CRISIS AND GENDERED TRENDS IN WORK, UNEMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL POLICIES

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**INTRODUCTION**

- Women experience higher unemployment rates than men in most European countries
  - a dimension of gender inequalities in EU labor markets
- A few exceptions
  - the UK,
  - some eastern European countries
  - the USA
- Recent crises (2000’s)
  - narrowing or even reversal of the gender unemployment gap
    - a reversal in the EU 27 (1st time in 2009)
    - in Germany (2001 & 2009)
    - in France for the youth (2009)
OUTLINE

• Purpose: exploring the unemployment gender gap reversal in Europe
  • using Eurostat data (LFS, Silc, LMP)
  • does it means a reduction in gender inequalities?

1. Crises, women's work and unemployment: theoretical approaches
2. Labour market segregation in France and Germany
3. Family arrangements and public policies
4. Conclusion: crisis as a catalyst for the decline of the male-breadwinner model?
  ○ Work in progress...
1. Crises, Women's Work and Unemployment: Theoretical Approaches

- Economic theories: a late interest
  - 1950-60’s in the USA
  - the 1970’s crisis stimulated researches
  - the 1980’s in the UK and Europe

- Seminal researches
  - Neoclassical approach: Human capital
    - gender specialization of work within households
    - women invest less in human capital & paid work
      - first fired (Oi 1962)
      - or discouraged (Mincer 1962)
  - Neo-Marxist and Institutionalist feminist approaches
FEMINIST ECONOMICS: MARXISTS AND INSTITUTIONALISTS

- Marxists
  - Women as a « flexible reserve army » of labour
    - drawn into the labour market by economic growth but expelled in time of crisis (Benston 1969)
    - or instead a low-cost sought-after manpower (Mitchell 1971)

- Institutionalists
  - Labour market segmentation (or segregation)
    - women overrepresented in “bad jobs”
    - as well as in jobs/sectors that are less exposed to the consequences of economic crises (Milkman 1976)
HYPOTHESES REGARDING WOMEN’S WORK AND UNEMPLOYMENT IN A CRISIS CONTEXT

• Institutionalists: gender segregation hypothesis
  • Ruth Milkman's (1976) seminal article in the US
    • unemployment gender gap reversal during the Great depression and during the 1970’s crisis in the US
    • women work in relatively sheltered sectors
  • Jill Rubery (ed. 1988)
    • the case of the UK (gender gap reversal) and other European countries
  • Eva Fodor (1997)
    • the case of transition economies (male employment crisis)
THREE HYPOTHESES ON THE DEMAND FOR WOMEN’S LABOR (RUBERY, ED. 1988)

1. “buffer”
   - women as a flexible reserve (pro-cyclical)

2. labor market (LM) “gender segregation”
   - women employment variations depend on their position in the LM (protected segments)

3. “substitution”
   - precarious work replaces regular employment (contra-cyclical evolution) in crisis contexts
   - Complementary rather than competing hypothesis
     - segmentation may explain that women either play as buffer labor force or substitute to men
THREE HYPOTHESES ON WOMEN’S LABOUR SUPPLY (Rubery, ed., 1988)

1. “flexible reserve”
   - women retire (totally or partially) when the labour market demand diminishes
   - additional or discouraged workers

2. “relative autonomy” (Humphrey, Rubery, 1984)
   - women’s participation relatively autonomous with regards to the economic situation or to wages
   - women consider themselves as permanent workers

3. family arrangements and social policies
   - women’s participation depends on family arrangements (“the economic organization of the family”)
   - and on state support to the “social reproduction”
     - ex: social policies and available childcare
WOMEN’S LABOUR SUPPLY AND WELFARE STATE REGIMES

- Lessons from comparative researches (since the 1990’s)
  - the diversity of women's participation to the LM
  - the role of Welfare State regimes
- France and Germany
  - Bismarckian, corporatist & conservative regimes
  - male-breadwinner models (vs individual in Northern countries)
  - different childcare regimes

• How to analyse the gender gap reversal in both countries?
• How do economic crises question the male-breadwinner model
2. CRISIS AND GENDER SEGREGATION IN FRANCE AND GERMANY

- **Germany**
  - unemployment gender gap reversal (men overexposed to unemployment)
  - from 2001 to 2006 and again since 2008
  - 2001 employment crisis has been the most important
  - (almost) continuous decrease in unemployment from 2005 to 2011

- **France**
  - progressive reduction of the unemployment gender gap
    - marked narrowing in 2009
    - reversal for the youth (below the age of 25)
Graph 1: Gender unemployment in France and Germany (LFS, Eurostat 2012)
Gender Segregation

• Before the crisis: intermediate level of gender segregation (Bettio, Veraschagina 2009)
  • in both countries, to balance the gender distribution
    • 26% workers should change their profession
    • 18% should change their sector of activity
  • stable gender segregation indicators (1997-2007)
• Multiple factors of gender segregation
  • gender roles, educational and vocational options
  • employers practices, gender stereotypes, etc.
Table 1: Crises and Employment by Sector and Sex in Germany and France

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<td>0.7</td>
<td>-0.7</td>
<td>-0.1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
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<td>1.7</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.9</td>
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<td>0.8</td>
<td>-1.7</td>
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<td>-0.9</td>
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<td>-4.1</td>
<td>-5.5</td>
<td>-2.5</td>
<td>3.7</td>
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CRISSES AND EMPLOYMENT SHIFTS BY SECTOR AND SEX

• In both countries, industrial employment is more hit declining in the long run
  • employment in the service sector is not
• Men are more concerned
  • the manufacturing sector counts for 36% of male employment in Germany and 28% in France
• Women haven’t been spared
  • sometimes more affected than men by industrial employment losses
  • their share in the manufacturing sector diminished faster from 2000 to 2011
• The gender segregation in the labour market
  • explains part of the reduction of the unemployment gender gap
  • ... but did not reduce during recent crises
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IP index</th>
<th>France in occupations in economic sectors</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
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<td></td>
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<td>26.6</td>
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<td>Germany in occupations in economic sectors</td>
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**Gender segregation in occupations/sectors** is calculated as the average national share of employment for women and men applied to each occupation/sector; differences are added up to produce the total amount of gender imbalance expressed as a proportion of total employment (Isco & Nace classifications)

**Data comparability:** no matching between the national French classification of occupations “Professions and socio-professional categories” (PCS) and the Isco
3. Crises, Family Arrangements and Public Policies

- Different family arrangements regarding childcare
  - Germany: relying on families (till the 1990’s)
    - childcare as a family rather than a public concern
    - West Germany: preference for family (mother) care, not in new Länder
  - France: (ambivalent) « free choice » principle
    - diverse and relatively extended childcare services
    - “maternal school” for children aged 2 +
    - but incentives to retire from the labour market
      - the care allowance PAJE-CLCA essentially addresses to mothers
  - Women’s employment rate higher in Germany (Fagnani, Math 2010)
    - especially for young and senior women
    - but not for mothers with young children
Graph 2: Women's employment and part-time rates in France and Germany
INCREASE IN WOMEN’S EMPLOYMENT RATES AND CHANGING CARE REGIMES

- **Germany**
  - Gradual development of childcare services
    - since the 1990’s for the 3-6 years (*Kindergarten*)
    - since 2002-2005 for children below 3
  - Increase in mother’s (with children below 6) employment rate
    - + 14 p.p. between 2005 and 2011, mainly part-time

- **France**
  - Childcare services continue to develop
    - apparently faster than in Germany for children below 3
    - but early schooling (below 3 in *écoles maternelles*) has diminished
  - Increase in mother’s employment rate
    - slower than in Germany but mainly full-time
  - Inflexion in care regimes: women more often “permanent workers”...
    - but not always full-time
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Germany</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
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<td>Children below 3 without formal childcare</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>80</td>
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<tr>
<td>... in formal childcare 1 to 29 h per week</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>7(*)</td>
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<td>... 30 h and above</td>
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<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Children aged 3-6 without formal childcare</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>... in formal childcare 1 to 29 h per week</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>... 30 h and above</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>46</td>
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<td>50,9</td>
<td>52,3</td>
<td>52,8</td>
<td>55,1</td>
<td>54,6</td>
<td>60,5</td>
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<td>65,1</td>
<td>66,4</td>
<td>68,9</td>
<td>68,2</td>
<td>64,9</td>
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<td>73</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td>... 30 h and above</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>23</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4(*)</td>
<td>5(*)</td>
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<td>62,3</td>
<td>61,8</td>
<td>63,4</td>
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<td>65,0</td>
<td>65,0</td>
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<td>36,1</td>
<td>37,6</td>
<td>37,6</td>
<td>35,2</td>
<td>37,3</td>
<td>36,0</td>
<td>36,3</td>
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Shortcomings of Eurostat data (EU-SILC) for analysing changes in care regimes

- Formal childcare: some “unreliable data” according to Eurostat
  - Standardized data improve international comparability
  - but national samples are often small (not in France)
    - few cases of children in the specified age brackets (0-3; 3-6)
  - blindness to organisational structures
    - public schools, public childcare provision, publicly subsidized childcare, or fully private childcare services
  - blindness to regional disparities
  - blindness to the cost of childcare
    - which is crucial when equal opportunity is a target
  - Ex: France, a hidden cost increase
    - Schooling rate for children aged 2
      - from 34.6% in 2000-01 to 13.6% in 2010-11 (Depp/Insee)
      - the only free childcare/educational service for children aged 2

- Analysing the income and living conditions of specific households may be difficult
  - Ex: lone parents/mothers (small samples)
ACTIVATION AND EMPLOYMENT POLICIES

- Activation policies could support women’s autonomy
  - women as permanent workers
- They instead reproduce or reinforce gender inequalities (Betzelt et al. 2011)
  - in Germany more than in France
    - because of the magnitude of the reforms
      - regarding the status and income of the unemployed
      - and employment de-standardization
      - high increase in part-time work
    - especially in a crisis context
      - crisis measures are not gender neutral
- Eurostat data: limited for international comparison on LMP
  - & gendered employment/unemployment statuses
TABLE 4: PMT EXPENDITURES IN FRANCE AND GERMANY

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<td>billion €</td>
<td>36.906</td>
<td>38.424</td>
<td>41.546</td>
<td>44.270</td>
<td>44.294</td>
<td>42.748</td>
<td>41.620</td>
<td>41.096</td>
<td>39.185</td>
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<td>2.564</td>
<td>2.569</td>
<td>2.693</td>
<td>2.788</td>
<td>2.675</td>
<td>2.488</td>
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<td>billion €</td>
<td>64.351</td>
<td>66.563</td>
<td>72.544</td>
<td>74.730</td>
<td>75.048</td>
<td>66.625</td>
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<td>49.304</td>
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<td>% of GDP</td>
<td>3.143</td>
<td>3.167</td>
<td>3.402</td>
<td>3.480</td>
<td>3.418</td>
<td>2.995</td>
<td>2.608</td>
<td>2.030</td>
<td>1.908</td>
<td>2.529</td>
<td>2.281</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- PMT data show major country differences
  - France: rather stable total PMT expenditure between 2000 and 2004, slight decrease after 2005 before an increase in 2009 and 2010 (crisis context)
  - Germany: dramatic decrease between 2004 and 2007, increase in 2009, and decrease since 2010
- But are limited from a gender perspective
SHORTCOMINGS OF THE LMP (LABOUR MARKET POLICIES) DATABASE...

- Data focus on “targeted measures” or expenditures
  - “general measures” or expenditures in favour with employment may be of comparable magnitudes
    - employer’s contribution exemptions, tax credits, incentives to work for income support recipients, *etc.*
    - especially in Bismarckian countries
  - Ex: France (Garoche, Roguet 2013)
    - 50.1 billion € dedicated to targeted measures in 2010
    - 40.7 additional billion € dedicated to general measures (employer’s exemptions for low-wage workers represent 22 billions)
    - during the crisis, targeted measures have increased more rapidly than general measures (more or less stagnating)

- Detailed and comparable data are provided on targeted programmes
  - But gendered data are not always available, or are “unreliable”
  - Complexity of national programmes
    - Ex: short-time working in France: 6 schemes in 2009, 4 in 2010

- France and Germany: often better to work on national data
ACTIVE MEASURES ARE AT BEST GENDER BLIND

• Germany: Hartz reforms (2002-2004, after the 2001 crisis)
  • women’s quotas ignored
  • end of active LM programs dedicated to vulnerable categories of women
  • women more often excluded from integration programs because of their unemployment status
  • de-standardization of employment (7 millions minijobs)

• France
  • development of the service to individuals - care service sector
  • women overrepresented in subsidized employment in the non market sector
    • poor quality jobs
“PASSIVE” MEASURES: EROSION OF WOMEN’S UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION STATUS

- Germany: Hartz reforms
  - hardening of unemployment benefits rules
    - many women excluded from unemployment insurance benefits
      - they are overrepresented in atypical employment
    - and penalized by reinforced mutual obligations (means tested unemployment benefits)

- France
  - unemployment solidarity benefits were already means tested according to household’s income
  - the income support RSA is still means tested
    - paradoxical individual incentives (Périvier 2009, Eydoux 2012)
  - gendered data hardly available for unemployment benefits and income support
SHORT-TIME WORKING: A CRISIS MEASURE SUPPORTING MALE-BREADWINNERS

• According to national sources on employment policies
  • Short-time working considerably increased in the past few years
    • and mainly concerned men
  • Germany: from important to massive use
    • from 90 000 workers in 2008 to more than 1 million in 2009 (x 12.5)
    • men count for 78% short-time workers in June 2009
  • France: from low to important use
    • From 2 500 workers in 2008 to 64 000 in 2009 (x 20)
    • 75% are men during the autumn 2009 (versus 66% in “normal” times)
• Apparently gender neutral employment policies
  • creating gender inequalities because of the gendered segregation
CONCLUDING REMARKS

• The gender unemployment gap narrowing or reversal
  • does not indicate the end of gender inequalities
  • nor the erosion of the male-breadwinner model
• It rather reflects the gender segregation of the labour market (not the reduction of this segregation)
  • women are concerned differently by crises and crises measures: precarious employment
  • unemployment: a limited indicator that must be coupled with indicators of (bad) quality employment
• It takes place in a context of continuous increase in women’s employment
• Linked to a change in care regimes (better childcare provisions)?
  • Additional data would be needed in EU-Silc
• Employment policies seem to play an ambivalent role
  • precarizing women’s employment and supporting men’s income
  • reinforcing the reference to the male-breadwinner model
• Eurostat on LMP: gendered data often missing/unreliable
• … while austerity measures rather penalize women
REFERENCES


