Reconciliation Regimes
– Ideas, Interests … –

Gender Arrangements in the Post-Welfare State
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Agenda

1. Introduction

2. Changing / changed meaning of 'reconciliation'

3. 'Employment-friendly' social (and family) policies

4. Patterns of work / family reconciliation policies

Introduction: 1970s to 2000s Re-'framing' of gender equality policies as reconciliation policies

['frame' as a central organising idea, a thought organiser (Ferree et al 2002), quoted by Häusermann/Kübler 2010]

- from (feminist) 'sharing' to EU 'reconciliation' (term first time employed 1990 The Workers Charter, Jacques Delors)
- Gender inequality as problem of reconciliation, insufficient childcare and long leaves from employment
- Weak reference to men …
- Switch to employment-friendly social policies provides opportunities for new, hitherto unknown, *policy coalitions*
- The latter explain why major family policy reform (as move towards reconciliation policies) has been successful some countries, recently

Changing meaning of 'reconciliation'

Stratigaki 2004: *The Cooptation of Gender Concepts in EU Policies: The Case of "Reconciliation of Work and Family"*

→ Recent EU mainstreaming of *gender equality policy* only after major transformation of meaning [1979s – 1990s]

→ Shift from 'an objective with feminist potential ("**sharing** family responsibilities between women and men") to a market-oriented objective ("encouraging **flexible forms** of employment")' ← European Employment Strategy of 1990s

← Cooptation = appropriation and transformation

→ by undermining the original policy goals and by shifting the meanings of original concepts as to fit new goals = 'political and economic priorities in the EU'

Cooptation and transformation … (Stratigaki 2004, pp. 44-50)

1970s: Reconciliation = sharing as
- part of a broad gender equality agenda
- 'equal sharing' to challenge gendered division of labour
- 'equal sharing of family and occupational responsibilities for the improvement of living and working conditions – a precondition for the achievement of equal treatment'

1980s: Smooth switch of objectives, of rank and wording
- Focus: flexible working time for working mothers instead of improvement of living and working conditions for all
- Working time flexibilisation prior to creating social infra-structure
- Targeted provisions (for groups who particularly need infra-structure), targeting specific women (lone mothers)
- 'Combining work and family' instead of 'equal sharing'

Cooptation and transformation … (Stratigaki 2004, pp. 44-50)

1990s: 'upgrading of the employment agenda' (46)
- 1994 White Papers 'Growth, Competitiveness, Employment'; 'European Social Policy' (44-5) →
- 'reconciliation' for the first time explicitly taken up outside of gender equality specific EU documents as part of economic arguments, competitiveness, 'social policy as a productive factor
- 'reconciliation' explicitly linked to promotion of / need for flexible labour
- Shift in emphasis from increasing gender fairness in employment (in 'primary labour market) via anti-discrimination measures to 'helping women to remain in the labour market with flexible jobs' (also in secondary labour market) (45)
- 1992 Childcare Recommendation, 1996 Parental Leave Framework Directive, 2002 Barcelona Childcare targets, EU gender Main-streaming Strategy as elements of the emerging (1998) European Employment Strategy

2000s Five family-related trends in EU (cf Daly 2004)

1. an increased interest of the state in family affairs (e.g. increased interest in men's 'care' contributions and in 'parenting' practices);

2. a move to treat children independently of their families and to grant them individual rights

3. a tendency to treat both parents as workers (= Lewis' 'adult worker model')

4. a move towards a greater welfare mix with regard to forms of income and income mixes as well as care provisions

5. and a move towards gender neutrality for the purposes of social policies – a move also driven by trends 1) and 3): 'bringing fathers in' and treating both parents as workers (= Lewis' 'adult worker model') → 'end to maternalism' (Orloff 2006)
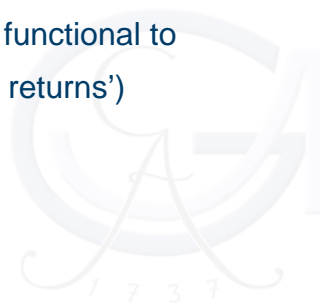

„The explicitly gender-differentiated maternalist logic of politically recognizing, and financially supporting, mothers' caregiving is being displaced by ostensibly gender-neutral notions of re-cognizing and supporting only economically 'active' adults, with support to care taking the form of temporary leaves to workers or public services for the care of their dependents. 'Maternalist' arguments are on the decline among advocates of women's equality, and political claims based on mothering are meeting less popular and elite approval. This is not to say that 'mother-hood' has lost its cultural support and resonances but simply that making claims on the state for resources and recognition on the basis of motherhood, or care, is more difficult and, in some cases, politically impossible". [Orloff 2006, 232]

Overall →

- Move towards **employment-friendly social policies** (including family policy = actual and future employment enhancing policy)

- Trend towards 'defamilialisation' and 'end to maternalism' [yet, varieties!]

- 'Gender equality' measures as far as functional to explicitly economic goals ('increasing returns')

Politically successful gender and family related reforms via

→ **Opportunities for new 'winning coalitions'**

- EU-level: women's groups x DG V

- Member state level: e.g. New Social Democrats x Centre-Liberal x employers associations (BDI in GER), yet, for *employment-oriented* **family policy reform** only

- Preferably short leaves (if at all), expansion of public childcare or childcare subsidies

- Policy output varies, though, depending on political-economical context, see CH or GER versus UK

Family policy models as filters of reform output

	Ideas behind policy	Legitimacy of public intervention in family	a) Financing b) Main provider
F	'Public child', 'enfant de la République', 'working family'	Explicit, (pronatalist), republican, tradition of family wage/subsidies	a) Contribution, taxes b) State (+3); family; market (-2)
DK, SWE	'Public child': child as collective good, risk; dual earning	Implicit, explicit: population+gender policy, social engineering	a) Taxes (fees) b) State, municipality
IT	'Family child', (3+: school child)	Subsidiary, exception: +3, -3 working mother	a) Taxes, fees b) State, grandparent
NL, UK, [CH]	'Private/parents' child', exception: children at risk	Subsidiary, [UK implicit focus on child poverty]	a) Tax credits, fees b) Family, market, employer, state +4
GER	Parental [and public child]	Explicit	a) Taxes, [fees] b) Family+state

Patterns of work / family reconciliation policies

If overall focus on employability and steady employment, then visible member states' efforts to establish and / or expand reconciliation policies, e.g.

- Childcare
- Short, employment-'conditioned' parental leave

- F, GER, NL, UK – varieties of reconciliation policies
- A, CH, GER – varieties of reconciliation policies
- The Nordic Model as ideal / blueprint

The Nordic „egalitarian blueprint" [Mahon 2006: 178]

- Parental leave structured to foster an equal sharing of domestic childcare between mothers and fathers with additional supports for lone parent workers
- Provision of universally accessible, affordable childcare and non-parental care services
- Children's right to 'age-appropriate early childhood education and care' regardless of their parents' employment status
- Care provided by skilled providers who earn 'equitable' wages and enjoy good working conditions and employment prospects
- Provisions made for democratic control, including a strong parental and community voice.

← Swedish Allan Larsson as director-general of GD Employment and Social Affairs 1995-2000

Reconciliation patterns [Mätzke & Ostner 2010]

France
Continuity in policy goals and instruments → mixed policy logic of universalism (écoles maternelles), increased targeting (targeted benefits, also for carers at home), hence mix of familialism and individualisation /freedom of choice (e.g. subsidies for hiring nannies); main actors established 'welfare elites'; driver e.g. unemployment

Germany
2000 on end to maternalism; switch to employment-enhancing family policies; switch to Swedish style parental leave, expansion of [right to] childcare, also for 0-3; activation of welfare dependent lone mothers; *Leitbildpolitik* (dual full-time earning); main drivers new 'winning coalitions', window for older policy ideas (frames), backdrop: skilled labour shortages, low fertility

The Netherlands
Old (liberal) policy ideas in newer instruments: Flexible work (more women than men, 1 ½ earner model), highly individualised cash benefits for childcare and life course transitions; drivers e.g. women's movement in party coalitions

The UK
Market and anti-poverty / 'working poor' logic: subsidies for market based childcare; child-minding benefit (for working poor), flat rate benefits for short parental leave, age 4 statutory school age; greater emphasis on in-work benefits, activation also of lone mothers (children older than 6)

Patterns of … in A, CH, GER

- Variants of federalism [A: weak, GER moderate, CH strong)
- Variants of Esping-Andersen's 'conservative' and familialist welfare state (A strong, explicit familialism, GER new mix, CH liberal-conservative)
- Variants of the 'social insurance state' (A strong, GER dualisation (social insurance x basic safety) CH weak (obligatory private insurances)
- Variants of family policy, varying mixes

[Marten, Neyer & Ostner 2012]

Patterns of … in A, CH, GER [Marten, Neyer & Ostner 2012]

	Austria	**CH**	**GER**
Maternity leave	16 weeks 100% wage replace-ment	14 week 80% wage replace-ment	14 weeks 100% wage replacement
Paternity leave	√	÷	√
Parental leave	1961-1974, 2010 earnings-related max € 2000	÷	2007 earnings-related min 300 – 1500 €, 12-14 months
Parental right to part-time	√	÷	√
Public child-care, pre-school	2010: right of +5 children (part-time)	Expansion of subsidies, tax allowances	Expansion of rights to public full-time childcare 0-6 [2013]

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