policies, practices, and working conditions for working parents are gendered. In the second part, we discuss the methodology of the case studies used in our research. The third part presents the individual case studies, which compare the organisational environment of the Czech and the home branches of one company. In the fourth part, we discuss our findings. The article closes with a summary of the main findings and suggestions for future research.

State welfare policy

A family-friendly policy can be defined as a formal or informal set of terms and conditions that are designed to enable an employee to combine family responsibilities with employment and reduce job-family conflict. They can be categorised into: paid or unpaid leave arrangements (e.g. maternity, parental leave), flexible working arrangements (e.g. part-time, job share, flexitime, compressed working week, annualised hours, and homeworking), and workplace facilities (e.g. nurseries, subsidised childcare, and counselling or stress management provision) [Callan 2007: 674; cf. Davis and Kalleberg 2006: 192]. The reasons and arguments for implementing family-friendly policies are framed in two ways: first, in the sense that gender equality and equality of opportunities together with economic factors such as the implementation of these policies can be profitable, and not just in terms of bringing about equality [Lewis 2006; Gornick and Meyers 2008] and second, in purely economic terms [Callan 2007].

Welfare state theories that build on democratic values, including gender equality in opportunities and treatment, construct an adult worker model [Lewis 2001] or a worker-parent model [Leira 2002], which must be free from gender stereotypes. Each individual should be able to choose his or her own strategy for combining work and care so that no type of choice is penalised. In order for carers and parents, women and men, to be able to equally choose the degree of their involvement in paid and unpaid labour, it is necessary to put in place a mixture of policies relating to time (working hours, time for work, time for care), money (for purchasing care and supporting those who personally provide care), and services (for children and for the sick and the elderly) [Leitner 2003; Pfau-Effinger 2005; Bettio and Plantenga 2004; Lewis 2006: 111].

Analyses of welfare states and inequalities completely ignored the gender dimension up until the end of the 1980s [Fraser 1989; Lewis 1992; Orloff 1993]. According to Esping-Andersen's classification, Germany and France are defined as corporatist welfare states and Sweden as a social democratic welfare state. Walter Korpi included the gender dimension in the Esping-Andersen analyses and modified the types. He categorises France and Germany as general family-support model and Sweden as the dual-earner support models [Korpi 2000]. Esping-Andersen himself later changed his viewpoint and paid significant attention to women's employment [Esping-Andersen 2000: 23].

Arguing from the stance of feminist social policy, Jane Lewis criticised Esping-Andersen's complete neglect of the gender dimension and instead categorised welfare state regimes based on the gender division of labour [Lewis 1992]. Furthermore, Lewis drew attention to the fact that gender is a fitting analytical tool thanks to its historical dynamism. Thus, for example, France historically ranked among the strong male-breadwinner states and today, according to Lewis, ranks together with Germany among the modified male-breadwinner countries. Sweden, according to Lewis, is a typical example of a weak male-breadwinner model. Shortly afterwards, Orloff divided the gender aspects of welfare states into two dimensions – women's access to paid employment and women's capacity to create and maintain an autonomous household [Orloff 1993]. Women's access to paid employment is a dimension that is strongly linked to the position of women in society as a whole and to attitudes towards the role of mothers in the public arena.

Feminist analyses of welfare states have also pointed out the limitations of all these typologies because they neglect very important differences, grouping together countries that are vastly dissimilar, like Germany and France. Research studies comparing individual countries from various perspectives (in our case family-friendly employment policies) further illuminate the causes of differences and their inter-relations. Furthermore, with the enlargement of the European Union, the question arises of how to categorise new member states in the existing typologies or whether to completely revise these typologies. However, the effort to categorise new member states has only just begun [Pascall and Kwak 2005]. The inclusion of the Czech Republic in a comparison with three Western European countries can provide a significant contribution to this body of knowledge.

After 1989, the Czech Republic, on its path to capitalism, abandoned some of the state family policies it previously had that supported working parents (especially mothers), such as its wide network of nurseries providing infant care, and it implemented the extension of parental leave, the effect of which has been the long-term exclusion of women from the workplace. Legislative measures of family policy and the labour market, which frame the strategies and create the space for work-life balance, have changed dramatically in the last fifteen years. The following changes in particular have occurred: a) the introduction of parental leave, which both

parents can take up as agreed between them; b) the gradual extension of maternity and parental leave to up to three years (until the child is three years of age), along with the possibility of collecting a low flat-rate parental allowance for up to four years; c) granting fathers equal access to parental and maternity leave in relation to the protection of employee rights; d) the introduction of the option of unrestricted earnings while a parent is collecting parental allowance and is on parental leave. (For a detailed account of the current legislative terms that apply to parenthood, see Maříková [2005]; and on their development and uptake by parents and employers in the Czech Republic, see Kuchařová et al. [2006]). The terms under which the legislative measures of the state family policy are taken up are negotiated at the level of organisations and within their gender structure and organisational culture [Křížková and Vohlídalová 2009].

The availability of institutional childcare facilities for children under the age of three is minimal and even among parents with children aged three or four the demand for childcare services is not met. In practice, this means that most women opt for parental leave of a maximum of three years. Some changes have occurred, such as the possibility to collect parental allowance and engage in gainful employment simultaneously. However, the practical exercising of this option is hindered by the rigidity of the labour market, which does not make it possible (or only marginally) to make use of legislative measures such as part-time work or homeworking.

For our comparative study, we selected companies based in Germany, France, or Sweden that have branches operating in the Czech Republic. These four countries were selected because they differ significantly in terms of how their social policy is constructed.

Organisation policy

The basic form and structure of modern organisations, which was established with the rise of modern capitalist societies, has always corresponded with the roles of men at a given period in history. The model worker was a man free from the concerns of family life, which was strictly separated from the sphere of labour. Family life was the responsibility of women, who did not contribute significantly to the operation of organisations, or else they performed service and caring roles there as they did in the household. With the mass entry of women into the labour market, organisations, and enterprises, women largely had to adapt to the model of worker that matched the life roles of men [Wajcman 1998]. These gender regimes, which are typical of the general inequalities in the position of women and men in organisations [Connell 2002], are largely maintained and reproduced in contemporary organisations, despite the existence of gender equality policies [Křížková 2003]. Women tend to be concentrated at the lower levels of the organisational hierarchy and in positions and professions with worse conditions (lower wages, prestige, promotion opportunities, access to further training, benefits, etc.)

Joan Acker's description of 'gendered organisations' outlines the gender differences and inequalities that permeate the whole organisational structure and all its processes [1990]. Acker claims that '[W]ork organizations are critical locations for the investigation of the continuous creation of complex inequalities because much societal inequality originates in such organizations' [Acker 2006: 441].

In this study, we deal with how these various organisational gender regimes – which are the result of various influences, such as state welfare policy, the degree of labour market regulation, the degree of centralisation of negotiations on labour conditions (national, union, entrepreneurial and individual levels), and the meanings and practices of work and care and attitudes to the gender division of labour in a concrete country [Orloff 1993; Lewis 1997; Ellingsæter 2000] form the organisational environment, policies, and practices for combining work and family life.

For this study, we have selected engineering as our one field of business. This type of industry and the individual segments of it, especially production lines, workshops, and plants, tend to be viewed as 'masculine' and perceived as a 'man's world' or more precisely as social environments that embody masculine values, norms, visions, and the male perception of the world and principles of activity, etc. [Cockburn 1985]. This does not necessarily mean that the jobs in this industry are always and under all circumstances performed by men, but men do predominate in this segment of production, among blue-collar workers, and among designers, constructors, engineers, and, last but not least, among managers. The masculine gendering of the organisation is linked to this symbolic level and *a priori* signifies the exclusion of everything that is not connoted as 'male' (or masculine) and that is then considered to be 'female' (or feminine) in the binary gender optic.

The gendering of the field of engineering thus revolves around the concept of traditional masculinity [Connell 2002]. In view of the fact that in the binary gender optic family-friendly policies tend to be perceived as measures designed for women, the choice of a 'masculine' field presents a suitable environment for studying family-friendly organisational policies and practices, in part also because it is an environment that is not typically perceived as one that would implement such policies and practices.

The methodology used in the case studies of the engineering firms

Three case studies were carried out in three organisations whose parent companies are based in one of the countries of the 'old' European Union (EU 15) – Germany, France, and Sweden – with a subsidiary in the Czech Republic. These companies are all prominent in the field of engineering.

The research was conducted at the end of 2006 and the start of 2007 using semi-structured interviews with the same thematic outline in the parent company and its Czech subsidiary. The interviews were conducted with human resources staff, representatives of unions, and with employees-parents of young children. The German and French interviews were conducted in the respondents' native language, and for Sweden, the interviews were conducted in English. The analysis of the transcribed interviews was also conducted in these languages.

The interviews were all conducted according to the same script outlining the thematic areas to be covered during the interview, but the actual order and the exact wording of the questions changed depending on the context and the course of the interview. Moreover, the interview was accompanied by a brief questionnaire, the purpose of which was to map individual family-friendly measures offered by the organisation. Data collection was supplemented with the study of documents that were made available to us during the interviews and through contacts within the organisations. Relevant documents concerning family-friendly policies and programmes or collective agreements made it possible for us to gain insight into the range of institutionalised measures adopted.³

The main analytical instrument used in the data analysis was the continuous comparison of the emerging categories and their dimensions, both within one case study – within the framework of one subsidiary of a company and between the subsidiaries of that one company in two countries – and between the case studies themselves. During the analyses, we compared the results of the individual case studies and developed a common set of codes, which directed the analyses so that the findings were to at least some degree comparable.

In view of the fact that the methodological framework of this research is in grounded theory and social constructivism, it was not our goal to obtain strictly comparative results. Consequently, our results include three case studies of companies, each of which compares the Czech and the parent organisation.

The size and nature of the organisation in the Czech Republic was of significance. For example, the German company has its distribution headquarters and a production branch in the Czech Republic, so it is quite independent in terms of its production and marketing operations. However, the French and Swedish firms only have distribution headquarters in the Czech Republic, so it is mainly marketing that is carried out in the Czech Republic. This had a bearing on the choice and availability of individual communication partners in the organisations, but also on our 'knowledge framework'. Because of these differences, in the case study of Germany and the Czech Republic we opted for a comparison of the organisations as a whole – the production and administrative components. In the case studies comparing the Czech Republic with Sweden and France we opted for a comparison of only the administrative parts of the organisations. Those differences may account for some of the findings; therefore, we have taken them into consideration when interpreting the data.

Access to the field was another limitation to the study. In the German engineering firm case, we were able to interview one human resources staff member, one trade union representative, who is also a member of the works council, and two parents from the German controlling company; in the Czech subsidiary we interviewed two human resources staff members, one trade union representative, and three parents (two mothers, both in marketing, and one father, a single parent in a blue-collar profession).

In the French engineering firm case, we conducted seven in-depth interviews in the controlling company (one with a female representative of the human resources department, one with a male representative of the trade union, and five with male and female employees-parents). Despite repeated attempts to establish contact, the human resources department at the Czech firm refused to cooperate with us and we were only able to carry out two interviews with female employees, both of them mothers of small children.

In the case of the Swedish engineering firm, the managerial staff (at the Swedish headquarters) proved to be even more uncooperative. We managed to conduct one interview with a young woman in a managerial position in administration before she left for parental leave. In the Czech branch, we interviewed three employees-parents: one man in the position of the company director, one man in the position of a customer service official, and one woman in a middle management position.

In the Czech branch of the French company and at the Swedish company headquarters, we were given limited access to the respondents, and that could hinder the comparative potential of the studies. Nevertheless, we were able to obtain formal and informal supplementary information from our study of documents and through our personal contacts in the companies.

³ A detailed account of the data sources, especially the interviews we conducted, is contained in the footnote to each of the case studies

No two organisations are alike: foreign companies in the home and in the Czech environment

This section outlines the similarities and differences between the environment of the parent company and that of its Czech subsidiary. The case studies are introduced with a brief summary of the given country's welfare state policy compared to that of the Czech Republic, followed by a comparison of how the company operates in each of the two different countries and a comparison of their corporate cultures.

*Germany and the Czech Republic*⁴

In the Federal Republic of Germany a new parental allowance, the 'Elterngeld', was introduced on 1 January 2007, which replaced the existing way of supporting persons on parental leave. The parental allowance is designed to motivate the faster return (especially of women) to work and to motivate men to take at least some leave to care for a baby. The allowance is higher than the previous allowances and is designed to compensate for lost earnings. The allowance is paid in the first twelve months of the child's life and is equal to two-thirds of a person's salary (but with a maximum of EUR 1800). If the salary is lower than EUR 1000, 100% is paid out, but the absolute minimum amount is EUR 300. If the father goes on parental leave, this amount is also paid for the thirteenth and fourteenth months of the child's life. The parents can decide to collect the allowance for up to two years – but then only half of the monthly sum that would be payable to them during twelve (or fourteen) months is paid. The employing organisation is obliged under the law to keep the job position of an employee on parental leave open for them to return.

A big problem in Germany (and even more so in its western part) is the major lack of preschool facilities. A law (from 2005) on the construction of childcare facilities stipulates that 230 000 new places in kindergartens, nurseries, and daycare facilities are to be created by 2010. In addition to non-port organisations, various ministries are currently addressing the issue of work-life balance.

One company in various countries

Both the German and the Czech organisations are comparable, though the Czech one is smaller. Both have headquarters in a smaller town and are the main employer (tens of thousands of people) in the town and its wider surroundings. Both the organisations are enterprises, with strong links to other industrial companies. They are successful, produce a large volume of exports, and make world-renowned brands. Most of the organisations' employees work in production, that is, on the production line in a shift-based operation.

In the German organisation, our interviewees from the human resources department and trade unions voiced the need to build a 'family-friendly firm'; the works council also adopted such a resolution. The human resources department (Frauenförderung) in the organisation focused specifically on supporting women in the engineering environment and supporting families by providing information flyers and training for parents returning from maternity or parental leave.

Conversely, the Czech organisation maintains the very neo-liberal stance that '*the company should not be doing everything itself... we allow people to earn enough...*' so that they can take care of their own affairs (Miroslav; HRM, top management; 50 years of age; 2 children: 25 and 28 years of age; CR). In addition to the gendered opinions of Czech human resources managers about the impropriety of women working in an engineering company, another major difference compared to Germany was the huge influence that the individual shift managers and plants have on decision-making. This also affected the atmosphere within the organisation, especially in production occupations, where the largest number of people worked. Their decisions were guided both by gender biases and, according to a statement from a female trade union member, rudeness, along with efforts 'not to complicate one's life' by making concessions, such as modifying working hours or changing shifts, even if this was within their remit. Personal relations and 'camaraderie' with the boss also influenced decisions. However, in the parent company in Germany, human resources managers talked about their current efforts to attract more women to all types of work activities, to have more women in supervisory positions, and to attract girls from secondary schools into technical fields.

Shift work and line production are the most important factors that interfere in the implementation of family-friendly policies and practices. In both organisations, an administrative employee has to be present at the workplace for a fixed period of time but the start and finish of working hours are flexible. However, according to the statements of the human resources managers in the Czech organisation, flexible working hours are impossible in production. Similarly, there is a disparity in the Czech organisation with regard to part-time work: although officially permitted, part-time work does not exist in production. In the German organisation, part-time work is

⁴ In the Czech Republic the interviews were conducted with the human resources staff members, one in the field of top management and the other from the department of personnel services; with two mothers, one after maternity leave and the second newly on maternity leave, both in marketing, and lastly with a father who was a single parent in a blue-collar profession. Among representatives of trade unions, one respondent was a trade union member dealing with the issue of women and families. In Germany the interviews were conducted with a human resources staff member from the department of Frauenförderung (support for women and families), a female trade union representative and a member of the works council, a father who was on parental leave, and a mother of three shortly after maternity leave.

more frequently permitted in administration, but it is also possible to agree on a more flexible arrangement in production. Such an arrangement is negotiated with the shift or plant manager, but in practice, it is relatively unusual.

The Czech organisation offers single parents a sheltered workshop where 'line work' is limited, and therefore some flexibility of working hours is allowed. However, the work is for lower wages, so, as one communication partner – a single father – noted, this is not a solution for single parents.

By comparison, the German organisation offers a special 'lunch' shift for single parents (from 10:45 to 16:33), which (unlike the protected workshop) is fully integrated into the main production process. When part-time positions and this special shift are not covered by internal staff, they are covered by agency staff. Agency workers are also used in the Czech organisation, but owing to reluctance on the part of the managers (the greater demands put on the manager's organisational efforts) it is not used for this purpose. A Czech human resources manager even declared that shortening shifts is impossible:

Well, it's simply not technically possible, it can't be... people go to work to fulfil tasks and not according to how they sleep or that they need to change a baby's diapers. (Ota; HRM, social services; 63 years of age; children: 31, 38; CR)

Both organisations offer homeworking for office professions. While in Germany this is a practical working option, in the Czech Republic it exists only for those in top management. For the past two years, the German organisation has offered tele-working, but only a very small number of employees have taken up this opportunity.

Company attitudes towards parenthood

Generally the interviewees did not regard taking maternity or parental leave as a problem. An important factor is the size of the organisation and the substitutability. The only perceived problem was in the case of a woman working in a specifically qualified position going on maternity leave. Both firms equally keep the position open for the employee on parental leave for longer than the legally defined period. In the Czech Republic, this is, according to the collective agreement, up to four years after a child is born (the fourth year is taken as unpaid leave); in Germany, an internal company decision allows up to seven years of parental leave.

Returning to work after parental leave in larger organisations appears to be less problematic in terms of finding a suitable position for a person to return to, especially in administrative posts. One Czech female trade-union representative noted that problems can, however, occur in production. According to her, *'the firm does not have a problem taking a person back but it has a problem employing them in another work regime.'* (Dana; trade union employee; 54 years of age; children: 29, 33; CR). She describes discriminatory practices where the firm offers the returning person a position but will not allow shift selection or part-time work, thus forcing the person (the vast majority of whom are women) to resign by agreement owing to difficulties with childcare responsibilities. The German organisation, on the other hand, does allow part-time work, even in line production.

In view of the fact that goods and technologies change fast, requalification upon return is common in both organisations. The German parent organisation even offers a 'family management' seminar for women/men returning from parental leave. The course prepares parents for the 'challenges' of combining work and parenthood.

Neither company offers many direct benefits to families. The Czech organisation pays a childbirth allowance; whereas other benefits (housing, health-care centre, etc.) were abolished upon the entry of the German partner in the 1990s. The German organisation does not provide a childbirth allowance. However, it offers parents an 'information service', such as an internet information exchange where it is possible to advertise and shop for babysitting services.

Babysitting and childcare are a major help to parents when combining family and working lives. Both companies previously had their own kindergarten or nursery. In recent years the parent company appears to have acknowledged the need to provide some childcare facilities to ensure employee satisfaction and it financially supports preschool facilities in the town. It also has a certain amount of influence over the services provided by the kindergartens and their opening hours. However, this is not the case in the Czech Republic.

Parents' ability and room to negotiate

The interviewees' statements uncovered one major difference: the degree of in/ activity on the part of both the leadership of the organisations and parents. In Germany, parents were relatively well informed; they can ask for information (and do so) from the trade unions and the human resources department (Frauenförderung); in more qualified positions they are contacted by the human resources manager before they return from parental leave. As the German human resources manager says:

A woman coming back from parental [leave] knows what her rights are here. And in case of doubt, when human resources aren't willing to give it to her, she will go with them to the works council. (Maria; HRM, Dep. Frauenförderung; 47 years of age; 2 children: 15, 17; DE).

Passivity on both sides is typical of the Czech Republic. Parents are generally unaware of their options and rights and are afraid to ask for anything, according to the female trade-union representative and a single parent-father. The human resources do not offer much because, allegedly, employees do not demand it (Ota; HRM, social services; 63 years of age). This creates a vicious circle. The organisation asks the employee but interprets silence as a lack of interest, and so it does not offer anything actively. Another argument heard from the organisation is the exaggeration of the effort not to discriminate; according to human resources managers, support for women, parents, or even kindergartens in the town would constitute discrimination against men, non-parents, or commuting employees.

France and the Czech Republic⁵

In France, a relatively short interruption of work after the birth of a child is well accepted, and collective childcare facilities have a good reputation. Furthermore, various types of care for children up to the age of three are relatively widely available (in terms of the number of vacant places and geographical availability), although this care can sometimes be quite expensive. Conversely, in the Czech Republic, childcare currently is insufficiently institutionalised and essentially unavailable. In France, a woman is entitled to sixteen weeks of maternity leave after childbirth, which can be extended by an additional four weeks. This period is covered by sickness insurance and, in many companies, collective agreements provide for coverage to make up for the rest of the salary. Parental leave can last up to three years after the child is born, during which the parent collects a low, flat-rate benefit. After childbirth, men are entitled to an eleven-day 'paternal leave', which 65% of fathers take up, and this is also covered by healthcare insurance. There is a cap on this benefit and some companies make up for the rest of the salary, like they do for mothers. This is also the case in the French parent organisation in the study.

One company in different countries

The French firm has headquarters close to Paris, with branches across the whole country. Its affiliates function in many European and other countries and it employs approximately 126 500 people (December 2005). In the company there are very strong trade unions with a long history and great bargaining skills. These organisations work together when negotiating with management. The most important outcome of their activity in the past few years was the so-called 'Accord du 17 février 2004'. The agreement in many ways supplements a previous measure relating to work-life balance.

The Czech branch was established in 1993 and in 2007 it had 87 employees. It has its headquarters in Prague and deals especially in trade and production and spare parts distribution, though the company does not have any production units in the Czech Republic. Unlike the French headquarters, employees in the Czech company are not organised in trade unions.

The companies' respect for parenthood

The conditions for combining parenthood and paid work in both organisations derive mainly from the time spent at work. In France, the official working week is 35 hours; at the French headquarters, however, working hours were based on the employees' requests that instead of shortening the work day employees would be given an extra ten days in holidays. During the working day, French male and female employees at the headquarters spend a relatively long time at the workplace (nine to ten hours, but sometimes up to twelve hours). The headquarters offers an advantage in the form of flexible working hours: work starts between seven and ten in the morning and ends between four and eight in the afternoon or evening. In many ways, labour productivity in the managerial and administrative positions is still measured by the time spent at the workplace, which respondents-parents say does not work for them. The unwillingness of parents to spend long hours at work can thus have an effect on their career progression.

When you decide to give priority to the family and try to go home earlier, you have to suddenly accept a less interesting position. (Laure; HRM; 36 years of age; 2 children: 6 months, 6 years; FR).

At the Czech branch, the rules governing working hours are somewhat different. Among the top managerial staff, a working day of ten hours or more is also sometimes expected, but this is not the rule. People in middle management positions usually start before nine in the morning and finish between five and six. Flexible working-hour arrangements are also in place here, with parents able to adapt them further to their needs:

Flexible, well, I have working hours stretched more than the normal hours. Because normally an employee should be here until five p.m. But I have an exception; I come at 7:45 and leave at 16:15 so I manage to fit my full-time job to the opening hours of a kindergarten. (Nada; business assistant; 31 years of age; 1 child: 5; CR)

⁵ In the Czech branch of the French organisation we encountered negative attitudes on the part of the human resources department. We were even faced with efforts to prevent us from contacting employees for the purpose of getting an interview. It was also much more difficult (than in the French headquarters) to persuade the employees, male and female, to give us an interview.

Work-life balance can also be tackled through part-time work. In France, part-time work usually takes the form of four-fifths of the full-time equivalent (working four days a week). The main disadvantage of a shortened work load in France is that it closes the path to career progression. For career-oriented employees in positions of middle and top management, therefore, it is not a viable option:

In my opinion it is possible, but then they point their finger at you and your professional progression... is not maybe completely stopped but it stops for the time you are working part time. (Marie-Louise; product manager; 32 years of age; twins 16 months; FR)

In the first years of the child's life, part-time work can be a temporary solution. The Czech branch is not as forthcoming when it comes to part-time work. Communication partners were able to use this type of work arrangement only in the first month after the enrolment of a child in a kindergarten or nursery as an adaptation period; otherwise it is not allowed, even in administrative positions. In France, almost all women interrupt work because of childbirth. Female managers in the studied company usually stay at home with a child only during maternity leave or extend that period with proper leave. Thus, women usually stay at home until the fourth to sixth month after the birth of the child. According to the 2004 Accord, absence due to maternity leave should not have any influence on an employee's assessment. Nevertheless, this is not always the case, as one female representative of the human resources department explains:

I think that they are disadvantaged because there is a budget given for bonuses. Each department and branch has their own budget. And this budget must be divided. And of course a person who worked for the whole year gets more money. (Laure; HRM; 36 years of age; 2 children: 6 months, 6 years; FR)

Men in France are offered eleven-day paternal leave. Mr. André (business manager; 34 years of age; 2 children: 1, 3; FR) confirms that before the 2004 Accord the attitude of the company to this type of leave tended to be negative – the company did not provide full salary compensation as it does now, and it did not look favourably upon men who decided to take up paternal leave. Since the 2004 Accord it has become widespread.

The Czech branch has thus far had little experience with female (or male) employees going on maternity or parental leave. Approximately five mothers with small children work there, of whom two are still at home with their child and do not plan to go back before the third or fourth year after the birth. Another employee, Naďa, returned to work after being three years on parental leave, when the child enrolled in a kindergarten, which is a normal practice in the Czech Republic. Her experience with negotiating her return to work was not very good:

Otherwise, on the part of the HR, I have to say that there, although I announced long before that that I would like to come back and so on, and although I was saying already during maternity leave that I would like only to help someone for a few hours a week, to come back gradually, this was never considered. I have to say that the attitude was very, very bad, passive and even resistant. (Naďa; business assistant; 31 years of age; 1 child: 5; CR)

Veronika, a manager, stayed at home with her child for fifteen months, after which she returned at the request of her direct supervisor. Personally, she feels this to be a long enough period, but in the Czech environment she had to deal with negative reactions from those around her, especially from women, because she failed to fulfil the cultural norm of 'good motherhood'.⁶

Parents' ability and room to negotiate

Owing to several decades of trade union bargaining at the French headquarters, actors (parents) do not appear to feel such a need to interfere actively in the negotiations; they see it as a process that takes place beyond them. In principle, bargaining in the French company is left to the trade unions, which carefully monitor the situation in the company. According to employees, trade unions are there to 'raise demands every time something comes up that can be improved from a social point of view.' (André; business manager; 34 years of age; 2 children: 1, 3; FR). Employees themselves do not usually demand anything from the leadership; the trade unions fulfil this role satisfactorily. They take care to distribute information – according to respondents it is sometimes difficult to get access to important information.

Whether and how parents (mothers) manage to find a balance between work and family obligations largely depends on social and institutional structures that help families. In France they have a wider range of childcare possibilities (state or private nurseries, day-care mothers, or household nannies) but they also have to battle with the excessive costliness of certified carers and the unavailability of places in state nurseries or the limited opening hours of these facilities. In the Czech Republic, state policy and the leadership of the organisation exhibit an overall disinterest in parents' problems obtaining day-care for children under the age of three.

Unlike the French headquarters, the Czech branch has no formal measures that go beyond what they are required

⁶ Attitudes towards mothers who do not adhere to the norm of a mother staying at home for three years were studied in detail in [Janoušková 2004].

to do by law. There is a general lack of experience with the issue of work-life balance. This is especially owing to the fact that the company almost exclusively employs young people (men and women), for whom the decision to start a family and consequently also the need to address the issue of combining work and private life are still in the future. The organisation has thus now been able to view its employees solely in the context of their work and without any outside commitments. The pressure to establish at least basic measures comes from the bottom up from female employees as they gradually become mothers and look for sustainable strategies to remain with the company. Success in negotiating clearly depends on their individual position in the organisation and their personal and professional relationship with their superiors.

Sweden and the Czech Republic⁷

Measures for combining work and family have long been in place in Sweden. They are designed to ease the situation of families with minor children and are provided under the following legislation: the Act on Childcare Leave, the entitlement to part-time work or suitable modifications of working hours, the legal right of the child to qualified care through institutionalised care organised by the state or municipality.

In Sweden, a child's parents are altogether entitled to 480 paid days of parental leave (or ideally 240 days for each of them) which they can use for up to eight years after the birth of the child. Sixty days are allocated exclusively for each of them. Unlike the Czech Republic, then, there is a sort of 'parental quota'. Each parent has to use up this minimum leave period or the legal entitlement is lost. The use of this type of leave and the payment of the corresponding allowance during this time is set up in such a way to be as variable and flexible as possible in order for parents to be able to accommodate the demands and the needs of a child; furthermore, institutional barriers are eliminated to the greatest possible extent (in the social system setup) [cf. Saxonberg 2008]. The Swedish system aims to support a more equal distribution of activities between parents with the implementation of this measure.

Public day-care facilities for children of preschool age are affordable for all parents, with no one paying more than 3% of their (family) budget for the first child, 2% for the second, and 1% for the third or more children. Most childcare costs are paid from public sources in the form of contributions from the municipality and from state resources such as targeted grants and support, etc. For children between the ages of 6 and 12 inclusively, various leisure activities are organised during after-school hours in so-called leisure-time centres.

A system of preschool and school-age care with a universalistic design does not exclude parents with lower income or lower 'family' social capital, but integrates them on the basis of citizenship rights and creates equal space for the social employment of parents.

One company in different countries

The company under consideration in this study was established in the inter-bellum period, offering various types of services in a number of locations; today it is part of a supranational production company in the field of engineering. Although this sphere of production builds on masculine values and worldview, in the Scandinavian company under study, emphasis tends to be placed on the humanity of work and on interpersonal relations, teamwork and diversity of work teams, and equality and non-discrimination, which are considered to be the main principles of organisational operations. Measures within the company, which has thousands of employees in Sweden, are based on the principle of not excluding anyone *a priori* and not preventing people from using their capabilities. Company measures respect the country's legislation and correspond to the generally widespread culture of non-discrimination.

Swedish law is very clear. There must be no discrimination of mothers, of either of the parents. During an interview no one may ask you about personal issues. These things are not acceptable either legally or culturally. Swedish culture in general is oriented against discrimination. (Ingrid; HR business partner; 33 years of age; no children; SE)

Within the company there is a strong focus not only on the person as an employee (good conditions are created to allow him or her to maximise their work performance) but also on people as individuals who have their own personal private-family life outside work.

In the Czech Republic, the branch is a small organisation with only a few dozen employees. It was established in the mid-1990s and imports products to the Czech Republic and conducts sales. Unlike the Swedish company there is no employee organisation (trade union) in the Czech firm. In the early days, a higher proportion of young people were employed in the firm who were at that time generally single and without children. There was a focus on high work performance; it was possible to identify 'loyalty' to the company, partly because of the above

⁷ In the text that follows we draw on analyses and work and map family policy in Sweden, on the Collective Agreement for the Engineering Industry in Sweden, and on the interviews we conducted. In the Swedish branch one interview was conducted with a young woman in a managerial position in administration before she left for parental leave; in the Czech branch interviews were conducted with three parents – a man in the position of a director in the company, a man in the position of a customer service official, and a woman in a middle management position who was on parental leave at the time the interview was carried out.

average wages. Given the average age of employees and that most of them were childless, the company did not have to deal with the issue of work-life balance, but that did not necessarily eliminate the issue of combining work and personal life altogether. However, the interviews conducted for this study showed that in the initial period the atmosphere in the company was very informal and friendly; employees were willing and got used to working overtime. It was not unusual to work from nine in the morning until ten in the evening, which undoubtedly left employees with a lack of free time – time for other people, relationships, and other activities than those immediately linked to the performance of paid work.

... When I came here, there was a huge number of young people. I was the oldest and I was just over thirty. The company was terribly immature in human terms... They didn't have families, they didn't have children. They placed work first... (Vojtěch; customer service director; 43 years of age; 2 children: 3, 6; CR)

The companies' respect for parenthood

In the first years in which the Czech branch was being established, a work model was constituted that was 'tailored' to a certain type of worker. The worker was envisioned as a single person with no personal or family life or personal commitments and obligations towards others who are close and dependent on them. In this work model, an individual *de facto* cannot have any family commitments, nor cannot fulfil these family commitments. This work model greatly interferes not only with family life but also with the personal life of the individual, including their ability to form personal relationships, as it becomes impossible for employees to (freely) use their leisure time. Unlike the Swedish parent organisation, the issue of work-life balance and the issue of equality was for a long time not a major topic for the management of human resources in the Czech branch.

In interviews with the Czech representatives of the company, it was noted that sensitivity to the needs of parents and especially mothers did not run along gender lines but according to whether an individual possesses such sensitivity or not. Nevertheless, the statement '*everything depends on people and their attitudes*', which refers to informal, personally forthcoming solutions to the situation, reveals that the employer organisation does not have a standard institutionalised solution for work-life balance in terms of being more sensitive to employees with caring commitments.

While it is common in Sweden that a certain category of employees may have flexible work hours, work part-time, or work at home (especially employed mothers) because work organisation flexibility is ensured by a higher legal norm (the parents' right to these forms of work), these forms of work are not established in the Czech branch. It is also unusual in the Czech Republic for men to go on parental leave,⁸ which in the Swedish organisation they do in conformity with an internal document based on a higher-level Collective Agreement.

Our company philosophy is for men to be at home with children similarly to mothers. It is healthy for a family, and it is a good thing to be with your child. This is the reason the company supports this. (Ingrid; HR business partner; 33 years of age; no children; SE)

Parents' ability and room to negotiate

In view of the fact that at the time when the interviews were conducted, parents were in the minority in the Czech branch, there were no measures to specifically address their situation. Everything was based on personal negotiations: the need of the employed person to formulate their demands individually, the ability to enforce them, the ability to negotiate certain conditions for combining work and family. Again, the individual ability or inability of employees to assert their demands is related to the willingness or unwillingness of people who manage work teams to negotiate with an employee. Thus, the individual qualities of people in leadership positions (such as being forthcoming, tolerant, understanding or, alternatively, having a low degree of empathy, being unforthcoming, unfriendly, intolerant or a certain selective sensitivity and empathy to certain employees, etc.) and the power of their formal position are more important than written and impersonal rules.

Although some work-life balance measures are formally in place in the Czech environment, they do not necessarily function in practice because of the (small) size of the company and the dominant corporate culture, which is to a certain degree rigid. Poor tolerance for anything other than the 'usual' conduct in the given group (in this case, age group) weakens tolerance for otherness, for example, parents. It appears that there is an invisible dividing line between parents and non-parents in the company. In the Czech organisation there is low tolerance for other types of work organisation, which is a result of an employee having a family, and this is more so on the part of co-workers than people in leadership positions.

I am definitely lucky that my boss, who has also two children, is a very family oriented person – according to me. So he always very well understood my situation. And the other fellow of mine also has a child. So, the willingness worked out there. However, as I could see in other departments, there have been mostly very young people, ambitious people who have not had a family. Therefore it is strictly

⁸ For exceptions, for example, for families with caring fathers, see Maříková [2009].

required there to be at work until six, and even in another department I know that a colleague needed to get the mortgage signed and ... they were not helpful at all. (Monika; manager customer sales; 31 years of age, 2 children: 2 years 6 months, and 6 months; CR)

Discussion of the findings

The three case studies gave us deeper insight into the issue of work-life balance from the perspective of working parents. The goal of the study was not to describe national systems of family policies or individual (family) strategies adopted by parents, but rather to focus on the level between these spheres of decision-making, and – against the backdrop of family policy systems in individual countries – to describe the conditions which organisations create and the ways in which these conditions are used by working parents to achieve work-life balance. Despite certain methodological limitations – problems with entry into some organisations – it is possible to derive some general conclusions from the study of the dynamics of the negotiations within the organisational environment and the links to the conditions determined by other social actors and individual strategies of parents in individual countries.

Despite our primary focus on the organisational level, our study also offers insight into individual levels of negotiating conditions for achieving work-life balance – the level of state family policy, the organisational level, and the individual level of an employee's strategy – especially in the Czech Republic [Křížková et al. 2007]. En route to capitalism after 1989 the Czech Republic abandoned some of its previous state family policies that supported working parents (especially mothers). This resulted in the long-term exclusion of women from the work process and conserved gender stereotypical roles in the context of a two-income family. This is related to the current gender inequalities that exist in many walks of life in Czech society. At the same time, there was a dramatic decline in the amount of union organisation and the role of trade unions decreased. The discrediting of trade unions owing to the role they played during state socialism before 1989 is connected with the more general tendency to reject any more pronounced state interference. On the other hand, the Czech population still tends to accept conditions determined at the top, through legislation or by management, and does not question existing conditions or initiate activities themselves from the bottom up.

The comparisons between the parent organisations and their branches and between the three case studies permitted us to identify the main interlinked factors that explain the variability of family-friendly policies and practices in organisations:

The character of the welfare state

In this research it is important to realise that the four countries we selected differ significantly in terms of women's employment or more precisely in terms of women's access to paid employment [Orloff 1993]. As mentioned above, this dimension is one of the determining sources of the arguments to implement family-friendly policies in the labour market. The countries under study (the Czech Republic, Germany, France, and Sweden) can, from our perspective, be divided into two types.

In the first type, state family policy basically excludes women after the birth of a child (by providing long parental leave⁹ and because of the unavailability of public childcare facilities for small infants) and thus conserves gender stereotypes related to care (by not supporting men to increase their participation in childcare); this is the way it is in Germany¹⁰ and the Czech Republic. This policy creates a certain opposition between the spheres of labour and family, employment and parenthood, work and care, and enforces the idea that labour and family roles are incompatible or in conflict. This is also related to the time demands on the performance of the roles in both these spheres – so-called presenteeism and pressure to work overtime, and high standards of motherhood in the form of the mother's extended presence at home – which support the assumption that work and parental roles are incompatible.

The second type of country, which includes France and Sweden, has long supported women's employment and maternal and parental leave is significantly shorter (six months to one year) and is accompanied by substantial financial compensation, which, together with a well-developed network of childcare facilities for the smallest children, ensures that women can return to work quickly. At the same time, family policy (at least in Sweden) gives considerable support to men in terms of contributing to care. The policies in these two countries are based on the concept of a working parent, more so in Sweden than in France, where there is a wide selection of benefits and services from which parents can choose depending on their employment position and income. Sweden is a country where the principle of universalism in social policy is firmly entrenched. This principle is founded on a

⁹ We should point out the absolute inappropriateness of the term for 'leave' in the Czech context. The Czech term '*dovolená*' used in official texts and in normal parlance means 'holiday' in relation to parental work and care. It signifies the under-recognition and devaluation of this period of parenthood in Czech society, which is even embedded in law. We therefore suggest reconsidering the appropriateness of this term in the Czech political and linguistic contexts and finding a substitute for it.

¹⁰ Germany has recently adopted changes geared at shortening parental leave, increasing financial compensation, and giving advantages to parents who share their care for a small infant by extending parental leave.

high quality of services and supports individual rights compared to the countries of the first type (the Czech Republic and Germany), where social policy is largely based on the principle of subsidiarity and mutual dependence of family members, including support for the gendered division of labour at home. Our findings show that these provisions set by state social policies have consequences for the organisational cultures of individual companies in studied countries.

Parental (motherhood) ideologies

In addition to the character of the welfare state, there is a macro-level factor that is strongly linked to national welfare systems and has a major influence on the shape of the practices of the organisations. In terms of the differences discovered among the individual countries, it appears to be crucial to examine the relationship between the length and conditions of maternity and parental leave and the ideology of motherhood, which sets the standards for a child's needs, especially in relation to the mother's uninterrupted presence or the length of the parental leave taken. These two variables differ hugely in the Czech Republic compared to the other countries in this study. Although a relatively precise notion of what it means to be a good mother is found everywhere, and this notion is considered to be universal, adherence to the French or Swedish standard would mean in the Czech Republic that a mother is neglecting her child and she could be viewed as a 'heartless' mother. The main difference between France or Sweden on the one hand and the Czech Republic on the other is the shorter duration of maternity and parental leave¹¹ and the greater availability of high quality, trustworthy childcare services in the first two countries mentioned. Czech female managers cannot choose among childcare services but almost have to count on making use of private paid care. At the same time, they face condemnation from others if they terminate parental leave when their child is fifteen months old, which in France, for example, is not uncommon. The social policy system and childcare facilities and services in France and Sweden are clearly more developed than in the Czech Republic, which is reflected in the conditions of parenthood at the organisational level, especially in a situation when a Czech branch of a foreign company does not deal with the issue of employee work-life balance seriously.

'Motherhood ideologies' in fact stem from the gender division of labour. Czech society generally fits the modified male-breadwinner model [see Lewis 1992]: women leave the workforce for a relatively long period to care for small children and remain economically dependent on their partners. This situation lays the ground for numerous gender inequalities in the labour market as well as inside the family. 'Motherhood ideologies' [see, e.g., Duncan and Edwards 1999; Hays 1996] then serve as powerful rationalisations for these inequalities.

The organisational culture of non-discrimination and equal opportunities

Another key factor explaining the variability of the organisational practices across different countries is the extent to which the companies officially adhere to the politics of non-discrimination and equal opportunities. The Swedish welfare state is typical for its pro-active social and family policy with a strong emphasis on measures that allow women and men to achieve a balance between their work and extra-work commitments and obligations. This attitude is then reflected in the organisational culture of the Swedish parent company. To some extent, the situation in the French parent company is similar. If we compare the situation in the Swedish and French parent companies and its Czech branches it is clear that not everything that is taken for granted in Sweden or in France is implemented in the Czech Republic. This is due to the different legislative frameworks and the different influence of the culture and historical experience of each country in the study. Although some measures facilitating work-life balance are formally available in the Czech environment, they do not function because of the rigid organisational culture.

The Swedish firm in this study is founded on the principle of economic growth and organisational port, not only in terms of production and sales but also in terms of the growth of the company's human capital. The firm stresses teamwork and the development and education of employees, as well as team diversity with a view to the level of skills, abilities, and qualities needed. Another component considered to be important for the development of the organisation is the support of women in leadership. The Swedish company strives to help eliminate inequalities between men and women through projects and measures aimed specifically at the sphere of gainful employment (such as career break programmes), but also through measures aimed at facilitating work-life balance. This 'women-friendly' organisational environment has a direct impact on the careers of women and on parents working in the Swedish and, to some extent also, in the French headquarters and the German company. In the Czech organisational units, attitudes towards women and parents are still conditioned by the tradition of coding engineering industry as a 'masculine' activity, which brings about the exclusion or denigration of everything coded as 'feminine'. This is usually automatically identified with the 'female sex' – either with an individual woman as a representative of the 'whole' or with women in general. This type of industry is thus dominated by 'masculine ideologies and instrumental rationality' [Kerfoot and Knights 1998], which rules out or

¹¹ Although the parental leave in France is set up similarly to the Czech Republic, it is supplemented with other measures allowing a greater variability in terms of ensuring childcare.

renders impossible the adequate evaluation and use of other human abilities and qualities, including the employment of certain 'social' needs (such as thoughtfulness, safety, tolerance, etc.). The Swedish and the French cases show that this cultural coding can under specific conditions be made obsolete.

Actors' activity in work relations

The German, French, and Swedish parent organisations endorsed the European trend of supporting equal opportunities for women and men, work-life balance, and the 'family-friendly approach'. Representatives of Czech organisations, on the other hand, tend to maintain a gender-neutral approach, which is moreover marked by the fear that any benefit for parents could discriminate against everyone else. The organisational culture of (not) supporting equal opportunities for women and men is also related to the fact that the legal claims of parents to modify their working hours are more a matter of theory than practice in the Czech organisation, and it is often stated by the persons in charge that for operational reasons it is impossible to implement certain measures. (The German organisation, however, was able to implement measures such as part-time work or changes in the length and organisation of shifts for parents in the same plants.)

In both Germany and the Czech Republic, it is apparent that people expect changes, directives, or initiatives to come from the state. This is especially obvious in relation to the issue of work-life balance, where conditions are viewed *in toto* as set by the state, and as such they are not disputed or are seen as accurate. This may also be related to the fact that in Germany and the Czech Republic the state family policy is basically uniform for all segments of the population and there are not many alternatives for creating an individual parental strategy, as is the case in France or Sweden. Although in terms of support for the family – whether by the organisation or the state – the situation in both the countries may look similar, our case study nevertheless shows that at the organisational level the situation in Germany is substantially different from the Czech Republic. Despite the fact that the company is a huge port-generating concern, the offer and access of working parents to modifications in their working hours or to homeworking are more favourable in Germany. Generally, we could say that German employees are aware of many of their rights and opportunities. In the Czech organisation, employees are more passive; they are often unaware of what they could or should want from the organisation and also fear being too active. This paradoxically causes the organisation to give up on any effort to offer anything. The situation is similar in the Czech branches of the French and the Swedish companies: while in the parent organisations, negotiations (mainly taken care of by the trade unions) are an integral part of work relations, in the Czech branches there are almost no negotiations.

Joan Acker [2006] states that organisations are locations of the continuous creation of complex inequalities, where participants have different access to power and control over goals, resources, and outcomes, and that gender is one of the most important lines of construction of those inequalities. We can assume then that in the organisational environment, where the tradition of individual negotiation and claim-making is absent or underdeveloped (as is the case of the Czech branches of the studied companies), structural disparities and inequalities (including the lack of equal opportunities for parents) will be more persistent in character and there will be less chance of change.

The role of trade unions

In principle, the negotiation of working conditions, including work-life balance issues, at the organisational level in France (even more so than in Germany) is the responsibility of trade unions. In the Czech environment there are no formal measures in organisations that go beyond the framework established by law and unions do not exist. In the Czech branch of the Swedish firm (as well as in the branch of the French firm), there are no trade unions and the likely perception is that there is no need for trade unions. Moreover, there is no human resources manager at the corporate level and instead each individual manager partly performs this role himself or herself. Perhaps it is partly for this reason that there are no rules or employee conditions set for combining work and parenting roles. Apparent here again is the passivity of Czech employees, who are not active in asserting their demands, and the potential unwillingness of people in leadership positions to allow parents to opt for alternative working conditions. The Swedish firm, which is strongly focused on social issues, is family friendly, and stresses the equality of women and men, does not implement these policies with equal force in its branch organisation; and this is also the case in the French and German branches.

The practical experience of the organisation with their employees as parents

According to our findings, neither the Swedish nor the French companies transfer their family-friendly policies to the Czech branches of their companies but instead tend to 'take advantage' of the Czech entrepreneurial environment, which does not strictly adhere to legal measures. To some extent this could be owing to the fact, in the case of both companies, that it was established purely as an administrative-sales branch, which at the beginning employed only young, career-oriented men and women who have only recently begun to form their family strategies. They therefore have an absolute lack of experience with work-life balance issues, mainly owing to the size and composition of the organisation.

If we compare the attitudes and conduct of foreign companies in their home country and in the Czech Republic it

is clear that what is normal in one country is not necessarily normal in another country. The supranational nature of a company does not necessarily eliminate 'local specifics'. In the Czech Republic we can discern a neo-liberal approach to work-life balance issues and employees' families, governed by the 'logic' that we let parents make money and let them take care of themselves. Conversely, in Germany, France, and Sweden the situation developed differently: the organisations seem to realise that a satisfied employee is an efficient and loyal employee. Therefore, they make efforts to listen to parents and actively improve their conditions, either by providing an information service or supporting preschool facilities, or through efforts to modify working hours for parents in such a way that they are able to combine their family and work commitments.

Conclusion

Important differences between the family-friendly practices of companies in their home country and in the Czech branches are due in part to the differences in the way welfare regimes are set up in individual countries. This is related to the gender structure of institutions at various levels in the given country and the area in which the company is active, differences in the importance of women's employment and motherhood ideologies, and the institutional conditions of childcare that the state (or other actors) offers. All this is influenced by the historical-social development of a country, which has an impact on the contemporary conditions of parenthood and newly implemented measures, because they are reflected in the way these conditions and instruments are conceptualised by individual actors – employers and parents, women and men.

The three case studies carried out in one industrial field allowed us to gain deeper insight into the organisational dynamics of the setting, negotiations, and practices of family-friendly policies in various countries compared to the Czech Republic. By using the given method in this area of research we were able to identify the following six main interlinked factors relating to the variability of family-friendly policies and practices in organisations: *the concrete welfare policy setting (1)*, ranging between universalism and familiarism and creating the gendered frame for the operation of organisations; *parental (motherhood) ideologies (2)* as ideas about what constitutes 'proper' parenthood (motherhood), which, at the level of organisations and at the level of society, can facilitate the performance of parental (maternal) and working roles or aggravate and make impossible the performance of parental (paternal) and working roles in terms of attitudes and evaluations (which are also reflected in policies); *the organisational culture of nondiscrimination and equal opportunities (3)*, which is a precondition for the willingness on the part of employers to offer and the ability of employees to take up family-friendly measures; *the activity of actors (4)* in work relations because, as we showed, at the level of organisations we can still discern a culture of employee passivity in terms of negotiating better working conditions, the unwillingness of employers to offer family-friendly measures and flexible working models, and the 'blind' acceptance of top-down measures by employees (from superiors) and employers (from the state); *the role of trade unions (5)* in negotiation working conditions and particular family-friendly policies at the organisational level; and finally it emerged that *practical experience of the organisation with their employees as parents (6)* is important for building a family-friendly organisational environment. To this we may also add the role of managers, which can be very important under certain conditions, as they often act as 'gatekeepers' with regard to the use of individual, formally offered measures or in terms of the development and implementation of employee demands. Simply put, an organisation with no trade unions, where most employees have no children, in a country where the welfare regime is not conducive to combining working and caring roles, will encounter great difficulty and reluctance on the path to developing family-friendly policies and practices.

The research study results show that, while a neo-liberal culture was imported into the Czech Republic with the influx of foreign companies and their economic and operational standards, so far they have not brought with them the social aspect that accompanies this culture in Western and Northern Europe. This discrepancy leaves room for further, more detailed study.

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Resource, Life Stage and Partner-Related Reasons of Postponement of Births: Comparison of Estonia and Finland³

Abstract. Decreasing fertility has been accompanied with the rising age of mothers almost in all the Western countries. Because of the lack of individual level surveys, the reasons for the postponement are often studied indirectly with the macro level data. Our aim is to explore the individual reasons of the postponement of births with a direct measurement instrument. The postponement of birth is defined as a situation when a person would like to have a child but it will be delayed at least for two years. Three prevailing types of reasons – resources, life stage, partner-related – are analysed in Estonia and Finland. The data from the surveys in 1999 and 2002 are used for analyses. It was found that the life stage and the resource reasons were equally prevailing in both countries among the reasons of postponement of births. However, life stage reasons were statistically more important in Finland than in Estonia. For different age groups and by different socio-demographic variables the reasons of the postponement of births vary considerably.

Introduction

There are many different ways how the postponement of births is understood and conceptualised. Several papers (Bebley 1981, Sobotka 2004a, Berelli-Harris 2005) see the rising age of mothers and consequent temporary decline of period fertility rates as fertility postponement, others define it as a combination of micro and macro level features (Kohler et al 2002, Ni Bhrolcháin and Toulemon 2005). Ni Bhrolcháin and Toulemon (2005) distinguish between postponement as behavioural process and postponement as a statistical-demographic sequence of events. In both cases, the postponement can lead to the decline of completed cohort fertility rates or recuperation of fertility later.

Most European countries face a situation where people would like to have more children than they actually have. The postponement of births is often considered to be responsible for this gap and the overall decline of fertility (Kohler et al. 2001). Although the postponement of childbearing has been seen as a factor causing the decline of average fertility, its influence is not necessarily so clear in the conditions of generally low completed fertility. The postponement of births does not necessarily lead to the decline of completed cohort fertility. Namely, the last studies show that although the period fertility rates are partly the result of fertility timing, the completed fertility is not necessarily influenced by the period changes when the postponement of births is accompanied by the concentration of the rest of births to the shorter vital period (Kohler et al. 2001). Also, Sobotka (2004b) argues that the higher age of mothers at first births was also common centuries ago in the conditions of a rather high completed fertility. He believes that the postponement of first births cannot be the only explanation of declining fertility.

However, there are many arguments in order to support the negative influence of postponement on fertility. For example, Frejka and Sardon (2004:18) state that fertility decline of young women is often misinterpreted as a postponement of childbearing. Instead, it might be more a cause-result relation: the initial decision about the postponement later transforms into the decision to have less or no children at all. Also, the postponement of births can contribute to the lower fertility via rising infertility in older ages. Several authors (Morgan and Rindfuss 1999, Lutz et al. 2003) refer to the fact that the postponement of first births reduces the average number of children born to a woman because the later fertility debut suppresses fertile age. After the subtraction of fertility decline in five Central and Eastern European countries Philipov and Kohler (2001) found two components of fertility decline: the correspondence of the decline to the overall social and economic situation and the tempo effect.

Despite the unclear influence on the final fertility outcome, research about the reasons of the postponement of the births remains essential, because the determinants of delayed parenthood can coincide with the determinants why people finally give up the idea to have children at all. The analyses of the reasons of the postponing of childbearing can contribute to the knowledge about the formation of the overall fertility trends as well.

The aim of this paper is to analyse the reasons of the postponement of births in two neighbouring countries: Estonia and Finland. In this study, a definition of postponement of births includes two components: firstly, the wish to have more children and secondly, the decision to postpone the birth of a child for some period. The paper concentrates on the micro level explanations and explains why and how the postponement of births of the child

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occurs in different population groups. We are interested in the general distribution of reasons in two countries, but also in the factors, which determine the probability of occurrence of different reasons. All the reasons are classified into three groups: resources, life stage and partner-related.

Two culturally similar countries with different reproduction history

Estonia and Finland are geographically and culturally close countries. In both countries younger generations, and particularly young women, spend a long time in education, ending up with a relatively high educational degree. Women form 58% of the group having higher school degree in Estonia and 59% in Finland. Today childbearing decisions in both countries are made in the context of rather high women's labour force participation. Also, a comprehensive day care system in both countries enables mothers with small children to work full-time (Nikander 1998, Ainsaar 2004). From all the 20–49 old women not having a child younger than 12 years, 83.8 are employed fully or part time in Estonia and 77.9 % in Finland (Aliaga 2005). The situation is more different for women having at least one child younger than 12, though 62.4% of them are employed in Estonia and 72.0% in Finland. The lower share in Estonia might be the result of the fact that the employment rate in Estonian rural areas makes it often more beneficiary for the mothers to stay at home with children. Such a high female labour force participation in two countries might be the result of overall conditions of combining work and family life and partly also to the apparent need for two incomes.

The two countries also fit well for the comparison because of very similar family policy incentives. After the overall change of the social security system at the beginning of the 1990s, Estonia borrowed all the main family policy elements from Finland (Ainsaar 2001a). As a result, the structure of the general public support system for families with children is very similar in the two countries. In the 1990s, both countries had also rather similar aims for the family policy (Ainsaar 2001b) and belonged to the group of countries where governments are investing a comparatively high percentage of public transfers in family policy. In Finland, the absolute value of family benefits was rather high, while in Estonia it was low (Stropnik 2000). As a result of differences in the absolute value of family benefits, child poverty was much more common in Estonia than in Finland (Forssén 1999). A comparison of poverty rates in different household types from the mid-1990s shows that the poverty of the two parents and two children household was five times higher in Estonia than in Finland and poverty among single parent households was three times higher in Estonia (Kangas 1999).

However, despite several administrative and cultural similarities, the two countries witness different demographic trends. Today's Finland represents a Scandinavian welfare state and Estonia an East-European post-socialist country (Coleman 1996, Ainsaar 2001b). The demographic development during the last thirty years has been rather different in those two countries. Fertility in Finland remained on a rather stable average level throughout the period (Figure 1). In Estonia, like in many other Eastern European countries, fertility was close to the replacement level until the beginning of the 1990s and dropped sharply to the level of 1.3 births per women at the beginning of the 1990s. This sharp decline has been explained mainly by the severe economic situation of families and the postponement of births because of social insecurity and economic hardship (Ainsaar and Oras 2000, Tiit and Ainsaar 2002, Ainsaar and Kiivet 2004). However, the reasons for the postponement of births in different age categories and families with and without children seem to be rather different both in Estonia (Ainsaar and Oras 2000, Tiit and Ainsaar 2002) and in Finland (Paajanen 2002).

Although both countries have been witnessing the rising age of mothers, the increase of the age of mothers has lasted longer in Finland and consequently the average age of mothers at first births is almost three years older in Finland than in Estonia (Figure 2). In Finland the mean age of women started to rise already in the 1960s (Frejka and Sardon 2004). The mean age of mothers at first birth has gone up from 24.4 years in 1971 to 28 years in 2005 (Council ... 2002, 2003). In Estonia the mean age of women at birth of the first child constantly decreased from the 1950s until the beginning of the 1990s and started to rise from the level of 22.7 years in 1994 (Sobotka 2004b). In 2005, it was already close to 25 years.

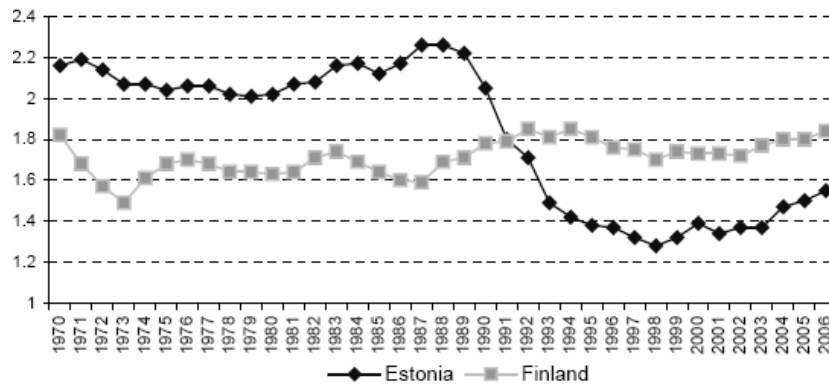


Figure 1. Total period fertility rates in Estonia and Finland 1970–2006.

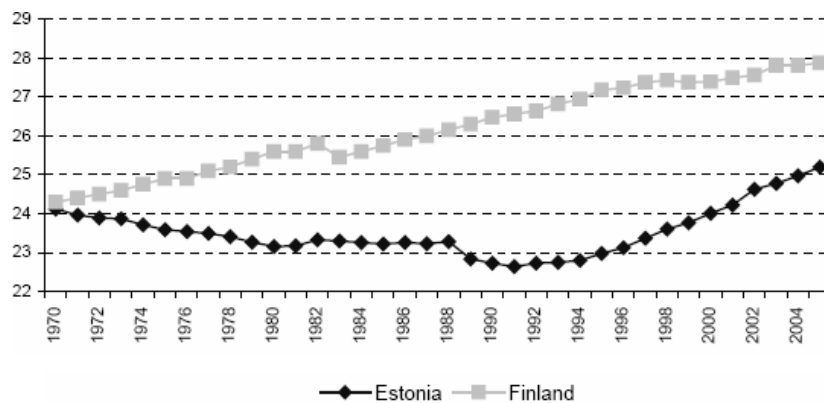


Figure 2. Mean age of first births for women in Estonia and in Finland 1970 – 2005.

Partly as a consequence of the different demographic regime, we can observe rather different levels of childlessness in the two countries. Childlessness has increased in both countries (World ... 2004), and reached the level of 15% in Finland and 5% in Estonia in the early 1990s (Sobotka 2004b). Accordingly, there are essential differences in the attitudes about the necessity of a child. In Estonia, people believe much more that having a child is a compulsory part of successful life⁴.

Finally, the population in Estonia is ethnically more heterogeneous than in Finland because of intensive immigration from the ex-Soviet Union regions before 1990. Because of behavioural and social differences of the largest – Russian speaking – minority in Estonia (Sakkeus 2007, Krusell 2007), we can expect that the country results for Estonia might be also more heterogeneous than in Finland.

Classifications of the reasons of postponement of births

Because of the assumed effect of the postponement of births on the completed fertility and infertility, we can assume that those very reasons can also contribute to the better understanding of the overall lower fertility. The total influence of reasons to the behaviour can appear either individual or as a combination of several reasons. In this part we look first at different theoretical approaches to the classification of the reasons of postponement, and then to different previous empirical evidences.

In the history of fertility research, a large variety of different reasons has been listed as factors influencing fertility. Trying to classify the reasons, approaches from psychology and other relevant areas of demography can be adopted.

The timing of births is one of the most frequently studied phenomena in the fertility research. There seem to exist traditions about the expected age of having children in different societies at different periods of time. According to the life course approach, people have certain stages in their life, which have a fixed sequence. As people might have several goals in their life, they also might have several life careers with different priorities. In the case of incompatibility these careers can also be called competing careers. For example, educational and fertility careers are often seen as competing careers in fertility studies. Barber (2001) and Mulder (1993) are using the approach of

⁴ European Value Survey 1999 T-test among 20 years and older respondents for both Estonian, Finnish men and women separately $p = 0.000$.

parallel careers in the life course. According to this approach, the individual preference, resources, and constraints influence the extent to which certain events and circumstances in parallel careers lead to action.

The group of life stage reasons reflects the wish to postpone the event of birth to the later age stage because of other more urgent goals in life. Changing family formation strategies and attitudes about the timing of fertility is in continuous interaction with the real behaviour of people. In conditions of contraception freedom, childbearing has become a matter of rational planning and decision making, taking into account potential advantages and disadvantages. Severe competition between alternative life goals can lead to selecting one career and abandoning the other. For example, a survey carried out among female academic professionals in Germany (Kemkes-Grottenthaler 2003) revealed that 71.6% of the childless respondents were postponing having children due to personal and job-related issues. The majority of them (67%) named an ongoing qualification process and insufficient funds as reasons for postponing childbearing. Other important motives were the need for self-realisation and being without a potential partner to raise a child. Also, in Sweden (Statistics Sweden 2001) childless women younger than 30 years living with a partner postponed childbearing, because they wanted to do other interesting things first or they did not believe that their economic or work situation was good enough. Turunen (1998) found that the most common reasons for childless Finnish women not having babies yet were that they did not feel mature enough to take care of a child as well as reasons related to work, studies and their economic situation. All these empirical results refer to the combination of timing the decision and some external factors.

Human action is generally the result of the interaction between the environment and an individual. In psychology, the distinction between *internal and external state of behaviour* is often made in this respect (Beck 2004). Internal reasons are related to personality settings, needs, individual resources, external to circumstances and resources outside a person. According to the activation theory for example, the external reasons are circumstances, which allow gathering enough resources in order to act. In the case of humans and social behaviour, subjective evaluation of the capacity of those resources is more relevant for decision-making than the objective state. External reasons are seen as factors influencing the attitude about having a child outside the personal settings.

Sobotka (2004b) has classified the reasons of postponement into five subgroups rather as a mixture of individual and macro-level explanatory factors as follows: the effects of educational attainment conflict between employment and motherhood, economic uncertainty, the transformation of the family and the partnership and contraceptive revolution.

Previous individual level explorative factor analyses in Estonia and Finland have drawn out four types of factors for the postponement of birth: age, economic hardship, ethnicity and partnership in Estonia (Tiit and Ainsaar 2002) and four types of factors in Finland: hedonistic, economic, a small child in family and partnership (Paaajanen 2002). It is remarkable that as a result of independent analyses three factors out of four were very similar in Estonia and Finland. In the next steps we concentrate mainly on those three main factors: partner, external reasons and life stage reasons and the partner.

Resource-related reasons are mainly also related to the situation outside individuals. These reasons are mainly the result of the general child bearing external environment and are not the result of life strategy plans. The other important assumption is that people see these conditions as essential preconditions in order to have a child and because of the lack of them, perceive them as the reasons not to have a child. In empirical data they are often related to economic circumstances and social policy. Because of their external origin, they can also be called external reasons.

Life stage reasons include the reasons that reflect the decision about the timing of births, and an individual life stages strategy. These reasons can also be called 'not yet' reasons. For example, from the groups of life stage reasons the most obvious is an effect of educational attainment on fertility. Many reports reveal some evidence (Liefbroen & Corijn 1999, Hoem et al. 2001, Kravdal 2001, Bratti 2002, Kantorová 2004, Skirbekk et al. 2003, Kreyenfeld 2004, Shkolnikov et al. 2004, Vikat 2004) about the effect of prolonged education on fertility postponement. It is believed that the changes in education also lead to the changing norms and attitudes (Prince-Gibson and Schwartz 1998), including the attitudes towards the age of having a child. They are related to the norms and expectations about the sequence of events in life before having a child (leaving parental home, having a job, etc). In the Estonian-Finnish comparison we use three statements classified under life stage reasons.

Partner-related reasons are related directly to the partner as a reason for not having a child. Three questions were analysed in this group: the missing partner, the partner's unwillingness to have a child and the claim that the relationship with the partner is insecure or bad.

In empirical analyses the reasons of postponement of births are classified according to this reasoning. The demographic and social structure of the two countries allows us to assume the prevalence of these reasons as follows:

1. Partner-related reasons prevail in the younger ages in both countries as we assume that younger people have had less time and resources to find partners.

2. Life stage reasons prevail in both countries in younger ages because the competition between different life careers is more severe in the younger ages. As people become parents in older ages in Finland than in Estonia, we can also expect finding more life stage reasons in Finland than in Estonia.

3. Resource reasons are stronger in Estonia as the support from society to families with children is weaker and the poverty rate among the families with children is higher, compared with Finland. We will also expect that the resource-related reason influences more people with lower incomes in both countries.

Method and data

Surveys from Finland and Estonia are used for the comparative empirical analyses. The Finnish survey⁵ was conducted as the mail questionnaire in 2002 and the Estonian⁶ one as a face-to-face interview in 1999. Both surveys used samples that were country representative, with the only exception being the Finnish survey that excluded the Swedish-speaking Province of Åland, which has autonomy. However, because of different survey modes the response rate differs: it was 91.8 % in Estonia and 55.6% in Finland. With one repeated round and one reminder letter, the overall response rate achieved in Finland was relatively low, but similar compared to other mail surveys conducted in Finland in recent years (Alkula et al. 1994). The final sample of the Finnish survey was weighted according to gender, age and education. The more precise description of the Finnish database is given in Paajanen (2002). Also, the Estonian database was weighted according to the population structure data from the last census (see Oja & Tiit 2002).

Both male and female respondents in the age range of 18–45 years are used for the analyses in this paper. The Finnish survey had altogether 2,096 and the Estonian dataset 2,484 respondents in that age range. Table 2 gives an overview of the structure of the sample.

At the first stage all the respondents were classified into three groups according to their fertility behaviour intentions: those who did not want to have (any) more children, those who wished to have more children and did not postpone the birth, and those who wanted to have more children but postponed the birth of a child. There were slight differences in question formulation in order to define postponers. Different methods still led to the same behavioural groups of postponers and these differences did not influence information about the reasons of postponement. In both countries it was first asked whether the respondent would like to have more children. After positive response in Estonia, the next question was whether the respondent was planning to have a child during the two coming years. Only respondents with a firm 'No' response were classified as postponers. After the positive response about a wish to have a child in Finland, it was asked if the respondent had tried to have a child during the last 12 months. Only respondents with a firm 'No' response and not pregnant (partner not pregnant) were classified as postponers. As the respondents in the group of postponers in Finland could not be pregnant (or their partner was not pregnant) during the survey, also the firm childless period (12 + 9 months) for Finnish respondents is almost as long as in Estonia. In both countries a question about reasons of postponement of the wished child followed right after 'No' responses. Table 1 gives a brief overview of the share of different groups in surveys.

Two samples had similar age and gender structure (Table 1). The survey revealed that 9–12% of the people aged 18–45 planned to have at least one (more) child and did not postpone the birth. The share of people who did not want to have any more children and the share of respondents with child(ren) produced the only essential country differences. These differences are possibly explained with a younger age at the start of a fertility career in Estonia than in Finland. 62% of respondents were already parents in Estonia, against 50% in Finland.

The questions about the reasons of the postponement of having a wished child were asked only from those respondents who stated clearly that they would like to have more children, but they were not going to have them in the near future.

⁵ Population Development, the Family and Family Formation in Finland in 2002, part of the DIALOG-project's PPA2-survey

⁶ Living Conditions Survey, accomplished within cooperation of FAFO (Norway), Tartu University and Ministry of Social Affairs in Estonia.

Table 1. Sample description of Estonian and Finnish surveys in 18–45 age group

	Estonian survey N (%)	Finnish survey N (%)
All respondents aged 18–45	2484 (100)	2096 (100)
18–24	557 (22.4)	499 (23.8)
25–35	1010 (40.7)	784 (37.4)
36–45	917 (36.9)	813 (38.8)
Males	1227 (49.4)	1066 (50.8)
Females	1257 (50.6)	1030 (49.2)
Have already child(ren)	1555 (62.6)	1054 (52.6)
Do not want to have more (any)children	1195 (48.1)	699 (35.2)
Want to have more children ⁷	300 (12.1)	189 (9.5)
Want to have more children, but postpone the birth ⁸	530 (21.4)	522 (26.2)

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18% of the Estonian postponers and 29% of the Finnish respondents who were not sure about their wish to have children in the coming years were omitted from the question about the reason of postponement. The information about the fertility intention was missing in case of about 2% of respondents in Estonia and 5% in Finland. The share of firm postponers was rather similar in two countries – 21% in Estonia, 26% in Finland. In both countries we can use the information about the reasons of the postponement of a wished child from about 500 respondents for more detailed analyses.

Altogether twenty-three reasons in Finland and seventeen reasons in Estonia were given in the list of possible replies about the reasons of postponing a birth. The respondents could also add one more reason of their own choice to the list. In both surveys several reasons of postponement were allowed to be marked simultaneously. For the sake of comparison, only twelve most important and very similar statements were used for analyses. These statements were divided into three broad theoretical categories: resources, the life stage, and partner-related reasons. Although the precise wording of answers was slightly different in two countries (Table 2), the semantic meaning of responses was the same. The frequency of selecting different reasons within a reason group did not influence the later analyses. For example if a respondent gave one answer in the group of a 'partner-related' reasons, the person got a 'partner-related reason' label and did not differ from the respondent who gave two different responses in the partner related reason group.

Table 2. Wording of resource, the life stage and partner-related reasons in Estonian and Finnish surveys

	Estonian survey	Finnish survey
Resources	Problems with living arrangements Economic difficulties Difficulties in taking care of children My or my partner's fear to lose the job	Our current home is too small for a growing family The uncertainty of my/our economic situation Demanding, difficult child care experiences The uncertainty of my/my spouse's job contract
Life stage	I'm/my partner is too young I do not want to interrupt my career My or my partner's studies are not finished	I'm/my spouse is still too young to have children My/my spouse's job doesn't allow it right now/a desire to advance in my career First I want/my spouse wants to finish my/ her/his education
Partner-related	I have no partner Partner doesn't wish to have a child now Relationship with the partner is insecure or bad	I haven't found the right partner My spouse doesn't want to have a child Because of difficulties in our marital/consensual relationship

Our main research interest is the distribution of these three types of reasons of postponement, their variations in two countries and the selectivity by socio-demographic groups. It might be methodologically important to

⁷ Want to have more children and plan to have them during the coming 2 years in Estonia. Want to have more children and have tried to have a child during last year or is pregnant right now in Finland.

⁸ Postponement = want to have child but do not plan to have during coming 2 years (firm NO) in Estonia, want to have child but have not tried to get pregnant (firm NO) during the last 12 months in Finland.

add that these three categories of responses were covering 98% of all responses in Estonia and 75% of all responses in Finland. Both surveys included a longer list of reasons. The rest of the arguments were not added to the comparison because of low occurrence rate (health) or low comparability reasons.

In order to analyse the selectivity of reasons by individual socio-demographic background, regression analyses were employed. Independent indicators in the regression models were age, education, level of income, partnership status, having or not having children, employment status, rural or urban destination. Gender was excluded from further analyses because the first analyses did not reveal gender differences in the reasons of postponement.

In order to analyse the responses in different age categories, we use three age groups of categories: 18–24 – the early fertility age for both countries; 25–35 – the average age to have a child; 36–45 – the age of late childbearing.

Selectivity by socio-demographic indicators

Table 3 shows the general distribution of the reasons of postponing births among three main groups. The first column of people in the table presents the share of people reporting about at least one reason belonging to this group as an important reason for the postponement of birth. The second column shows the confidence intervals of this distribution on the 95% probability level.

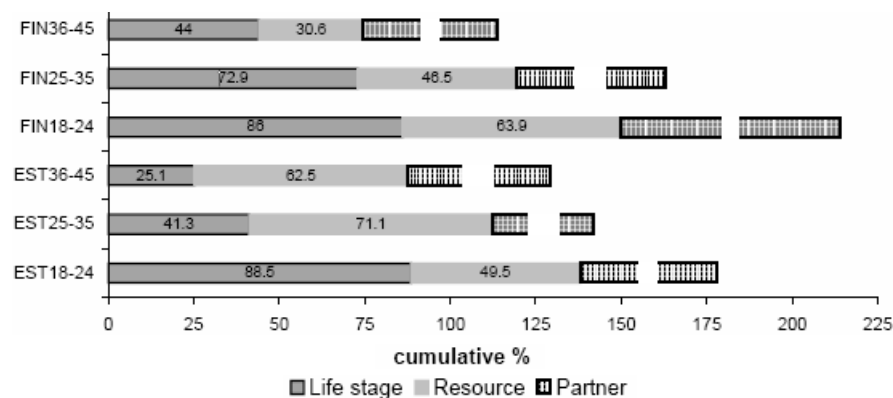
Table 3. Distribution of the reasons of the postponement of births

	Estonia		Finland	
	%	Conf i 95%	%	Conf i 95%
Resource	54.9	50.6–59.2	60.4	56.2–64.6
Life stage	51.6	47.3–55.9	65.0	60.9–69.1
Partner	34.5	30.4–38.6	41.3	37.1–45.5

We see that the life stage and the resource reasons were prevailing in both countries among the reasons of the postponement of births. Despite the fact that the share of all the reported life stage reasons and the resource reasons shared the first and the second position, the Finnish respondents mentioned statistically life stage reasons more often. The frequency of resource reasons was not statistically different in two countries. Partner-related reasons occupied the third position.

Figure 3 presents the distribution of different reasons by age groups. At first it reveals that the 18–24 age groups report more intensively all reasons for the postponement of births. This is especially obvious in the case of Finnish respondents. At 18–24 life stage reasons were prevailing in both countries. Life stage reasons decreased with age and were marginal for example among older postponers in Estonia. Resource reasons dominated in the older age groups in Estonia, while in Finland the resource reasons were most prominent in the youngest group and their share diminished gradually with age. The lack of the suitable partner or other partner-related reasons was very important among young Finnish respondents. As a next step we will look at the background of different types of reasons of the postponement of the births on individual level, and the selectivity of reasons in the context of different socio-demographic background variables will be analysed.

Figure 3. Cumulative % of resource, life stage and partner-related reasons for postponement of child birth by age groups in Estonia and Finland (several reasons are marked simultaneously).



Life stage reasons

The statements that the respondent feels too young to have children (36%) and studies (29%) in Estonia and studies (42%) and wants to advance his or her career (32%) in Finland were the most predominant arguments in the group of life stage reasons.

The life stage reasons were more often mentioned by the younger postponers than the older ones in both countries, also taking into account all the interactions with other background variables (Table 4). The age dependency was especially obvious in Estonia. There was no statistically significant difference between the groups until the age of 35 in Finland. The importance of life stage reasons fell significantly after the age of 35 in both countries. Also, studies increased the importance of life stage reasons for birth postponement. The influence of studies was especially remarkable in Estonia. At the same time the presently achieved educational level and the living place did not produce any significant differences in life stage reasons.

Table 4. Postponement of births because of life stage reasons (logistic regression among those who postpone the birth of a child, 0 = no postponement because of life stage reasons, 1 = postponement because of life stage reasons)

		Estonia			Finland		
		B	P	Exp (b)	B	P	Exp (b)
Age	1. 18–24			1			1
	2. 25–35	-2.332	0.000	0.097	-0.399	0.116	0.671
	3. 36–45	-3.648	0.000	0.026	-1.217	0.001	0.296
Education	1. No professional			1			1
	2. Vocational	-0.364	0.241	0.695	-0.560	0.053	0.571
	3. High, university	0.065	0.896	1.067	0.361	0.277	1.435
Income	1 Low			1			1
	2	0.505	0.224	1.657	-0.184	0.528	0.832
	3	1.289	0.002	3.629	-0.217	0.525	0.805
	4 High	1.674	0.000	5.336	-0.600	0.117	0.549
Partner	1 Married, partner			1			1
	2 Without partner	0.906	0.012	2.474	-0.594	0.031	0.552
Have child(ren)	1 No			1			1
	2 Yes	0.467	0.156	1.596	-1.512	0.000	0.221
Status	Employed			1			1
	Studying	2.498	0.000	12.155	1.175	0.001	3.237
	Other	0.058	0.871	1.059	-0.430	0.166	0.650
Living place	1 Urban			1			1
	2 Rural	-0.347	0.306	0.707	0.010	0.965	1.010
Resource reasons	1 No			1			1
	2 Yes	-0.100	0.733	0.904	1.651	0.000	5.210
Partner reasons	1 No			1			1
	2 Yes	-0.965	0.003	0.381	0.460	0.046	1.583
Nagelkerke R Square		0.65			0.45		

In Estonia the better off people postponed childbirth more often because of life stage reasons, while there were no statistically significant differences between income groups in Finland. Partnership produced a reverse relationship in the two countries. People living with partners reported more often about life stage reasons in Estonia while in Finland it was significantly less. Having already children was negatively connected with mentioning life stage reasons in Finland, but there was no influence of having children in Estonia.

The strong positive relationship between the groups of reasons was revealed in Finland. In Estonia the life stage reasons formed a more clear-cut group of reasons: there was no interaction with resource reasons and the exclusive relationship with partner-related problems.

As a second group, we will analyse resource reasons. The general economic difficulties (Estonia 46% and Finland 40%) and the difficulties related to housing conditions (both in Estonia and in Finland 29%) were the most important arguments within resource reasons in both countries.

Table 5. Postponement of births because of resource reasons (logistic regression among those who postpone the birth of a child, 0= no postponement because of resource reasons, 1 = postponement because of resource reasons)

		Estonia			Finland		
		B	p	Exp (b)	B	p	Exp (b)
Age	1. 18–24			1			1
	2. 25–35	0.419	0.196	1.521	–0.447	0.066	0.640
	3. 36–45	–0.532	0.181	0.588	–0.979	0.002	0.376
Education	1. No professional			1			1
	2. Vocational	0.092	0.703	1.096	0.586	0.025	1.797
	3 High, university	–0.376	0.316	0.687	0.065	0.820	1.068
Income	1 Low			1			1
	2	–0.415	0.155	0.660	–0.135	0.612	0.874
	3	–0.374	0.192	0.688	–0.779	0.010	0.459
	4 High	–0.499	0.105	0.607	–0.974	0.004	0.378
Partner	1 Married, partner			1			1
	2 Without partner	–0.965	0.001	0.381	–0.648	0.008	0.523
Have child(ren)	1 No			1			1
	2 Yes	0.007	0.975	1.007	0.711	0.003	2.037
Status	Employed			1			1
	Studying	–0.309	0.305	0.734	–0.369	0.202	0.692
	Other	0.637	0.029	1.891	0.969	0.002	2.636
Living place	1 Urban			1			1
	2 Rural	–0.990	0.000	0.371	–0.104	0.638	.901
Life stage	1 No			1			1
	2 Yes	–0.026	0.928	0.974	1.652	0.000	5.216
Partner reason	1 No			1			1
	2 Yes	0.535	0.020	1.708	0.503	0.015	1.654
Nagelkerke R Square		0.18			0.275		

Once again several similarities emerged between the countries (Table 5). Living with a partner and currently not working were related to postponing fertility because of resource reasons in both countries. At the same time also some differences emerged. Younger, lower income groups and the respondents having a child (children) mentioned resource reasons more frequently in Finland, but these connections were missing in Estonian data. Also, persons with a vocational education mentioned more resource reasons than the persons in other educational groups in Finland. In Estonia there were no differences among educational groups. Resource reasons were reported more by the people living in urban areas in Estonia, in Finland the place of residence was not significantly related to resource reasons.

Once again, the Finnish data revealed a positive interaction between resource, the life stage and partner-related postponement statements. In Estonia resource reasons were associated more frequently only with partner-related problems.

As a third group, we analyse the factors of the partner-related reasons (Table 6). Not having a partner was the most frequent response in both countries. In Estonia 27% and in Finland 33% of respondents mentioned it as an important reason to postpone childbirth in this group.

Table 6. Postponement of births because of partner-related reasons (logistic regression among those who postpone the birth of a child, 0 = no postponement because of partner-related reasons, 1 = postponement because of partner-related reasons)

		Estonia			Finland		
		B	P	Exp (b)	B	P	Exp (b)
Age	1. 18–24			1			1
	2. 25–35	-0.213	0.547	0.808	-0.022	0.928	0.978
	3. 36–45	0.209	0.634	1.234	0.845	0.011	2.327
Education	1. No professional			1			1
	2. Vocational	0.042	0.869	1.043	0.305	0.244	1.356
	3 High, university	-0.157	0.723	0.855	-0.233	0.436	0.792
Income	1 Low			1			1
	2	-0.123	0.688	0.884	0.026	0.923	1.026
	3	-0.306	0.332	0.738	-0.215	0.488	0.807
	4 High	-0.079	0.810	0.924	-0.373	0.291	0.688
Partner	1 Married, partner			1			1
	2 Without partner	2.304	0.000	10.016	1.757	0.000	5.798
Have child(ren)	1 No			1			1
	2 Yes	0.131	0.594	1.139	-0.035	0.885	0.965
Status	Employed			1			1
	Studying	-0.453	0.157	0.636	-0.555	0.057	0.574
	Other	-0.607	0.053	0.545	-0.038	0.896	0.963
Living place	1 Urban			1			1
	2 Rural	0.543	0.035	1.722	-0.568	0.012	0.566
Life stage reasons	1 No			1			1
	2 Yes	-1.085	0.000	0.338	0.421	0.065	1.523
Resource reasons	1 No			1			1
	2 Yes	0.531	0.020	1.700	0.522	0.012	1.686
Nagelkerke R Square		0.24			0.26		

As expected, the persons who reported partner-related reasons more often were mainly those who did not have a partner. It was true for Estonia, as well as for Finland. In Finland the people postponing childbirth because of partner reasons lived more often in the urban environment and in Estonia in the countryside. In both countries resource reasons were related to partner reasons. The most important variable raising the importance of partner-related reasons was the age of 36–45 in Finland. It refers to the extreme need for partners namely at that age. There was no difference between age groups in Estonia. In Estonia also persons not currently working or studying reported more partner-related reasons. Education, income and having children were related to the partner-related reasons in both countries.

Discussion

It turned out that some constant combinations of reasons emerged. In both countries resource and partner-related reasons often appeared to form a positive association. People with partner problems also experienced more often resource problems. It can be related with a common latent variable – maturity or age.

The life stage reasons of births had a very different connection with other reasons in the two countries. Postponement of childbirth because of the wrong life stage was weakly related to resource and partner problems in Estonia while in Finland the people reporting about life stage problems tended to also have more resource and partner problems. Therefore it seems, that the hypothesis about the age or life stage as leading factors of postponement of births is more accurate in the case of Finland than in Estonia.

Life stage reasons were most age selective and produced more or less the expected result in respect of socio-demographic characters. However, this selectivity was more obvious in Estonia and started to influence the results only at the age of 35 in Finland. This shifted age selectivity in Finland can be explained with generally older parents in Finland and postponement of a start of fertility career. The planned later start of fertility career of higher education oriented people also can explain the result that students in both countries mentioned more often life stage reasons than working respondents or those staying at home.

Some differences concerning life stage reasons in the two countries emerged as well. We did not have any clear hypothesis about the relationship of wealth and life stage reasons beforehand. However, the data showed that wealthier people postponed childbirth more often because of life stage reasons in Estonia. In Finland a statistically significant outcome was missing, although the results showed a similar direction. This result can be interpreted according to the theory of the value of a child. Namely to wealthier and perhaps more income-oriented people the price for a child is higher because the child might interrupt their career. Although they can afford a child from the economic point of view, they would like to postpone the birth, because according to new home

economics (Becker 1973) their opportunity costs of having a child would also be higher. The missing effect of opportunity costs in Finland might be a result of stronger family policy.

It was also revealed that while people with a steady partner reported less about life stage reasons in Estonia it was contrary in Finland. This might be the result of different partnership-fertility timing traditions. There seem to be at least two strategies of timing of family and fertility careers in Europe: the western (Finland) and the eastern (Estonia). In the western type the fertility career begins considerably later than partnership (Pitkanen and Jalovaara 2007). In the eastern type the two events are much closer (Monnier and Rychtarikova 1992, Sardon 1993). Although people in Finland had partners, they still did not feel sufficiently mature to have children and postponed births, while in Estonia the postponement because of life stage reasons was more characteristic of the people who had not started their partnership career either.

The most powerful predictor of the importance of **resource reasons** was a status of currently being at home (not working or studying) in both countries. This group consisted mainly of young women at the maternity leave in (Estonia) and unemployed persons (in both countries). Also, living with a partner (in both countries) and having a child (in Finland) increased the probability of resource reasons. We did not find the expected statistically significant differences in the importance of resource problems and income in Estonia. This relationship was revealed in Finland. A possible explanation for that is the more equal distribution of the perceived economic barriers for child bearing in Estonia for different income groups in 1999.

We would also like to comment upon the result that no relationship between the frequency of reported resource reasons and the place of residence emerged in Finland, and resource reasons were reported more often by the people living in urban areas in Estonia. As timing of births depends on the perceived barriers, we can propose that because of lower costs of raising children in the countryside, also the perceived barriers in the countryside were lower, although the general average income was higher in towns in Estonia. The result may also be caused by higher opportunity costs for parents (mainly mothers) in towns, because of higher incomes and consequently also the comparatively lower level of compensation for the maternity leave.

Conclusions

The paper analyses distribution and formation of self-reported reasons of postponement of having a wished child in Estonia and in Finland. The reasons of postponement of births were classified into three groups: life stage, resource, partner-related. Life stage and resource reasons were equally prevailing in both countries among the reasons of postponement of births. However, in country comparison the life stage reasons were statistically more important in Finland than in Estonia. We did not find the expected differences of importance of resource reasons in the two countries. Partner-related reasons were in the third place on the list of reasons in both countries and statistically age dependent only in Finland. Namely from the age of 36 the reasons of postponement were twice more often related to the partner than in younger ages in Finland.

The paper demonstrated that in different age groups and by different socio-demographic variables the reasons of postponement of births vary considerably. From all the individual level socio-demographic variables living together with a partner produced the most constant variability in both countries.

Several similar trends in two countries emerged, but there were also differences. The universal outcomes for both countries were:

1. Prevalence of life stage reasons among students and in younger ages.
2. Resource reasons were most typical of the people in a steady partnership.
3. The main partner-related reason was the missing partner.
4. There was no gender selectivity in different reasons of postponement in Estonia and Finland.

The dissimilarities between countries can be explained mainly with different demographic behaviour and economic situations.

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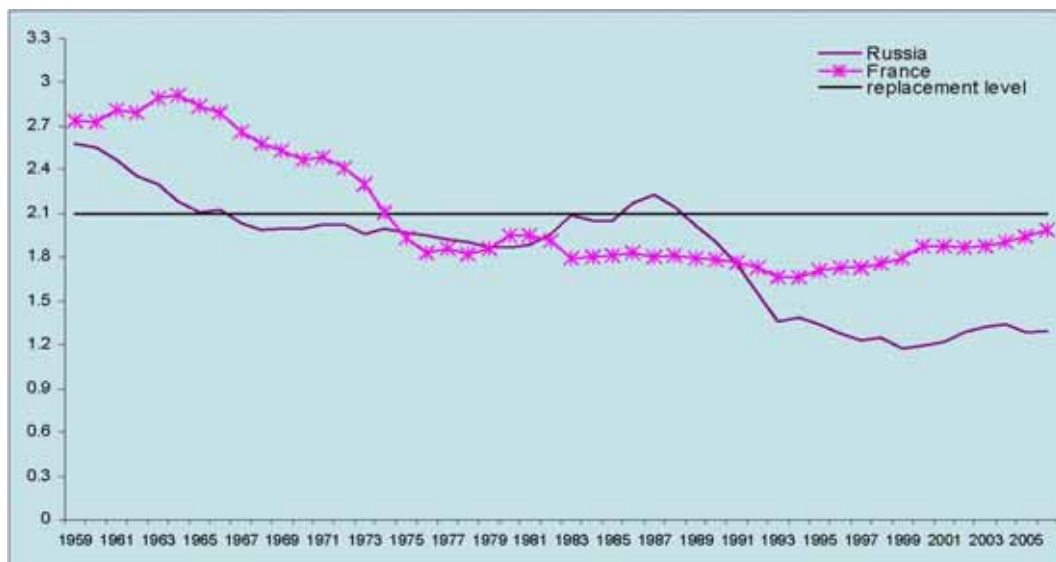
Implementations of the French Family Policy Measures in Russia²

The beginning of the 20th century in Europe and all over the world was marked by growing interest in the well-being of families. Family as a social and economic institution is influenced by changes in society, culture of the country and economic welfare. The rapid changes in these areas cause modification of family structures and as a result of it, change in attitudes toward having a certain number of children as well as increase or decrease in fertility level. Thus, family as an institution is a driving force of socio-economic changes and their victim at the same time. Concepts, definition and measurements of family, family policies and other social policies that have implications on families are not constant over time. The paper compares the efficiency of French and Russian family policy and examines such measures of the French family policy that can be applied in Russia and positively influence the fertility.

The time between late 19th and mid 20th century in Western Europe was the time of the end of the demographic transition. The second demographic transition has intensified the change in family formation and childbearing preferences. The combination of these trends had resulted in negative natural population growth and growing population aging. France as one of the pioneer countries has experienced the consequences of both demographic transitions. France was one of the first countries that realized the importance of encouraging fertility level by the family support. The first step in French family supporting measures was done in 1860, when the Ministry of sea fleet started paying some benefits to support clerks with big families (with 4 and more children). The population growth and related issues have been a matter of French social policy for a long time. The strong family support resulted in one of the highest TFR in Europe (2,0 in 2008 (p).

The situation in Russia is not so optimistic. The first year Russia faced fertility below replacement level (TFR=2.1) was the year 1967 (TFR was 2.03) (diagram 1). Strange as it may seem Russia has a developed family policy. The governmental family support in Russia includes allowances for children and families, institutional pre-school and school care, right to reinstatement after maternity leave to former position, etc. All measures were launched at different time, and all of them were worked out in response to the needs of the social and economic development. However, there is still very low fertility in the Russian Federation. Diagram 1 illustrates changes in the total fertility rate in France and Russia during last decades. The fertility decline stopped in early 80s, at that time most of the current Russian family policy measures were introduced. However, the success was short-lived, and the dramatic decrease was recorded in the late 80s. The recent changes in fertility succeeded in 1,5 children per woman³

Diagram 1. Total fertility rate in France and Russia in 1959–2006



(Source: www.ined.fr⁴, www.dmo.econ.msu.ru⁵, compiled by the author)

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² The paper was presented at the Quetelet Seminar "Population policies in Europe and in North America", organized by Centre de recherche en démographie et sociétés, Université catholique de Louvain in Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgique on 18.-20. November 2009

³ http://www.gks.ru/free_doc/new_site/population/demo/demo27.htm

⁴ http://www.ined.fr/fichier/t_telechargement/3594/telechargement_fichier_fr_t2.xls

The determining factor of reproductive behaviour is the correlation between desired number of children and expected number of children. Like any other social norm, this correlation can be changed over time. Today the dominant family model in Europe (and in France also) is the "two child model". In Russia, this model looks like "not less than one child, but no more than two". This means that there are a huge number of families with one child and a very limited number with three and more. To illustrate this fact I refer to the results of the pilot survey "Family and Fertility" conducted in 2006 in several regions of Russia. Table 1 shows the correlation between desired and expected number of children in two regions only, both of them lying in the European part of Russia.

Table 1. Desired and expected number of children in some regions of the Russian Federation

Age	<i>Nizhny Novgorod</i>		<i>Tverskaya oblast</i>	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
	Desired number of children			
<25	2.5	3.14	2	2.18
25-29	2.42	3	2.15	2.24
30-34	2.31	2.25	2.18	2.41
35-39	2.5	2.13	2.3	2.51
40+	2.05	2.6	2.35	2.41
all	2.26	2.63	2.24	2.4
	Expected number of children			
<25	1.83	2.17	1.8	1.67
25-29	1.7	2.17	1.85	1.93
30-34	1.54	2	1.75	1.85
35-39	1.64	1.43	1.61	1.95
40+	1.51	1.68	1.83	1.85
all	1.6	1.78	1.75	1.8

(Source: <http://www.gks.ru> - database of the pilot-survey "Family and Fertility in Russia-2006")

The desired number of children is two children per woman, for men this number is a little bit higher. For men in Nizhny Novgorod the desired number of children is almost 3, but expected is only 2. For women the number is 1,6 that means only one child per woman. The results of the main survey (conducted in September-October 2009) show the similar data (Table 2): the desired number of children for women is 2.28 (expected 1.72) and for men 2.38 (expected 1.90).

Table 2. Desired and expected number of children in the Russian Federation

Age		
	Women	Men
	Desired number of children	
<25	2.34	2.46
25-29	2.21	2.32
30-34	2.24	2.34
35-39	2.36	2.37
40+	2.27	2.43
all	2.28	2.38
	Expected number of children	
<25	2.01	2.10
25-29	1.74	1.98
30-34	1.78	1.90
35-39	1.64	1.94
40+	1.55	1.76
all	1.72	1.90

(Source: <http://www.gks.ru> - database of the pilot-survey "Family and Fertility in Russia-2009")

⁵ <http://dmo.econ.msu.ru/demografia/Demographie/Fecondite/index.html>

Russia achieved very low fertility primarily through the postponement or elimination of a second and higher order births. The total fertility rate declined from 1.9 in 1990 to 1.296 in 2006. The widespread explanations of researchers are mostly describing macro-level conditions, such as economic uncertainty (Kohler 2002, Bilari 2004, Khorev 1997), anomie (Philippov, 2002) and ideational transition (Vishnevskii 2001). We agree with such explanations, the uncertainty in the possibility of bringing up two children, is the main determinant of the Russian low fertility. The success of the French policy is the confidence of the family, or parents in the future – they believe that they will find help from the government. According to the OECD database in France, the proportion of citizens defining their life as “happy” and “very happy” is 78.5. There are no such data for Russia, Table 3 shows the subjunctive well-being of the family ranged in money terms. Such an evaluation is not legitimate in comparison with France, but it can be a good illustration of the people’s attitude. Table 3 illustrates that each “extra” child moves family to the poorer category, almost 46% of the families with 4 children have difficulties in buying cloths and shoes.

Table 3. Subjunctive evaluation of the well-being of households in Russia in 2007 (% of the total number of households)⁶

	<i>subjunctive</i>			<i>well-being</i>		
	no money for food	difficult to buy clothes	cannot buy durable consumer goods	not enough money for a car	enough money for all needs	difficult to answer
All households	2,0	24,2	44,9	25,4	2,3	1,3
with 1 child	1,6	20,5	43,7	28,0	4,8	1,4
with 2 children	2,5	20,6	45,5	28,5	2,2	0,7
with 3 children	7,4	34,6	37,7	18,9	0,8	0,6
with 4+ children	15,2	45,8	23,5	12,6	2,9	-

(Source: <http://www.gks.ru> - database “Family in Russia-2008”)

In 2009, the survey “Family and fertility” conducted by the Federal State Statistics Service studied reasons for not having another child. Answering the question “If you would like to have more children, as you plan, what could prevent you and to what degree from having a desirable number of children?”, 44,5 % of women and 42,9 % of men mentioned the uncertainty about the future.

The relationship between the economic development of the country and fertility decline has been a subject of investigations for many years. Events less catastrophic than war or famine, such as economic recession and high unemployment may also influence fertility (Morgan 1996). After the break-up of the Soviet Union, the Russian economy experiences great depression. As a result of it, the rapid fertility decline has occurred. However, the direct casual link between the macroeconomic structural changes and fertility decline is difficult to ascertain especially in light of long-term tendencies in fertility decline (Pirelli-Harris, 2006).

The stress experienced by the Russian society during the depression period had a strong impact not only on economic values of life, but also on psychological aspects of family life. Due to the financial hardships for individuals and families, the economic crisis and uncertainty lead to the breakdown in social norms – anomie. This is a point of turning macro-level conditions into individual level conditions of decision-making. The anomie can make people adverse tot taking additional risks, such as those that might attend childbearing (Philippov 2002). In highly educated societies, in which parents desire to have children “of high-quality”, couples may refuse to have another child, not because of economic inability to bring it up, but because of the feeling of loss of control over the environment in which a child would grow-up (Pirelli-Harris, 2006).

After the break-up of the Soviet Union, the Russian society has been experiencing both the economic change and anomie. The economic, political and social structures of the society have been rapidly reorganized. After the transition from the state-administrative to market economy the great decrease in real income occurred. Due to it, living standards declined and the proportion of families with children living below the poverty level increased. The research results used in this paper refer to the beginning of the year 2000. That is reasonable because of the time lag between economic developments and their demographic consequences. The implications of the economic system transformation in 1990s have been revealed in the current period.

In late 1998 (after the financial crisis) almost two-thirds of working adults experienced wage delays, and over half of children under age six lived in poverty (Mroz, Mancini, Popkin, 1999). Unfortunately, there is no possibility to directly compare poverty levels in Russia and France because of different methods of calculating poverty.

Russia is still on the way to the stable economy and confidence in future. All the new governmental measures should be aimed at the instillation of confidence in families, to give them possibility to have as many children as

⁶ The results of the sample survey of households budgets conducted by the Federal State Statistics Service in 2007

they desire. In my paper, I will examine such measures of the French family policy, which can be applied in Russia and influence positively the fertility. I will consider only several groups of measure in coordination with economic changes that such innovations can cause.

Before turning to the implementation of the French experience, we need to describe shortly the Russian system of child-care services. In the Russian Federation, children are enrolled to school at age of 7. As soon as they reach the age of 3, they can visit pre-school institutions – “kindergartens”. Until this age, the mother can take unpaid parental leave, paid leave is granted until the child is under age of 1,5. Due to the lack of kindergarten places, only about 50% of the children wishing to attend kindergarten can use this possibility (Table 4). The total number of pre-school institutions is declining in Russia rapidly. This is one of the directions to change. Here we should use the experience of France providing variety of different public child-care services. Parent’s expenditures for the services are high, but all of them are compensated by the family allowances. In Russia, the payments are not high, but are not bucked.

Table 4. Institutional pre-school care in Russia

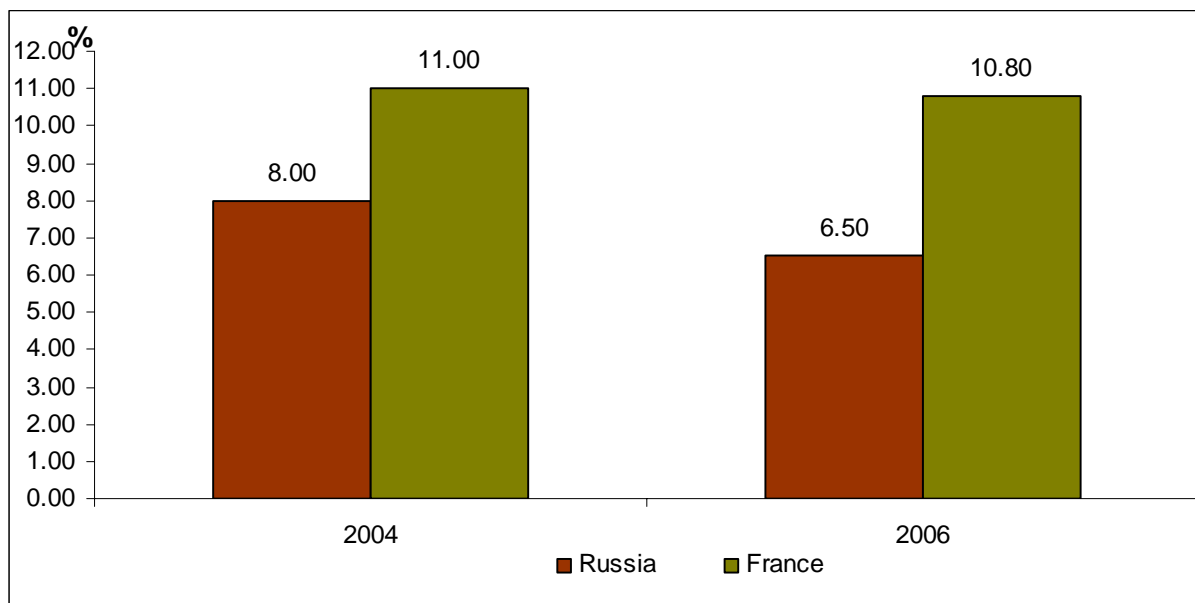
	1995	2000	2005	2006	2007
Institutions of pre-school care (total number in thousands)	68,6	51,3	46,5	46,2	45,7
Positions in pre-school care institutions (for 1000 children aged 1-6 years, in thousands)	676	688	603	589	565
Share of children in pre-school care institutions (in % of total number of children aged 1-6 years)	54	55	57	58	59

(Source: <http://www.gks.ru> - database “Family in Russia-2008”)

The special policy on increasing the number of kindergartens and facilitating the access to them can have positive effect on fertility. Such optimism is provided by several social surveys that show the aspiration of young families (before 35 years old) for earning their living independently. These are very promising facts because the young families are the most reproductive group within family institution. Moreover, the tendency to achieve the desired well-being on their own, without governmental support, is an indication of the changes in the society. It is necessary to notice that according to its historical development Russia is a paternally oriented country. Now we can presume that economic behaviour is changing.

The change in number of pre-school care services can also cause the changes in the labour market. The French family policy is not only a natalistic and health instrument, it is also a powerful method to change the structure of employment. For example, the set of measures launched in 1984 was designed to encourage the labour force participation of women. At that time the part-time job possibility was developed. The set of measures presented in 1994 was designed to lower intensity in the labour market. The allowances for mothers taking parental leave until the child reaches the age of 3 were increased. Diagram 2 shows the results of this policy presenting the unemployment rate among women. The current situation is that in France the unemployment rate is higher, because of the governmental policy. In Russia, due to the unstable economic situation and very low allowances women have to work. That is why one more French-style innovation can consolidate the financial situation of family and of women – part-time employment. In current Russia, there are part-time jobs, but usually women prefer public sector employment, such as schools and preschool education in order to be with the child and to have some money. These jobs are very low paid, furthermore, during the parental leave women can lose some professional skills and can not come back to the former job position. The possibility to have part-time employment, less paid but in the same position is the solution. This can influence not only fertility, but also change the attitude to pregnancy, delivery and motherhood and make it an odder thing, not something horrifying and breaking life of a woman. That is the way to change the reproductive behaviour and, as a result of it, the fertility level.

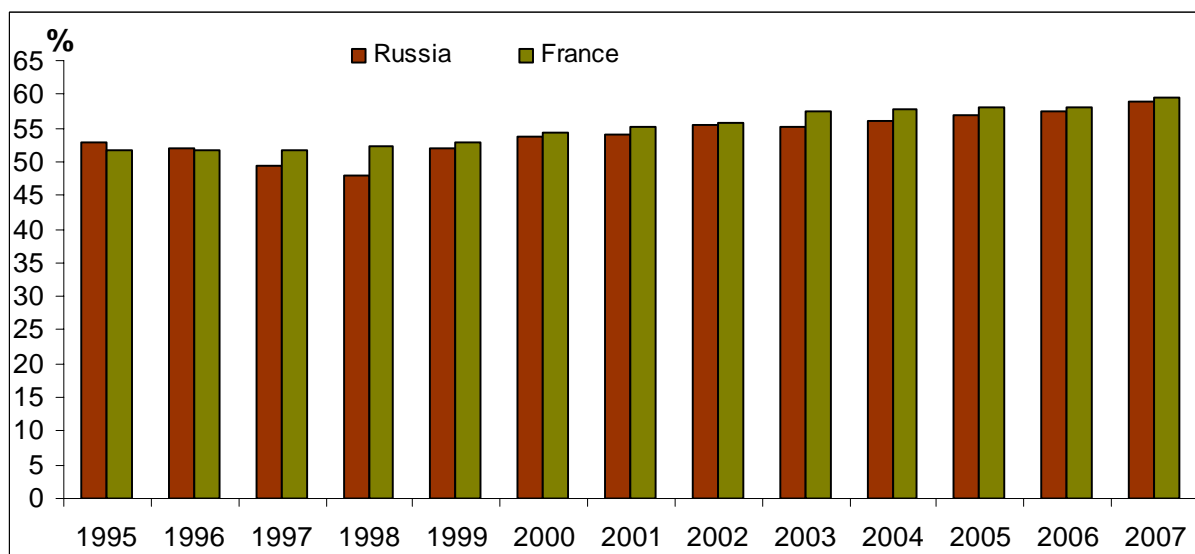
Diagram 2. Share of unemployed women at working age (15 to 64 years) in Russia and France



(Source: <http://www.gks.ru> - database "Family in Russia-2008")

The current situation on the labour market in Russia can be corrected with the measures of family policy too. The female employment in Russia is higher than in France (diagram 3). This means that the increase in child-care services can lead to the increase in fertility, the desired number of children can be achieved.

Diagram 3. Share of women at working age (15 to 64 years) in employment in Russia and France



(Source: <http://www.oecd.org>)

An increase in number of child-care services can also be a solution to the low allowances problem as well as to the pension problem. The other direction in developing family policy is to revive the system of day care for children of 0-3 years old. Such a system was established in mid 60s and was disestablished in early 2000. In France, there are several services for children aged 0-2 years, *crèche* (center-based care) and *assistant maternelle* (nurses). This measure will increase fertility at younger ages. Table 2 shows that the most optimistic group is younger than 25. The easy access to the nursery care may encourage young families, getting education or starting the career (the mid age of finishing Master program in Russia is 23), to have a child.

Such changes can have a positive fertile and economic effect, but they might turn out to be costly and not to work. The difficulty lies in cultural differences between two countries. Russia is a "family-care" oriented country. It is a widely spread idea that with respect to the psychological and mental development it is better for a child to be with mother or at least in family. The decision of having a child depends in most cases on the grandmother's

willingness to care for the baby. In France, the idea of early socialization of a child is the dominant one.

The set of allowances in Russia is very contradictive. On the one hand monthly payments are very low, on the other hand the new system of "maternity capital" is supposed to provide mother with 312162.5 (8108 euros⁷) in the case of a second birth. This huge sum can be spent only on mother's pension, future education of the children or on the housing modernization. This means that this huge, at first sight, amount of money is nothing but a way to support Russian pension system, because it is too small for other purposes.

The one-time allowance for early registered pregnancy (before 12 weeks) is 374,6 rubbles (about 10 euros). There is the monthly allowance during the parental leave, until a child becomes 1,5 years old; for the first child it makes out 1873.1 rubbles (48.6 euros). After the delivery, women receive the unique payment of 9989.86 rubbles (259.48 euros). This is the federal social protection; each region provides a special child care scheme. Such schemes are very different according to the different economic situations around the country. Table 5 presents the coverage of children with allowances in Russia. As we can see, it is not enough and the share is decreasing. This means that the allowances system is not effective. The difficult access to the allowances and bureaucratic run-around limit the number of recipients. During the last decade rate of economic growth has accelerated, an average income of Russian households has raised and the number of allowances has decreased. Table 4 shows the share of children receiving allowances in total population of children aged 0-16, who should get the financial help from the government. The decrease of this ratio testifies that allowances are for the poor. Such tendency is an indicator of the social attitude towards family policy. In France, family policy is something positive for each citizen, it is associated with children, family and well-being. In Russia, family policy is a help for the poorest, marginal or lonely parents, it is very scanty and difficult to obtain, the lowest good.

Table 5. Allowances in Russia

	<i>2000</i>	<i>2005</i>	<i>2006</i>	<i>2007</i>	<i>2009</i>
Total number of children, receiving allowances aged 0-16 (in thousands)	19168	13345	11830	11312	10623
Children of lonely mothers (in thousands)	1615	1581	1524	1554	1554
Children of parents in military service (in thousands)	3,8	2,3	1,9	1,7	3,6
Share of children receiving allowances in total population of children aged 0-16	57,2	47,8	43,8	42,8	40,8

(Source: <http://www.gks.ru> - database "Family in Russia-2008")

We suppose that the allowance system in Russia cannot be so extensive like in France. Economic development of the two countries is too different, and geopolitical specifics can not make it similar. During last two years, the system was revised and indexed with the real inflation ratio and special allowances were introduced - payments compensating expenditures for the kindergarten: 20% for the first child, 50% for the second, and 70% for the third child. This scheme is very contradictive; it strengthens the inequality of families. Due to the difficult access to the pre-school institutions, only some of the families can obtain such compensation and have possibility to get mother's income. The others lose mother's income or incur expenditures for nurses that are not compensated.

In France, there is a scheme of tax-reduction for families with children. It could be a very effective instrument for Russia. In case of Russia, it is better to use the reduction of bank credits, especially for cars and housing. Housing is a very sensitive issue in the post-Soviet countries. In different social surveys, the housing problems are mentioned as the second major restriction in decision of having another child. Table 6 illustrates housing conditions in Russia. The norm of square meters per person fixed by law is 12; the minimum sanitary norm is 6 meters per person.

⁷ The convertation is assuming 1 euro = 38,5 rubles for 26/05/2010

Table 6. Housing conditions in Russia in 2007 (in % of total number)⁸

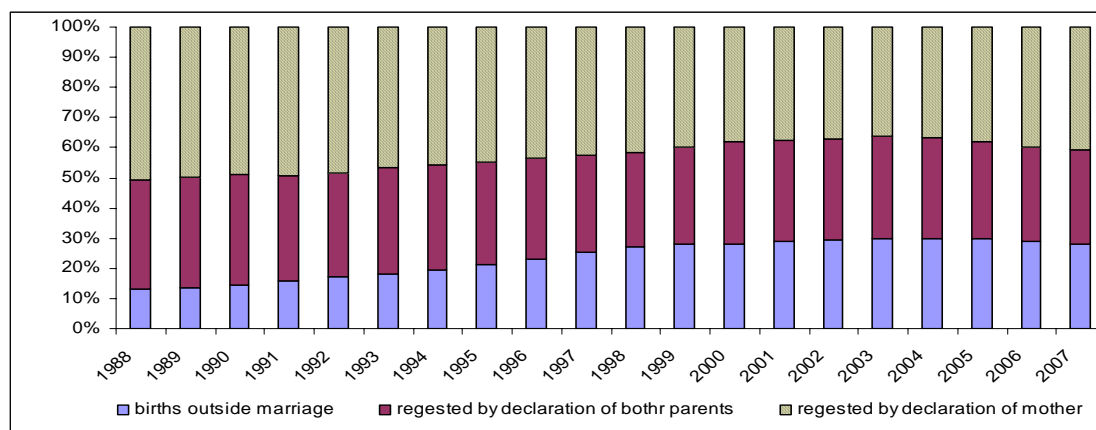
square meters per person	Households			
	with 1 child	with 2 children	with 3 children	with 4+ children
less 9.0	8.7	19.1	38.8	56.4
9.1-13	28.1	35.7	36.3	31.8
13.1- 20	41.6	34.7	20.7	7.6
20.1-25	12.8	6.6	2.7	3.1
25+	8.7	3.9	1.5	-

(Source: <http://www.gks.ru> - database "Family in Russia-2008")

The reduction of the bank credits for housing can reduce the expenditures and efforts of families to improve their housing conditions. That can positively influence fertility, especially in young families and families with two children desiring the third one.

Family policy in France is available to all families, with both parents, with one parent, to families with adopted children and to families in civil union too. Russian family policy is addressed to married couples. It supports traditional family and gender roles. In changing world, during economic transformation and the demographic change the family policy should be flexible and open to all persons wanting to have a child. This is the only way to move. The number of extramarital births is increasing alongside with the changes in family model in Russia. Diagram 4 shows that the number of extramarital births registered by declaration of both parents is also increasing. These children and families should be confident in the future and have possibility to work and earn money, so they need governmental support.

Diagram 4. Extramarital births in Russia



(Source: <http://www.gks.ru> - database "Family in Russia-2008")

Adoption of French experience in family policy would require more than just a few adjustments but rather fundamental economic changes and modifications.

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Disciplining Mothers: Fertility Threats and Family Policies in Romania²

Abstract. In postsocialist Romania, the ethos of heroic mothers with five or more children was downplayed into a pejorative label for uneducated women who commodify their children in order to get welfare and subsist outside of the labour market. Throughout the last two decades, the changes in family policies indicate a strong preoccupation for "disciplining" mothers by sanctioning motherhood without prior employment and rewarding only the birth of the first four children. Romanian policymakers showed less concern for decreasing fertility rates than to the situation of "unwanted" children and "uncontrolled" fertility in poor rural regions, and especially among the Roma minority.

The present paper investigates how family policies in post-socialist Romania maintained unfavourable conditions of entitlement for parents with irregular participation on the formal labour market. It argues that the regulations on maternity benefits, childcare leave, and means-tested child allowance targeted primarily the fertility behaviour of women, and failed to meet the quest for "social investment" welfare (Lister, 2004) and support for balancing workplace and domestic duties.

During state socialism, the "double-burden" (Kligman, 1998) of wage labour and family responsibilities belonged to the taken for granted reality of mainstream women, who were perceived as resilient enough to use informal childcare through kinship or undocumented labour. After 1990, childcare services became increasingly difficult to afford. Optional crèche vouchers provided by employers were legislated only in 2007, but they are still seldom offered to the employees. The rank of the children conditions welfare entitlement: birth indemnity is granted only for the first four newborn babies, the amount of means-tested child allowance flattens at the fourth child, maternity and paid childcare leave is available only for the first three births. In low income families where mothers lack the necessary work record to qualify for the benefit, fathers go on parental leave, but usually they engage in informal labour and the distribution of family responsibilities follows the traditional gendered pattern. There are no means-tested maternity benefits, but the amount of universal child allowance is five times higher for children below the age of two (cca. €50). Given that child allowance is imputed when establishing the right to social assistance benefits, the birth of a child means losing the Minimum Income Guarantee and, consequently, the obligation to pay the healthcare contribution. Jobless families most often fail to pay the contribution and parents lose their health insurance.

The insight into the development of family policies in Romania serves as a case study for investigating welfare regulations as pragmatic solutions to heavily ideologised national problems, led primarily by endogenous factors. The first part of the paper provides a synthesis of recent legislation changes and concludes that the EC influence might have fuelled occasional compromises, but not a coherent restructuring of family benefits. The second part uses the 2007 Barometer on Public Policies and the ECHISERV dataset in order to evaluate the impact of family transfers on household welfare for low income or jobless families, drawing attention to the situation of the Roma minority.

Introduction

In postsocialist Romania, the ethos of heroic mothers with five or more children was downplayed into a pejorative label for uneducated women who commodify their children in order to get welfare and subsist outside of the labour market. Throughout the last two decades, the changes in family policies indicate a strong preoccupation for "disciplining" mothers by sanctioning motherhood without prior employment and rewarding only the birth of the first four children³. Romanian policymakers showed less concern for decreasing fertility rates than to the situation of "unwanted" children and "uncontrolled" fertility in poor rural regions, and especially among the Roma minority.

The present paper investigates how family policies in post-socialist Romania maintained unfavourable conditions of entitlement for parents with irregular participation on the formal labour market. It argues that the regulations on maternity benefits, childcare leave, and means-tested child allowance targeted primarily the fertility behaviour

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³ The Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Protection initiated the change of the legislation in January 2010, proposing to merge the birth allowance (a financial benefit for the first four children of a mother) with the trousseau for the new-born (envisaged as an in-kind benefit, but functioning as a financial benefit for all new-born children). According to the new legislative proposal, each new-born child would be entitled to a financial benefit of around 87 Euro (see www.mmuncii.ro).

of women, and failed to meet the quest for "child-centred policies" (Lewis, 2006b) branded as "social investment" welfare (Lister, 2004), and to provide support for balancing workplace and domestic duties.

The insight into the development of Romanian policies serves as a case study for investigating welfare regulations as pragmatic solutions to heavily ideologised national problems, led primarily by endogenous factors. Higher birth rates among the Roma minority, the depth of their economic deprivation and the visibility of their social marginalisation, prejudices against the Roma fuelled by nationalist discourses constitute some of the most salient endogenous factors, which shaped Romanian family policies. The first part of the paper provides a synthesis of legislation changes until 2010 and concludes that the influence of the European Commission might have led to occasional compromises, but not to a coherent restructuring of family benefits. The second part uses the 2007 Barometer on Public Policies and the ECHISERV dataset in order to evaluate the impact of family transfers on household welfare for low income or jobless families, drawing attention to the situation of the Roma minority.

The post-socialist development of family policies in Romania

Family policies in post-socialist countries of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) show different patterns of re-familiasation and it is difficult to assess to what extent the socialist de-familiasing legacies, the revitalization of nationalism, the soft pressures of the EU and the deepening demographic concerns orchestrated the tune of policy design. Following Leitner's (2003) conceptual distinction between "implicit" and "explicit" familialisation, Szelewa (2006), Polakowski and Szelewa (2008), as well as Szikra and Tomka (2009) convincingly argue that Poland adopted "implicit familialism", the Czech Rep. and Slovakia "explicit familialism", whereas Hungary embraced a mixed approach, labelled by the authors as "optional familialism". Regardless of the (re-)familiasation model adopted, the policy outcomes had been apparently the same: fertility rates continued to decrease, whereas women's participation on the formal labour market did not significantly increase (Szelewa, 2006). In the case of Romania, as discussed in the following paragraphs, there is a dual policy of "implicit familialism" for parents absent from or with irregular participation on the labour market, and "optional familialism" for working parents. This duality is rooted in the attempt to discourage women from the poorer segments of the population to have children, and encourage the fertility of middle-class women, though not necessarily their childcare role within the family.

As Daly (2004) insightfully remarks, the family should be seen in a broader approach, "as involving not just a structure or form, but sets of practices and relations" (Daly, 2004: 136). At the level of policy priorities, she notices a shift from regulations on the obligations between spouses towards parental responsibilities. In this context, the transformations of care relationships constitute the core issue of "de-familialization". The idea is developed by Leitner and Lessenich (2007), who draw attention that, behind the conceptual opposition between dependence and independence in familial care relationships, one should regard (1) both the perspective of the care giver and that of the care receiver, and (2) the social as well as economic dimensions of (in)dependence. Although quite intuitive, these prerequisites have been mostly disregarded by theoreticians and politicians of "de-familialization", who, according to the Leitner and Lessenich (2007), focus on the care-givers (and the authors repeatedly remind us "read: women") and economic (in)dependence (gainful participation on the labour market). The authors somewhat leave aside that the demarcation between dependence and independence is also ambiguous, given that emotional ties are difficult to be unrolled and rolled back.

Policies concerning children were often attempts of shaping parenting practices and, in particular, "disciplining" mothers (Rawlings, 2006; Haney, 2002) in the Foucaultian sense of the term (Foucault, 1979; Culpitt, 2001). Reproductive policies, i.e. prevailing medical, psychological and social normative considerations upon pregnancy, childbirth, and mothering had been shaped not by a monolithic non-feminist or anti-feminist "forces", although they had been holding considerable influence on the development of these policies. Feminist critiques were incorporated in the evolution of these policies, just as the "resistance" of women claiming for giving birth to their children at home. The control of medicine (its "monopoly" over childbirth in the 20th century) was "not simply imposed from the top down" (Sawicki, 1993: 196), but it raised resistance and opened up a field of struggles. Looking at the development of what she calls "public maternalism" in Hungary, Haney (2002) concludes that "instead of remaining in the confines of the maternal, female [welfare] clients strategized with their maternal resources to defend their interests as wives, workers and women" (Haney, 2002: 133). Middle-class women might have acted in a similar vein in Romania as well, but it is difficult to assess whether women from subaltern groups (less educated women from rural areas, and especially Roma women) have ever exercised political voice.

Analysts of family policies usually put on gender lenses in order to scrutinize policy development (Haney, 2002; Lewis, 2006b, Lewis and Surrender, 2004; Newman, 2005; Popescu, 2006); but the impact of gendered policies is mediated and shaped by one's class position and ethno-cultural belonging. This becomes particularly salient when ethnic minority status overlaps with economic deprivation and marginal position on the formal labour market, such as in the case of the Roma minority.

Comparative studies on policy responses to declining birth rates ought to pay attention at the different demographic profiles and fertility rates of various ethno-cultural groups *within* states, and how family policies are

turned into Trojan horses for ethno-nationalist interventions of governments. This is especially so in the case of Romania, which had a loud ethno-nationalist discourse throughout 1970-80, and extreme nationalist politicians continued to be popular after the change of the regime, some of them⁴ even entering the European Parliament in 2009. During state socialism, the predominant policy towards well organized, politically strong ethnic groups (such as the Hungarians or the Germans) was to trim down ethnic difference at mere folklore (Verdery, 1992). Politically weak ethnic groups (such as the Roma or the Lipovean-Russians in Dobrogea) were not even recognized as national minorities, but labelled as having a deficit of civilization and forced to assimilate.

After the political turn in 1989, the Roma gained political voice and the cultural rights of a national minority, however, prejudices against the "Gypsies" perpetuated. One of the strongest elements of these prejudices is that the Gypsies instrumentalize their children in order to gain money either from child allowance or from begging. Their fertility behaviour is seen as irresponsible and abusive, and Gypsy women are perceived as uncaring and exploitative mothers.

Throughout Central and Eastern Europe, the incidence and the depth of poverty is considerable higher among the Roma than the non-Roma (European Commission, 2004; D. Ringold, 2000; D. Ringold, Orenstein, M., Wilkens, E., 2003; Szelenyi, 2002), and considerably more Roma than non-Roma receive means-tested income support benefits (Milcher, 2005; UNDP, 2003; Fleck and Rughinis, 2008), although the amount of these benefits is hardly enough to ameliorate their situation of deprivation (Fleck and Rughinis, 2008; Milcher, 2005; Rat, 2005; Szalai, 2005; Stewart, 2002). National statistics on welfare receipt do not offer data split by ethnicity, given that welfare applicants are not required state their ethnic belonging on the forms submitted to the offices in charge⁵. Survey research leaves room to overestimating poverty and welfare receipt among the Roma, given that segregated, poor Roma communities are easier to be included in the sample than integrated Roma living amongst the mainstream. The latter might decline from revealing their ethnic identity to the interviewers, in the context of strong negative prejudices against them.

"The ethnicization of poverty" in CEE countries can be seen as a twofold process: (1) proportionately more Roma than non-Roma are born in disadvantaged families, with few chances of upwards social mobility, and they remain in poverty; (2) those Roma who are either coming from relatively well-off families or manage to seize resources for crossing over their deprived family background, in order to complete their upwards trajectory, prefer to assimilate in the majority ethnic group so as to avoid the risk of exposure to prejudice.

Nonetheless, the "ethnicisation of poverty" is linked to the superposition of the derogatory label of "welfare dependency" upon a whole "ethnic" group, opening the door for politically loaded conceptualisations with some anecdotal evidence attached: "underclass", "culture of poverty", "ghettoization of the poor". In their response to the incipient British moral panic of the emerging "underclass" forecasted by Murray (1990), Dean and Taylor-Gooby (1992) assert that if there were something common between the potential "underclass" in the US and that from the UK, it would be that they both serve a "conceptual repository for non-conforming social minorities (...). The reflexive effect of the underclass concept is not to define the marginalised, but to marginalise those it defines" (Dean and Taylor-Gooby, 1992: 44). Concerns for "welfare dependency" among the Roma penetrate not only in the mass media, but also in the "expert" evaluations of transnational actors such as the World Bank or the UNDP. For instance, the 2003 World Bank report argues for the need for "breaking the cycle of poverty and social exclusion" whereas the 2003 UNDP report is tendentiously entitled "The Roma in Central and Eastern Europe. Avoiding the Dependency Trap"⁶.

"Social exclusion" as a concept gains relevance as: "(the) lack of empathy between the majority and socially isolated minorities makes it easier for ambitious politicians to advance their causes by demonizing and ultimately dehumanizing these minorities" (Barry, 1998: 18-19). Public expectations for state action in the case of the Roma have an inherent dimension of exercising social control upon "the Gypsies". For example, in the 2006 survey on public opinion on ethnic minorities in Romania, 81% of the non-Roma respondents assessed that the majority of the Roma disobeyed the law, and, at the same time, 49% considered that the state should provide more subsidies and assistance for the Roma and 47% that the state should implement measures to stop the increase of the number of the Roma (CCRIT, 2006).

⁴ It is the case of Corneliu Vadim Tudor, the leader of the Great Romania Party, elected in 2009 to enter the European Parliament.

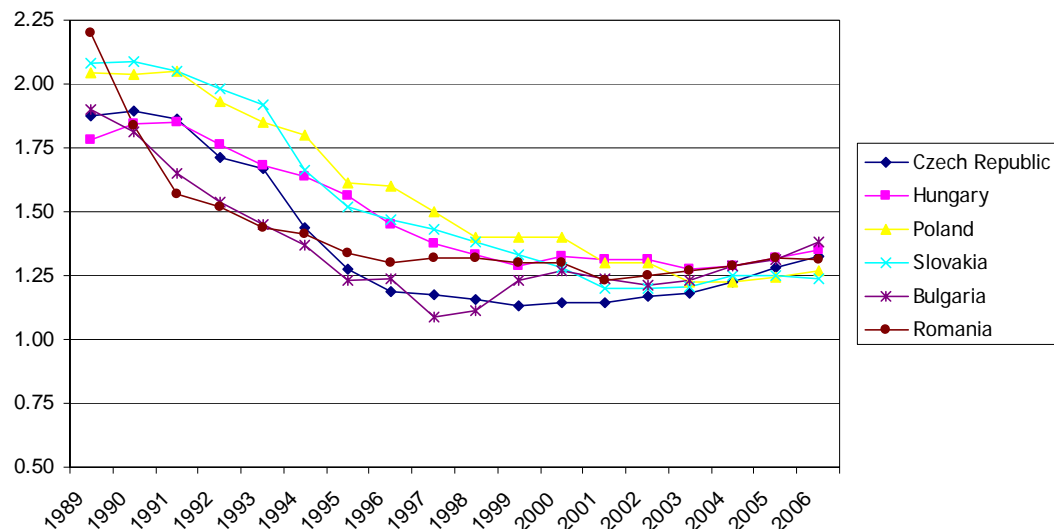
⁵ The regulation tries to combat the possibility of negative discrimination, nevertheless, it excludes any objective evaluation of actual welfare receipt among the Roma, as compared to majority populations (Cahn, 2004; European Commission, 2004; Rat, 2005).

⁶ "If social welfare systems are to decrease (rather than increase) dependency cultures, they should be based on the principle of "positive net benefits for positive net efforts". Social welfare systems should provide incentives (and not disincentives) for the adoption of pro to active life strategies" (UNDP, 2003).

Fertility blues in Romania⁷ – who has children and how many?

After the change of the political regime in 1989, there was a sudden drop of the fertility rate at the national level from 2.2 in 1989 to 1.6 in 1991. Most analysts (Hărăguș, 2008; Popescu, 2004a and 2006; Roth et. al., 2006; Rotariu, 2003) interpret this as a backlash of the coercive pro-natalist policy of Ceausescu and the availability of contraceptives and abortion after 1990, the abortion rate in Romania peaking at 315 legally induced abortions per 100 live births in 1990 and 1991 (UNICEF, 2008). However, the steady decrease of the fertility rate throughout the 1990s, common to all CEE countries, was induced primarily by economic insecurity and falling living standards in the region (Popescu, 2006). Natality slightly increased after 2002 and converged in 2006 at around 1.3 children (close to the EU-15 average) in 2006.

The evolution of fertility rates in CEE countries 1989-2006



(Source: UNICEF TransMonee Project Database, 2008.)

The evolution of fertility rates did not follow the same pattern for all socio-economic strata and ethnic groups. Throughout the transition period, fertility rates in Romania were higher in rural areas than in the urban, and women with lower level of education had more children and at younger ages than women with higher educational qualifications (Hărăguș, 2008; Rotariu, 2003). Unfortunately there is no data available for the *evolution* of fertility rates by ethnicity; the latest data split by ethnicity is provided by the 2002 Census, which also offers information on the age-group and family status of mothers.

Table 1: The distribution of women by ethnicity and number of children in 2002

Computed for all women aged 15+ (%)	Without children	1 child	2 children	3 children	4 or more children	Total	Fertility rate
Total	28.3	22.7	27.5	10.4	11.1	100%	1.65
Romanians	28.4	22.9	27.5	10.3	10.9	100%	1.63
Hungarians	26.5	22.2	31.1	11.2	8.9	100%	1.61
Roma/Gypsies	28.3	14.2	15.8	11.9	29.8	100%	2.45

(Source: *Romanian National Census 2002*, Own calculations based on census data provided by the *National Agency for the Roma*, www.anr.gov.ro. Fertility rate computed as number of live births per women.

Note: Out of the 29.8% of Roma women who had 4 or more children, 11% had four children, 13% had five or six children, and the rest more than six children).

As shown in Table 1, the fertility rate of ethnic Romanian and Hungarian women was 1.63 live births per woman aged 15 or older, as compared to 2.45 in the case of Roma women. Whereas more than 50% of both Romanian and Hungarian women had only one or two children, 30% of the Roma women reported one or two children at the moment of the Census. 12% of the Roma women had three children and almost 30% four or more children.

⁷ The title obviously paraphrases Castles' title: "Birth Rate Blues: A Real Crisis in the Making?" (Castles, 2003, pp. 141-167).

Table 2: The distribution of women aged 15–19 by ethnicity and number of children in 2002

Computed for all women aged 15–19 (%)	Without children					Total	Fertility rate
	1 child	2 children	3 children	4 or more children			
Total	95.45	3.85	0.62	0.07	0.01	100%	0.05
Romanians	96.11	3.39	0.45	0.04	0.00	100%	0.04
Hungarians	96.34	3.13	0.46	0.05	0.01	100%	0.04
Roma/Gypsies	77.69	16.26	5.19	0.74	0.12	100%	0.29

(Source: Romanian National Census 2002, Own calculations based on census data provided by the National Agency for the Roma, www.anr.gov.ro. Fertility rate computed as number of live births per women.)

Note: Out of the 29.8% of Roma women who had 4 or more children, 11% had four children, 13% had five or six children, and the rest more than six children.)

Teenage motherhood was also apparently more frequent in the case of Roma (see Table 2). As compared to the fertility rate of 0.4 live births per woman aged 15–19 in the case of ethnic Romanians and Hungarians, for teenage Roma women the fertility rate was 0.29. Whereas only less than 4% of Romanian and Hungarian teenage women reported to have children, 16% of the Roma under 20 years old had one child and 5% two children.

Table 3: Legal marital status and fertility of women aged 15+ by ethnicity in 2002

Figures computed for women aged 15+	Not married			Married			Divorced			Widow		
	% of total	% who gave birth to children	Fertility rate	% of total	% who gave birth to children	Fertility rate	% of total	% who gave birth to children	Fertility rate	% of total	% who gave birth to children	Fertility rate
Total	21.9	14.7	0.31	56.3	89.2	1.98	5.3	79.9	1.51	16.5	84.8	2.31
Romanians	21.3	12.6	0.25	57.0	89.1	1.97	5.4	79.8	1.50	16.3	84.9	2.31
Hungarians	20.2	15.0	0.33	54.3	90.2	1.90	5.3	80.8	1.52	20.2	85.2	2.14
Roma/Gypsies	53.2	55.4	1.55	34.4	92.1	3.50	2.7	85.2	2.59	9.6	85.6	3.70

(Source: Romanian National Census 2002, Own calculations based on census data provided by the National Agency for the Roma, www.anr.gov.ro. Fertility rate computed as number of live births per women.)

Table 3 shows the distribution of women by ethnicity and legal marital status, and compares fertility rates along these two variables. In 2002, only one fifth of the Romanian and Hungarian women aged 15 or older were not legally married, as compared to slightly more than half of the Roma women. The fertility rate of unmarried Roma women was 1.55, whereas that of Romanians only 0.25 and Hungarians 0.33. These figures comprise some age affect as well, given that (as previously discussed) teenage motherhood is more frequent among the Roma than the non-Roma.

Table 4: Fertility rates in the case of consensual union* in 2002 Romania

Figures computed for women aged 15+	% of total	% who gave birth to children	Fertility rate
Total	4.5	68.1	1.64

Romanians	4.0	65.9	1.51
Hungarians	4.2	73.2	1.83
Roma/Gypsies	29.4	79.5	2.37

(Source: *Romanian National Census 2002*, Own calculations based on census data provided by the *National Agency for the Roma*, www.anr.gov.ro)

*Note: "Consensual union" was not a legal category of in Romania until 2009, when it was introduced under the name of "engagement". It can be read as the equivalent of cohabitation.

Out of all Roma women, 29.4% reported at the 2002 to live in cohabitation, as compared to 4% of the Romanians and 4.2% of the Hungarians. Given that cohabitation did not have a legal correspondent in Romania until 2009 (when the institutionalized form of civil engagement was introduced), partners living together had a rather insecure and legally ambiguous position, although welfare policies (such as the Minimum Income Guarantee or means-tested child benefits) treated cohabiting couples similarly to married ones. It should be noticed that the fertility rate of cohabiting Roma women is 2.37, which is somewhat higher than those of the Romanians (1.51) and Hungarians (1.83), but lower than the overall fertility rate of the Roma women (2.45).

Policy responses: who should have children and how many

During state-socialism, child allowance was received as an income-supplement for one of the parents (usually the father), conditioned upon his/her working status. There was no means-tested additional support designed specifically for families and children. The legislation did not change until two years after the fall of communism, in 1993 (Ceramî, 2006; Popescu, 2004a; Popescu, 2006; Roth et. al., 2006). Given that many Roma were not working or they lost their working status right after 1990, in 1990-93 they were basically not entitled to receive financial support for children.

Universal child allowance. After the implementation of the new law (61/1993) all children were entitled to receive the universal child allowance (not their parents), but all school-aged children were supposed to attend institutions of education in order to receive the allowance. The administration of the benefit was fragmented, given that children who were not yet of school age received it through the local offices of social protection, whereas school-aged children through the educational institution they were attending. The legislation was discriminatory against young persons aged 16-18 who decided to leave earlier the educational system for paid employment, and favoured those still at school at the age of 18 or 19, as the latter continued to benefit until the end of the academic year. In 2005, the Constitutional Court decided that it was unconstitutional to condition the universal child allowance upon school attendance *at any age below 18*. On the basis of the governmental ordinance OUG 148/2005, starting with January 2007 the universal child allowance was not conditioned anymore by school attendance, and in the case of children below the age of two the value of the benefits became considerably higher (around 50 €).

Benefits for families with three or more children before 2003. In 1997 (Law 119/1997), families with three or more children were entitled to a supplement to the universal child allowance. This supplement was not means-tested, it was offered upon request and its value was small and decreased considerably in real terms until 2004, when the laws on child benefits were changed. The legislation was abolished by OUG 105/2003, and there are no specific benefits targeted at families with many children.

Means-tested child allowance. The universal child allowance was doubled starting from 2003 by a means-tested component for needy families with children, whose values are slightly higher in case of one-parent families (governmental ordinance OUG 105/2003). The eligibility threshold was initially established at around 50 € per family member per month, which was considerably higher than the corresponding level of the Minimum Income Guarantee. Between 2003 and 2009, the eligibility threshold and the values of the benefits were indexed annually through governmental ordinance. Starting from 2009, the eligibility threshold was set somewhat higher, at the minimum net national wage. The condition of receipt: every three months, parents should present at the welfare office a certificate testifying that their school-aged children attend school. The amounts remained rather low and after the fourth child the benefit does not increase anymore: this means that there is no means-tested allowance for children who rank fifth or higher in the family. In 2009, needy families with four or more children received a monthly complementary allowance of 17 €, whereas lone-parent families with four or more children 22 €. The value of the benefit is increased by 15% for families receiving social aid based on the Law on the Minimum Income Guarantee (see also Romanian Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and the Family, 2009a).

Birth-indemnity is a fix sum of around 60€, granted at the birth of the first four children. There is no indemnity for children who rank five or higher. Starting from 2007, the financial benefit is accompanied by a voucher for baby-items. According to the governmental ordinance OG No.5/2010, the voucher for baby items ("trousseau" at birth) was replaced by a financial allowance.

Paid maternity leave and child-care leave before the child reaches the age of two (or three in the case of children with disabilities) is available for parents who were gainfully employed and contributed to the insurance-fund continuously for at least 12 months before the birth of the child. However, both maternity and parental leave are *paid* (i.e. parents receive a monthly state benefit) only for *three* children. Maternity benefit is granted for four months, out of which at least two should be used after the birth of the infant. The value of the benefit is earnings-related, computed as 85% of the previous income of the mother. Fathers are entitled to only two weeks of additional paid leave, which should be used after the birth of the child. Paid childcare leave for children below the age of two (or three for children with disabilities) can be taken either by the father or the mother, but the couple cannot use the parental leave and its corresponding benefit simultaneously. Before 2009, the benefit was flat-rate and computed as 85% of the national average wage. Starting with 2009, an earnings-related alternative was legislated, which grants parents with higher incomes 85% of *their* average income during the last 12 months of gainful employment, ceiling the benefit at 952 € per month. The poorest categories of the population, with irregular participation on the formal labour market, do not satisfy the twelve months continuous contributory period and fail to qualify for these benefits. Many Roma parents are in this situation. Families with lower incomes, where only the male partner is employed for the minimum wage, often decide to combine paid childcare leave (used by the father) with informal work, especially in rural areas, leaving the actual caring role for the women at home (Petre, 2008; Barometer of Public Policies, 2008 – see Appendix). The law does not stipulate that when one of the parents is staying home (as "housewife"), the other parent cannot claim the benefit: applicants should only sign a declaration that their partner is neither on maternity nor childcare leave (see also Romanian Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and the Family, 2009b).

Table 5: The evolution of the proportion of fathers on childcare leave by area of residence

	National	Rural	Urban
First quarter or 2006	17.9	29.7	11.8
First quarter or 2007	19.9	31.9	13.3
First quarter or 2008	19.9	31.1	13.4
Fourth quarter or 2008	18.8	30.1	12.4

(Source: Romanian Ministry of Labour, 2009 b.)

Table 5 reports on the evolution of the proportion of fathers on childcare leave by area of residence: it is noteworthy that in rural areas around 30% of parents on paid childcare leave are the fathers, although in rural areas the traditional gender roles are rather strong (Gender Barometer, 2000) and most women are either unpaid agricultural workers on family farms or "housewives" (Romanian National Institute of Statistics, 2008). The decision to go on childcare leave is most probably motivated by an economic rationale, to combine the financial benefit (which might well be higher than the wage of the father) with undeclared informal labour.

Stimulant for returning to work is granted for parents who are eligible for paid childcare leave, but decide to return to work: they receive a monthly financial benefit ("stimulant") of around €30. As shown in Table 6, the number of parents opting for paid labour and receiving the "stimulant" instead of the childcare benefit was almost double in urban areas: 11.2% in the fourth quarter of 2008, as compared to 6.8%.

Table 6: The evolution of the proportion of parents opting for returning to workplace and receiving the stimulant instead of childcare benefits

	National	Rural	Urban
First quarter or 2006	2.4	1.5	2.9
First quarter or 2007	7.4	5.9	8.4
First quarter or 2008	8.8	6.6	10.0
Fourth quarter or 2008	9.6	6.8	11.2

(Source: Romanian Ministry of Labour, 2009b.)

Employers can also grant crèche vouchers for their female employees with small children, in case that none of the parents is staying at home with the infants. These vouchers are not liable to taxation. Both measures target middle-class parents from urban areas, given that childcare facilities are hardly available in rural areas.

Table 7: Distribution of beneficiaries of parental child-care leave in 2008 by the amount of insured income

Monthly income of beneficiaries	National	Urban	Rural
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Below 706 lei*	87.47	84.12	93.26
Above 706 lei	12.53	15.88	6.74

(Source: Romanian Ministry of Labour, 2009c.)

*Note: 706 lei/month represents the amount of average monthly income, i.e. for beneficiaries with this income 85% of their wage is equal to the flat-rate value of the benefit.

As indicated in Table 7, in urban areas 84.1% of parents on childcare leave had incomes below the national average wage of 706 lei, whereas in rural areas 93.2%. Thus, only a reduced segment of the upper-middle class (15.8% in the urban and 6.7% in the rural areas) actually benefited from the change of the legislation on the amount of the benefit. Needless to say, the effects of the law are regressive, given that it was not coupled by providing a universal maternity or childcare benefit. The "higher" amount of the universal child allowance for infants below the age of two (around €50/month) was regarded to serve as a surrogate for "universal" childcare benefits: however, its value represents only one fourth of the childcare benefit granted to insured parents, who were gainfully employed throughout the last 12 months.

The brief overview on welfare measures to support families with children reveals a dual policy of "implicit familialism" for women absent or with irregular participation on the labour market, and "optional familialism" for working women. This duality is rooted in the attempt to discourage women from the poorer segments of the population to have children, and encourage the middle-class women, though offering them both the alternative of assuming parental care responsibilities, and the alternative of return to their previous job.

Coverage and poverty reduction effectiveness of family benefits

In order to assess the coverage and poverty reduction effectiveness of family benefits, the ECHISERV dataset was used, which was collected within the framework of the research project CEEX 157/2006, "Disparities in the Use of Health Care Services in the North West Development Region. Socio-economic Patterns and Causes", project director: Professor Dr. Livia Popescu, "Babes-Bolyai" University Cluj. Details about the project and its results are available on the web-page of the project: www.socialzoom.com/echiserv.

The ECHISERV fieldwork took place in November 2007 on three representative samples of the Romanians, Hungarians and Roma living in the North-West Development region (N-W) of Romania. The region belongs to the economically more developed parts of Romania, with lower poverty rates and relatively higher proportions of urban population (National Statistical Institute, 2007).

The samples were clustered stratified-random samples, all major cities from the region were included and, based on size, age structure and ethnic distribution, clusters of similar localities were constructed. Households were selected with the method of random walk; within the household, respondents were selected based on pre-established quotas. The sample was validated⁸ using territorial statistics provided by the National Statistical Institute, 2007. The questionnaires were printed in Romanian and Hungarian, and completed during face-to-face interviews at respondents' homes, in whichever of the two languages they felt more comfortable to speak. The Romanian sub-sample contained 423 respondents, the Hungarian⁹ – 410, and the Roma – 277 respondents. For regional statistics, an integrated weighted sample was used.

Table 8: Sources of income and the coverage of means-tested social transfers in the North-West region, 2007

	Below the poverty threshold*		Above the poverty threshold	
	Region	Roma sample	Region	Roma sample
Income from wage labour	29.4	21.6	66.9	65.6
Income from agricultural work or assets	3.6	0.0	4.6	0.0
Income profits, rents, dividends	0.0	0.0	1.8	0.0
Work abroad with contract	0.0	0.0	2.1	0.0
Pensions (retirement and disability)	39.3	24.8	56.0	25.0
Universal child allowance	31.8	46.9	29.8	59.3
Means-tested child allowance for needy families	6.0	15.1	2.5	12.5
Maternity and child-care benefits during parental leave	2.4	1.4	4.3	7.8
Unemployment benefits	1.2	0.4	1.5	3.1
Social aid based on MIG	4.7	20.2	0.9	4.7

⁸ Details concerning the sampling procedure and its validation are available upon request from the project members. See www.socialzoom.com/echiserv for contact details.

⁹ The final sample contained three respondents of German ethnicity. They were included in the Hungarian sub-sample.

Emergency social security benefits	1.2	3.3	0.0	1.6
Disability allowance	2.4	4.2	0.9	7.8
Scholarships for good performance	3.5	0.4	1.5	0
Social scholarships (means-tested)	1.2	0.9	0.3	1.6
Support from relatives living in the country	1.2	0.9	1.8	1.5
Support from relatives living abroad	0.0	1.9	2.5	7.8
Occasional work without a contract	3.6	20.2	3.1	20.3

(Source: ECHISERV dataset. Own calculations.)

*Note: The poverty threshold was computed according to the €stat definition of the at-risk-of-poverty threshold: 60% of median income per equalised household member, OECD-2 equivalence scale (weighting each adult except from the household head by 0.5 and each child aged 0-14 by 0.3).

As reported in Table 8, universal child allowance provides income for 46.9% of Roma households living below the at-risk-of poverty threshold, as compared to 31.8% of total households (Roma and non-Roma) in the N-W region. For households above the poverty threshold, 59.3% receive the universal child allowance in the case of Roma families, and 29.8% at the level of the N-W region. As mentioned before, the amount of the benefit in 2007 was around €8 per child per month, and it was indexed at €10 in 2009. Means-tested child allowance for needy families with children was received by 15.1% of the poor Roma households, as compared 6% of poor households at the regional level; for the households above the poverty threshold the corresponding figures were 12.5 (Roma) and 2.5% (regional level). Again, the amounts of the benefit are very low. Concerning maternity and child-care benefits during parental leave, it is noteworthy that only 1.4% of the poor Roma households received the benefit in 2007, as compared to 2.4% of the households at the level of the region. In the case of households above the poverty threshold, the situation was reverse: 7.8% of the Roma households and 4.3% of all households received the benefit. The monthly amount of this insurance-based benefit was higher than the minimum national wage (it was computed in 2007 as 85% of the national average wage).

These results are consistent with previous findings on the poverty reduction effectiveness of social protection measures in the case of the Roma, as compared to the non-Roma in Romania (Rat, 2005; Fleck and Rughinis, 2008). On the basis of the Integrated Household Surveys 1995-1998, Teşliuc et. al. (2001: 106-15) report that 11.1% of the Roma and 2.6% of the Romanian households received social assistance benefits in 1998, whereas in 1995 only 3.9% of the Roma and 2.1% of the Romanian households received welfare. Child allowance was received by 59.8% of the Roma and 38.3% of the non-Roma households in 1998, as compared to 55% versus 36.7% in 1995. The analysis PEGEE dataset¹⁰ (see Rat, 2005) indicates that in 2000 only 10% of the Roma and 4% of the non-Roma households were receiving social assistance benefits. State transfers for children were received in 69.5% of the households whose head declared to be a Rom(ni), as compared to 42% of the non-Roma households.

Table 9: Poverty reduction by all state transfers (except from pensions) in the North-West Region, 2007

	Absolute poverty reduction		Relative poverty reduction	
	Region	Roma sample	Region	Roma sample
Total poverty reduction of state transfers	4.0	4.09	15.5	5.24
State transfers for children*	2.0	2.05	6.9	2.62
Maternity and child-care benefits during parental leave*	1.2	1.14	4.4	1.45
Unemployment benefits	0.2	0.15	0.8	0.19
Social aid based on MIG	0.1	0.00	0.4	0.00
Disability benefits	0.2	0.45	0.8	0.58
Other state social transfers	0.3	0.30	1.2	0.39
Support from relatives and private charity	0.4	0.30	1.6	0.39

(Source: ECHISERV dataset. Own calculations. Total poverty reduction computed as the sum of all separate effects of state social transfers (support from relatives and private charity excluded).

Notes: *The category of "state transfers for children" was composed of the universal child allowance and means-tested child allowance for needy families (including lone-parent families).

¹⁰ The PEGEE 2000 dataset was collected within the project *Poverty, Ethnicity and Gender in Transition countries* carried out by the Center for Comparative Research of the Sociology Department of the Yale University (lead by Iván Szelenyi and involving social scientists from the all countries under study). The fieldwork took place in 2000 on national representative samples and oversamples of poor populations and the Roma minority. The following countries were included in the study: Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland, Romania, and Slovakia. See Szelenyi (2002) for additional details.

** The category "Maternity and child-care benefits during parental leave" was composed of paid maternity leave, paid parental leave and birth indemnity (only a few cases in the sample).

The poverty reduction effectiveness of state transfers for children is thus very low. Moreover, in terms of absolute poverty reduction, there is no difference between the figures for the Roma and those for the whole N-W region overall: "after" universal child allowance and means-tested allowance for needy families with children, the poverty rate decreased by 2% in both cases. Concerning relative poverty reduction, 7% of the inhabitants of the N-W region avoided poverty due to receiving state transfers for children, as compared to only 2.6% of the ethnic Roma.

Conclusions

During state socialism, the "double-burden" (Kligman, 1998) of wage labour and family responsibilities belonged to the taken for granted reality of mainstream women, who were perceived as resilient enough to use informal childcare through kinship or undocumented labour. After 1990, childcare services became increasingly difficult to afford. Optional crèche vouchers provided by employers were legislated only in 2007, but they are still seldom offered to the employees. The rank of the child conditions welfare entitlement: birth indemnity is granted only for the first four newborn babies, the amount of means-tested child allowance flattens at the fourth child, maternity and paid childcare leave is available only for the first three births. In low income families where mothers lack the necessary work record to qualify for the benefit, fathers go on parental leave, but usually they engage in informal labour and the distribution of family responsibilities follows the traditional gendered pattern. There are no means-tested maternity benefits, but the amount of universal child allowance is five times higher for children below the age of two (cca. €50). Given that child allowance is imputed when establishing the right to social assistance benefits, the birth of a child means losing the Minimum Income Guarantee and, consequently, the obligation to pay the healthcare contribution. Jobless families most often fail to pay the contribution and parents lose their public health insurance.

The moral panic of high and uncontrolled Roma fertility created in Romania a fertile terrain for implementing family policies which attempt to discipline motherhood by tying maternity and parental benefits to working status and the rank of the child, maintaining a very low level of universal and means-tested child allowance and imposing the proof of school attendance as a condition for welfare receipt. The recent modification of the law on childcare leave, which changes the previously flat-rate benefit into an earnings-related one, with a bottom-level of 85% of the national average wage and a ceiling at almost €1,000/ month, clearly favours the assuming of parental roles by the middle-class. The granting of a symbolic "stimulant" for parents who return to job instead of staying on childcare leave, as well as the possibility of receiving crèche vouchers from employers, indicate a move towards selective "optional familialism" of the Romanian policies. However, poor families, with partners weakly integrated on the formal labour market, are left to make ends meet with very modest child benefits, and to satisfy care needs within their own domestic arrangements (as they cannot afford and sometimes even access services). "Implicit familialism" comes as a sanction for "undisciplined" mothers.

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Appendix

Table A1. The distribution of responses to the question: "Who should take care of the small children before school-age in case that both parents are working?" (Romania, December 2007)

	Proportion of respondents
The mother should stay at home with the children.	34.5
One of the parents, doesn't matter who, should stay at home with the children.	29.6
The employers and public institutions should set up nursery schools for the children of their employees.	17.6
The state or local governments should provide childcare services in nursery schools and crèches.	7.0
The grandparents or other relatives should take care of the children.	6.6
The father should stay at home with the children.	0.8

(Source: Romanian National Agency for Governmental Strategies: *Barometer of Public Policies*, 2007.)

RESEARCH PROJECTS

Human Fertility Database Project: Open Access to High-Quality Comparable Data on Fertility¹

The Human Fertility Database (HFD), accessible at www.humanfertility.org, is a joint project of the Max-Planck-Institute for Demographic Research (MPIDR) in Rostock (Germany) and the Vienna Institute of Demography (VID). It has been modelled on an example of successful Human Mortality Database (www.mortality.org), which has become a key resource for high-quality mortality data.

The first trial version of the Human Fertility Database has been accessible online since September 2009. Its main goal is to provide free and user-friendly access to detailed, well-documented and high-quality data on period and cohort fertility to a broad audience of users. The initiative aims to facilitate research on changes and inter-country differences in fertility in the past and in the modern era. Besides featuring detailed period fertility data, including fertility tables and indicators by age and parity of the mother, the database also contains a wealth of cohort fertility data. Whenever possible, all data and indicators are provided by birth order, so that fertility change can be studied by its order-specific components, reflecting the sequential nature of decision-making process among couples.

The HFD follows four guiding principles that have been used for constructing the Human Mortality Database: comparability, flexibility, accessibility, and reproducibility. The following features should make the HFD particularly attractive to its users:

- High level of detail
- Uniformity of methods and data design, which implies comparability of all the data across countries, cohorts, and periods
- The emphasis on displaying order-specific fertility indicators, which should encourage higher level of sophistication in fertility analyses and projections
- Free access to all data upon registration
- Detailed documentation files and warnings about important data issues where applicable

The HFD is limited to countries where the registration of births by official statistical agencies is virtually complete and where population estimates over the range of reproductive ages are reliable. These requirements make it mostly limited to Europe and the developed countries outside Europe. In the future, the institutions supporting the HFD aim to compile a related repository of fertility data, the Human Fertility Collection, which would also contain survey data and a wide range of less uniform fertility data for many other countries.

At present, the HFD database provides age-, cohort- and (whenever possible) birth-order-specific fertility rates, cumulative and total fertility rates, mean ages at birth and also cohort and period fertility tables for national populations or areas. In addition, it provides input data which consist of detailed birth counts and estimates of female population exposure obtained from officially recognized sources.

A complete documentation of all data is available at the HFD website. A detailed method protocol describes methods applied when reconstructing uniform sets of data and fertility indicators for the database. For each country, the description of data sources is given in the documents posted on the respective country page.

At present, the project is still at a 'trial' stage. As of April 2010 it contains data for eight countries – Austria, the Czech Republic, the Netherlands, Russian Federation, United States, Slovakia, Sweden and Switzerland, spanning over different ranges of periods and birth female cohorts.

Country	Period	Birth cohorts
Austria	1951–2008	1936–1958
Czech Republic	1950–2008	1935–1958
the Netherlands	1950–2008	1935–1958
Russian Federation	1959–2008	1944–1958
Slovakia	1950–2008	1935–1958
Sweden	1891–2007	1876–1957
Switzerland	1944–2007	1929–1957
USA	1933–2006	1918–1956

¹ The information is compiled by Michaela Potančoková and the HFD-team

The HFD will be continuously updated and upgraded and more countries will enter the database soon. Among more than 30 countries contacted data for Bulgaria, Canada, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Japan, Latvia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, and the United Kingdom are expected to enter the database in 2010 or early 2011.

Following comments and feedback from the advisory board members and interested users, slight revisions to the methodology used and modifications of the website design will take place during the year 2010. All these developments would not be possible without a generous support concerning data collection, provision and documentation that has been provided by country-specific teams and experts.

Data access: Free, upon registration

Data covered: Live births and detailed fertility data and indicators by age of mother, birth cohort, calendar period, and birth order; all data are provided for as long time period as possible

Responsible institutions:

Max-Planck-Institute for Demographic Research (MPIDR), Rostock (Germany): www.demogr.mpg.de

Vienna Institute of Demography (VID), Vienna, Austria: www.oeaw.ac.at/vid

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Foreign-origin Population: Social Networks in the Context of Second Demographic Transition

Focus: The main aim of the grant application is to elaborate the role of the social networks in the emerging innovative demographic behaviour patterns in the second demographic transition framework. The focus is on interactions of social networks with demographic processes of foreign origin population of Estonia. The application relies mainly on the nation-wide surveys in Estonia like Estonian Family and Fertility Survey (FFS/GGS) 1st and 2nd round, Estonian Health Interview Survey 1996 and 2006, enabling close international cooperation and comparisons in Europe. Collaboration is foreseen also in newly developed research networks with the Nordic countries through REMESO, Linnköping University on SOCTIES research proposal and in cooperation with Estonian relevant institutions on possibilities to implement SHARE in Estonia. Concentration is put on the interactions of the social networks and demographic processes in the phase of second demographic transition in three following domains: (1) Differentials of economic activity of foreign origin population and the impact of social networks in 1st and 2nd generation; (2) Interrelations of social networks and immigrant population health; (3) Social networks in ageing process and the impact of immigrant population on acceleration of the process. Dissemination of the project results is foreseen through submitting papers to the international conferences (IUSSP; EAPS; Nordic Symposium of Demography), participating in activities of international doctoral schools (REMESO; EDSD), submission of papers in both international and Estonian journals and contributing to monographs, issued through international cooperation.

Duration: 2010-2013

Financing: Grant of the Estonian Science Foundation

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(Source: Estonian Research Portal)

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Internet: http://www.sociologia.amu.edu.pl/isoc/articles.php?article_id=1941&

Management: Tyszka, Zbigniew, Prof., head



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SCHOLARLY JOURNALS

Demografie. Revue pro výzkum populačního vývoje
(Demography. Review for Population Research)

Place of publication: Prague, Czech Republic

Publication dates: since 1959, quarterly

Published by: Czech Statistical Office

E-mail: vera.hruskova@czso.cz

Editor-in-chief: Hrušková, Věra

Subject area: Topical articles, analyses and surveys of population development in the Czech Republic and abroad. Data on rates of marriage, divorce, birth, death and abortion; migration; analyses of population processes.

Internet:

<http://www.czso.cz/csu/redakce.nsf/i/demografie>

The English electronic journal "Czech Demography" includes a selection of articles, reviews, and summaries from the quarterly Czech print journal "Demography. Review for Population Research". (since 2007)

Internet:

http://www.czso.cz/eng/redakce.nsf/i/journal_demography**Statistika - ekonomicko-statistický časopis**
(Statistics - Journal for Economy and Statistics)

Place of publication: Prague, Czech Republic

Publication dates: bi-monthly.

Published by: Czech Statistical Office in cooperation with the Czech Statistical Society

E-mail: milan.zalud@czso.cz

contact: Žalud, Milan

Subject area: General statistical issues, theoretical and methodological benefits, current news of the state statistical service, statistical surveys, economic and statistical analyses of development in various fields of the economy, population and the environment, articles on statistics in other countries, on experience of statistical practice.

Internet:

http://panda.hyperlink.cz/e_cesta.htm**Demografiya ta sotsialna ekonomika** (Demography and Social Economics)

Place of publication: Kiev, Ukraine

Publication dates: since 2004, twice a year

Published by: Institute of Demography and Social Studies of the Academy of Sciences of Ukraine

E-mail: demography@idss.org.ua

Editor-in-chief: Pyrozhekov, Serhij I.

Subject area: Demography, Social Economics, Labour Relations.

Internet: <http://www.idss.org.ua/journal.html>**Statistika Ukrainy** (Statistics of Ukraine)

Place of publication: Kiev, Ukraine

Publication dates: since 1998, quarterly

Published by: Scientific and Technical Complex for Statistical Research, State Statistics Committee of Ukraine

E-mail: office@ukrstat.gov.ua

Editor-in-chief: Vasyechko, Olga O.

Subject area: Theoretical and Methodological Issues on Statistics, Official Statistics Transformation, Statistical Research, Business Tendency Survey, International Statistics Standard Adaptation, Data Mining, Marketing of Statistical Information, Public Administration and Management Issues

Internet:

http://www.ukrstat.gov.ua/druk/katalog/kat_e/mag_e.htm**Naselenie** (Population)

Place of publication: Sofia, Bulgaria

Publication dates: semiannual in Bulgarian with English summaries since 1983; ISSN 0205-0617

Published by: Centre for Population Studies of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences

E-mail: cps@cc.bas.bgInternet: <http://cps.bas.bg/english/nass-en.html>

Editor-in-chief: Belcheva, Maria, Dr.,

mbel4eva@abv.bg

Subject area: Family Sociology, Sociology of Sexual Behavior; Demography; Population Studies, Sociology of Population; Migration, Sociology of Migration

**Sem'ya v Rossii** (Family in Russia)

Place of publication: Moscow, Russian Federation

Publication dates: quarterly since 1994 in Russian

Published by: Research Institute of Family and Education, Russian Academy of Education

E-mail: semjavrossii@bk.ru

Editor-in-chief: Darmodekhin, S., Prof. Dr.

Subject area: Sociology of the Youth, Sociology of Childhood; Family Policy, Youth Policy, Policy on the Elderly, Family Sociology.

**Narodonaselenie** (Population Studies)

Place of publication: Moscow, Russian Federation

Publication dates: quarterly since 1998, in Russian

Published by: Institute for Socio-Economic Studies of Population (ISESP), Russian Academy of Sciences

E-mail: razmik@cemi.rssi.ruInternet: <http://www.narodonaselenie.ru/>

Editor-in-chief: Rimashevskaya, Nataliya M., Prof. Dr.

Subject area: Socio-economic and demographic problems of the population

Zhurnal issledovaniya sotsial'noj politiki (Journal of Social Policy Studies)

Place of publication: Saratov, Russian Federation
Publication dates: quarterly since 2003 in Russian: ISSN 1727-0634

Published by: Russian Society of Sociologists; Centre of Social Policy and Gender Studies of the Saratov State University of Technology

E-mail: editorial@jsps.ru
Internet: <http://www.jsps.ru/english/>

Editor- in-chief: Yarskaya-Smirnova, Elena; Romanov; Pavel

Subject area: Family Policy, Social Policy; Social Security; Income Policy, Property Policy, Wage Policy; Youth Policy, Policy on the Elderly.



Katedra

Place of publication: Warsaw, Poland
Publication dates: since 2001

Published by: Fundacja Res Publica, Warsaw University, Institute of Applied Social Sciences, Department of Studies of Family and Social Pathology

E-mail: gender@net.isns.uw.edu.pl

Editor- in-chief: Chołuj, B.; Fuszara, M.; Grzybek, A.; Oleszczuk, T.

Subject area: Gender studies; Feminism; Role of women in society; family studies; Literature about women.



Studia demograficzne (Demographic Studies)

Place of publication: Warsaw, Poland
Publication dates: since 1963

Published by: Committee of Demographic Sciences of the Polish Academy of Sciences,

E-mail: studia.demograficzne@pan.pl

Internet: <http://www.sd.pan.pl/>

Editor- in-chief: Kotowska, Irena E.

Subject area: The thematic scope of the journal encompasses broadly-understood population issues, in particular (but not exclusively) from the fields of demography, epidemiology, economics, geography, sociology, political sciences and population statistics.



Demográfia (Demography)

Place of publication: Budapest, Hungary
Publication dates: since 1957, quarterly

Published by: Hungarian Academy of Sciences (Magyar Tudományos Akadémia), Institute of Demography; Hungarian Statistical Office, Demographic Research Institute

E-mail: kardulesz@demografia.hu

Internet: http://www.demografia.hu/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&id=8&Itemid=20

Editor- in-chief: Speder, Zsolt Prof.

Subject area: Demography, Social Statistics.

Romanian Journal of Population Studies

Place of publication: Cluj-Napoca, Romania
Publication dates: since 2007 (semi-annually), ISSN 1843-5998

Published by: Romanian Centre for Population Studies
E-mail: csp_cluj@yahoo.com

Internet: <http://centre.ubbcluj.ro/csp/rjps.html>

Editor- in-chief: Rotariu, Traian Prof.

Subject area: Studies from the fields of demography, historical demography, geography and population history.



Rodina a Praca (Family and Labour)

Place of publication: Bratislava, Slovakia

Publication dates: since 2005 (bi-monthly), ISSN: 1336-7153

Published by: Institute for Labour and Family Research

E-mail: szaboova@sspr.gov.sk

Internet:

<http://www.sspr.gov.sk/index.php?nodeid=160&lang>

Editor-in-chief: Repkova, Kvetoslava Dr.

Subject area: Thematical issues to the topic: Family Policy, Labour and Social Policy.

FULL TEXTS

- Alich, David (2009) *Fatherhood in Russia between 1970 and 2004: the male perspective of family and fertility behavior in a changing society*, Rostock: Universität Rostock
http://www.demogr.mpg.de/publications/files/3722_1265809219_1_Full%20Text.pdf
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http://www.transeurope-project.org/UserFiles/File/Papers/TransEurope_WP5_Baranowska.pdf
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<http://www.demogr.mpg.de/papers/working/wp-2009-032.pdf>
- Kreyenfeld, Michaela; Konietzka, Dirk; Hornung, Anne (2009) Family diversity in France, the Russian Federation, and East and West Germany: overview on living arrangements and living conditions, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) (Editor): *How generations and gender shape demographic change: towards policies based on better knowledge*, New York [et al.] - United Nations, 33:56, ISBN:978-92-1-117004-7
http://www.unece.org/pau/ggp/publications/conference_2008.htm
- Muresan, C.; Hoem, J. M. (2010) 'The negative educational gradients in Romanian fertility', *Demographic Research*, 22:4, 95-114
<http://www.demographic-research.org/volumes/vol22/4/22-4.pdf>
- Perelli-Harris, Brienna; Gerber, Theodore P. (2010) '#Non-marital childbearing in Russia: second demographic transition or pattern of disadvantage?', *Demographic Research*, 47
http://www.demogr.mpg.de/publications/files/3513_1257152155_1_Perelli-Harris%20and%20Gerber%20conditional%20accept.doc

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DATA

Albania

- Population Census 2001, Institute of Statistics of Albania
http://www.instat.gov.al/repoba/english/default_english.htm

Bosnia-Herzegovina

- Population Census of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Federal Office of Statistics
<http://www.fzs.ba/Eng/population.htm>

Belarus

- National Statistic Committee of Belarus
<http://belstat.gov.by/>

Bulgaria

- Population Data, National Statistic Institute
<http://www.nsi.bg/otrasal.php?otr=19>

Croatia

- Census 2001, Central Bureau of Statistics of Croatia
<http://www.dzs.hr/Eng/censuses/Census2001/Popis/Edefault.html>

Czech Republic

- Population and Housing Census 2001, Czech Statistical Office
http://www.czso.cz/eng/redakce.nsf/i/population_and_housing_census
- Demographic Yearbook of the Czech Republic 2008, Czech Statistical Office
<http://www.czso.cz/csu/2009edicniplan.nsf/engp/4019-09>

Hungary

- Population Census 2001, Hungarian Statistical Office
<http://www.nepszamlalas.hu/eng/volumes/volumes.html>

Macedonia

- Census of population, households and dwellings, 2002, State Statistical Office of Macedonia
http://www.stat.gov.mk/english/glavna_eng.asp?br=18

Moldova

- Population Census 2004, National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova
<http://www.statistica.md/pageview.php?!=en&tid=295&>
- Population and the demographic structure, National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova

<http://www.statistica.md/pageview.php?l=en&tid=334&tid=2338>

Montenegro

- Census of population, households and dwellings in 2003, Statistical Office of Montenegro
<http://www.monstat.org/engPopis.htm>

Poland

- National Population and Housing Census 2002, Statistical Office of Poland
<http://www.poznan.pl/mim/public/s8a/attachments.html?co=show&tid=3906&instance=1011&parent=463&lang=en>

Romania

- Census of population and dwellings 2002, National Institute of Statistics of Romania
http://www.insse.ro/cms/files/RPL2002INS/index_eng.htm

Russian Federation

- Russia on Figures (Population), Federal State Statistics Service (GOSKOMSTAT),
<http://www.gks.ru/>
- Russian Sociological Data Archive
<http://sofist.socpol.ru/kluch.shtml?en=1>

Serbia

- Population Census 2002, Statistical Office of Serbia
<http://webrzs.stat.gov.rs/axd/en/popis.htm>

Slovakia

- Population and Housing Census of Slovakia 2001, Statistical Office of Slovakia
<http://portal.statistics.sk/showdoc.do?docid=3035>

Slovenia

- Popis 2002 (Population Census 2002 results), Statistical Office of Slovenia
http://www.stat.si/popis2002/en/rezultati_slovenija_prebivalstvo_dz.htm

Ukraine

- All-Ukrainian Population Census 2001, State Statistics Committee of Ukraine
<http://www.ukrcensus.gov.ua/eng/>

CONFERENCES

European Population Conference 2010

Date: September 1-4, 2010

Organiser: Vienna Institute of Demography

Conference site: Vienna, Austria

E-mail: epc2010@opr.princeton.edu

Internet: <http://epc2010.princeton.edu>



Facing Demographic Challenges in Europe. (This conference is part of the 13th IS 2010 multiconference)

Date: October 11-15, 2010

Organiser: Jožef Stefan Institute

Conference site: Ljubljana, Slovenia

E-mail: matjaz.gams@ijs.si

Internet:

<http://is.ijs.si/konference/Demografija/demografija-ang.html#nav>

INTERNET LINKS

• International Social Survey Programme 2002: Family and Changing Gender Roles III (ISSP 2002)

Focus: Family and gender roles: Attitude towards employment of mothers and married women; role distribution of man and woman in occupation and household; preferred extent of employment for women during different stages of child raising; attitudes towards marriage, single-parenting, cohabitation before marriage, and divorce; views on the significance of children in life; views on paid maternity leave and on financial aid for working parents; management of income in marriage or partnership; allocation of duties in the household and in family matters; time budget for housekeeping and sharing of housekeeping for both partners; frequency of disagreement about the sharing of housekeeping; decision making in matters of child raising, weekend activities and buying major things for home; principal earner (partner with higher income); stress caused by family, work and household duties (scale); estimation of general personal happiness; satisfaction with employment situation and family life; employment of mother during childhood of respondent; employment in various phases of child raising.

Survey period: September 2001 to February 2004

Universe: 46.638 respondents from 34 countries worldwide, among them Latvia, Poland, Russia, Slovenia, Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Hungary
Data access at GESIS Data Archive:

<http://zacat.gesis.org/webview/index.jsp?object=http://134.95.45.58:80/obj/fStudy/ZA3880>

Data and documents are released for academic research and teaching.

• **Population Index on the Web** - This is the online version of Population Index (the primary reference tool to the world's population literature). It covers the period from 1986 to 2000. It can be searched by author, subject matter, geographical region, and by year of publication in addition to free text searching. There is also a browse facility. It is also possible via this website to submit materials for citation in Population Index. The Index covers all fields of interest to demographers, including fertility, mortality, population size and growth, migration, nuptiality and the family, research methodology, projections and predictions, historical demography and demographic and economic

interrelations.

<http://popindex.princeton.edu/>

- **POPLINEDatabase** - The POPLINE (POPulation information onLINE) database gives access to the world's reproductive health literature, including abstracts of published and unpublished literature covering population, family planning, and related health issues. POPLINE is provided and maintained by the Information and Knowledge for Optimal Health (INFO) Project at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. Subjects covered within the database include family planning technology, family planning programs, fertility, population law and policy, demography, and population and the environment. Information is sourced from family planning organisations, governments, and a variety of international agencies and includes references to books and book chapters, reports, journal articles, conference papers, and theses. The database is updated twice monthly and may be searched by keyword or browsed by subject area.

<http://db.jhuccp.org/ics-wpd/popweb/>

- **The European Society on Family Relations (ESFR)** is a multidisciplinary, non-profit organization of family researchers. The Society aims to serve as a "platform for expert knowledge concerning family relations including the interface between research and policy on the local, national and international levels" and the "information will be available for dissemination to individual families, corporate organizations and government agencies". The site provides access to the ESFR newsletter, news and event information and links to related websites.

<http://www.esfr.org/>

- **Gender Data Archive** of TARKI is a Guide to Datasets and other Research Resources for Hungarian Gender Studies (introduce the results of empirical research surveys and to provide access to data bases connected of this field of study).

<http://www.tarki.hu/adatbank-h/nok/index-e.html>

- **OECD Family Database.** Following up on the OECD Babies and Bosses reviews on the reconciliation of work and family life in selected Member States, and in view of the strong demand for cross-national indicators on the situation of families and children, the OECD has developed an on-line database on family outcomes and family policies with indicators for all OECD countries. The database brings together information from different OECD databases (for example, the [OECD Social Expenditure database](#), the [OECD Benefits and Wages database](#), or the [OECD Education database](#), and databases maintained by other (international) organisations.

<http://www.oecd.org/els/social/family/database>

- **World Bank Data** now in Google search results - A new World Bank relationship with search giant Google is bringing key development data like this

directly to web users, making data easier to find, visualize, customize and share than ever before. Now, a special Google public data search feature will show numeric results for 17 [World Development Indicators \(WDI\)](#) reliably sourced to the World Bank. For example, a [Google search for GDP](#) features a box at the top of the page highlighting Bank data and linking to Google's [public data](#) graphing tool. Google's graphing tool lets users see and compare country-by-country statistics and offers customized graphs with a 'link' or web address that can be easily embedded and shared in other websites.

<http://www.google.com/publicdata/overview?ds=d5bncppjof8f9>