



Making work pay for mothers: An EU perspective

Dr Katerina Mantouvalou

Peer Review on 'Making work pay for mothers'

Mutual Learning Programme , DG Employment

Malta, 18-19 May 2015

Presentation structure

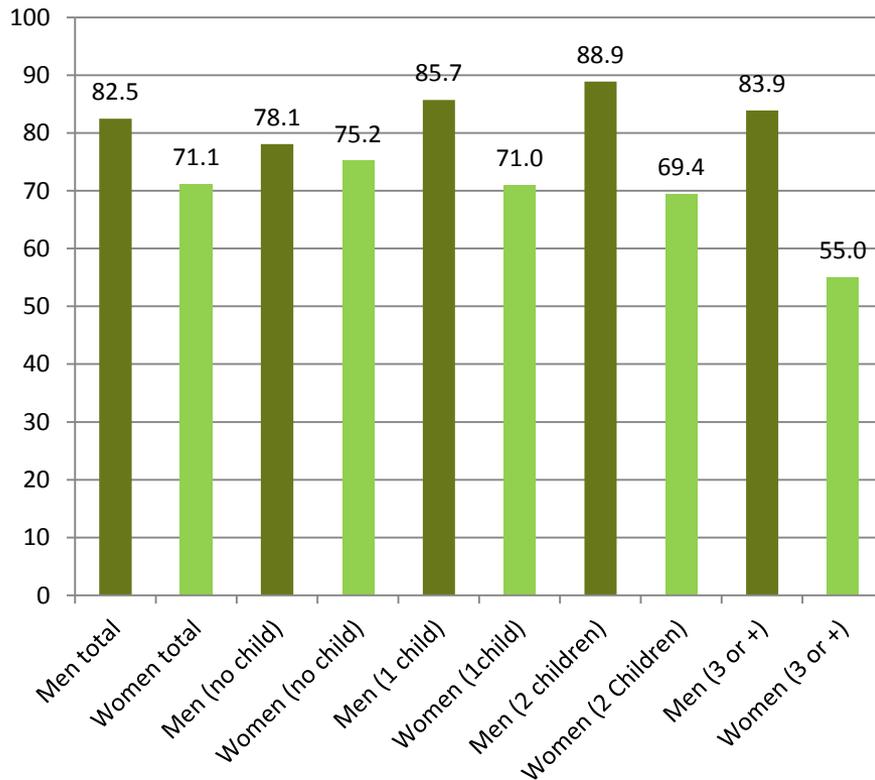
- EU policy commitment to expand childcare
- Parenthood, employment and childcare provision: A statistical overview
- Determinants in access to and use of formal childcare structures in EU
- Measures to improve access to and use of childcare services in Europe
- Impact of childcare measures
- Issues for further consideration

EU policy commitment to expand childcare

- Childcare expansion is high on the EU employment and gender equality agenda
- Since 2000 the EU has set targets to improve women's employment rate, increase childcare availability and promote work-life balance
- In 2002 the Barcelona targets were put in place to improve the provision of childcare
- ESF provides financial support to increase investment in childcare
- European Directives on equal pay, maternity and parental leave, and equal treatment of men and women in the workplace

Parenthood, employment and childcare provision: A statistical overview

**Employment rate
European Union (2013)**

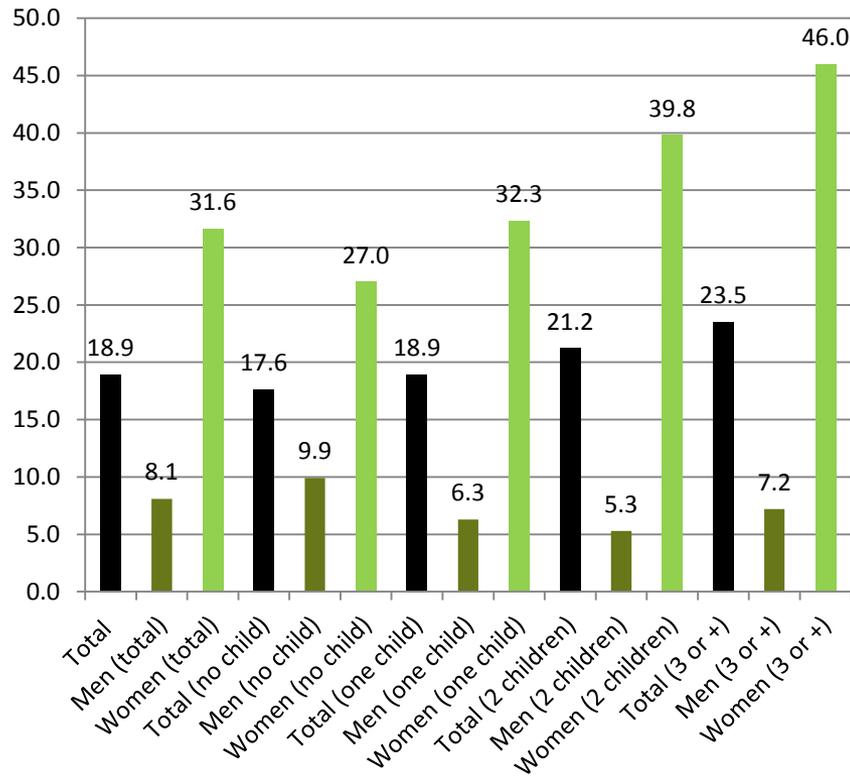


Eurostat, – 2013 (population 25-64 years)

- Employment rates of women and men without children are similar
- The gender gap increases with the number of children in the household
- 'Gendered parenthood'

Parenthood, employment and childcare provision: A statistical overview

Part-time employment European Union (2013)

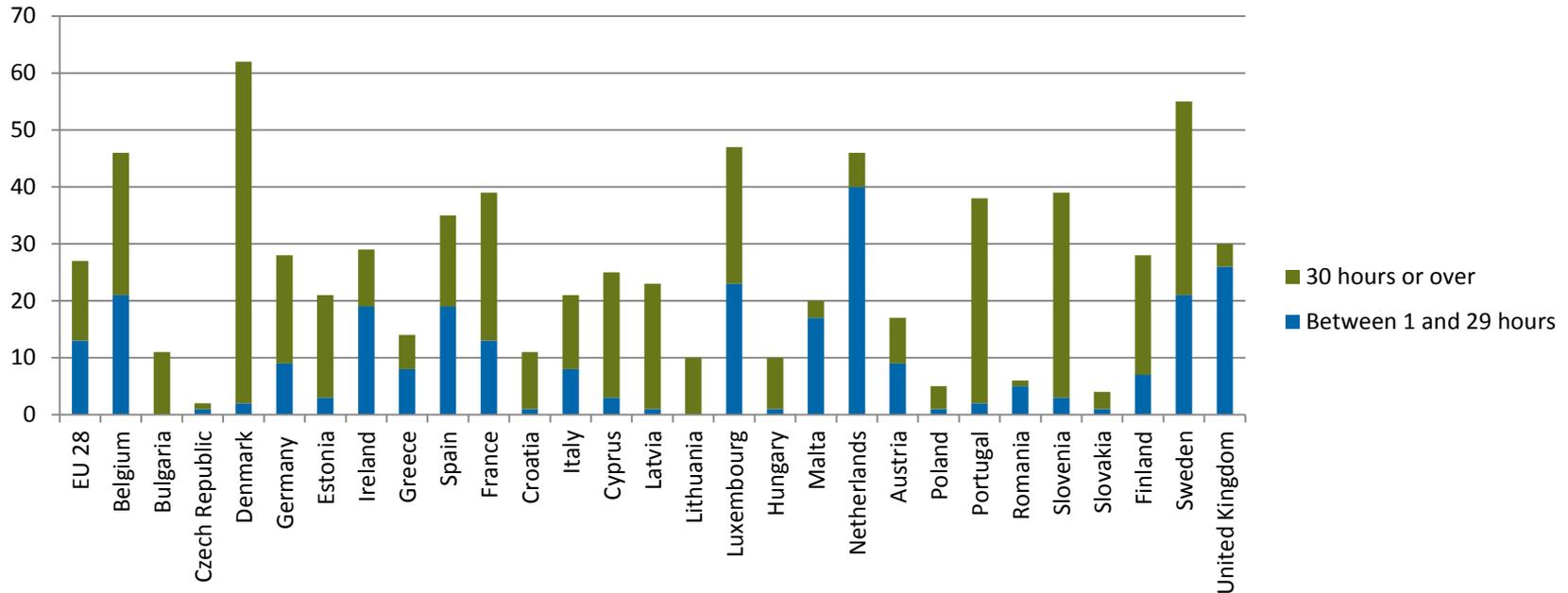


- Even when mothers work, it is more likely to be part-time
- Part-time employment increases along with the number of children
- Some MS show slightly different patterns

Source: Eurostat – Labour Force Survey, 2013 – 15-64 years

Parenthood, employment and childcare provision: A statistical overview

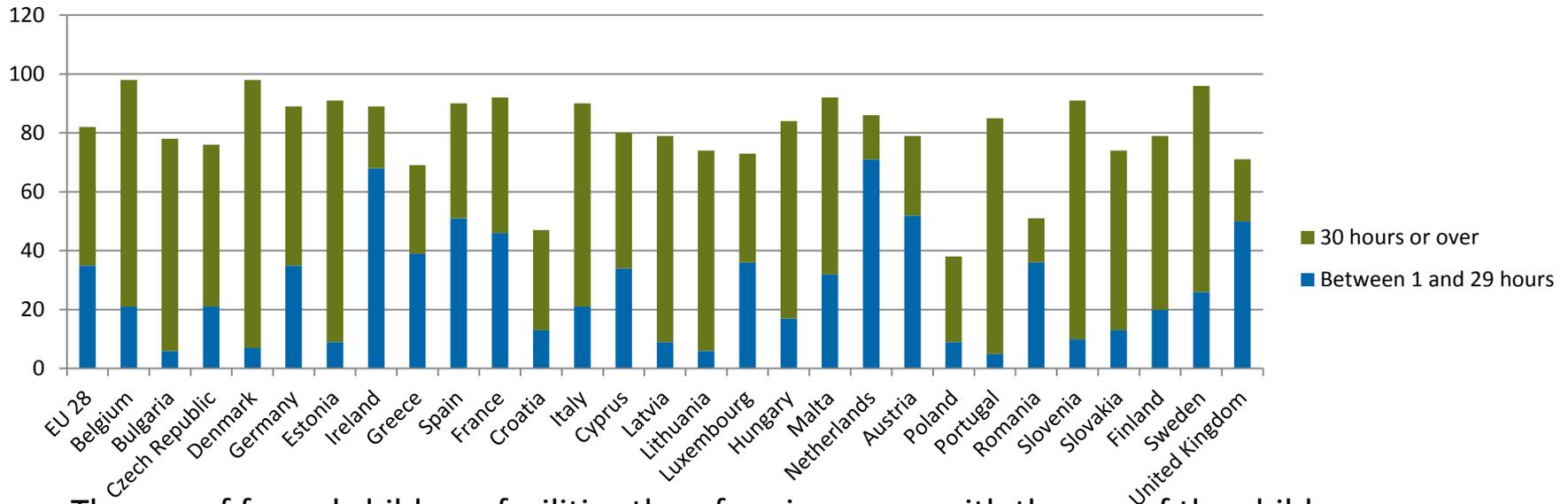
Children under three years cared for in formal structures (2013)



- Only nine MS (BE, DK, ES, FR, LU, NL, PT, SI and SE) exceeded the target for under 3 year olds
- Four MS (DE, IE, FI and UK) almost met this target and reached or surpassed the EU average (27%)
- Four MS (DK, PT, SI and SE) had reached the 33% target on a full-time basis (30 hours or more).

Parenthood, employment and childcare provision: A statistical overview

Children between three years and mandatory school age cared for in formal structures (2013)



- The use of formal childcare facilities therefore increases with the age of the child
- Nine MS (BE, DK, EE, ES, FR, IT, MT, SI, SE) have met the target of 90%
- Five MS (DE, IE, HU, NL, UK) have met or exceeded the EU average (82%)
- Childcare for this age group is predominantly full-time (apart from AT, IE, NL, UK)

Determinants in access to and use of formal childcare structures in EU

- Individual: Education, type of employment of woman and household income
- Institutional: Cost, quality and availability of childcare (EQLS, 2011)
 - 53% of women do not work or work part-time due to childcare cost
 - 58% of parents reported that availability was either very difficult or a little difficult
 - 41% of parents reported that they have difficulties in accessing childcare due to distance and/or opening hours
 - 27% of parents were concerned about the quality of those services
- Cultural: Perceptions of women of young children working vary across MS

Measures to improve access to and use of childcare services in Europe

- Changes to the existing legal and policy framework
- Fee subsidies to access childcare, cash benefits and tax deductions and/or tax credits
- Recognition of certain providers (e.g. childminders) as formal childcare providers
- Preferential access to childcare for particular types of families (e.g. lone mothers and large families)
- Training requirements for childcare service personnel

Changes to the legal framework to frame childcare as a social right

- Some Member States (FI, DK and SE) have framed childcare as a social right
- Others (DE) have introduced laws to extend the provision of childcare services
- Others (BE, FR and SI) have introduced policies and programmes that seek to provide full coverage too

Measures to improve access to and use of childcare services in Europe

Measures to improve affordability of childcare

- Fee subsidies to access childcare:
 - Some MS provide subsidies to new parents (e.g. BE, NL, UK)
- Cash benefits:
 - Some MS provide direct transfer to parents (BE, FR), grandparents (CZ, NL, SI) or to suppliers (SK)
- Tax deductions and/or tax credits:
 - Tax deductions are widely used (BE, CZ, DE, FR, NL, UK)
 - They target middle and high income workers
 - Tax credits can also target employers (FR)

Measures to improve access to and use of childcare services in Europe

Measures to improve availability

- Recognition of childminders as formal service providers (FR)
- Preferential access to particular types of families (e.g. lone mothers in employment; large families) (SK)
- Childcare adapted to parents' specific needs due to atypical working hours (FI)
- Subsidised childcare provided to dual earner families (NL)

Measures to improve access to and use of childcare services in Europe

Measures to improve quality

- Improvement of the professional qualification of childcare workers (BE)
- Adoption of a generic approach to Early Childhood Education and Care to qualify students to work in all educational settings (DK)
- Voluntary registration of childminders to declare themselves as service providers (SI)

Measures to improve access to and use of childcare services in Europe

Family leave arrangements and work-life balance measures

- Different family leave provisions (i.e. maternity, paternity and parental leave)
- Specific measures to increase the take-up of parental leave among fathers
- Flexible working arrangements

Impact of childcare measure

Women's labour market participation

- Childcare with opening hours similar to regular working hours -> Positive impact on maternal employment
- Cost of approx. 10% of net family income -> positive impact on maternal employment
- More than 10% cost -> Highly educated women more likely to make use
- Less than 10% cost -> Less significant increase in the maternal employment

Impact of childcare measure

Fertility

- More extensive reconciliation measures -> Highest birth rates
- Childcare -> Might encourage individuals to start a family
- Childcare -> Might increase fertility by facilitating upbringing of a child

Impact of childcare measure

Protection against poverty and social exclusion

- Increase in maternal employment -> Likely to reduce child poverty

Development of the child

- Increase in childcare use -> Improved educational, social and behavioural outcomes, esp. for children from disadvantaged groups

Issues for further consideration

- What type of measures have MS implemented to improve the availability, affordability and quality of childcare provision?
- Which ones of these measures target families most in need of assistance?
- Which factors hinder mothers' participation in the labour market?
- What other forms of family friendly initiatives have shown to be effective in increasing the active labour market participation of parents?

Thank you