Convergence towards a Dual Earner Model? Contrasting changes in family-related attitudes and family policies across Europe

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1. Thematic Background

*Increasing women’s employment*

- **Increasing labour market participation** rates of women across Western societies throughout recent decades
- Increasing women’s employment as an **explicit aim of various national/international agendas** (e.g. Europe 2020)
- Intended **move from a “male breadwinner model” to a “dual earner model”**, implying equal paid and unpaid work of both spouses
- Still **deficiencies in the actual implementation** of this plan (only partial convergence of employment rates, full-time/part-time divide, gender pay gap etc.; e.g. European Commission 2017)
- Strong remaining cross-national differences
1. Thematic Background

*Increasing women’s employment*

- Various factors that can be held responsible for the only limited increase in women’s employment, including for example
  - **Supply side factors**: disparities in education and training systems, work-family reconciliation measures
  - **Demand side factors**: general labour market situation, occupational and sectoral structures etc.

- **Aim of this paper**
  - To investigate trends in the “cultural context”: Individual attitudes reflecting societal norms about women’s employment: **acceptance as a precondition for implementation**
1. Thematic Background

Key questions

1. **Description of long-term trends:** In how far has the acceptance of women’s employment developed over time, both in general as well as with regard to the desired type of work (full- versus part-time)?

2. **Socio-demographic decomposition:** Which nation-specific social groups have been the frontrunners and the laggards in the attitudinal trends?

3. **Interrelationship with (shifts in) reconciliation policies:** Are there countries where public policies actually “lag behind” manifest attitudinal changes? And, vice versa, are there countries where public policies have run ahead of rather modest changes in employment-related attitudes?
2. Data and Methods

Indicators for Attitudes towards Female Employment

International Social Survey Programme (ISSP)

- Cross-national survey programme with yearly waves
- Founded in 1984, starting with 4 countries, now 43 countries worldwide with wide coverage of Europe
- Regularly repeated modules

Advantages

- Broad range of indicators reflecting the long-term development since the late 1980s
- Comparative analysis for 21 European countries reflecting all typical welfare regimes 2002 ⇔ 2012
2. Data and Methods

Indicators for Attitudes towards Female Employment

Indicators

- Acceptance of traditional male breadwinner model
  - Men’s job is earn money, women’s job household (5-point-scale agreement)

- Women’s Employment: expected working time
  - Do you think that women should work outside the home full-time, part-time or not at all under the following circumstances
    a. When there is a child under school age.
    b. After the youngest child starts school

- Potential side-effects of out-of-home care
  - A pre-school child is likely to suffer if his or her mother works.

- Socio-demographic covariates
  - Gender, Age, Education, Labour force status

Source: w.issp.org
2. Data and Methods

Indicators for Contextual/Institutional framework

Indicators

- **Child Care Infrastructure (Eurostat/EU-SILC)**
  - Children in formal childcare or education by age group and duration - % over the population of each age group 2002 - 2012 (or next proxy date)

- **Parental leave (OECD)**
  - Total length of paid maternity and parental leave in weeks

- **Actual female employment rates (OECD)**
  - % employed of the age group 25-64
2. Data and Methods

Methods

- **1. Description of long-term trends:** In how far has the acceptance of women’s employment developed over time, both in general as well as with regard to the desired type of work (full- versus part-time)?

  ➤ **Descriptive statistics (Frequencies, means, standard deviations) age 18-64**

- **2. Socio-demographic decomposition:** Which nation-specific social groups have been the frontrunners and the laggards in the attitudinal trends?

  ➤ **Multivariate logistic regression, country-level**

- **3. Interrelationship with (shifts in) reconciliation policies:** Are there countries where public policies actually “lag behind” manifest attitudinal changes? And, vice versa, are there countries where public policies have run ahead of rather modest changes in employment-related attitudes?

  ➤ **Bivariate correlations**
3. Results

1a. Support for the male breadwinner model

Mean (2002): 22.26%
Mean (2012): 20.33%
SD (2002): 13.97%
SD (2012): 16.32%
3. Results

1b. Expected working time: Pre-school child (examples)

**Summary**
- Move from a male-breadwinner to a predominantly part-time oriented model in pre-school age
- Different „speeds“: From remnants of staying at home to an increasingly full-time oriented model

**Stay-at-home**
- Mean (2002): 35.62%
- Mean (2012): 25.82%
- SD (2002): 12.00%
- SD (2012): 14.43%
3. Results

1c. Youngest child at school (examples)

**Summary**
- Move from a part-time to a predominantly full-time oriented model in school age
- Different „speeds“: From the persistence of a part-time model to full-time orientation

**Austria**
- Full-time Mean (2002): 31.69%
- Part time Mean (2012): 49.68%
- Full-time SD (2002): 10.58%
- Part time SD (2012): 15.88%

**Czech Republic**
- Full-time
- Part time
- Stay-at-home

**UK**
- Full-time
- Part time
- Stay-at-home

**Belgium**
- Full-time
- Part time
- Stay-at-home

**Slovenia**
- Full-time
- Part time
- Stay-at-home

**Portugal**
- Full-time
- Part time
- Stay-at-home

**Denmark**
- Full-time
- Part time
- Stay-at-home
3. Results

1d. Child suffers when mother works

Summary

- Decreasing fear of negative effects of part-time employment (if prevalent et al.; Northern Europe)
- Highest consideration still in Eastern and Southern Europe, though on the decline

Mean (2002): 44.30%
Mean (2012): 33.68%
SD (2002): 18.48%
SD (2012): 17.21%
3. Results

2a. Intra-national differences: Male breadwinner support (Central Europe)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Age (ref. 18-34)</th>
<th>Education (ref. High)</th>
<th>Employment Status (ref. Full-time)</th>
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<th>Pseudo-R2</th>
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ISSP 2002/2012; pooled sample, logistic regression, +/- represent significance levels of 0.05/0.01/0.001
### 3. Results

#### 2b. Intra-national differences: Male breadwinner support (Northern Europe)

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ISSP 2002/2012; pooled sample, logistic regression, +/- represent significance levels of 0.05/0.01/0.001
### 3. Results

#### 2c. Intra-national differences: Male breadwinner support (Eastern Europe)

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ISSP 2002/2012; pooled sample, logistic regression, +/- represent significance levels of 0.05/0.01/0.001.
3. Results

3a. Attitudes towards women’s employment & family policies

**Summary**

- Negative correlation between child care support and male breadwinner orientation
- Over-time shift towards higher child care coverage in most parts of Europe
- Persistently low child care coverage in Eastern Europe goes vis-a-vis with stagnating orientation towards female employment
3. Results

3b. Attitudes towards women’s employment & family policies

Summary
- Modestly positive correlation between length of leave and male breadwinner orientation
- Low child care coverage often complemented by long leave schemes
- Rather persistent pattern in leave schemes over time
3. Results

3c. Attitudes towards women’s employment & family policies

![Graph showing the relationship between support for male breadwinner roles and female employment rates in 2002 and 2012. The graphs display data for various countries, with a regression line indicating the correlation and an $R^2$ value.]
3. Summary

1. Description of long-term trends:
   - Overall move away from traditional orientations towards female employment, yet male breadwinner orientation not fully replaced by dual earner model, especially in family phase
   - Despite general trend, few signs of overall convergence, stagnation particularly in Eastern Europe

2. Socio-demographic decomposition:
   - Generational change and educational attainment as major drivers of attitudinal change
   - Surprisingly little effect of employment status
   - Small intra-variations in Northern Europe → established attitudinal model

3. Interrelationship with (shifts in) reconciliation policies
   - Considerable relationship of attitudes with level of child-care support
   - Few changes in reconciliation policies accompany weak attitudinal changes in Eastern Europe
Thank you for your attention!

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