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UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

FACULTY OF SOCIAL, HUMAN AND MATHEMATICAL SCIENCES

Social Sciences

The 'Active' Welfare State: Towards a Gender-Friendly Approach

by

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Thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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ABSTRACT

FACULTY OF SOCIAL, HUMAN AND MATHEMATICAL SCIENCES

Sociology and Social Policy

Thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Since the late-1990s, advanced economies have converged on an 'active' social policy agenda aimed at maximising employment. Consequently, women are no longer treated as caregivers. Rather, they are required and assumed to be in employment. Although gender has moved from margins to the mainstream of comparative welfare state research in recent years, the agenda of 'gendering' the analysis of welfare states under activation remains incomplete. This three-paper thesis contributes to completing this agenda. Papers 1 and 2 assess activation strategies towards lone mothers who, as sole breadwinners and caregivers within their households, are a 'litmus test' of gendered social rights. Focusing on the UK, Paper 1 shows that, against the commonplace characterisation of the UK as a pioneer of 'making work pay', changes to the UK's tax-benefit system since 2010 have weakened lone mothers' financial incentives to work beyond a few hours a week. Paper 2 subsequently builds on Paper 1 in dimensional and geographical scope by examining how active labour market and family policies across 22 welfare states help or hinder lone mothers' employment. It shows that cross-national variations in support for maternal activation are not well captured by the commonplace dichotomy within the mainstream literature between a Nordic-style 'train-first' approach to activation and an Anglo-Saxon 'work-first' approach. Paper 3 then extends Papers 1 and 2 in conceptual terms. It argues that analysing women's social risks under activation requires looking not just at active labour market and family policies. Also important are gender boardroom quotas and other regulatory policies that set numerical targets for women in top corporate board and executive positions. This is because a 'critical mass' (23-40 per cent) of women in top management can generate important 'trickle-down' benefits, which can help to alleviate some of the 'new' social risks (e.g. work/care conflicts, in-work poverty) faced by women at the bottom of the labour market under activation.

Table of Contents

ABSTRACT	i
Table of Contents	ii
List of Tables	v
List of Figures	vi
Declaration of Authorship	vii
Acknowledgements	viii
[1] Introduction: Gender and the Analysis of Welfare States	1
1.1.1 Esping-Andersen’s Worlds of Welfare Capitalism	5
1.1.2 Feminist Critiques of Esping-Andersen’s Framework.....	8
1.1.3 Dimensions for ‘Gendering’ Welfare Regime Analysis	10
1.1.4 Breadwinner/Caregiver Models.....	12
1.1.5 The Value of Gender-Sensitive Analyses	15
1.2 The Turn of the 21 st Century: Gender Moves from the Margins to the Mainstream of Comparative Welfare State Analysis.....	15
1.2.1 The ‘New’ Social Risks Literature.....	16
1.2.2 The Social Investment Paradigm.....	18
1.2.3 Gender Equality Leaders and Laggards.....	19
1.2.4 Gender and Welfare State Research: An Unfinished Agenda.....	22
1.3 Contribution of this Thesis	23
1.3.1 Papers 1 and 2: ‘Gendering’ the Analysis of Labour Market ‘Activation’	24
1.3.2 Paper 3: Towards a Broader Conceptualisation of Gendered Disadvantage	33
1.3.3 Implications for Social Policymaking	35
[2] PAPER 1. Diminishing Returns: Lone Parents’ Financial Work Incentives in the UK Under Universal Credit	37
2.1 Introduction.....	38
2.2 Lone Parent Welfare-to-Work Reforms in the UK: Continuity and Change Since 1997	40
2.2.1 New Labour (1997–2010)	40
2.2.2 Conservative–Led Coalition (2010–15).....	42
2.3 Method: Model Family Analysis.....	47
2.4 Results	51

2.5 Concluding Remarks	59
[3] PAPER 2. Beyond the ‘Train-First’/‘Work-First’ Dichotomy of Activation: How Welfare States Help or Hinder Maternal Employment	61
3.1 Introduction: Why We Need a New Typology of Lone Mother Activation.....	62
3.2 Lone Mother Activation: State of the Art.....	65
3.3 Method: Fuzzy-Set Ideal Type Analysis.....	67
3.4 Dimensions of Comparison	70
3.4.1 Opportunities for Training.....	70
3.4.2 Strict Conditionality.....	72
3.4.3 Activating Childcare Policies.....	73
3.5 Results: Lone Mother Activation Regimes	75
3.6 Discussion and Implications for the Activation Literature	79
[4] PAPER 3. Bringing Women on Board: Legislating Gender Balance in Top Jobs to Manage Women’s ‘New’ Social Risks	83
Introduction	84
Considerations of Gender in Comparative Welfare State Research.....	87
What About Gender Inequity in the Very Top Jobs?.....	91
The Limits of Individual-Level Explanations.....	91
Stereotypes and ‘Homosocial Reproduction’	93
‘Social Identity Threat’ and Role Models.....	95
Informal and Opaque Selection Procedures	96
A Case for Affirmative Action.....	97
Why Affirmative Action Policies ‘Count’ for Social Policy Analysis	98
Achieving a ‘Critical Mass’ of Women in Top Management: The Case for Gender Boardroom Quotas	101
The Potential Influence of Institutional and Organisational Contexts.....	105
Concluding Remarks.....	108
[5] Conclusion: Implications for the Welfare State Literature, Future Research and Policy.....	109
5.1 Lone Parents in the UK.....	109
5.2 The Gendered Dimensions of Activation	111
5.3 A Top-Down Strategy for Managing Women’s Social Risks	113
List of References	115
Appendix A. Example Universal Credit Calculation	153

Appendix B. Assumptions Made in the UK Tax-Benefit Simulations	155
Appendix C. Data Sources for the Fuzzy-Set Analysis.....	159
Appendix D. Coding Framework for the ‘Strict Conditionality’ Set in the Fuzzy-Set Analysis.....	161
Appendix E. Coding Framework for the ‘Activating Childcare Policies’ Set in the Fuzzy-Set Analysis.....	164
Appendix F. Results of the Sensitivity Analyses for the Fuzzy-Set Ideal Type Analysis.....	165
Appendix G. Women’s Share of Corporate Board Seats in Non-Quota Countries.....	167

List of Tables

Table 1. Percentage of lone mothers who claim the benefits they are entitled to by benefit type.....	48
Table 2. Membership scores of 22 OECD countries to three fuzzy sets and their classification into seven lone mother activation models.....	76
Table 3. Membership scores of 22 OECD countries to seven lone mother activation models.....	77
Table 4. Example Universal Credit calculation for a lone mother.....	153
Table 5. Details of the assumptions in the Chapter 2 simulations.....	155
Table 6. Sets and indicators for the fuzzy-set ideal type analysis with data sources.....	159
Table 7. Coding framework for the ‘strict conditionality’ set based on a lone mother receiving unemployment benefits.....	161
Table 8. Coding framework for the ‘activating childcare policies’ set.....	164
Table 9. Shifts in fuzzy-set membership by variations on the calibration of indicators....	166
Table 10. Women’s share of board seats of the largest publicly listed companies in European countries with no quota legislation.	167

List of Figures

Figure 1. Participation tax rates for two lone mothers in minimum wage jobs under 2010 and 2015 UK tax-benefit systems.....	52
Figure 2. Participation tax rates for two lone mothers in average wage jobs under 2010 and 2015 UK tax-benefit systems.....	53
Figure 3. Weekly net incomes for two lone mothers in minimum wage jobs under 2010 and 2015 UK tax-benefit systems.....	54
Figure 4. Weekly net incomes for two lone mothers in average wage jobs under 2010 and 2015 UK tax-benefit systems.....	55
Figure 5. Women's share of board seats in large publicly listed companies in business and finance sectors across selected European countries.....	104

Declaration of Authorship

I, Helen Kowalewska, declare that this thesis and the work presented in it are my own and has been generated by me as the result of my own original research.

‘The ‘Active’ Welfare State: Towards a Gender-Friendly Approach’

I confirm that:

1. This work was done wholly or mainly while in candidature for a research degree at this University;
2. Where any part of this thesis has previously been submitted for a degree or any other qualification at this University or any other institution, this has been clearly stated;
3. Where I have consulted the published work of others, this is always clearly attributed;
4. Where I have quoted from the work of others, the source is always given. With the exception of such quotations, this thesis is entirely my own work;
5. I have acknowledged all main sources of help;
6. Where the thesis is based on work done by myself jointly with others, I have made clear exactly what was done by others and what I have contributed myself;
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[1]

Introduction: Gender and the Analysis of Welfare States

Since the closing decades of the 20th century, economic, social and demographic changes have produced new pressures on the welfare states of advanced economies. The erosion of the male breadwinner model, women's increased employment, and the decline of full-time, secure jobs have made providing coverage against the so-called 'new' social risks (e.g. lone parenthood, in-work poverty) associated with post-industrialism more pressing (e.g. Hemerijck, 2002; Jenson, 2004; Taylor-Gooby, 2004b; Bonoli, 2005; Ranci, 2010; Vandebroek et al., 2011; Leoni, 2015). At the same time, governments are facing pressures to maintain spending on the 'old' social risk policies associated with the industrial welfare state. Older cohorts are now entering retirement after having contributed to a generous public pension system throughout their working lives, and with the expectation of a decent state pension. Population ageing and increased longevity are also placing health and social care systems under strain (Pierson, 1994, 2001). Yet, women's increased employment participation has meant that rising demand for child and elder care are outstripping the supply of familial caregivers (Orloff, 2009a). This has produced a 'crisis of care' across advanced economies (e.g. Hochschild, 1995; Daly and Lewis, 2000; Mahon, 2005; Morel, 2007).

Yet, providing coverage against social risks has become more difficult. On the one hand, the very financial basis of the welfare state is being squeezed (Pierson, 1994, 2001). The need to compete globally and attract business to their shores has reduced the tax-raising powers of national governments and their abilities to correct for market-generated inequalities (e.g. Scharpf, 1996; Alesina and Perotti, 1997; Mishra, 1999; Hemerijck, 2013). Falling tax revenues due to a shrinking workforce under population ageing and the displacement of manufacturing by the services sector, where productivity and wage growth are slower and part-time and short-term employment are more

INTRODUCTION

widespread, further underpin this era of ‘permanent austerity’ (Pierson, 1994, 2001; see also Hemerijck, 2013). On the other hand, many of the policies designed to deal with old risks in hard times have the potential to expose particular population groups to social risk (Taylor-Gooby, 2011). For instance, privatisation and the tightening of eligibility conditions in the area of pensions may mean part-time, low-wage, temporary or on-call workers, who potentially do not reach earnings thresholds or earn enough to contribute to a private pension, at risk of poverty in old age (Taylor-Gooby, 2011; Hemerijck, 2017). What is more, both old and new social risks are less predictable under post-industrialism. For example, in the heyday of manufacturing, governments could set aside funds to cover brief spells of unemployment caused by cyclical falls in economic output to cover workers until they found a similar job when demand picked up again. In contrast, unemployment under post-industrialism tends to be structural and longer-term, as continual product, production and market innovations render existing skills obsolete. Consequently, cash transfers alone are no longer a sufficient response to unemployment (Hemerijck, 2017).

In response to these challenges and in line with the agendas of the European Union and other supranational bodies, welfare states across advanced economies have undergone major restructuring. A key aspect of this modernisation is the shift away from an emphasis on so-called ‘passive’ social policies designed to replace the (male) breadwinner’s income during periods of labour market inactivity, and towards ‘active’ social policies aimed at maximising employment rates and continuity (e.g. Esping-Andersen et al., 2001; Eichhorst et al., 2008; Bonoli, 2009a, 2009b; Morel et al., 2012b; Bonoli, 2013; Hemerijck, 2013; Begg et al., 2015).¹ This transformation has had major repercussions for women, who they are no longer excused from employment for the purposes of caregiving, but are instead expected and required to participate in paid work (e.g. Lewis, 2001a; Daly, 2011; Jenson, 2015; Kowalewska, 2017). Such a policy shift is apparent in the international trend towards compulsory work obligations for (mainly female) lone parents (e.g. Haux, 2013; Kowalewska, 2015, 2017) and the spread of care services and other work/family

¹ The welfare state literature often presents active and passive social policies as mutually exclusive; however, most social policies are a complex combination of both active and passive dimensions. For example, while disability and old-age benefits may support individuals who are unlikely to work again, they may also be ‘activating’ for family members who provide care by enabling the recipient to purchase formal care services. Moreover, by enabling ‘unproductive’ workers to exit from the labour market, such income transfers can contribute to greater industrial productivity (see Nolan, 2013).

'reconciliation' policies designed to encourage and enable women's employment (e.g. Lewis, 2001a; Orloff, 2006). The transition away from the male breadwinner family model and towards treating women as 'adult-workers' (Lewis, 2001) reflects arguments by policymakers and analysts regarding the importance of women's employment for securing 'our common future'. Commentators identify women as 'a massive untapped labour reserve' (Esping-Andersen, 2002: p. 94), whose mobilisation can contribute to expanding the welfare state's tax base to help deal with the challenges of population ageing and increased longevity. At the same time, maternal employment provides a means of improving outcomes for children, who are prioritised as the citizen-workers of tomorrow (e.g. Giddens, 1998; Esping-Andersen et al., 2001; Blair, 2002; Esping-Andersen, 2002; OECD, 2007; Esping-Andersen, 2009; OECD, 2011; European Commission, 2016).

The centrality of women's employment and labour market activation for understanding and responding to the current challenges facing advanced economies has underpinned greater attention to gender and women within comparative welfare state research since the late-1990s and 2000s (Orloff, 2009a; Orloff and Palier, 2009). However, the agenda of 'gendering' the analysis of the 'active' welfare state remains incomplete (see also Orloff, 2009a). Accordingly, this three-paper thesis contributes to completing this agenda. It does this by means of a three-paper format, whereby Chapters 2-4 comprise three standalone, but interrelated papers.

Papers 1 and 2 (Chapters 2 and 3) assess activation strategies towards lone mothers who, as sole breadwinners and caregivers within their households, provide a 'litmus test' of gendered social rights (e.g. Hobson, 1990; Skevik, 2005). Focusing on the UK, Paper 1 shows that the introduction of the new Universal Credit, together with benefit cuts and other tax-benefit reforms under the Conservatives since 2010, have weakened lone mothers' financial incentives to work beyond just a few hours per week. This goes against the commonplace characterisation of the UK as taking an 'incentive-reinforcing' approach to labour market activation and as a pioneer of 'making work pay' (e.g. Bonoli, 2012, 2013). Paper 2 then builds on Paper 1 in terms of its dimensional and geographical scope. It does this by examining how active labour market and family policies across 22 welfare states help or hinder lone mothers' employment. The analysis shows that cross-national variations in support for maternal activation are not well captured by the prevailing dichotomy within the mainstream literature between a Nordic-style 'train-first' approach to activation, and an Anglo-Saxon 'work-first' approach. Furthermore, assumptions of a linear, unequivocal move towards an active welfare state are undermined by the 'de-activating' potential of certain

aspects of welfare states for women, in that they promote women's caregiving over their employment.

Paper 3 (Chapter 4) extends Papers 1 and 2 in conceptual terms. I argue that analysing women's social risks under activation requires looking not just at active labour market and family policies. Also important are gender boardroom quotas and other regulatory policies that set numerical targets for women in top corporate board and executive positions. Evidence suggests that a 'critical mass' of women in top management influences firms to implement family-friendly and other workplace-based policies that improve working conditions and pay for *all* women throughout the organisational hierarchy. In this respect, bringing more women into top management is a potentially valuable, but overlooked, top-down strategy for managing some of the social risks faced by women at the bottom of the labour market under activation.

The remainder of this chapter lays the theoretical, conceptual and empirical groundwork for these papers. In the next section, I discuss the various gender-sensitive conceptual frameworks and dimensions developed by feminists in the 1990s for comparing welfare states, which are the backbone for this thesis. I then examine the extent to which mainstream comparative welfare state research has incorporated gender, before outlining existing feminist critiques of considerations of gender within mainstream research. In the final part, I detail how the three papers fit together to contribute to developing a gender-friendly approach to the analysis of welfare states under activation.

1.1 The 1990s: Gender Studies Meet Welfare State Regime Analysis

Since the 1970s, feminist academics have sought to 're-gender' the analysis of social policy (Lister, 2000). In response to the gender-blindness of welfare state scholarship in the 1950s and 1960s (e.g. Titmuss, 1958; Townsend, 1962; Abel-Smith and Townsend, 1965; Marshall, 1965; Titmuss, 1968; Townsend, 1979), early feminist researchers, writing mainly from an Anglo-American perspective, emphasised the oppressive characteristics of the 'family wage' ideal inscribed in the post-war welfare state. This ideal assumed that people were organised into heterosexual, stable families supported by the man's full-time labour market wage, while his wife stayed at home to raise the children and provide all care and other domestic work in the home for no pay. Thus, the (male-dominated) state bureaucracy administered social provision to replace the male breadwinner's wage in periods of sickness, disability, unemployment or old age. Feminists argued that in tying social rights to labour market

participation, the family wage system undervalued the unpaid work carried out by women within the home. This is despite the indispensability of such work to all aspects of human life, including the functioning of the economy through the provision of a fit and healthy workforce. Moreover, the family wage system gave the male breadwinner full control over the allocation of money within the household and, by extension, his dependent wife. Feminists contested that this reduced women to contracting their bodies for financial support from their husbands. Conversely, men, bound by no such constraints because of their access to an independent income through the market, took advantage of a double standard of sexual morality (e.g. Land, 1971; Balbo, 1975; Land, 1976; Wilson, 1977; Land, 1978; McIntosh, 1978; Gordon, 1988; Fraser, 1989).

However, feminists writing from a Nordic/comparative perspective cast doubt on the applicability to other countries of such a general feminist theory of the welfare state based on the repressive Anglo-Saxon experience alone (e.g. Jenson, 1986; Borchorst and Siim, 1987; Hernes, 1987; Siim, 1987). Notably, Hernes (1987) argued that women's improved position in Nordic countries throughout the 1970s and 1980s gave evidence of the welfare state's 'women-friendly' potential, defined as enabling women to make their own choices in life independently of gender. Therefore, to reflect diversity in the impact of the welfare state on women's lives across different countries, feminist scholarship on the welfare state took a comparative turn in the early-1990s (Sainsbury, 1999b). In doing so, most gender scholars took as their starting point Esping-Andersen's (1990) seminal *Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*.

1.1.1 Esping-Andersen's Worlds of Welfare Capitalism

Prior to 1990, most mainstream comparative scholarship had operationalised welfare state effort by how much countries spent on social policies, i.e. the quantity of welfare provision (e.g. Wilensky, 1975; Cameron, 1978; Esping-Andersen and Korpi, 1984). Yet, as Esping-Andersen (1990) argued, not all spending counts equally. For instance, high spending may be disproportionately concentrated on privileged and already wealthy groups, and so fail to address inequalities between the rich and poor. Alternatively, it may be concentrated on low-level, means-tested benefits that create social division by stigmatising the least well-off. Welfare spending may also be temporarily high because of mass unemployment and so the state's failure to intervene in the first place. Hence, Esping-Andersen (1990) argued that to know the quality of a welfare state, we needed to know *who* was entitled to *what* benefits

INTRODUCTION

and services, and how well protected different groups were from various risks to their wellbeing *throughout the life-course*.

Focusing on pensions, sickness and unemployment benefits, and services, Esping-Andersen (1990) compared 18 industrialised countries by degrees of (1) 'decommodification', (2) social stratification and (3) public/private mix. Decommodification, a concept originally created by Polanyi (1944) and later developed by Offe (1972, 1984), captures how well protected citizens are from market failure as a matter of right. The greater the degree of decommodification, the less dependent workers are on the market and employers, and so the more power the working classes have. Social stratification measures the extent to which social provision upholds unequal class relations. Public/private mix refers to the relative roles of the state, market, or family in providing for individuals' welfare (Esping-Andersen, 1990). Nevertheless, by Esping-Andersen's own admission, he paid 'hardly any notice to [the family]' (1999: p. 47, f1).

Countries belonged to one of three welfare state 'regimes' according to the particular combination of each of these three dimensions that they displayed. The 'liberal' regime, to which the United Kingdom and United States come closest, is the least decommodifying of the three welfare state regimes. Reflecting the liberal tenets of individual self-reliance and a market-based economy, it emphasises work over welfare and dictates a residual role for the state to preserve the operation of market forces. Consequently, the main forms of welfare provision are low, means-tested benefits (Esping-Andersen, 1990, 1999). This creates a division between a state-dependent, stigmatised and poor minority, and a working majority able to afford private social insurance plans. As a result, levels of poverty and class inequality are high in these countries (Esping-Andersen, 1990; Goodin et al., 1999; Arts and Gelissen, 2002).

Esping-Andersen's second welfare state regime is the 'corporatist' or 'conservative' regime, to which Austria, France and Germany most closely conformed. Shaped by the twin legacies of the Catholic Church and corporatism, the conservative regime is moderately decommodifying but highly stratifying. On the one hand, the Catholic principle of subsidiarity stipulates that welfare should, first and foremost, be provided by the family through the male breadwinner's wages. On the other hand, the influence of corporatism means that state social provision serves to maintain occupational inequalities by linking welfare contributions and entitlements to earnings (Esping-Andersen, 1990; Arts and Gelissen, 2002). In turn, this regime is characterised by a division between labour market 'insiders', comprising mainly working-age men who occupy a privileged position in

relation to the labour market and welfare state, and labour market 'outsiders', such as the young, the poorly skilled, and women (Esping-Andersen, 1990, 1999; Goodin et al., 1999; Manow and van Kersbergen, 2009).

The final regime identified by Esping-Andersen (1990) is the 'social democratic' regime. Espoused by the Nordic countries, this regime is the most decommodifying and least stratifying of the three types. During the post-war period, the small landholders that comprised the agrarian middle-class, and who typically lacked steady streams of income, formed coalitions with left parties to successfully push for a universalistic, tax-based welfare state. This, of course, benefitted the working classes, too (Manow, 2009; van Kersbergen and Vis, 2014). Thus, rather than wait for the family or market to fail, the social democratic welfare state takes direct responsibility for, and plays an active role in securing, the welfare of *all* citizens. In turn, the social democratic state cultivates high levels of cross-class solidarity (Esping-Andersen, 1990).

Nevertheless, the large tax revenues required to sustain such welfare commitments, together with the socialist aim of full equality, mean that all citizens within the social democratic regime are expected to participate in paid work (Esping-Andersen, 1990). So, while social rights are tied to citizenship, certain benefits are gradated according to employment and earnings (Esping-Andersen, 1990; Goodin et al., 1999). However, in achieving high employment rates, the social democratic welfare regime produces the lowest poverty and inequality levels of the three regimes types (Goodin et al., 1999; Papadopoulos and Tsakloglou, 2002).

Hence, Esping-Andersen's framework categorised countries not simply by the culmination of its social policies. Rather, his regime concept captures the terms and conditions under which individuals can make claims on the state, and how effectively patterns of public provisioning and regulation help to reduce, or instead reinforce, market-generated inequalities in power and resources across classes (Esping-Andersen, 1990; O'Connor et al., 1999). In addition, by focusing on the 'essence' of the main patterns of provisioning and regulation, rather than treating welfare states simple as sums of their social programmes, Esping-Andersen's typology reduced complexity to highlight the most important similarities and differences between welfare state types (Arts and Gelissen, 2002).

1.1.2 Feminist Critiques of Esping-Andersen's Framework

Yet, despite alluding to gender, feminist scholars of the welfare state argued that Esping-Andersen's analysis was based on inherently gender-blind indicators. Mirroring feminist critiques of welfare state scholars some 30 years earlier, they argued that Esping-Andersen's analysis largely ignored women (Lewis, 1997a). The central feminist critique of Esping-Andersen's framework concerned his occlusion of women's unpaid care work. Specifically, while his public/private mix indicator considered how responsibility for family care was distributed between the family, the state and the market, it ignored how such care work was distributed *within* the family (e.g. Lewis, 1992; Orloff, 1993; O'Connor, 1996; Sainsbury, 1999a). Around the world, women continue to spend two to ten times more time on caring for adults and children within the home for no pay compared with men, even when they work just as long as or longer than men (OECD, 2014). The gendered division of family responsibilities is especially acute amongst lower-income households and affects even egalitarian Scandinavian countries, albeit to a lesser extent (e.g. Gershuny and Sullivan, 2003; Neilson and Stanfors, 2014). But even when care work is transferred from the family to the market or state, women still do most of it for little pay (Lewis, 1992; O'Connor, 1996; Sainsbury, 1999a). For instance, in the UK, eight in ten workers in caring and leisure occupations as of 2012 were women. What is more, average pay in these occupations equated to just 74 per cent of average pay for all occupations (Equality and Human Rights Commission, 2013).

Women's unpaid care responsibilities additionally mean that they more likely than men to be working part time or not at all. Resulting low wages and/or inadequate social security coverage can render women who are not in work or working part-time reliant on a male partner for some or all income. This entails various risks to women's welfare not captured by Esping-Andersen's decommodification indicator because of its focus on the extent to which welfare states reduce the reliance of the *full-time wage-earner* on the *market*, rather than the dependence of the *part-time worker/caregiver* on the *family* (e.g. Langan and Ostner, 1991; O'Connor, 1993; Orloff, 1993).

For a start, dependence on a husband or partner renders women vulnerable to the risk of poverty *as individuals*. By treating the family as a 'black box', i.e. considering inputs and outputs but ignoring its internal workings, Esping-Andersen's analysis ignores that income may not be distributed evenly within the household (Saraceno, 1997). Evidence shows that women can face difficulties in accessing household benefits because their weaker labour market attachments are seen as carrying weaker "rights" to shared

household income (see e.g. Bennett, 2013 for a review of UK evidence). So, while unemployment benefits, pensions and other welfare policies designed to replace the male breadwinner's income may push the household above income poverty thresholds, not all members of the household are necessarily protected from poverty. Still, women with adequate access to household income are at risk of being plunged into poverty upon relationship breakdown or the death of a partner (Millar and Glendinning, 1992). For instance, it is well documented that lone parent households - who are overwhelmingly women² - are significantly more likely to be in income poverty than two-parent households across *all* welfare states (Chzhen and Bradshaw, 2012).

Dependence on a male breadwinner can undermine women's body rights, too (e.g. Orloff, 1993; Shaver, 1994). Women with no other way to feed themselves or their children other than through their relationship to a male breadwinner are vulnerable to domestic violence and control by an abusive partner (Orloff, 1993; Fraser, 1994). For instance, although domestic violence against women by men is a problem that cuts across social class, most women who seek refuge in shelters are unemployed, underemployed, or poor (Zad, 2013). Such dependence may also give women little say in their relationships or in decisions that affect their wellbeing for fear of abandonment, including reproductive decisions relating to conception, pregnancy, and childcare (Orloff, 1993; Shaver, 1994). Yet, control over her reproduction supports a woman's abilities to participate in and maintain employment and, by extension, gain financial independence (O'Connor et al., 1999). Therefore, as Millar and Glendinning argue:

'Any valid definition of poverty must focus on the capacity of individual people to support themselves without relying upon others' (1992: p. 9).

Moreover, by focusing on the extent to which welfare states 'free' citizens from market dependency, Esping-Andersen's decommodification index underplays the value of becoming commodified in the first place, especially for women (Orloff, 1993). By providing women with an alternative income source to husbands and partners, paid employment has the potential to strengthen women's bargaining power within relationships and allow them to leave undesirable or dangerous ones (e.g. Hobson, 1990; Orloff, 1993; Hobson, 1994; Ruggles, 1997). Consequently, state provision of childcare services and other policies to

² Across OECD countries, women head 85 per cent of lone parent households on average (OECD, 2017).

INTRODUCTION

help women balance employment and care, but also promote a more equal gender distribution of the care work that remains in the family, are key gendered dimensions of welfare states (Lewis, 1992; O'Connor, 1993; Orloff, 1993). So, by ignoring these aspects of welfare states, Esping-Andersen's framework failed to explain cross-national differences in levels of women's employment (Lewis, 1992).

These shortcomings lead to a final critique of Esping-Andersen's framework concerning his social stratification measure. While this measure considers the state's role in cementing or alleviating *class* inequalities, it overlooks the ways in which state social provision uphold, or potentially help to dismantle, *gender* stratification (e.g. O'Connor, 1993; Bussemaker and van Kersbergen, 1994; Lewis, 1997a). For instance, married women caring for an elderly, sick or disabled person in the UK were disqualified from state benefits for carers until 1986 on the assumption that they would be staying at home anyway (Pascall, 1997). This example illustrates how, in assuming women's unpaid caregiver role and thereby excluding women from the same social rights as men, state social provision can serve to reinforce women's economic dependence on a male breadwinner. Similarly, until 1987, married women in the Netherlands were excluded from unemployment benefits unless they earned more than their husbands (Sainsbury, 1996). Given that women typically earn less than male partners, this stipulation also reinforces women's economic dependence on men.

1.1.3 Dimensions for 'Gendering' Welfare Regime Analysis

The gender-blindness of Esping-Andersen's work led feminists to develop various alternative dimensions and conceptual frameworks for analysing the gendered underpinnings of welfare states. In doing so, feminists took one of two approaches (Sainsbury, 1999b). The first approach involved extending Esping-Andersen's framework by adding in gender-sensitive dimensions. Feminists adhering to this approach argued that supplementing, rather than replacing, Esping-Andersen's framework was important for capturing the gender *and* class effects of state social provision. They argued that this also encouraged mainstream scholars to incorporate gender relations into their own work (O'Connor, 1993; Orloff, 1993).

Furthermore, building gender directly into mainstream welfare state research helped to highlight that gender is not simply 'a women's issue' (p. 502). As O'Connor (1993) argued, welfare states structure, and are structured by, class *and* gender. For instance, feminists have highlighted how women's political mobilisation was as important as cross-

class coalitions between farmers and left parties for shaping the trajectory of the Swedish welfare state. Just as industrialisation had mobilised the male working class to demand improved working conditions as factory employees, the post-war expansion of the Swedish welfare state mobilised women as its main employees and beneficiaries to demand better working conditions and provisions for combining employment and motherhood. In turn, women's mobilisation at the grassroots level paved the way for increased proportions of women in political parties and government, who also successfully pushed for the expansion of family policies and care services (e.g. Hernes, 1987; Lewis, 1992; Siim, 1994; Huber and Stephens, 2000; Pierson, 2000).

To complement Esping-Andersen's decommodification indicator with a gender-sensitive one, Orloff (1993) and O'Connor (1993) proposed that the quality of welfare states should also be measured by the *right to be commodified*. So, while decommodification focuses on insulation from the pressures of the labour market, the right to be commodified concerns insulation from involuntary economic dependence on family members or state agencies through policies that support an individual's participation in employment. Relevant policies for promoting or discouraging women's employment include the availability of care services, length and flexibility of the working day, degree of employment and pay equity, generosity of paid parental leaves, and availability of training and retraining services.

An additional gender-friendly dimension developed by feminists to supplement decommodification was *defamilialisation* (Lister, 1994; Saraceno, 1997). Parallel to the extent of state support for (male) wage-earners to uphold a socially acceptable standard of living independently of their participation in paid employment, defamilialisation captures the degree of welfare state support for (female) unpaid caregivers to uphold a socially acceptable standard of living independently of personal relationships. In other words, defamilialising policies enable women to survive and support their children as single mothers (Orloff, 1993).

Defamilialisation can be achieved in one of two ways. Firstly, in line with the *right to be commodified* dimension, states can reduce the compulsion for women to enter or remain in relationships by supporting their access to paid employment. However, increasing employment opportunities is not itself sufficient for gender equality. Also important are policies that get men to do more childcare and domestic chores, so that women are not limited to part-time or 'flexible' forms of employment that fit around their domestic responsibilities, but tend to be less well-paid, secure or prestigious. Secondly,

states can enable women's financial autonomy by providing social support for full-time stay-at-home caregivers that rewards such care labour on the same basis as benefits to wage-earners (Orloff, 1993; Lister, 1994; Saraceno, 1997). But to ensure that women's unpaid care labour is truly valued, and that the financial independence of caregivers is not simply an unintended policy consequence of, for instance, the linking of benefits with citizenship, Orloff (1993) argues that it is also necessary to increase women's political representation. This is on the assumption that women's political power will enable them to make dominant the understanding that women's services to the state through their care labour entitle women to state social provision.

1.1.4 Breadwinner/Caregiver Models

The second approach to 'gendering' mainstream regime analysis involved developing alternative conceptual frameworks to replace Esping-Andersen's original typology. Feminists embracing this approach argued that to take Esping-Andersen's framework, and simply 'add women and stir', was not enough for gendering the analysis of welfare regimes (Lewis, 1992; Sainsbury, 1994b; Lewis and Ostner, 1995). As Lewis (1992, 1997a) argued, the key relationship undergirding Esping-Andersen's typology was between work and welfare, whereby work is defined as full-time paid employment and welfare as state-provided income for full-time wage-earners. As aforementioned, this relationship does not apply equally to the situation of women because of their unpaid care labour. Therefore, feminists adhering to this second approach to gendering welfare regime analysis argued that the starting point should not be Esping-Andersen's androcentric framework. Instead, it should be the gendered division of labour that prescribes breadwinning for men and caregiving for women (Sainsbury, 1994b).

Accordingly, most gender models of social policy developed in the 1990s compared welfare states by how far they had (not) come from the traditional male breadwinner model that dominated Western welfare states for most of the 20th century. *Strong male breadwinner* states, such as the United Kingdom and Germany up until around the end of the 1980s and beginning of the 1990s, had travelled the smallest distance from this traditional model (Lewis, 1992; Sainsbury, 1994b, 1996). Here, the 'family wage' ideal, which assumed that people were organised into stable families supported by the man's labour market wage, continued to dominate social policymaking. The result was a two-tiered, gendered welfare state (e.g. Gordon, 1990; O'Connor, 1993; Orloff, 1993; Lewis, 1997a). That is, while men qualified for high quality insurance-based benefits as workers,

women were often entitled only as wives or widows to derived benefits that were sometimes less generous than direct benefits. In this respect, the welfare state played an active role in reinforcing women's dependency on men and making it more difficult for them to access the labour market, especially full-time employment. And, even where women could make individual claims to state support, it was either as single mothers to low-level and sometimes punitive social assistance, or as part-time workers to less generous and more restrictive benefits than for full-time workers (e.g. Sainsbury, 1994a; Orloff, 1996; Lewis, 1997a; Daly, 2000).

Conversely, Nordic countries, especially Sweden, had moved furthest from male breadwinning ideals and so were variously categorised as adhering to a *weak male breadwinner* or *individual* logic (Lewis, 1992; Sainsbury, 1994b, 1996). In Sweden, the family wage ideal had begun to erode in the 1930s and 1940s, as the entry of influential women into the political elite and national interest in increasing women's labour power and fertility brought women's employment and work/care policies onto the political agenda. Provision was initially limited to supporting women's employment only until they had their first child, after which they were encouraged to withdraw their labour (Lewis, 1992). However, as more women entered the workforce and political arena in the 1970s, they successfully pushed for universal and generous paid parental leaves and public provision of care services to support the employment of *all* women, including mothers with small children (Hernes, 1987; Lewis, 1992). Separate taxation for each partner in a couple household, in the context of a more progressive tax system that takes less from lower earners, gave further incentives for Swedish women to enter employment (Lewis, 1992).

Nevertheless, as highlighted by Lewis (1992), while women in Sweden have been expected to change their employment behaviour, there have not been the same expectations on men to change their domestic behaviour. Consequently, although Sweden achieves high female labour force participation rates, women are still far more likely to make use of family-friendly policies and workplace practices and, in turn, work part-time and in sectors and occupations that fit around their caregiving, especially the public sector. So, while the public sector offers women relatively good working conditions, and a progressive taxation system and compressed wage structure produce small gender income gaps by comparative studies (e.g. Korpi, 2000; Shalev, 2008; Evertsson et al., 2009), the Swedish labour market nevertheless remains gender-segregated, even with some desegregation in recent years (Bettio and Verashchagina, 2009; Ellingsæter, 2013; Grönlund and Magnusson, 2016). For instance, 43 per cent work of working women in

INTRODUCTION

Sweden are in health and social work or education compared with an EU average of 30 per cent (European Commission, 2013).

A third breadwinner model identified by Lewis (1992) was the *moderate male breadwinner model*. According to Lewis, this model offered women greater choice between unpaid care and paid employment than other models. It was exemplified by France where, unlike most other Continental states, support for women's employment was high during the 19th and 20th centuries. Intense state-church disputes led the state to incorporate all forms of education, including preschool, into the national education system as a means of curtailing the church's power. This in turn enabled women's employment (Morgan, 2002). Pronatalist concerns and the predominance of family-run businesses in France, which depended on women's labour power, gave further impetus for the expansion of work/care policies in the early 20th century (Lewis, 1992; Pedersen, 1993). Care services were extended again in the 1970s following feminist and labour market demands (Morel, 2007).

Yet, as Morel (2007) points out, under high unemployment, falling fertility rates and constrained budgets underpinned a shift away from public provision of childcare and back towards support for private and familial provision in the 1980s and 1990s. This was under a rhetoric of giving women a 'choice' between staying at home and working. On the one hand, to reduce demands on public services, provide a cheaper source of childcare, and create additional jobs, the 1980s saw the creation of a special benefit for middle and high earning working women to hire a private nanny to provide care in the home. On the other hand, to free up jobs, a parental leave benefit was made available for families with two or more children if one parent stopped working or switched to part-time hours for three years. Because the benefit is flat rate rather than earnings-related, it is generally more attractive to women, especially those in low-paying jobs (Klammer and Letablier, 2007; Morel 2007).

Consequently, while France is a 'middle achiever' (p. 158) in terms of women's employment, this masks sharp class divisions. That is, poorer and less well-educated mothers are more likely to withdraw from the labour market for lengthy periods to provide care. Conversely, wealthier women with a higher education, who are able to afford a private nanny, are more likely to remain in full-time employment (Klammer and Letablier, 2007; Morgan, 2012). Indeed, in 2014, under half of low-educated mothers were in employment compared with 86 per cent of highly-educated mothers (OECD, 2017a). Hence, despite the rhetoric, the moderate male breadwinner model gives more advantaged women greater 'choice' over earning and caregiving than women with lower earnings potential (Morel, 2007).

1.1.5 The Value of Gender-Sensitive Analyses

Through incorporating gender into the analysis of welfare state regimes, this body of feminist scholarship has revealed important features and differences between welfare states that were obscured by Esping-Andersen's framework (Pierson, 2000). For instance, focusing on the extent to which social policies reflected a male breadwinner ideology highlighted the similarities between the UK and the Continental countries of Germany. In addition, incorporating family policies into the state-market nexus drew attention to the exceptionalism of France compared with other Continental states. Indeed, on measures of family policy, France arguably sits closer to the Nordic countries (e.g. Morgan, 2012).

These gender-sensitive dimensions and frameworks also illuminated potential trade-offs between competing forms of equality (Pierson, 2000). So, while state social provision in France has helped to reduce gender stratification by enhancing women's incomes through caregiver benefits and employment supports, it has correspondingly exacerbated class differences between different groups of women. Similarly, while the Swedish welfare state achieves high female employment rates, it also intensifies gender labour market segregation (Pierson, 2000).

What is more, bringing gender into the picture challenges traditional accounts of how contemporary systems of social provision were constructed. Mainstream research had tended to discount the contributions of women as political actors, or gender and family issues (Pierson, 2000). Yet, in France, for instance, the common acceptance that state intervention in fertility was in the national interest in the 1930s made sure companies were behind and helped to fund the expansion of family policies (e.g. Pederson 1993). Meanwhile, in Sweden, women's mobilisation both as recipients of state social provision and active participants in its creation has been crucial for shaping the terrain of the welfare state today (e.g. Hernes, 1987).

1.2 The Turn of the 21st Century: Gender Moves from the Margins to the Mainstream of Comparative Welfare State Analysis

By the turn of the 21st century, however, explicit state support for the male breadwinner family model was eroding everywhere (Lewis, 2001a). In response to the various demographic, economic and social pressures mentioned at the outset of this chapter, even strong breadwinner states were transforming their social policies to better support and

actively encourage women's employment (Lewis, 1997b, 2001a; Orloff, 2006). Reflecting this, gender and women began moving from the margins to the mainstream of comparative welfare state analysis (Orloff, 2009a; Orloff and Palier, 2009). Two main streams of welfare state research have taken up the issue of gender: the new social risks literature; and the social investment literature.

1.2.1 The 'New' Social Risks Literature

The new social risks literature highlights how various post-industrial developments have created a set of so-called 'new' social risks (e.g. Hemerijck, 2002; Taylor-Gooby, 2004b; Bonoli, 2005; Vandebroek et al., 2011). These new risks include conflicts between earning and caregiving, having an elderly or frail relative in need of care, and becoming a lone parent (mother). These situations are labelled 'risks' in that they make it difficult for families, but especially women given the gendered division of family responsibilities, to participate in employment and secure an adequate income. A related new social risk is inadequate social security coverage due to following an 'atypical' employment path (Bonoli, 2005). For instance, part-time work and career interruptions often result in reduced pension entitlements in old-age (Bonoli, 2003b). Again, women are disproportionately exposed to this risk since they are more likely to take career breaks or reduce their hours for childbearing and caregiving (Bonoli, 2005). Hence, in considering gender, the new social risks literature focuses primarily on women's greater vulnerability to poverty because of the potentially deleterious effects of their caregiving responsibilities on their labour market ties.

Despite their name, new social risks are not entirely new. Such events as difficulties in reconciling employment and childcare, family separation, or job loss as a result of technological advancement have always existed (Harsløf and Ulmestig, 2013). These risks were, however, rare, and affected a much smaller proportion of the population under industrialism compared with today (Bonoli, 2005, 2006). For instance, even in Sweden, only around one-third of women with small children in the late-1960s were in paid employment compared with 76 per cent by 2000 (Korpi and Stern, 2006). So, it is not the risks themselves that are new. Rather, new social risks can be considered new insofar as they are newly recognised as pressing social needs requiring public provision, as post-industrial changes have meant they now arise more frequently and affect more people than before (e.g. Cousins, 2005; Huber and Stephens, 2006; Eugster, 2010; Harsløf and Ulmestig, 2013).

The 'new' social risks associated with post-industrialism are distinguishable from the 'old' risks associated with industrialism in at least three ways. First, whereas the industrial welfare state prioritised the reduction of poverty and redistribution of income through cash transfers during periods of labour market inactivity, the post-industrial welfare state is more focused on *preventing* poverty from occurring in the first place. It does this mainly through providing services that prepare and encourage individuals to support themselves through paid employment. This is evidenced by the expansion of human capital development policies (e.g. early education and care and labour market training initiatives) and such work/family measures as parental leaves to enable (female) employment (Taylor-Gooby, 2004b; Leoni, 2015).

Second, old risks primarily affected the lower-skilled male blue-collar worker, but rarely arose because of full male employment and strong economic growth under industrialism. Conversely, new risks affect a larger proportion of the population and greater diversity of individuals (e.g. women, the low-skilled, and youth), and typically arise more frequently (Armingeon and Bonoli, 2006). For instance, the higher prevalence of single parent families due to changing norms and greater support for individuals to leave undesirable or dangerous relationships has increased the proportion of families at risk of poverty because of the increasing necessity of dual earnership for achieving a decent household income (Huber and Stephens, 2006). Similarly, the displacement of unskilled but steady manufacturing jobs by precarious low-wage service jobs has increased the frequency and duration of unemployment spells experienced by lower-skilled workers.

Third, the consequences of new social risks tend to be more severe. For instance, while low-skilled workers have always been at risk of unemployment, unemployment rarely exceeded 1-3 per cent under industrialism (Huber and Stephens, 2006); yet, the decline of unskilled manufacturing jobs has intensified the likelihood and duration of unemployment for low-skilled workers. What is more, new social risks can accumulate. For example, single parenthood may force a parent out of the labour market because of employment/family conflicts, triggering the risk of poverty in the short-term. In the long-term, such periods of unemployment can lead to the depreciation of human capital, making it harder to re-integrate into the labour market at the same skill and pay level, and so producing lower lifetime earnings. In turn, a disrupted career pattern can lead to insufficient pension coverage in old age due to lower lifetime social security contributions (Eppel and Leoni, 2011).

1.2.2 The Social Investment Paradigm

A related framing within mainstream comparative welfare state research which emerged as a way of addressing new social risks, and which also attends to gender, is that of social investment. While the term 'social investment state' was originally coined by Giddens (1998), social investment has always been a cornerstone of social policy (Nolan, 2013; Smyth and Deeming, 2016). In the 1930s, Swedish Social Democrats, Alva and Gunnar Myrdal, drew on social democratic influences dating back to the late-19th century to propose the idea of 'productive' social policy in response to falling fertility and sluggish economic growth. By protecting individuals and families against future risks, investing in education and training and encouraging childbearing, the Myrdals justified such policies as housing and cash transfers and services to support working parents as 'productive', in that they supported a healthy and educated workforce to reproduce itself over time (Morel et al., 2015; Smyth and Deeming, 2016). In the UK, social investment was promoted by Tawney (1952), who argued that social policy was not merely a 'cost', but a necessary investment, too, for achieving social and economic goals. Similarly, O'Connor (1973) identified a social investment function of welfare states aimed at enhancing labour productivity, and distinct from a 'social consumption' function that was focused on enabling the reproduction of labour, or a 'social expenses' function that served to maintain social harmony (see also Gough, 1975).

The productive or social investment dimensions of social policy were subsequently 'rediscovered' following the decline of Keynesianism in the 1970s and casting aside of neoliberalism in the 1990s (Morel et al., 2012a; Smyth and Deeming, 2016). Since then, the social investment state has become a dominant concept in the welfare state literature and has been hugely influential on the policy discourses and trajectories of national governments and such supranational bodies as the European Union and OECD. The social investment state prioritises state investments to maximise employment rates and develop human capital, such as early childhood education and labour market training opportunities. While important for reducing new social risks in the present, these interventions are justified primarily by their future pay-offs (Jenson and Saint-Martin, 2006; Jenson, 2006). Proponents of social investment argue that increasing employment is critical firstly for expanding the tax-base to afford welfare programmes in the future, and secondly for raising household incomes to give children the best start in becoming productive citizen-workers of the future (Jenson, 2001; Lister, 2003; Jenson and Saint-Martin, 2006; Jenson, 2006). At the same time, training measures which enhance the skills of the workforce today

are justified by delivering stronger economic growth in the future (e.g. Hemerijck, 2002; Lundvall and Lorenz, 2012). Hence, the social investment perspective is more than simply an account of how welfare states are adapting to post-industrial changes; it is also a *paradigm*, in that it represents a desired end-point or blueprint to which welfare states should aspire (Nolan, 2013).

As in the new social risks discourse, addressing the apparent trade-off between motherhood and employment is the central aspect of gender addressed by the social investment framework. On the one hand, stimulating women's fertility is important for preventing the 'demographic crisis' sparked by population ageing and increased longevity. On the other hand, increasing women's employment rates is critical for expanding the tax-base (e.g. Esping-Andersen, 2002, 2009; Bonoli and Natali, 2012; Morel et al., 2012b; Hemerijck, 2013). Through helping to reduce child poverty, increasing maternal employment is also part of the social investment's future-oriented and child-centred vision (Jenson and Saint-Martin, 2006; Jenson, 2006). According to advocates of social investment, then, the key task for the post-industrial welfare state is to 'defamilialise' care, i.e. reduce the family's care burden through state and/or market services, and support women as working mothers through work/family reconciliation policies, such as maternity leave (Esping-Andersen, 2009).

1.2.3 Gender Equality Leaders and Laggards

The overriding focus on policies to support working motherhood as *the* key indicators of gendered social rights has led comparative welfare state literature to name the Nordics as the most 'women-friendly' (e.g. Esping-Andersen, 2009; Nelson and Stephens, 2009; Bonoli, 2013; Esping-Andersen, 2015; Hemerijck et al., 2016). Scholars highlight how these countries' universal, high quality childcare services, 'activating' parental leaves with incentives for fathers to take leave, and generous family allowances enable women to reconcile earning and childbearing. In turn, highly-educated women who want to have children are not forced to sacrifice their careers. What is more, the affordable public childcare and secure and flexible jobs created by a large public sector increase employment rates among low- and medium-skilled mothers, who might otherwise be unable to participate in employment (e.g. Esping-Andersen, 2009; van Kersbergen and Hemerijck, 2012; see also e.g. Korpi et al., 2013). Indeed, demographic studies find that the Nordics have been most successful in reversing declining fertility rates *and* securing higher female employment rates countries because of extensive policies for reducing work-care conflicts

INTRODUCTION

and encouraging fathers' domestic roles (e.g. de Laat and Sevilla-Sanz, 2006; Thévenon and Gauthier, 2011; Goldscheider et al., 2015). Accordingly, Esping-Andersen (2016) claims that Scandinavian countries have entered the final stage of the 'gender revolution' of gender-egalitarianism within the household and at the level of the welfare state (2016: pp. 38-9).

Part of the reason why Nordic countries have adapted so well to new social risks is because the industrial social democratic state was amenable to post-industrial risks. The linking of social rights with citizenship, rather than previous employment, helped to prevent the risk of inadequate social security coverage for those (women) following atypical and unpredictable career profiles (Esping-Andersen, 1999; Bonoli, 2007). Furthermore, a compressed wage structure, which produced narrow wage gaps across different industries, alongside labour market training initiatives introduced in earlier decades to address skills shortages, provided protection against the risks of in-work poverty and long-term unemployment associated with having low or obsolete skills (Bonoli, 2007, 2012).

Yet, as Bonoli (2007) argues, time is also an important variable for explaining Nordic countries' status as the social investment vanguards. Here, new social risks emerged in the 1970s, at a time when competing demands for increased social spending on 'old' risks due to population ageing and increased longevity had not fully emerged. As a result, there were sufficient state resources to provide coverage against old and new risks. This is important because old risk groups typically hold greater sway over welfare policy decision-making due to their greater representation in government and trade unions, and among voters (Bonoli, 2005, 2007; see also Tepe and Vanhuysse, 2010).

That being said, another important factor underpinning Nordic countries' adaption to new social risks is the smaller power imbalance between new and old social risk groups compared with other welfare state regimes. In the Nordic regime, new social risk groups, especially women and younger workers, tend to be better-represented among key democratic institutions (Bonoli, 2005, 2007). For instance, women comprise 46 per cent of members of parliament in Sweden compared with an EU average of 29 per cent (European Institute for Gender Equality, 2017). Indeed, women's political mobilisation is a key explanatory factor for the development of childcare policies and services to address new social risks (Daguerre, 2006; Huber and Stephens, 2006; Bonoli, 2007).

Post-industrial risks emerged early in the UK and US, too. However, a more residual post-war welfare state and the weaker political power of new social risk groups meant that the early emergence of new social risks in English-speaking countries did not translate into as comprehensive policies for women as in Scandinavia (Bonoli, 2005, 2007).

So, while defamilialisation has occurred in these countries, it has been achieved mainly through market rather than state provision of care services (Esping-Andersen, 1999, 2009; Bonoli, 2013). Childcare is largely treated as a matter of private 'choice' (Orloff, 2009a). Consequently, the main forms of state support for women's employment are tax deductions and credits, and some state subsidies to allow for the purchasing of childcare services through the market (e.g. Gornick and Meyers, 2004; Orloff, 2009a; Craig and Mullan, 2011). At the same time, care leave policies, such as maternity and parental leave, remain underdeveloped (e.g. Bonoli, 2013). Hence, as the social investment literature notes, female employment rates in English-speaking countries are moderately high; however, the high costs and under-provision of full-time market-based childcare services have underpinned high levels of part-time maternal employment in these countries (with the notable exception of the United States) (e.g. Esping-Andersen, 2002, 2005, 2009; Hemerijck, 2013; Esping-Andersen, 2015).

Yet, it is Continental and Mediterranean welfare states that recent comparative welfare state scholarship considers as gender equality 'laggards' (e.g. Bonoli, 2006: p. 16; Esping-Andersen, 2009: p. 23). Here, post-industrial developments occurred much later in the late-1980s and early-1990s, when pressures on old social risk policies were ripe. As a result, the demands of politically powerful old risk groups for the preservation of generous pensions have depleted resources for addressing new risks (Bonoli, 2007). In Continental states, this power imbalance is exacerbated by the strength of trade union and employer organisations, who are able to block reforms designed to help labour market 'outsiders', such as working mothers and lone parents (Hemerijck et al., 2016). In Mediterranean countries, the lack of a family policy tradition further inhibits the development of policies to provide coverage against 'new' family-related and gendered social risks (Bonoli, 2006). So, despite some family policy modernisation in recent years, provision of child care services and other work/family policies remains inadequate, especially in Southern Europe (e.g. Palier, 2010; Hemerijck et al., 2016). As Esping-Andersen (2009) argues, this effectively forces a trade-off between motherhood and careers. While lower-educated women opt for the former, highly-educated women opt for the latter. It is for this reason that Esping-Andersen (2009, 2016) claims that the gender revolution remains incomplete in Continental and especially Mediterranean states, since change has been limited to the well-educated, middle classes.

1.2.4 Gender and Welfare State Research: An Unfinished Agenda

In considering gender, then, mainstream welfare state research has focused mainly on women's lower employment rates and the employment-enabling dimensions of family policy which help to bring more women into the workforce. However, as Orloff (2009a) argues, the agenda of 'gendering' the mainstream literature remains unfinished.

For a start, in focusing so strongly on 'defamilialising' or shifting care *from* the family, and thereby treating family policies as instruments for realising labour market goals, mainstream scholars underplay the implications of such policies for the gendered division of care *within* the family (e.g. Stratigaki, 2004; Lewis, 2006; Orloff and Palier, 2009; Saraceno, 2015). As discussed, the original feminist intent behind the concept of defamilialisation was to support women's economic independence from men through policies that enabled their employment and/or rewarded their care labour (Lister, 1994; Saraceno, 1997). Yet, mainstream analysis defines it narrowly as the availability of care work outside of the home, so that women can participate in employment in line with labour market objectives (Esping-Andersen, 1999). This shifts the goalposts from supporting women's financial and other kinds of autonomy, to enabling women's participation in (any) employment (Jenson, 2015). It also underplays the right to provide care and be cared for, as well as the value of such familial care. Instead, women's care work is recast as an obstacle to be overcome so they can be 'more productive' wage-labourers (Saraceno, 2015).

The overriding emphasis of mainstream social policy analysis on maximising women's labour supply also fails to problematise the *kinds* of jobs that women are getting (e.g. Lewis and Giullari, 2005; Razavi, 2014). While market and/or state services can substitute for some care within the family, care relations are complex. They involve personal and emotional dimensions, whereby the identity of the care provider and continuity of relationship between the provider and receiver of care matter for the quality of care. Therefore, care cannot, and arguably should not, be fully transferred outside of the family (Folbre and Nelson, 2000; Lewis and Giullari, 2005). So, even with comprehensive supports for working mothers, women's care work still means that they are overrepresented in 'flexible' forms of employment that are often part-time, short-term and poorly paid (e.g. Lewis, 2001a; Razavi, 2014; Saraceno, 2015). For instance, the average female part-time rate across EU countries is 32 per cent compared to 9 per cent for men (Eurostat, 2017b). And, despite some acknowledgement by proponents of social investment of gender disparities in paid work, getting more women into (any) employment to secure

the financial sustainability of the welfare state is considered more 'salient' and 'of utmost priority' (Hemerijck et al., 2016: p. 22) Thus, as Jenson (2015) argues, the focus on maximising women's employment, regardless of the equity and adequacy of hours and wages, overlooks and even risks confirming existing gender inequalities.

Given that care cannot be fully transferred from the family, there is a need to concomitantly promote a more equal sharing of care work within the family so that women can engage with employment on the same terms as men (Lewis and Giullari, 2005). Mainstream social policy analysis does acknowledge the gendered division of family responsibilities; for instance, Esping-Andersen recognises the 'centrality of men's behaviour' for enabling women to combine employment and care (2009: p. 19). But, he also suggests that the gendered division of family responsibilities is fundamentally immovable and neglects to consider what might be done to change it (Lewis, 2010; Saraceno, 2015). What is more, discussions of getting men to do more care work in mainstream analyses tend to be grounded in demographic and economic goals of increasing fertility and employment, and not the aim of supporting greater gender equality in the home or the workplace (Jenson, 2008, 2015).

1.3 Contribution of this Thesis

The preceding review of the literature has highlighted increasing attention within mainstream welfare state research to family policies and the ways in which such policies condition women's access to employment. These themes reflect broader concerns with 'new' social risks as well as the re-emergence of a social investment paradigm. Yet, as a growing feminist critique highlights, such considerations of gender undervalue unpaid care work, overlook the limits to 'defamilialisation', and fail to problematise women's concentration in part-time and 'flexible' employment.

To this feminist critique, I add two additional dimensions. First, I critique the overriding focus on the 'active' or employment-enabling dimensions of family policies for failing to integrate the family or gendered dimensions of labour market 'activation' policies, which are equally important for enabling women's employment. Second, I critique the narrowing of the female-friendly dimensions of welfare states to family policies for occluding gender boardroom quotas and other regulatory policies that set numerical targets for women in top corporate board and executive positions. These policies are not ordinarily included in welfare state research, which is concerned primarily with social risk policies. But I argue that they should be. This is because mandating women's inclusion in top

management positions can generate ‘trickle-down’ benefits for women at the bottom of the labour market, which can help to alleviate some of the new social risks faced by many low- and middle-skilled women under activation.

1.3.1 Papers 1 and 2: ‘Gendering’ the Analysis of Labour Market ‘Activation’

As the foregoing review of the literature has shown, employment-oriented family policy designed to facilitate maternal employment has become a key dimension of analysis within mainstream comparative welfare state research since the end of the 1990s (see also e.g. Seeleib-Kaiser and Toivonen, 2011). Yet, this paints an incomplete picture of the extent to, and ways in which, welfare states seek to ‘activate’ women. Also important are the family elements of active labour market policies – that is, how, or indeed if, (women’s) care responsibilities are accommodated by labour market policies designed to move the unemployed back into work.

This point can be illustrated by means of an example. Suppose that two countries provide limited coverage of out-of-school care services. Accordingly, both countries might be labelled as unsupportive of maternal employment. However, looking at the conditions attached to unemployment benefits for (mostly female) jobseekers with young children could reveal important cross-national differences in the gendered logics underpinning them. For instance, whereas one country may permit jobseekers with young children to limit their employment availability to school hours only, the other country might expect all job-seekers to take on full-time employment, irrespective of their care responsibilities. This would suggest that the former country recognises care, but provides limited out-of-school care services because of an underlying preference for maternal care while children are young. In contrast, the latter country neglects and fails to value unpaid care work altogether. By extension, it may produce higher poverty rates among women, especially single mothers, as jobseekers who cannot afford private sources of childcare or rely on family and friends to provide care outside of school hours may lose their benefits for failing to meet strict employment requirements. Alternatively, strict benefit conditions may force women into taking the first available job, no matter how poorly paid. Therefore, a more holistic analysis of how family policies condition women’s relationship to the labour market, *in interaction with* active labour market policies, can highlight important nuances between welfare states that are otherwise obscured by focusing on family policies only.

There is already a sizeable branch of comparative welfare state analysis that charts cross-national differences in active labour market policies. This body of research

typically distinguishes a continuum of approaches to activation, with a 'train-first', 'human capital development', 'offensive', 'enabling' or 'universalist' approach at one end, and a 'work-first', 'defensive', 'demanding' or 'liberal' approach at the other end (e.g. Torfing, 1999b; Lødemel and Trickey, 2000; Barbier, 2001; Peck and Theodore, 2001; Dingledey, 2007; Eichhorst et al., 2008). The train-first approach aims to support sustainable transitions back into jobs at a range of skill levels by offering high quality education, training and work experience programmes designed to improve long-term employability. In contrast, the work-first approach seeks to pressurise and coerce the unemployed into (any) jobs quickly through cost-efficient, short-term and work-focused interventions (Torfing, 1999b; Bruttel and Sol, 2006; Lindsay et al., 2007). These differences are underpinned by different understandings of the causes of unemployment, why it is a problem, who is responsible for managing this risk, and what the best solution is. Specifically, the train-first approach sees a lack of the right qualifications as the leading cause of unemployment. According to this approach, the state has a duty to meet people's need to work, and so shares responsibility with the individual for managing his/her unemployment (Dean, 2010). Conversely, the work-first approach explains unemployment primarily in terms of a poor work ethic among the inactive, exacerbated by 'overgenerous' benefits. It therefore blames the unemployed for their situation and relies on low-level out-of-work support, in-work benefits intended to 'make work pay', and stringent welfare conditionality designed to steer the behaviour of the unemployed (Daguerre, 2007).

More recently, Bonoli (2010, 2012, 2013) has extended the train-first/work-first typology by identifying two additional approaches to activation. The first is 'employment assistance', which focuses on removing potential obstacles to employment, such as a lack of work experience. Anglo-Saxon, Continental and Nordic countries all display this approach to an extent. The second is 'occupation', which relies on job creation and other schemes to keep the unemployed 'busy'. This approach used to be common across Continental states in the 1980s and 1990s, but now plays a more significant role in Sweden's activation approach.

These various typologies of labour market activation are valuable for understanding the variety of policy approaches that can be encompassed under the label of 'activation', as well as the different logics underpinning them. Yet, this literature gives an incomplete account of how welfare states activate women specifically. This is because such literature draws on implicitly masculinist analytic frames. That is, it focuses, as if by default, on active labour market policies for the 'average' unemployed worker who is

INTRODUCTION

unencumbered by family care responsibilities. As a result, the family dimensions of active labour market policies are neglected (Kowalewska, 2017).³

To illustrate: the activation literature typically characterises Anglo-Saxon countries as work-first, i.e. focused on pushing the unemployed into jobs quickly through a combination of benefit conditions and financial incentives. This is evidenced by low unemployment benefit replacement rates, the widespread availability of in-work tax credits, and the enforcement of benefit sanctions in cases of noncompliance with welfare-to-work conditions (e.g. Torfing, 1999a; Lødemel and Trickey, 2000; Barbier, 2001; Peck and Theodore, 2001; Dingledey, 2007; Eichhorst et al., 2008; Bonoli, 2013). However, when we examine the employment-related conditions attached to unemployment benefits for job-seekers with caregiving responsibilities - i.e. the family or care dimensions of active labour market policies - not all Anglo-Saxon countries can necessarily be described as work-first (Kowalewska, 2017). In the UK, for instance, lone parents and nominated 'lead carers' within two-parent households can limit their job availability to school hours when their youngest child is in primary education (Department for Work and Pensions, 2017). Hence, the conditions attached to unemployment benefits are less demanding or focused on securing quick re-entry into employment as for the 'average' job-seeker.

The nuances in activation policies for job-seekers with caregiving responsibilities suggest that bridging the 'gap' between the study of employment-oriented family policy on the one hand, and 'active' labour market policies on the other hand, could enrich the comparative analysis of welfare states. As aforementioned, bridging this gap could illuminate important differences between countries. But it may also highlight contradictions in the treatment of women across these different policy areas. For instance, widespread high-quality and affordable childcare services may enable and encourage women's employment; but if individuals in receipt of unemployment or social assistance benefits are exempt from job-search requirements while children are small, this may dampen the 'activating' effects of childcare provision.

Accordingly, Papers 1 and 2 (Chapters 2 and 3) contribute to incorporating gender into the analysis of activation policies. In doing so, I follow previous feminist research (e.g. Orloff, 1993; Hobson, 1994; Skevik, 2005) and use the situation of lone parents as a 'litmus test' for all mothers. Lone parents tend to be lone mothers, who are, by

³ While other scholars have, like Bonoli, also developed multidimensional typologies of activation (e.g. Dean, 2006, 2007; Serrano Pascual, 2007; Heidenreich and Aurich, 2014), they share his focus on the unencumbered (male) worker.

definition, women maintaining households with children independently of men (Skevik, 2005). Thus, I use the terms 'lone parent' and 'lone mother' interchangeably, and assume that if policies are good enough that single mothers can reconcile the demands of employment and childcare, then they should be good enough for all mothers, irrespective of any partners' role in caregiving.

It can be argued that the treatment by welfare states of lone mothers is not necessarily the most effective indicator of gendered social rights given the different situations of partnered and single mothers. For a start, mothers in couple households tend to have more and younger children than their single counterparts (Chzhen and Bradshaw, 2012). Furthermore, welfare states often treat mothers differently according to their partnership status, such as by offering specific benefit arrangements for lone parents or additional parental leaves (see e.g. OECD, 2011). Nevertheless, I argue that policies for single mothers are still relevant for their mothers living in couple households for two reasons. Firstly, as argued by Hobson (1990, 1994), they give an indication of mothers' 'exit' options from relationships. That is, the better the situation for single mothers, the more empowered partnered mothers will be to exercise 'voice' within relationships and 'exit' from undesirable ones (Hobson, 1990; Orloff, 2009a). Secondly, transformations in family structures and behaviour over the last four decades have made single parenthood a life course stage for increasing numbers of women (Bonoli, 2005). For instance, across the 17 Western states included in Andersson and Philipov's (2002) study, one-quarter of all women on average will spend at least some time as a single parent by age 40. So, while lone parenthood is often transient due to new partnerships and children eventually growing up, it is still a social risk to which a considerable proportion of women are now exposed.

Paper 1⁴

In 'gendering' the analysis of activation policies, Paper 1 (Chapter 2) examines lone parents' financial employment incentives under 'make work pay' policies in the United Kingdom. 'Make work pay' policies encompass policies designed to make it more financially attractive for individuals to work at all or longer. The theory is that creating stronger economic incentives to enter even low-wage employment will increase the supply of labour. At the

⁴ This paper was completed in April 2015 and published in *Social Policy and Society* (Kowalewska, 2015).

INTRODUCTION

same time, by acting as low-wage subsidies, benefit ‘top-ups’ for low-earners can reduce wage costs for employers, thereby creating more low-wage jobs into which the unemployed can move. In turn, higher employment rates can generate efficiency savings by creating a larger tax-base and reducing expenditures on costly out-of-work benefits (e.g. Pearson and Scarpetta, 2000; OECD, 2003b, 2005).

While making work pay is not a new policy objective, many of the instruments deployed to achieve it are. As Morel et al. (2012a) highlight, between the mid-1970s and early-1990s, making work pay was synonymous with restricting the rewards attached to not working through, for example, keeping levels of unemployment benefits and social assistance low and placing time limits on the receipt of such benefits. This reflected the dominance of neoliberalism, whereby social spending was a ‘burden’. Under the social investment paradigm, however, make work pay measures are cast in a more positive light. Specifically, while making work pay still involves reductions in ‘passive’ social provision - including in egalitarian Scandinavia⁵ - making work pay is more about raising the incomes of low-earners (Morel et al., 2012a). This has become a particularly pressing issue under post-industrialism given sharp increases in income inequality among working-age households, which is mainly the result of growing labour market wage disparities (Immervoll and Richardson, 2011). In this respect, then, make work pay measures are a vital dimension of ‘redistributive recalibration’ (p. 171) under social investment. That is, ‘recommodification’, i.e. bringing more people (back) into the labour force, has displaced ‘decommodification’ as the key mechanism by which welfare states manage social risks, as governments have modified their benefits systems to redistribute income through in-work benefits targeted at the working poor (Hemerijck, 2013; see also Palier, 2013). Accordingly, make work pay policies are important new social risk policies (Marx, 2006).

The perceived benefits of make work pay policies in terms of promoting equity by raising the incomes of the most vulnerable, and delivering efficiency savings via higher employment rates, have made them a focus of supranational bodies (e.g. OECD, 2000, 2003b; European Commission, 2004). They have also become a vital element of the activation discourses and policy approaches of an increasing number of countries (e.g. Fagan and Hebson, 2006). For instance, more than half of OECD countries have introduced in-work financial support since the 1990s, whether in the form of tax or social insurance reductions (e.g. Finland, Germany, Portugal) or cash top-ups for low-earners through

⁵ See e.g. Kvist (2003), who charts incremental cuts in unemployment insurance replacement levels and duration across Scandinavian countries throughout the 1990s.

benefits and/or tax refunds (e.g. Austria, France, the UK) (Immervoll and Pearson, 2009; OECD, 2016b).

The rise of make work pay policies up the social policy agenda points to the need to explore whether such policies have the potential to deliver on the promise of 'making work pay' in practice, especially for lone mothers. This is because although lone parents' employment rates have increased from an OECD average of around two-thirds in the mid-1980s to three-quarters as of the late-2000s (OECD, 2011), lone parents are overrepresented among the working poor. For instance, across EU countries, around half of lone mothers working part-time and one-third working full-time are in elementary occupations or service or sales jobs (Ruggeri and Bird, 2014). So, while poverty risks for working lone mothers are lower than for their jobless counterparts (OECD, 2011), lone mothers are nevertheless disproportionately exposed to the new social risk of in-work poverty (e.g. Bonoli, 2005).

Yet, ensuring that work pays for lone parents is not just about increasing their labour supply or raising their incomes. It is also about securing the abilities of women more generally to form and maintain households as single parents, i.e. independently of men (Orloff, 1993). If lone parents can sustain a decent family income through employment, then women in relationships may be empowered to exercise their 'voice' and 'exit' from abusive, controlling or undesirable relationships. Hence, in ensuring work pays for lone parent households, welfare states can grant women greater autonomy over their lives and bodies (e.g. Hobson, 1990; Orloff, 1993; Hobson, 1994; Ruggles, 1997; Schoen et al., 2002).

Against this background, Paper 1 focuses on lone parents' financial work incentives under make work pay policies in the UK. I focus on the UK for two main reasons. First, the institutional context of English-speaking countries suggests that lone parents might be more responsive to the perceived financial employment benefits and penalties created by the tax-benefit system than their counterparts in other countries. This is not just because tax-benefit incentives are the main tools of activation in English-speaking countries (e.g. Bonoli, 2013). It is also because the UK's large low-wage sector means that without adequate income supports, lone parents are potentially priced out of the labour market. As of 2014, 21 per cent of full-time workers in the UK were earning less than two-thirds of median gross hourly earnings. This compares to 9 per cent in Nordic countries and 15 per cent in most Continental and Mediterranean states (Eurostat, 2017a). The problem is exacerbated by the high costs of predominantly market-based childcare services. For instance, average childcare fees for two pre-school aged children to attend accredited early

INTRODUCTION

education and care services equate to 53 per cent of the average wage in the UK; this compares to an OECD average of 28 per cent (OECD, 2017a). So, while women's financial autonomy would ideally be achieved via their access to *better* jobs, rather than tax-benefit measures that simply supplement poor wages, in-work benefits nevertheless have a potentially important role to play in reducing poverty among the lowest earners. This is especially relevant in the UK context.

Of course, factors besides financial considerations shape lone parents' employment behaviour, too. Particularly important are culturally and socially situated ideas about 'good' mothering (e.g. Duncan and Edwards, 1999) and 'good enough' care for their children (e.g. Williams, 2004). Nevertheless, research shows that the perceived financial benefits and penalties of employment which are created by the tax-benefit system can influence lone parents' employment decisions, and are of overriding concern to many (e.g. Lister, 1999; Bell et al., 2005; Wiggan, 2005). Indeed, cross-national evidence suggests that the labour supply of lone parents is among the most responsive of all population groups to the financial employment (dis)incentives embedded in tax-benefit systems (e.g. Immervoll et al., 2005; Evers et al., 2008; Figari, 2015).

The second main reason for focusing on the UK is that its tax-benefit system has undergone, and is undergoing, major change, with potentially important ramifications for lone parents. Notably, whereas the New Labour government (1997-2010) sought to make work pay mainly by increasing in-work benefits, the Conservatives, both in Coalition with the Liberal Democrats (2010-15) and as a majority government (2015-), have focused on cutting out-of-work support. This reflects a shift in welfare-to-work policy discourse under the Conservatives further towards one that blames state provision for creating an 'underclass' of welfare claimants, who allegedly lack the proper work ethic of mainstream society (Murray, 1990). For instance, the Conservative Minister for Employment in 2012, Mark Hoban, reflected the Conservative (mis-)conception that not working is a 'choice' by claiming that, under the government's changes, 'choosing a life on benefits when you're able to work is not an option' (Department for Work and Pensions and Hoban, 2012).

At the same time, the Conservatives began rolling out their flagship Universal Credit in 2013, which they promised will make work pay by simplifying the benefits system (e.g. Department for Work and Pensions, 2010b; Conservative Party, 2017). Universal Credit does this by merging several existing out-of-work and in-work benefits into one. This includes tax credits, which are claimed by an estimated 95-100 per cent of lone parents (Department for Work and Pensions, 2012; HMRC, 2013). As such, the introduction of

Universal Credit will have important ramifications for lone parents' incomes and financial employment incentives.

To this end, Paper 1/Chapter 2 assesses the potential impact of recent changes to make work pay measures in the UK on lone parents' incomes and employment incentives. It does this by comparing changes in lone parents' incomes and incentives under two scenarios. The first scenario encompasses Universal Credit, benefit freezes, and all tax-benefit changes in place under the Conservative-led Coalition government as of 2015. The second scenario encompasses taxes and benefits under the previous New Labour government, adjusted according to relevant convention or statute to bring them in line with 2015 prices. The analysis reveals that while Universal Credit has the potential to substantially improve lone mothers' incentives to work in 'mini-jobs' of fewer than 16 hours, their incentives to work longer are still weak, if not weaker than under the previous system. Moreover, the financial returns to progressing in work begin to diminish once hours exceed just six at average wage and nine at minimum wage, and virtually disappear when working hours fall outside of the school day. Hence, focusing on the specific situation of lone mothers suggests that the UK does not offer as strong financial work incentives as is typically assumed in comparative welfare state analysis (e.g. Bonoli, 2012, 2013).

Paper 2⁶

Paper 2 (Chapter 3) extends Paper 1 in terms of its geographical and dimensional scope. In terms of the former, it examines how the UK and 21 other OECD countries representing a range of welfare state regimes seek to 'activate' mothers. In terms of the latter, Paper 2 assesses how 'activating' policies besides make work pay initiatives are for lone parents. Specifically, I develop a typology of lone parent activation based on the welfare-to-work conditions attached to benefits, opportunities for training, parental leave provisions, childcare services and the scheduling of primary education.

Paper 2 contributes to 'gendering' the comparative analysis of labour market activation policies in two main ways. First, by examining if, and to what extent, the labour market policies of various advanced countries support lone mothers to reconcile employment and care, Paper 2 incorporates the care-sensitive dimensions of labour market policies into the analysis of activation. It does this by, on the one hand, examining the job

⁶This paper was completed in 2016 and published the following year in the *Journal of European Social Policy* following the award of the 2016 Doctoral Researcher Prize (Kowalewska, 2017).

INTRODUCTION

availability and search conditions imposed on lone mothers. This is important because certain countries impose different availability and search requirements on lone parents to account for their caregiving responsibilities, such as shorter expected commute times to prospective employment than for other jobseekers. On the other hand, I consider the likelihood that lone mothers will be able to access any available training given their care responsibilities. Even if a country is considered as 'train-first', in that it offers ample labour market training opportunities, women may not have equal access to such opportunities if, for instance, care services to enable their participation in training are lacking.

The second way in which Paper 2 contributes to gendering the comparative analysis of labour market activation is by treating family policies as an integrated component of the active welfare state. In other words, I compare the ways in which a country's labour market policies, *in interaction with its family policies*, enable or undermine lone mothers' participation in employment. As aforementioned, this can expose the different gendered policy logics undergirding contemporary welfare states. For example, weak benefit conditionality coupled with inadequate provision of care services might suggest a preference for maternal care and so the resilience of male breadwinning/female caregiving norms.

Accordingly, I follow feminists such as Lewis (1992, 1997a) by developing a new gender-sensitive typology of welfare states that does not simply 'add' women into existing activation typologies. As aforementioned, existing typologies of activation are built on the relationship between work and welfare, whereby work is defined as full-time employment and welfare as labour market policies that encourage, enable or equip the unencumbered worker's re-entry into work. In turn, this construct misses the importance of any unpaid care responsibilities in conditioning (female) individuals' labour market ties and access to active labour market policies. To overcome the androcentricism of existing frameworks, my analysis takes as its starting point the relationship between paid work, welfare *and unpaid care work*.

In doing so, the analysis reveals that, despite the greater attention to gender and new social risks within comparative social policy research, the branch of this literature focused on labour market activation remains gender-blind. This is because my findings suggest that cross-national variations in support for maternal activation are not well captured by the prevailing Anglo-Saxon 'work-first'/Nordic-style 'train-first' dichotomy within comparative welfare state research. On the one hand, policies towards lone mothers in Australia and the UK are not always conducive to rapid job (re-)entry. This goes against

the characterisation of these states as work-first. On the other hand, mothers in Nordic countries appear to face greater difficulties than other jobseekers in accessing training opportunities because of their caregiving. Furthermore, certain policies in some welfare states are potentially 'de-activating' for mothers, in that they promote prolonged withdrawal from employment and/or part-time employment for caregiving purposes. This finding suggests that the assumption underpinning mainstream comparative welfare state analysis of a linear, unequivocal move towards active social policy does not hold when it comes to individuals with caregiving responsibilities, i.e. women. In addition, my findings indicate that the mainstream activation literature has underestimated the extent to which certain Mediterranean and post-Soviet states are activating for mothers, as family policies in both Slovenia and Portugal are supportive of maternal employment.

1.3.2 Paper 3: Towards a Broader Conceptualisation of Gendered Disadvantage

Paper 3 (Chapter 4) extends Papers 1 and 2 in conceptual terms. It does this by arguing that any gendered analysis of welfare states under activation needs to look beyond active labour market and family policies designed to bring primarily low- and medium-skilled women into paid work. Also important are gender boardroom quotas and other regulatory policies that help highly-skilled women progress to top corporate board and executive positions by setting numerical targets for their representation in such jobs. Evidence suggests that mandating a 'critical mass' of women in top management of 23-40 per cent (e.g. Kanter, 1977; Torchia et al., 2011) enables women in these positions to successfully push for, and influence the adoption of, female-friendly workplace-based policies that benefit women at lower levels of the organisation. Gender-balanced top management teams are also associated with reduced gender segregation and pay gaps at the bottom of organisations (Hultin and Szulkin, 2003; e.g. Joshi et al., 2006; Hirsch, 2013), and improved promotion and job retention rates among female subordinates (e.g. McGinn and Milkman, 2012). Accordingly, I argue that quotas and other policies that mandate a critical mass of women in top management should be incorporated into gendered analyses of welfare states, as their 'trickle-down' benefits can contribute to alleviating some of the 'new' social risks (e.g. work/care conflicts) that bear disproportionately on low-skilled women under activation.

Unlike Papers 1 and 2, then, Paper 3 is a 'think-piece' rather than an empirical analysis. As such, its central aim is to expand considerations of which policies should 'count' in the analysis of the gendered character of welfare states. By highlighting the trickle-down benefits of gender diversity in top management for managing women's social risks, Paper 3

INTRODUCTION

aims to stimulate future empirical research which includes such affirmative action policies as gender boardroom quotas as key dimensions of variation between states.

An existing body of literature has already critiqued welfare state analysis for overlooking the ways in which welfare policies condition women's disadvantaged access to management positions. Mandel and Semyonov (2006) identify a Nordic gender equality 'paradox', whereby although generous Nordic-style employment/family reconciliation policies enable low- and moderately-skilled women's employment, they also make it harder for highly-skilled women to progress to managerial positions. While work/family policies are often couched in gender-neutral language, the gendered division of care work means that it is overwhelmingly women who make use of them (Westlund, 2007). Therefore, by increasing the statistical probability that women will take leave or reduce their hours for caregiving, generous work/family policies, in addition to strong employment protections that enable employees to take leave, potentially motivate employers to discriminate against women when hiring for managerial positions. The problem is particularly acute when it comes to management positions given that employers often make costly investments in developing managers' firm-specific knowledge. Accordingly, employers in Nordic and family-friendly welfare states may be more reticent to hire a woman than a man in anticipating that the woman is more likely to have a disrupted career or switch to part-time hours. Furthermore, by providing female-typed occupations, family-friendly working conditions, and job security, the large Scandinavian public sector makes it less likely that highly-skilled women will compete with men for jobs in the private sector that typically offer better pay and progression (Estévez-Abe, 2005; Mandel and Semyonov, 2005; see also Estévez-Abe, 2006; Shalev, 2008).

Paper 3 makes a unique contribution to this literature in two ways. Firstly, whereas the paradox literature does not differentiate between levels of management, I zoom in on women's underrepresentation in the very top management positions. This is important because it is when women's share of board and executive positions increases, and not just women's share of management overall, that the trickle-down benefits for less advantaged women appear. Evidence suggests that women at lower levels of management typically do not have sufficient power to effect organisational change. In contrast, when women comprise a critical mass of top management, they do (e.g. Cohen and Huffman, 2007). The specialised skills, knowledge and experience required for board and executive positions make women in such positions harder to replace and sought after by competing

businesses. Consequently, they are more likely to have bargaining power to push for organisational change compared with their subordinates.

Secondly, while paradox theory posits that women's underrepresentation in elite labour market positions is a function of their caregiving and an inevitability of generous work/family policies, my paper highlights other gender-based barriers to reaching the very top management positions. True, women's underrepresentation in top management is linked to the caregiver role that they occupy or are assumed by employers to occupy. But women are also held back from reaching male-dominated and desirable labour market positions *simply because they are a woman*. And while antidiscrimination legislation prohibits firms from not hiring a woman for a board or executive position based on her sex, evidence shows that the persistence of more subtle gender-based barriers mean that a woman is often not considered for such positions in the first place. For instance, recruitment to executive and board positions typically occurs through informal networks; yet, women generally find it harder to break into such networks, since these networks almost always contain solely men and centre on masculine activities (e.g. Oakley, 2000; Sealy et al., 2009; Stead and Elliot, 2009; Dhir, 2015).

Yet, Paper 3 argue that gender boardroom quotas, which mandate the deliberate inclusion of women in top management, have been successful in overcoming some of these gender-based barriers, including in countries with highly-developed public family provisions. Therefore, as Korpi et al. (2009, 2013) argue, women's disadvantages in accessing more desirable jobs need not forever be blocked by generous family policies. Rather, their effects can be countered through regulatory policies that set numerical targets for women's representation in top management. In turn, gender boardroom quotas can contribute to enhancing the female-friendliness of the workplace.

1.3.3 Implications for Social Policymaking

Beyond the academic contribution, the thesis has implications for social policymaking, too. Paper 1/Chapter 2 suggests that the rate by which the Conservative's flagship Universal Credit is withdrawn as earnings rise is set too high. The financial incentives for lone parents to take on additional hours of employment beyond just a few per week are poor, especially when they have to pay for childcare. Meanwhile, the findings of Paper 2/Chapter 3 are indicative of a conflict between policy frameworks that potentially 'de-activate' women, and the policy rhetoric of an 'adult-worker' model which expects and assumes both men and women are independent wage-earners (e.g. Lewis, 2001a, 2002; Pascall and Lewis, 2004;

INTRODUCTION

Annesley, 2007). Unless policymakers resolve this apparent conflict, women will continue to be at a disadvantage in terms of poverty rates, financial independence and access to social protection. Furthermore, by presenting a social risk rationale for bringing more women into top corporate jobs, Paper 3/Chapter 4 strengthens the case for greater government intervention in this area through such measures as gender boardroom quotas. Chapter 5 concludes the thesis by discussing these policy implications, alongside the implications of the three papers for the gender and welfare state literature, in depth.

Diminishing Returns: Lone Parents' Financial Work Incentives in the UK Under Universal Credit

Lone parents in the UK have long been a key target group of tax-benefit policies designed to 'make work pay'. 2010-15 witnessed a major shake-up of such policies, as the Conservative-led Coalition government cut out-of-work benefits and began rolling out the Conservative's flagship Universal Credit. This paper examines some of the implications of such changes for single mothers' incomes and financial employment incentives. While most previous studies have used microsimulation models based on representative samples of actual lone mothers, I use hypothetical lone mothers. This is to illustrate how a lone mother's income and employment incentives vary according to changes in one characteristic at a time (e.g. number of children, wage rate), while holding all other characteristics constant. The analysis reveals that Universal Credit and other tax-benefit changes introduced since 2010 have substantially improved lone mothers' incentives to work in 'mini-jobs' of fewer than 16 hours. However, lone mothers' incentives to work longer remain weak, while their take-home incomes when in 16-hour plus jobs are lower than under the old system. Specifically, the financial returns to progressing in employment start to diminish once hours exceed just six at average wage and nine at minimum wage, and virtually disappear when working hours start to reach full-time and fall outside of the school day. So, while tougher conditionality may push lone parents to work longer, diminishing financial returns to taking on additional hours, in the wider context of reduced employment supports and weak labour demand, risk undermining lone parents' abilities to meet increased work expectations.

2.1 Introduction

Many reforms to the UK's tax-benefit system announced by the Conservative-Liberal Democrat Coalition from 2010 were underpinned by the aim of 'making work pay'. A key target group of these reforms were lone mothers, who currently head 23 per cent of all UK families with dependent children (ONS, 2015). This is partly because 41 per cent of lone mothers are not in paid employment compared to 33 per cent of lone fathers (Office for National Statistics, 2011) and 28 per cent of mothers living with a partner (ONS, 2013). Furthermore, of those lone mothers who do work, 58 per cent are in low-paying sectors and 57 per cent work fewer than 30 hours a week (Harkness and Skipp, 2013). Lone parents also face some of the weakest incentives of all family types to start and progress in work. This is not only because they tend to have low earnings potential, but they are also more likely than individuals in one- and two-earner couples and single people without children to receive generous out-of-work support and face the overlapping withdrawal of multiple means-tested benefits as earnings rise (Adam and Browne, 2010).

Lone mothers' employment behaviour is of course shaped by a range of factors, from culturally and socially situated ideas about 'good' mothering (Duncan and Edwards, 1999) and 'good enough' care for their children (Williams, 2004), to the availability of local jobs, childcare and transport (Rafferty and Wiggan, 2011). Nevertheless, research shows that the perceived financial benefits and penalties of working created by the tax-benefit system can influence lone parents' employment decisions, and are of overriding concern to many lone parents (Lister, 1999; Bell et al., 2005; Wiggan, 2005).

Against this background, this paper illustrates the financial work incentives and incomes for two hypothetical lone mothers under the Coalition government's reforms to direct taxes and cash benefits. It therefore builds on recent studies which use microsimulation models based on representative samples of actual lone parents to measure the likely impacts of reforms on work incentives and incomes (e.g. Browne, 2012; Adam and Browne, 2013; Adam and Phillips, 2013; De Agostini and Brewer, 2013; Reed et al., 2013; Brewer and De Agostini, 2015). In microsimulation based studies, the impacts of the Coalition's reforms are shown to the extent that they affect the lone parents contained in the relevant dataset. In contrast, hypothetical lone mothers can be assigned any set of characteristics; and, by varying one characteristic at a time while holding all others constant, we are able to test whether the Coalition's reforms have the potential to deliver on its promise to make work pay for lone mothers under a range of different circumstances which are relevant to different groups of lone parents (Immervoll et al., 2004). Notably, the

analysis illustrates how the hypothetical lone mothers' tax burdens and benefit entitlements vary with small increments in their labour supply. This can expose if there are certain 'thresholds', in terms of working hours and/or earnings, from which the financial returns to increasing labour supply start to diminish as a result of the design of the Coalition's tax-benefit system (Berger et al., 2001).

While Brewer et al. (2012a, 2012b), Hirsch (2012), Pareliussen (2013) and Ghelani and Stidle (2014) have also examined the impacts of the Coalition's flagship make work pay reform, Universal Credit, on one or more hypothetical lone mother(s), this paper extends such work in three main ways. First, it includes all changes to in-work taxes and cash benefits announced by the Coalition in addition to Universal Credit. This includes important changes to support for Council Tax and income tax. Second, the analysis compares the hypothetical lone mothers' incentives under the Coalition's reform package with the incentives that they could have expected if the previous Labour government's tax-benefit system had instead continued, with amounts adjusted for inflation. Third, the paper situates the findings within their broader context. Specifically, it describes the policy context by comparing welfare-to-work reforms and the discourses behind them under Labour and the Coalition, and concludes by discussing what the findings might mean in practice for lone mothers given broader economic and policy changes.

The paper shows that while the Coalition's make work pay agenda substantially improves the constructed lone mothers' financial incentives to work in mini-jobs of fewer than 16 hours a week, their incentives to work longer are weak and, in some cases, weaker than under Labour. What is more, total net incomes when working in jobs of 16 hours or longer are, for the most part, lower than under Labour. The financial returns to progressing in work begin to diminish once hours exceed just six at average wage and nine at minimum wage, and virtually disappear for the lone mother with childcare costs when working hours reach full-time and start to fall outside of the school day.

The next section charts the development of lone parent welfare-to-work measures since 1997. The methods are reported in section three, followed by the results in section four. The paper concludes by discussing the potential implications of the results for lone mothers given the broader institutional and economic context in the UK.

2.2 Lone Parent Welfare-to-Work Reforms in the UK: Continuity and Change Since 1997

Whereas the previous Conservative government had been ambivalent towards lone mothers' participation in paid work (Lewis, 1998; Lister, 2002), governments since 1997 have made lone mothers a key target group of welfare-to-work reforms. This partly reflects an international trend towards activation policies designed to equip, encourage and compel lone mothers to enter and progress in paid employment (Morel et al., 2012). It also reflects the influence of neo-liberal ideology and American-style workfarism (Slater, 2012), a consensus that 'work is good for you' (e.g. Department for Work and Pensions, 2007b: p. 23; Freud, 2011), and a shared commitment to ending child poverty. Despite these continuities, there have been important shifts in the discourses and emphases of lone mother welfare-to-work policies from the New Labour government to the Conservative-led Coalition.

2.2.1 New Labour (1997–2010)

New Labour's welfare-to-work discourse suggested that irresponsible attitudes and behaviours, exacerbated by dependency on state benefits, were partly to blame for worklessness (Driver and Martell, 1999; Deacon, 2003). This argument formed part of an agenda to modernise the Labour party by distancing it from the 'tax-and redistribute' image of 'old' Labour governments. It also responded to conservative claims that state benefits had created a 'moral underclass', whose beliefs and norms underpinned a 'culture' of welfare dependency (Murray, 1990).

Yet, without abandoning social democratic principles altogether, New Labour's discourse also emphasised that worklessness was a problem of inequality. Specifically, it argued that poor attitudes and behaviours among the workless were simply mechanisms for coping with the structural barriers that they faced in accessing the same employment and education opportunities as other groups in society (Deacon, 2003). According to New Labour, then, state provision of employment supports was necessary for redressing social exclusion and inequality of opportunity; however, unemployment could only be tackled if claimants were willing to change their behaviour and take full advantage of improved supports in return (Deacon, 2003):

'When skills needs are identified we will expect people to undertake the training necessary to meet them and

when job opportunities are available we will expect people to take them' (Department for Work and Pensions, 2007a: p. 6).

In line with this discourse, New Labour sought, on the one hand, to increase employment supports in order to address some of the structural barriers that lone mothers faced in accessing employment opportunities. Notably, Labour introduced the New Deal for Lone mothers (subsumed into the Flexible New Deal in 2009), which offered personalised guidance and practical support in finding and sustaining employment. It also implemented various measures to help lone mothers balance employment and their caring responsibilities and improve the affordability and availability of childcare.

On the other hand, New Labour's understanding of worklessness as partly rooted in behavioural factors underpinned benefit reforms designed to influence and regulate lone mothers' behaviour in favour of starting and progressing in employment. Thus, New Labour sought to encourage lone mothers' employment participation by 'making work pay' through a National Minimum Wage and lower in-work taxes for low and average earners. However, its flagship make work pay reform was Working Families Tax Credit (replaced by the Working Tax Credit in 2003). This was available to lone mothers working 16 hours or more a week, with a bonus at 30 hours. In contrast to the previous Conservative government's Family Credit, it was more generous, was withdrawn more slowly over a higher earnings threshold, and included a subsidy worth up to 80 per cent of childcare costs by the time Labour left office.

At the same time, Labour saw a progressive strengthening of the employment-related conditions attached to lone mothers' benefit receipt as increasingly necessary and justified for regulating their employment behaviour. This culminated with the introduction of Lone Parent Obligations in 2008. For the first time, lone mothers were required to move off of Income Support and on to Jobseeker's Allowance and be available for employment once their youngest child reached a certain age, which Labour intended to gradually reduce from 12 to seven years. There were, however, certain 'flexibilities' for lone mothers (Haux, 2012; Whitworth and Griggs, 2013). For instance, subject to a minimum availability requirement of 16 hours, lone mothers with a child under 13 could restrict their work availability to normal school hours, while those with older children could restrict theirs to fit around their caring responsibilities. These flexibilities applied irrespective of the actual

availability of local jobs at the required hours (see Kennedy, 2010 for an overview of all flexibilities).

Despite missed targets, Labour oversaw a rise in lone mother employment from 45 to 57 per cent (Haux, 2011; Waldfogel, 2011). While much of this was down to a strong economy and changes in the characteristics of both lone mothers and the labour market (Gregg et al., 2006; Millar, 2010), evidence shows that the first wave of reforms (1998–2003) alone led to an increase in lone mother employment of 4-5 percentage points, with Working Families Tax Credit serving as the main driver behind this gain. The reforms achieved this increase mainly by improving job retention rates during the initial transition from a two-parent household to a one-parent household (Gregg et al., 2009). Nevertheless, Brewer et al. (2006) find that Working Families Tax Credit would have increased lone mother employment by an additional 2 percentage points had it not been for simultaneous increases in cash benefits for families with children, irrespective of employment status. As part of its child poverty reduction strategy, Labour introduced a generous Child Tax Credit and substantial increases in Child Benefit and allowances for children within Council Tax Benefit and Housing Benefit. Furthermore, while the availability of Working Families Tax Credit at 16 hours increased the proportion of lone mothers in jobs of 16 hours or longer, it also led to a reduction in average hours among full-timers (Gregg et al., 2009). Still, evidence suggests that, overall, Labour’s reforms raised working lone mothers’ incomes by 4-11 per cent on average, and non-working lone mothers’ incomes by 6-18 per cent on average (Adam and Browne, 2010).⁷

2.2.2 Conservative–Led Coalition (2010–15)

In contrast to Labour, the Coalition’s welfare-to-work discourse largely downplayed broader economic and social structural explanations for worklessness. Under the influence of Conservative ideology and the Centre for Social Justice, the Coalition’s rhetoric closely followed the moral underclass discourse of conservative thinkers during the 1980s (Daguerre and Etherington, 2014). According to this discourse, while worklessness is rooted in behavioural factors, state benefits and the dependency that they foster are ultimately to blame. The claim is that by allowing and promoting benefit dependency instead of participation in paid work, overgenerous and lenient benefits have created an

⁷ Estimates of income gains from Labour’s reforms vary depending on the assumptions underpinning the ‘no reform’ or counterfactual scenario.

'underclass' of welfare claimants who lack the proper work ethic of mainstream society (Murray, 1990). A prominent example of this discourse can be found in Iain Duncan Smith's speech to the 2011 Conservative party conference when he was Work and Pensions Secretary:

'To each person it [Labour's tax-benefit system] said: 'you're financially better off out of work, better off playing the system'. They knew too many British people were on benefits living unproductive lives ... A growing underclass was establishing itself, shut away, dysfunctional and too often violent' (Duncan Smith, 2011).

A conception of 'fairness' further underpinned the Conservative critique of welfare dependency. On the one hand, the Coalition argued that reducing welfare dependency was about delivering 'fairness' to claimants. This argument is based on a portrayal of welfare claimants as 'victims' of the benefits system. Thus, the Conservatives claimed that by failing to make work pay, a wasteful and complex benefits system under Labour, comprising different out-of-work and in-work benefits with varying withdrawal rates, had served to 'trap' many claimants in inactivity and poverty (Hayton and McEnhill, 2014). On the other hand, reducing welfare dependency was also about 'fairness' for taxpayers. The argument put forward by the Coalition, which has continued under the Conservative government, was that Labour afforded non-working individuals several 'advantages' over working individuals. It portrayed the benefits system as lax and as failing to adequately mirror 'life in the real world' (Daguerre and Etherington, 2014: p. 50). It also criticised supposedly excessive increases in out-of-work benefits, in spite of slow wage growth following the 2008 global financial crisis (Osborne, 2012). The Coalition labelled these alleged advantages as 'unfair' by portraying non-working individuals as less morally upright than 'hardworking taxpayers' who are 'doing the right thing' by working and paying into the system (Daguerre and Etherington, 2014; Hayton and McEnhill, 2014).

To this, the Coalition and subsequent Conservative government added that reducing welfare dependency was also about 'fairness' for future generations. It is argued that cutting the welfare bill to tackle the public sector deficit, which stood at £155 billion in 2010 (Hansard, 2010), is not only economically prudent for securing future growth, but

DIMINISHING RETURNS

morally right for preventing the transmission of this debt to subsequent generations (Hayton and McEnhill, 2014).

In line with this discourse, the Conservative-led Coalition began implementing several benefit reforms designed to influence claimants' behaviour by encouraging employment while making it more difficult to remain inactive. Most notably, the benefits attached to worklessness have been, and continue to be, drastically cut on the assumption that lower out-of-work benefits will steer claimants into employment. Year-on-year, Child Benefit and levels of out-of-work support for Council Tax and housing costs have been frozen or increased either in line with a lower measure of inflation than under Labour, or by 1 per cent only. In addition, funding for Council Tax support has been cut by 10 per cent. Indeed, tax-benefit spending was projected to be £16.7 billion lower in 2015–16 than it would have otherwise been (Hood and Phillips, 2015). This is despite falling tax revenues following substantial increases in the point at which income tax becomes payable, as was originally pledged in the run-up to the 2010 election by the junior partners in the Coalition, the Liberal Democrats.

Yet the centrepiece of the Coalition's make work pay agenda has been the Conservative's flagship Universal Credit, which was first proposed by the Centre for Social Justice, a think-tank co-founded by Iain Duncan Smith. This new benefit integrates several out-of-work and in-work benefits, namely Child Tax Credit, Housing Benefit, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, income-related Employment and Support Allowance, Income Support and Working Tax Credit. Under Universal Credit, a lone mother's maximum entitlement comprises her standard allowance plus elements for the first child and subsequent children, as well as additions for housing and any disabilities or caring responsibilities. Like Working Tax Credit, Universal Credit contains a childcare subsidy which is set to increase from 70 to 85 per cent of childcare costs from 11 April 2016 (HM Government, 2016). For consistency, support for Council Tax has also been reformed to use the same calculation of maximum entitlement. Despite estimated implementation costs of £1.8 billion, the government expects Universal Credit to deliver total net savings of £5.3 billion over twelve years (National Audit Office, 2014). It additionally estimates annual savings thereafter of £2.7 billion due to higher employment and reduced administration costs, error, fraud and overpayments (National Audit Office, 2013).

According to the Conservatives, Universal Credit will make even small amounts of work pay. This is because Universal Credit removes the 100 per cent withdrawal rate for out-of-work benefits, replacing it with a lower one. Thus, under Labour, a lone mother lost

£1 of her out-of-work benefits for every £1 she earned over an earnings disregard of just £20 a week. However, under Universal Credit's withdrawal rate of 65 per cent on net income, the lone mother will potentially lose 65 pence of her benefits per £1 of net earnings gained after National Insurance and income tax.⁸ Universal Credit also extends childcare subsidies to lone mothers working fewer than 16 hours who previously received no such help, since Working Tax Credit was not available to them (Department for Work and Pensions, 2010b).

The Conservatives have additionally claimed that it will pay to work longer and earn more under Universal Credit. This is because Universal Credit's single rate of withdrawal is lower than the combined rate by which Housing Benefit and tax credits were withdrawn under Labour (Department for Work and Pensions, 2010b). Under Labour, the combined withdrawal of Housing Benefit and tax credits meant that a working lone mother potentially lost 90 pence to benefit withdrawal and in-work taxes for every additional £1 earned from working longer or for higher pay. Under Universal Credit however, she potentially loses 76 pence of every additional £1 earned to benefit withdrawal and taxes. Appendix A gives a worked example of how Universal Credit is calculated for one of the lone mothers included in this analysis.

In addition to making work pay, the behavioural conditions attached to lone mothers' benefit receipt have intensified since 2010. Lone Parent Obligations have been extended to those with a child aged five or six⁹, delivering estimated net savings to the Exchequer of £250 million by March 2015 (Department for Work and Pensions, 2011a). Furthermore, 11 out of 12 of the lone mother 'flexibilities' in Labour's Jobseeker's Allowance are either no longer legally binding, or are narrower in scope under Universal Credit. For example, Universal Credit regulations do not explicitly state that lone mothers with a child aged between five and 13 years can still restrict their job availability to school hours only, even if no such jobs are available. Meanwhile, those with older children can no longer restrict their job availability according to their caring responsibilities unless jobs are actually available at the required hours (Gingerbread, 2013).

⁸ Since this paper was published, the withdrawal rate has been reduced from 65 to 63 per cent (HM Treasury, 2016).

⁹ Since this paper was published, the Conservatives have extended job availability and search requirements to lone parents with a youngest child aged three or four as well (see e.g. Rabindrakumar, 2017).

DIMINISHING RETURNS

A further change to conditionality under Universal Credit is that working lone mothers will continue to be subject to it until they are earning the equivalent of the National Minimum Wage multiplied by the number of hours they are expected to be available for employment (Kennedy and McInnes, 2013). In 2015–16 prices, this is equivalent to £130 a week for those with a youngest child aged five to 12 years, assuming a school-hours job of 20 hours a week. For lone mothers with older children who are unable to find employment at the hours they require to suit their caring responsibilities, the threshold is £227.50 assuming a 35-hour job.

Tougher conditionality has been accompanied by longer benefit sanctions. Sanctions involve the temporary reduction or termination of benefits for failing to meet the conditions of benefit receipt. Under Labour, a lone mother's Jobseeker's Allowance could be sanctioned for a period lasting from one week up to a maximum of six months. While the amount sanctioned under Universal Credit is unchanged, equivalent to 100 per cent of a lone mother's standard allowance only, sanctions will now last at least four weeks and potentially reach three years, depending on the nature of the offence and previous non-compliance (e.g. Department for Work and Pensions, 2011b; Department for Work and Pensions and Hoban, 2012).

Correspondingly, the Conservative-led Coalition placed less emphasis than Labour on improving employment supports to help address some of the broader economic and social structural barriers to lone mothers' employment (Daguerre and Etherington, 2014). The exception is its Work Programme, which has replaced Labour's Flexible New Deal but claims to offer lone mothers the same personalised employment support (Department for Work and Pensions et al., 2013). However, the main difference from its predecessor is that the Work Programme incorporates a greater role for non-state providers and market mechanisms (Daguerre and Etherington, 2014; Rees et al., 2014). The government claims that this will deliver comparable employment outcomes to the Flexible New Deal but at a 2 per cent lower cost, since it is non-state providers who bear the financial risk (Lupton, 2015).

In summary, welfare-to-work policy discourse since 2010 has shifted further towards one which blames worklessness primarily on behavioural failings, exacerbated by welfare dependency. The Conservatives have sought to reinforce this critique of dependency by portraying it as unfair on welfare claimants and taxpayers, and unaffordable in the current economic climate. In line with this discourse, the Coalition relied mainly on

reforming the tax-benefit system to make work pay, and intensifying the conditions attached to benefit receipt to activate lone mothers.

The remainder of this paper examines whether reforms to the tax-benefit system between 2010 and 2015, in addition to the Conservative's flagship Universal Credit, could make work pay for lone mothers. Existing projections based on representative data on actual lone mothers show that the reforms are likely to reduce average incentives for non-working lone mothers to start employment, and have a negligible impact on lone mother employment rates. At the same time, average incentives for those who are already working to increase their earnings are projected to increase, potentially leading to a 7 per cent increase in total hours worked by lone mothers and a 5 per cent increase in their aggregate earnings (Adam and Browne, 2013; Adam and Phillips, 2013). The paper builds on these projections by using hypothetical lone mothers to show how the impacts of the reforms on a lone mother's financial employment incentives potentially vary according to her specific characteristics. This is to expose whether the reforms have the potential to deliver on the government's promise of making work pay for lone mothers under a range of different circumstances relevant to different groups of lone mothers. In particular, the analysis shows how tax burdens and benefit entitlements can vary with small increments in a lone mother's labour supply in order to highlight potential 'anomalies' in the Conservative-led reform agenda, whereby taking on additional hours beyond a certain point results in no, or only slight, income gains (Berger et al., 2001).

2.3 Method: Model Family Analysis

The analysis compares two hypothetical lone mothers' incentives under two different scenarios. The first scenario includes all changes to taxes and benefits implemented by the Coalition up to April 2015, in addition to Universal Credit. The analysis ignores any transitional protection, which is extra income to 'top up' an individual's Universal Credit during the initial transition onto the benefit so that he or she is not financially worse-off in the short-term. The analysis also assumes that Universal Credit covers 85 per cent of childcare costs as planned from April 2016.

The second scenario is the tax-benefit system as at April 2010 under Labour. Benefits included are Child Benefit, Child Tax Credit, Council Tax Benefit, Housing Benefit, Income Support, Jobseeker's Allowance and Working Tax Credit. For comparability, taxes and benefits under both scenarios have been adjusted to bring them in line with 2015–16

DIMINISHING RETURNS

prices according to relevant convention or statute, using either historic or projected rates of inflation (Appendix B).

Because the analysis is based on two hypothetical lone mothers, the results are not statistically representative of the UK lone mother population at large and cannot capture its full heterogeneity (Meyer et al., 2007). Using hypothetical lone mothers also means that formal rules and laws have to be followed even though non-take up (Table 1) affects real-life incentives (Atkinson and Marlier, 2009; Bradshaw, 2010). The analysis therefore does not summarise actual work incentives for the lone mother population under Universal Credit and other policy changes. Rather, it shows how these tax-benefit instruments potentially affect a lone mother’s employment incentives according to her characteristics and circumstances.

Table 1. Percentage of lone mothers who claim the benefits they are entitled to by benefit type.

Benefit	Year	Annual take-up rate (%)
Child Benefit	2011-2	95 - 96
Council Tax Benefit	2009-10	80 - 89
Housing Benefit	2009-10	86 - 92
Income Support	2009-10	84 - 92
Jobseeker’s Allowance	N/A	Data unavailable
Tax credits	2011-2	95 - 100

Notes: Data for Jobseeker’s Allowance take-up rates are not available due to small sample sizes. Child Benefit take-up rates are for all families with children.

Sources: Department for Work and Pensions (2012); HMRC (2013).

The two lone mothers are:

- Katherine, who has two children. For 38 weeks per year she pays £8.36 to a child-minder for every hour worked outside of normal school hours during term-time. During school holidays, she pays £4.72 to a holiday club for every hour worked (Appendix B). Calculations are based on average weekly childcare costs across the year.
- Rosie, who has one child and does not pay for childcare.

Thus, the lone mothers differ in two main respects. They firstly differ in relation to the number of children. This is to reflect the situations of most lone mothers in the UK today. Like 30 per cent of lone mothers, Katherine has two children, and like 58 per cent, Rosie has one child (ONS, 2015). Secondly, whereas Katherine pays for childcare, Rosie does not. This is to illustrate how incentives under the reforms potentially vary according to whether or not employment incurs childcare costs, as a survey recently showed that one-quarter of lone parents do not work while one-third work under 35 hours because they cannot afford the childcare (Borg and Stocks, 2013). Accordingly, Katherine, like 60 per cent of working lone mothers in the UK, pays for formal childcare. On the other hand, Rosie pays no childcare costs, as 40 per cent of working lone mothers said in a recent survey they do not require childcare (Maplethorpe et al., 2010). This is presumably because their children are either in school or old enough to no longer need supervision.

The analysis calculates the hypothetical lone mothers' incomes and incentives under a range of working hours in order to identify potential 'anomalies' in the design of Universal Credit and other tax-benefit reforms, whereby taking on additional hours of work results in no, or only slight, income gains (Berger et al., 2001). In addition, their incentives are measured under two different rates of hourly pay: the National Minimum Wage to reflect the concentration of lone mothers in low-paying jobs, and the median hourly wage for all female employees in the UK to reflect the Coalition's aim of helping people progress to higher pay (see e.g. Department for Work and Pensions, 2010a).

To isolate the influence of number of children, childcare costs, labour supply and hourly wage on the lone mothers' incentives and incomes, the analysis assumes they pay the same Council Tax and housing costs. These rates, in addition to Katherine's childcare costs, derive from national averages (Appendix B). Housing costs are based on average rates in the social-rented sector to reflect that almost two-thirds of lone mothers rent, and that of these, 70 per cent are in social housing (Maplethorpe et al., 2010). The analysis further assumes that both of the lone mothers are over 25, as the most recent available data show that 88 per cent of lone mothers are 25 years or older (Office for National Statistics, 2003). Because the focus is on the work incentives created by the tax-benefit system only, it is assumed the lone mothers do not have savings or receive child maintenance. While these factors can affect a lone mother's financial work incentives, the added complexity and specificity of such assumptions would only take the lone mothers further from the situations of actual lone mothers (Heikkilä and Kuivalainen, 2002).

DIMINISHING RETURNS

The analysis measures two types of financial work incentive. The first is the incentive to be in paid work and is measured by the lone mothers' participation tax rates:

$$1 - \frac{\text{in-work income after benefits, taxes, childcare costs} - \text{out-of-work income}}{\text{total gross earnings}}$$

To illustrate: a lone mother with total gross earnings of £300 takes home £200 after benefit withdrawal, taxes and childcare costs. This compares to benefits when not in employment of £170. The lone mother's participation tax rate is therefore:

$$1 - \frac{£200 - £170}{£300} = 0.9$$

In other words, she loses 90 per cent of her total gross earnings to benefit withdrawal, taxes and childcare costs. High participation tax rates indicate weak incentives to be in employment, while low participation tax rates indicate strong incentives.

The second is the incentive to take on additional hours when in employment and is measured by the lone mothers' effective marginal tax rates:

$$1 - \frac{\text{change in take home income from taking on additional hours}}{\text{change in gross earnings from taking on additional hours}}$$

To illustrate: a lone mother in a minimum wage job of £6.50 an hour increases weekly her hours by 10, giving additional gross earnings of £65. However, her take-home income increases by just £13. Her effective marginal tax rate is therefore:

$$1 - \frac{£13}{£65} = 0.8$$

This means she loses 80 per cent of the extra earnings gained from taking on ten additional hours of employment to benefit withdrawal, increasing tax liabilities and/or additional childcare costs. High effective marginal tax rates thus indicate weak incentives to take on additional hours, whereas low effective marginal tax rates indicate strong incentives to work longer.

2.4 Results

To give a measure of the lone mothers' financial incentives to be in paid work, Figure 1 shows their participation tax rates under Labour and the Conservative-led Coalition according to hours worked in a minimum wage job. Figure 2 shows the same as for Figure 1, but for an average wage job. In both figures, the solid lines represent the lone mothers' participation tax rates under Universal Credit and other taxes and benefits as at April 2015, while the dashed lines represent their participation tax rates under Labour as at April 2010. The further the lines sit above the horizontal axis at 0 per cent, the higher their participation tax rates, and so the weaker their incentives to be in paid work. Conversely, the closer the lines sit to the horizontal axis, the stronger their financial incentives to be in employment.

Figure 3 gives the lone mothers' budget constraints when in a minimum wage job, while Figure 4 gives their budget constraints in an average wage job. A budget constraint plots hours worked against income from earnings and benefits net of any taxes and childcare costs to illustrate how an individual's income varies with hourly increments in labour supply. The slope of the budget constraint therefore gives a measure of the lone mothers' effective marginal tax rates, which capture the incentives to take on additional hours of employment. A positive gradient indicates net income is increasing with each additional hour of work taken on. Consequently, the steeper the positive gradient, the more the lone mothers keep of an increase in earnings from working longer, and so the lower their effective marginal tax rates and the stronger their incentives to increase their labour supply.

The figures show that the lone mothers' incentives to work in a mini-job of four to 15 hours improve substantially and become strong under the 2015 plus Universal Credit scenario (Figures 1 and 2). Total net incomes when in a mini-job have also increased significantly (Figures 3 and 4). For instance, Katherine's participation tax rate at 15 hours for a minimum wage job falls from 99 per cent under the 2010 system to 43 per cent under Universal Credit (black lines in Figure 1). This means that she keeps an extra 56 percentage points of her earnings from working this long. In addition, Katherine's total net income has increased from £228 under the 2010 system to £279 under the 2015 one (black lines in Figure 3), representing an income gain of £51. Similarly, Rosie's participation tax rate at 15 hours for a minimum wage job has fallen from 79 to 40 per cent (grey lines in Figure 1), meaning she keeps an extra 39 percentage points of her earnings. Meanwhile, her income

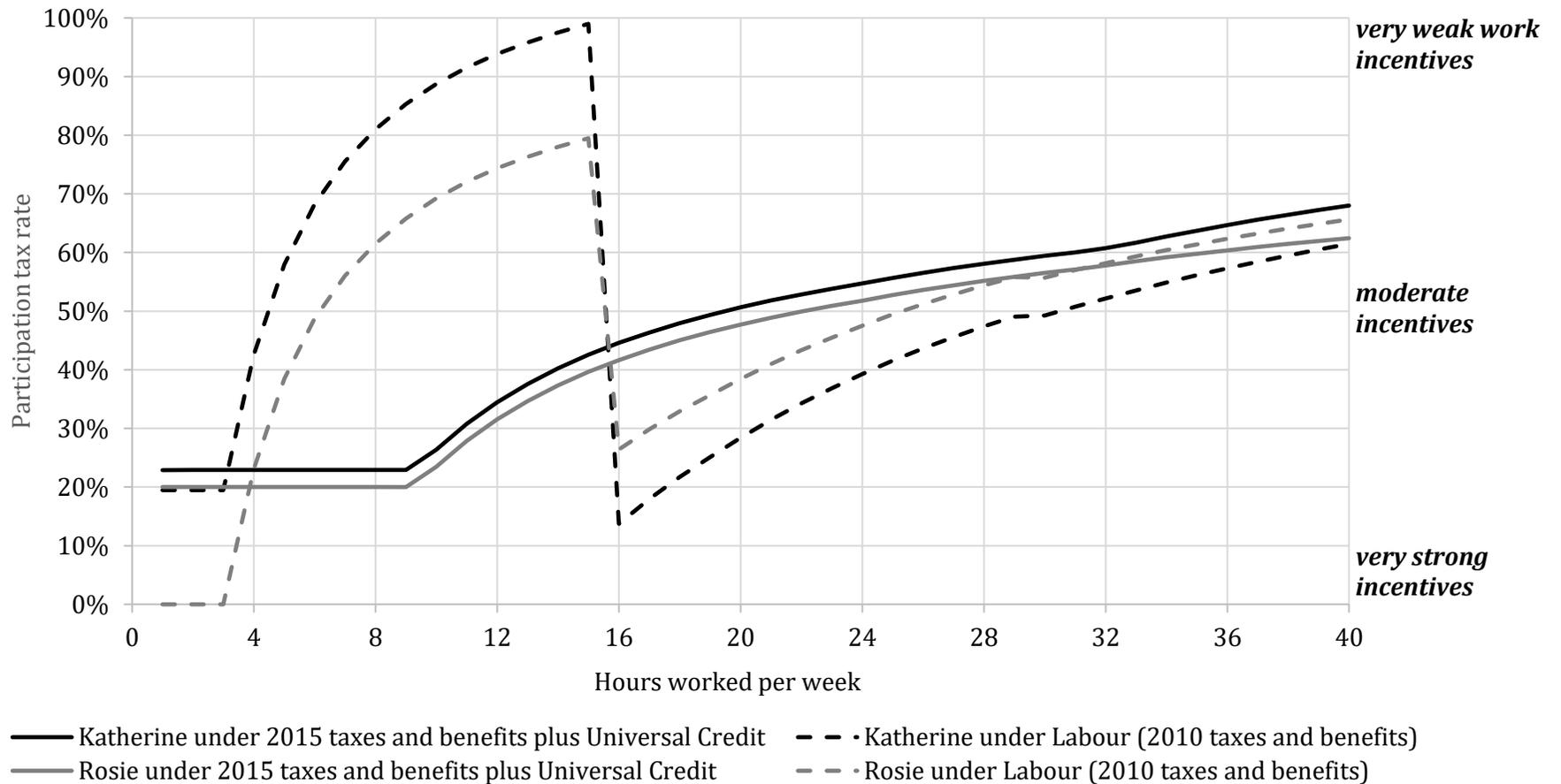


Figure 1. Participation tax rates for two lone mothers in minimum wage jobs under 2010 and 2015 UK tax-benefit systems.

Notes: The participation tax rate measures the incentive to be in paid work. It is measured by: $1 - [(take\ home\ income\ when\ in\ employment - out-of-work\ income\ from\ benefits) \div total\ gross\ earnings]$. Minimum wage is £6.50 an hour. Katherine has two children and pays for childcare; Rosie has one child and does not pay for childcare.

Source: Own calculations (Appendix B).

THE 'ACTIVE' WELFARE STATE: TOWARDS A GENDER-FRIENDLY APPROACH

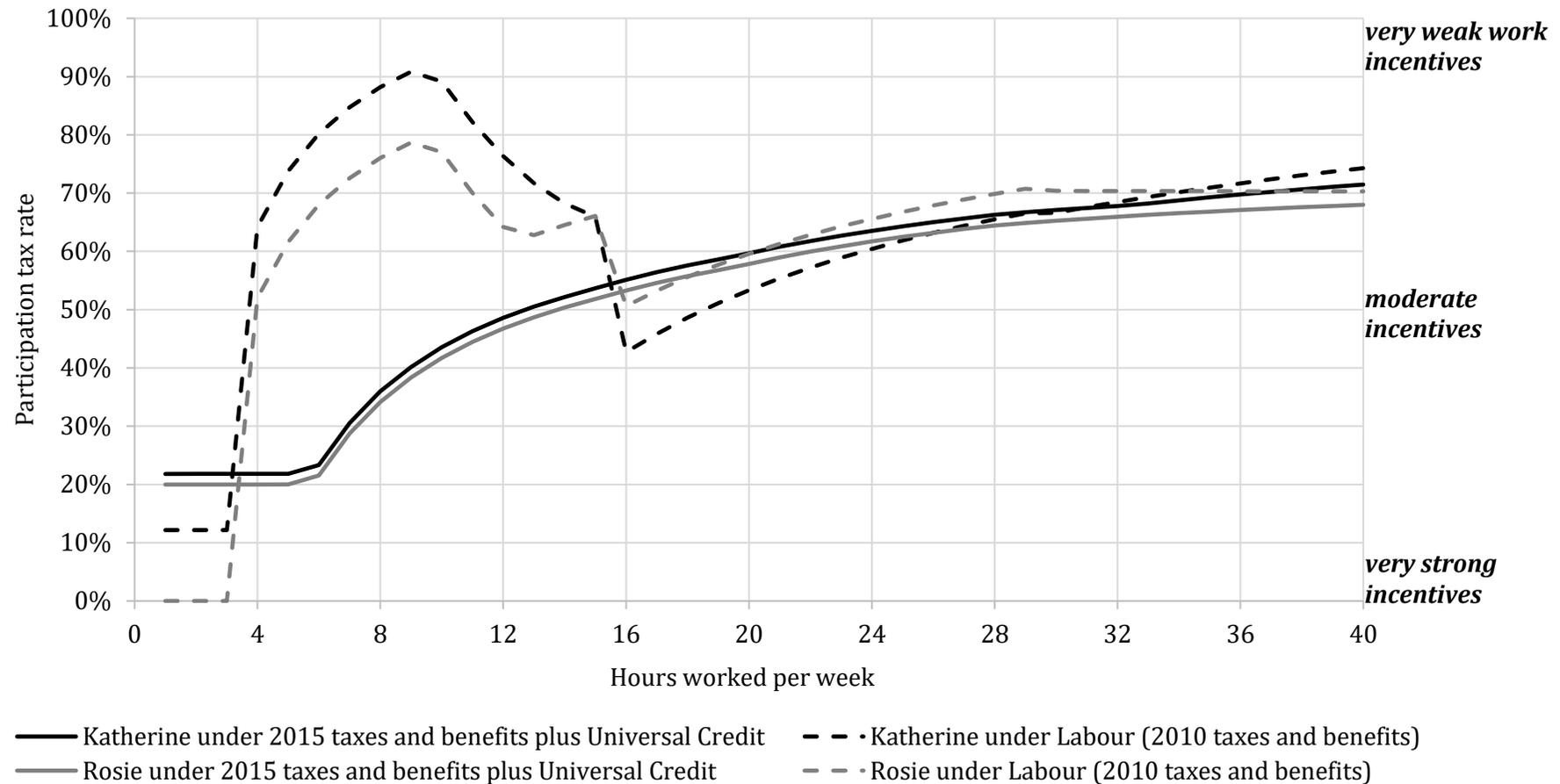


Figure 2. Participation tax rates for two lone mothers in average wage jobs under 2010 and 2015 UK tax-benefit systems.

Notes: The participation tax rate measures the incentive to be in paid work. It is measured by: $1 - [(take\ home\ income\ when\ in\ employment - out-of-work\ income\ from\ benefits) \div total\ gross\ earnings]$. 'Average' wage refers to the median hourly wage for all female employees of £10.42 an hour. Katherine has two children and pays for childcare; Rosie has one child and does not pay for childcare.

Source: Own calculations (Appendix B)

DIMINISHING RETURNS

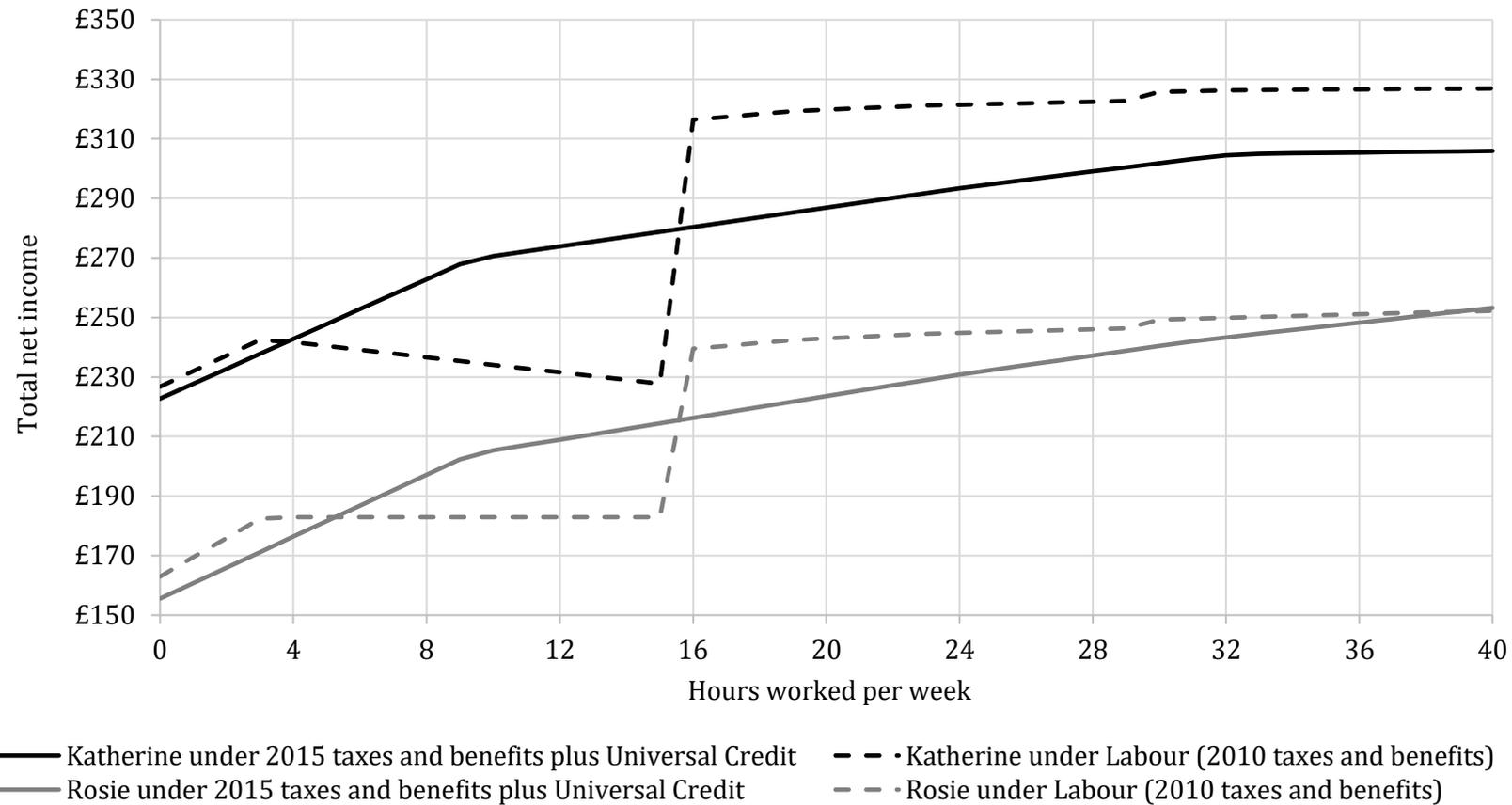


Figure 3. Weekly net incomes for two lone mothers in minimum wage jobs under 2010 and 2015 UK tax-benefit systems.

Notes: Total net income is all income from benefits and/or earnings after deductions for rent, Council Tax and any childcare costs, National Insurance contributions and income tax. Minimum wage is £6.50 an hour. Katherine has two children and pays for childcare; Rosie has one child and does not pay for childcare.

Source: Own calculations (Appendix B).

THE 'ACTIVE' WELFARE STATE: TOWARDS A GENDER-FRIENDLY APPROACH

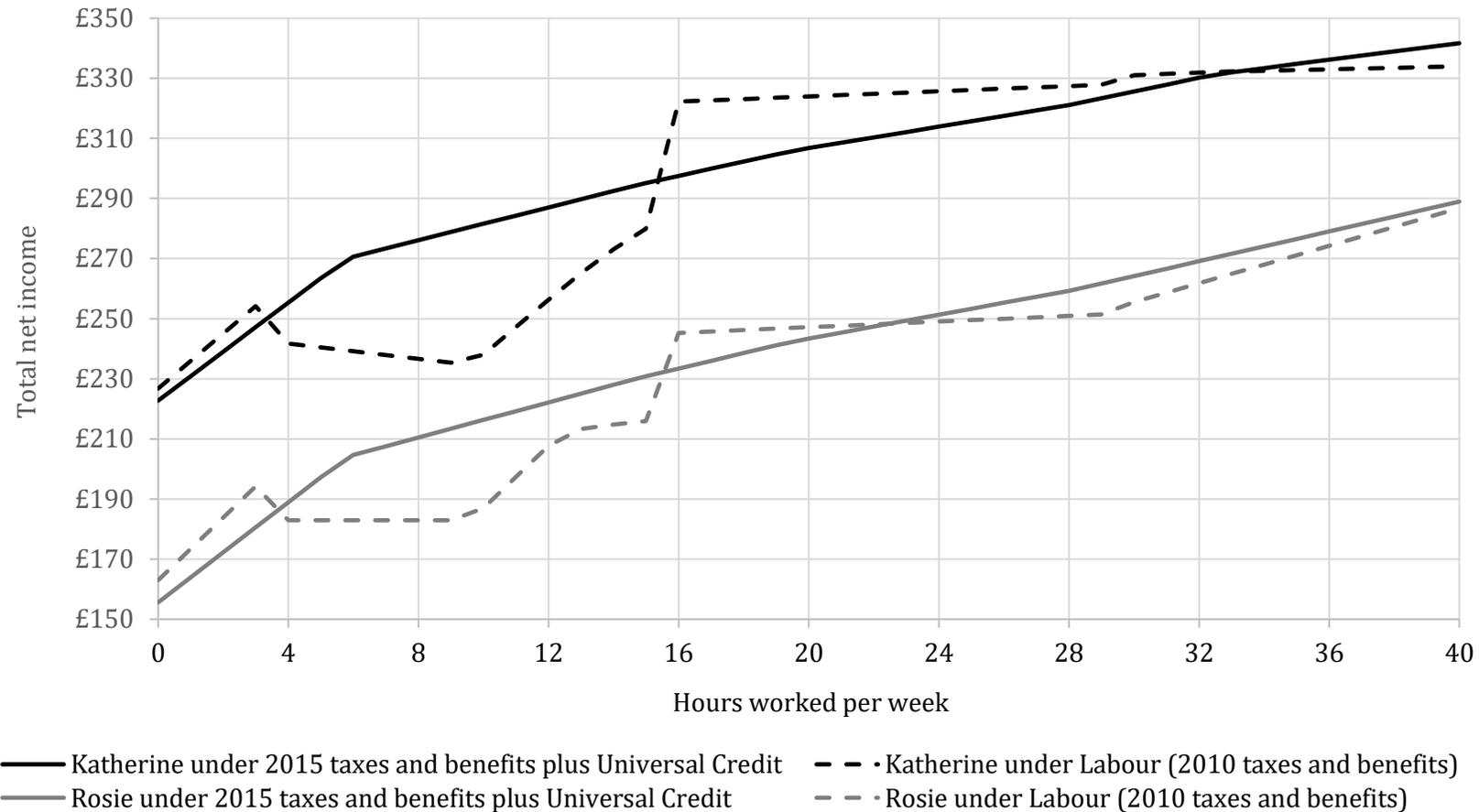


Figure 4. Weekly net incomes for two lone mothers in average wage jobs under 2010 and 2015 UK tax-benefit systems.

Notes: Total net income is all income from benefits and/or earnings after deductions for rent, Council Tax and any childcare costs, National Insurance contributions and income tax. 'Average' wage refers to the median hourly wage for all female employees of £10.42 an hour. Katherine has two children and pays for childcare; Rosie has one child and does not pay for childcare.

Source: Own calculations (Appendix B).

has risen from £183 to £214 between 2010 and 2015 (grey lines in Figure 3), which represents a gain of £31.

Stronger incentives to work in a mini-job result from Universal Credit's lower withdrawal rate compared to the Income Support and Jobseeker's Allowance it replaces, as well as the extension of childcare subsidies to those working fewer than 16 hours. Katherine's work incentives and net income between four and 15 hours have therefore improved the most since she pays for childcare, while Rosie does not. A more generous element for Katherine's second child in Universal Credit compared to Labour's Child Tax Credit, equivalent to £5.86 in 2015–16 prices, also explains why Katherine's income when out of work or in a mini-job has improved to a greater extent than for Rosie.

On the other hand, the lone mothers' incentives to work fewer than four hours weaken slightly under the Conservative-led Coalition's make work pay agenda. This is because whereas Labour's Council Tax Benefit disregarded some earnings before it started to be withdrawn, the new system of support for Council Tax introduced under the Coalition does not disregard any earnings before it starts to be reduced by 20 pence for every £1 earned. Nevertheless, because support for Council Tax is the only benefit that starts to be withdrawn when working under four hours, the lone mothers' incentives under the new system remain very strong in absolute terms (solid lines in Figures 1 and 2).

While Universal Credit and accompanying measures clearly give strong incentives for the lone mothers to work in short-hours jobs, the impacts on their incentives to work in jobs longer than 16 hours are more mixed. This is because compared to under the old 2010 system, incentives to work 16 hours or longer are, at best, marginally stronger and, at worst, substantially weaker.

The drop in incentives to be in paid work is sharpest at exactly 16 hours due to the removal of Labour's Working Tax Credit. For instance, for a minimum wage job, Katherine's participation tax rate rises from 14 per cent under Labour to 45 per cent under Universal Credit. This means that she loses 31 percentage points more of her earnings under the 2015 system compared to before if she takes a 16-hour minimum wage job (black lines in Figure 1). Correspondingly, her total net income has fallen from £316 to £280, representing an income loss of £36 (black lines in Figure 3). Similarly, Rosie's participation tax rate for a 16-hour minimum wage job rises from 26 per cent under the 2010 system to 42 per cent under Universal Credit and other changes. She therefore loses 16 percentage points more of her earnings to benefits withdrawal and taxes under the new system (grey

lines in Figure 1). In addition, her total net income has fallen from £240 to £216, which is an income loss equivalent to £24 (grey lines in Figure 3).

Participation tax rates for a 16-hour job at average wage have also increased under the 2015 system, but to a smaller degree: namely, 12 percentage points for Katherine and 2 percentage points for Rosie (Figure 2). This is because Labour's Working Tax Credit gave exceptionally strong incentives to take a minimum wage job. Its generous earnings disregard, in combination with low earnings, meant the lone mothers kept most, if not all, of their maximum entitlement to tax credits. They were, however, still marginally better off in absolute terms under Labour when in 16-hour job or longer that paid average rather than minimum wage by at least £5.80, and up to £7.06 per week for Katherine and £34.54 for Rosie (Figures 3 and 4).

While incentives to take a job of 16 hours or slightly longer are far weaker and incomes far lower under the new reforms than before, there are smaller changes in incentives and incomes at longer hours of work. Figures 1 to 4 show a gradual narrowing of the gap in participation tax rates and incomes between Labour's old system and the 2015 system as working hours go up. This is partly down to above-indexation increases in the earnings threshold at which income tax becomes payable under the Coalition. These mean that the lone mothers start paying tax at 32 rather than 24 hours in a minimum wage job, and at twenty instead of 15 hours in an average wage job. They also lose £10.55 less of their earnings to tax in 2015–16 prices when they do start paying tax.

Smaller changes in incentives and incomes at longer working hours are also down to Universal Credit. Although Universal Credit removes Working Tax Credit and the income boost it gave at 16 hours, its lower withdrawal rate relative to Housing Benefit and tax credits in combination leads to similar, if not slightly better, incentives and incomes than under Labour the more hours the lone mothers work beyond 16. For example, in 2015–16 prices, Katherine's income under Labour from Housing Benefit and tax credits when in an average wage job fell by £69.10 when she increased her hours from 16 to 40; in contrast, under the new system, her income from Universal Credit falls by £50.60 if she takes on these additional hours.

Another notable feature of Figures 3 and 4 is that Katherine's income when in a 16-hour job or longer has fallen to a greater extent under the Coalition's changes than is the case for Rosie. For instance, for a 40-hour job at minimum wage, Katherine's total net income has fallen from £327 under the 2010 system to £306 under the 2015 one, representing an income loss of £21 (black lines in Figure 3). Conversely, Rosie's income has

DIMINISHING RETURNS

decreased by just 98 pence (grey lines in Figure 3). This difference between the lone mothers is explained by lower elements for subsequent children under 2015 benefits compared to under Labour's benefits system, which affect Katherine because she has two children. Specifically, elements for subsequent children in Child Benefit are £2.50 lower because of changes under the Coalition in 2015–6 prices, while those in Universal Credit and support for Council Tax are £10.34 lower than in Labour's Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit.

In terms of the lone mothers' incentives to take on additional hours when they already have jobs, Figures 3 and 4 show an overall improvement from the 2010 system to the 2015 one. This is shown by the fact the lone mothers' budget constraints are, for the most part, more positive sloping under the 2015 system than under the 2010 one. Universal Credit's lower withdrawal rate relative to the pound-for-pound withdrawal of the out-of-work benefits it replaces, together with the availability of help with childcare costs at all working hours, have improved the lone mothers' incentives to increase their hours beyond a few up to 15 a week. At the same time, Universal Credit's lower withdrawal rate compared to Housing Benefit and tax credits combined, in conjunction with its higher childcare subsidy compared to Working Tax Credit, have increased the lone mothers' incentives to take on additional hours beyond 16 a week.

Yet, the problem with Universal Credit is that in absolute terms, the lone mothers' incentives to work beyond just a small number of hours a week remain inadequate. Participation tax rates under Universal Credit and other 2015 taxes and benefits begin to exceed 50 per cent above just 20-22 hours' work at minimum wage, or 12-14 hours at average wage (solid lines in Figures 1 and 2). These figures indicate that the lone mothers stand to lose more than half of their total earnings to benefit withdrawal, taxes and/or childcare costs if they look to work longer than part-time hours.

Moreover, the incentives for the lone mothers to take on additional hours when they are already in employment beyond just nine hours at minimum wage and six hours at average wage remain weak in absolute terms under the new system. Their budget constraints from these points start to flatten, thereby indicating only negligible income gains from each additional hour of employment taken on beyond these hours (solid lines in Figures 3 and 4). This is mainly because these are the hours from which Universal Credit starts to be withdrawn. The combined withdrawal of Universal Credit and support for Council Tax gives effective marginal tax rates of 72 per cent for Rosie and 75 per cent for Katherine due to her childcare costs. This means that the lone mothers lose between 72 and

75 pence of every additional £1 they earn from working beyond six hours at average wage and nine at minimum wage. Effective marginal tax rates then rise by an additional 3 per cent when National Insurance becomes payable from 25 hours at minimum wage and 16 at average wage. Effective marginal tax rates rise by a further 6 per cent when the lone mothers start paying income tax from 33 hours at minimum wage and 21 at average wage.

Because she pays for childcare, effective marginal tax rates for Katherine from thirty-three hours are exceptionally high. This is because the analysis assumes that by working 33 hours or longer, Katherine would be working outside of normal school hours and so would have to start paying for formal childcare services for both of her children during term-time. As a result, her effective marginal tax rates from thirty-three hours onwards jump up to 98 per cent at minimum wage and 87 per cent at average wage. This suggests that there are virtually no incentives for Katherine to progress up to full-time employment under Universal Credit and changes to support for Council Tax since 2010.

2.5 Concluding Remarks

Since the 1990s, 'make work pay' measures have become a key policy lever for getting more lone mothers into employment and earning more. While Labour sought to make work pay mainly by increasing in-work benefits, the Conservative-led Coalition has instead focused on cutting out-of-work support and simplifying the benefits systems to help lone mothers keep more of their earnings. This has been underpinned by a discourse which claims an apparently overgenerous and complicated benefits system under Labour not only created worklessness by eroding the 'work habit', but was 'unfair' on both welfare claimants and taxpayers and no longer affordable given deficit reduction plans.

However, for the two hypothetical lone mothers in this analysis, while incentives to work in a mini-job of fewer than 16 hours have improved, incentives to work longer appear weak, if not weaker than under Labour. In fact, the financial returns to progressing in employment begin to diminish once hours exceed just six at average wage and nine at minimum wage. These are the hours from which the Conservative's flagship make work pay reform, Universal Credit, starts to be withdrawn. This suggests that Universal Credit's withdrawal rate may be set too high to make more than only small amounts of work pay.¹⁰

¹⁰ Since this paper was published, the rate by which Universal Credit is withdrawn as earnings rise has reduced from 65 to 63 per cent (HM Treasury, 2016). However, the work allowance – that is, the

DIMINISHING RETURNS

On the other hand, the introduction of in-work conditionality until lone mothers are working 'enough' hours is likely to push many into working longer, even if it does not pay (Whitworth and Griggs, 2013). Although Labour similarly used conditionality to push certain lone mothers into jobs of 16 hours, the analysis shows that these jobs paid for the hypothetical lone mothers through Working Tax Credit. In contrast, the Conservative's overriding goal of reducing benefit dependency means that tougher conditionality will potentially push lone mothers into working beyond the point of financial returns.

Yet the abilities of lone mothers to meet the increased employment demands and expectations being placed on them are likely to be undermined by broader policy and economic changes. Early evidence suggests that the Work Programme, which replaced Labour's Flexible New Deal in 2011, is not meeting lone mothers' specific needs, and they are one-third less likely than other groups to find employment through it (Dewar, 2012; Whitworth, 2013). In addition, spending on early intervention, education and childcare fell by a quarter between 2009–10 and 2012–13 (Stewart and Obolenskaya, 2015), while 37 per cent of local authorities have reported cuts to provision of after-school clubs and 44 per cent have reported reductions in breakfast clubs (Wintour, 2013). Furthermore, lone mother underemployment, measured by total hours worked as a percentage of preferred hours of work, rose by 51 per cent between 2007 and 2012 throughout the recession (Tinsley, 2014). In summary, whereas Labour's welfare-to-work reforms helped to raise lone mother employment and incomes, diminishing financial returns to working beyond just a short number of hours under changes to the tax-benefit system since 2010, in conjunction with tougher conditionality and reduced employment supports, could have the opposite effect. This is especially likely given the rise in short hours and insecure forms of employment in the aftermath of the recession.

amount a lone mother can earn before her Universal Credit entitlement is affected – has also reduced from £60.69 to £44.31 per week since April 2016 (Department for Work and Pensions, 2015). These two changes mean that, in the example Universal Credit calculation in Appendix A, the lone mother is £7.25 per week *worse off* when working 35 hours at minimum wage, assuming that everything else remains equal. The reduction in the work allowance also means that the Universal Credit starts to be reduced at a lower number of working hours.

[3]

Beyond the ‘Train-First’/‘Work-First’ Dichotomy of Activation: How Welfare States Help or Hinder Maternal Employment

Since the late-1990s, a sizeable branch of comparative social policy literature has documented the trend across advanced economies away from ‘passive’ social protection and towards labour market ‘activation’ aimed at maximising employment throughout the life course for all adults, including women. Most of this literature distinguishes between a Nordic-style ‘train-first’ approach to activation focused on developing jobseekers’ employability, and an Anglo-Saxon ‘work-first’ approach that emphasises quick job (re-)entry. This typology tells us what activation means for the unemployed (male) worker. Yet, by ignoring the family, it overlooks what activation means for the (female) parent-worker with childcare responsibilities. To contribute to filling this ‘gap’, this paper uses fuzzy-set ideal-type analysis to compare 22 countries representing five ‘worlds’ of welfare (Anglo-Saxon, Nordic, Continental, Southern European and post-Communist) by how (de-)activating their labour market policies, parental leave provisions, childcare services and the scheduling of primary education are for lone mothers. The analysis reveals that cross-national variations in support for maternal activation are not well captured by the Nordic-style ‘train-first’/Anglo-Saxon ‘work-first’ dichotomy. On the one hand, policies to develop mothers’ human capital are not as extensive across the Nordics as predicted by the existing activation literature. On the other hand, policies towards mothers in Australia and the UK are not always conducive to rapid job (re-)entry against the characterisation of these states as employment-first. What is more, the findings show that the mainstream activation literature underestimates the extent to which certain Mediterranean and post-Soviet states are activating for mothers. Hence, I argue that despite the greater attention to gender and new social risks within the comparative social policy literature, the branch of this literature that focuses on activation still ignores women.

3.1 Introduction: Why We Need a New Typology of Lone Mother Activation

Since the late-1990s, a sizeable comparative social policy literature has documented the trend across advanced economies away from 'passive' social protection and towards labour market 'activation'. While the former focused on income maintenance for the male breadwinner and his family during periods of sickness, disability, unemployment and old-age, the latter is aimed at maximising employment for all adults throughout the life course. However, the precise meaning of labour market 'activation' and different ways in which welfare states seek to encourage, compel and prepare individuals to be in employment are not immediately clear. This is because an extremely diverse range of policy instruments can be subsumed under the label of activation. Moreover, these different instruments often have different characteristics and reflect sharply contrasting ideas about the causes of unemployment, why it is a problem, who is responsible for managing it, and what the best solution is (Bonoli, 2012).

To disambiguate the meaning of activation and capture its nuances, a significant body of comparative social policy literature has emerged that organises the different policy approaches welfare states take in activating the unemployed into a limited number of 'ideal types'. Most of the literature distinguishes between a 'work-first' approach to activation that seeks to pressurise the unemployed into (any) jobs quickly, and a 'train-first' or 'human capital development approach' that aims to develop individuals' long-term employability. While the employment-first approach tends to be more dominant in Anglo-Saxon states, especially the United States, the human capital development approach is more characteristic of Sweden and other Nordics (e.g. Lødemel and Trickey, 2000; Peck and Theodore, 2001; Eichhorst et al., 2008). Although there is less agreement in the literature regarding the positioning of Continental countries, most studies agree that there is no coherent Continental activation strategy as different Continental countries pursue the employment-first and human capital development approaches to differing degrees (Barbier and Ludwig-Mayerhofer, 2004). Meanwhile, Mediterranean and post-Soviet states are typically described as weakly activating (e.g. Morel et al., 2012b) or as emphasising the duties and obligations of the unemployed only (e.g. the Czech Republic and Portugal in Serrano Pascual's (2007) typology), if they are considered at all.

In focusing on the individual's relationship first with the welfare state and second with the market, existing typologies tell us what activation means for the average

unemployed worker. Yet, they overlook the role of the family. As a result, they exclude childcare and other policies which support the activation of mothers given the gendered division of caregiving within the family. In turn, the mainstream activation literature largely ignores the potential for policies to 'de-activate' mothers by reinforcing their caregiving rather than supporting their employment. For example, certain states provide flat-rate 'home-care' cash benefits to stay-at-home parents with young children for three or more years. But, in the vast majority of cases, the mother is the recipient (Westlund, 2007; Duvander and Ellingsæter, 2016). At the same time, employment or the use of state-subsidised childcare services can preclude entitlement to such benefits (OECD, 2007, 2011). So, while home-care allowances are couched in gender-neutral language, in practice, the gendered division of care work means that such allowances potentially serve to de-activate mothers with young children (Westlund, 2007). Indeed, more than 90 per cent of recipients of 'home-care' cash benefits for stay-at-home parents with young children are women (Duvander and Ellingsæter, 2016).

Against this background, my study contributes to addressing the shortcomings of the existing mainstream activation literature in relation to the specific situations of mothers. It does this by focusing on how labour market policies support lone mothers to reconcile activation and childcare, and by treating childcare policies, parental leave provisions and the scheduling of primary school systems as integrated components of the active welfare state. Through a fuzzy-set ideal type analysis of 22 countries, I examine how a range of benefits and services beyond labour market ones alone address the employment/childcare dilemma for lone parents.¹¹ Hence, following previous feminist research (e.g. Orloff, 1993; Hobson, 1994; Skevik, 2005), I treat the situation of single parents as a 'litmus test' for all mothers. This is because mothers head, on average, 85 percent of lone parent households across the OECD (OECD, 2017a). Therefore, lone parents tend to be lone mothers, who are, by definition, women maintaining households with children independently of men.¹² Thus, I use the terms 'lone parent' and 'lone mother'

¹¹ The analysis focuses on lone parents who require childcare to cover all or part of their working week. This is seemingly the case for most lone parents since, on average, 58 percent of lone parents across the EU have children aged under 12 (Eurostat, 2016).

¹² Shared parenting, whereby children spend roughly equal amounts of time living with each parent post-separation, has become more common (OECD, 2011). However, internationally, only around 7–15 per cent of care arrangements are shared (Skinner et al., 2007). Hence mothers retain exclusive or majority custody most of the time.

interchangeably and assume that if policies are good enough to allow single mothers to reconcile the demands of employment and childcare, they will be good enough for all mothers irrespective of any partners' role in caregiving.

Although mothers in couple households tend to have more and younger children than single mothers (Chzhen and Bradshaw, 2012), and welfare states sometimes treat mothers differently according to their partnership status, policies for single mothers are still relevant for those living with a partner for two main reasons. Firstly, they give an indication of mothers' 'exit' options from relationships. That is, the better the situation for single mothers, the more empowered partnered mothers are to exercise voice within relationships and leave undesirable ones (Hobson, 1990; Orloff, 2009a). Secondly, transformations in family structures and behaviour over the last four decades have made single parenthood a life course stage for increasing numbers of women (Bonoli, 2005). For instance, across the 17 Western states included in Andersson and Philipov's (2002) study, on average, one-quarter of women will spend at least some time as a single parent by the age of 40. So, while lone parenthood is typically transient, with single mothers often re-partnering or children eventually leaving home, lone parenthood is nevertheless a 'new' social risk to which a significant proportion of women are now exposed.

The analysis reveals that cross-national variations in support for maternal activation are not well captured by the prevailing Nordic-style 'train-first'/Anglo-Saxon 'work-first' dichotomy. On the one hand, policies to develop mothers' human capital are not as extensive across the Nordics as predicted by the existing activation literature and against the common assumption of a single 'women-friendly' and gender-equal Nordic model of welfare (e.g. Gornick and Meyers, 2009). Furthermore, policies in Finland are potentially de-activating for mothers. On the other hand, policies towards mothers in Australia and the UK are not always conducive to rapid job (re-)entry against the characterisation of these states as employment-first. What is more, the findings suggest that the mainstream activation literature underestimates the extent to which certain Mediterranean and post-Soviet states are activating for mothers. Overall, these results indicate that despite the greater attention to gender and new social risks within the comparative social policy literature, the branch of this literature which focuses on activation still ignores women.

The next section makes the case for developing a new typology focused on how welfare states help or hinder mothers' employment. In the second section, I summarise existing research on maternal activation. I then outline the methods in the third and fourth

sections, followed by the findings in the fifth. I conclude by highlighting the contribution of these findings to the activation literature.

3.2 Lone Mother Activation: State of the Art

During the 1990s, research interest in lone mothers within the field of comparative social policy peaked. This was partly due to the increased prevalence of lone mothers and concerns about their relatively high rates of poverty and welfare dependency. But it was also because lone mothers offered an instructive category for analysing how welfare states resolved the employment/childcare dilemma for all mothers, independently of any partners' contributions (e.g. Orloff, 1993; Hobson, 1994; Lewis and Hobson, 1997). Lewis and Hobson (1997) subsequently identified two main care regimes according to how they treated lone mothers: the 'caregiver' model, which assumed that all mothers were full-time carers; and the 'parent-worker' or 'adult-worker' model, which treated all parents, including lone mothers, as full-time workers.

Since the late-1990s, however, welfare states across Europe and elsewhere have progressively converged on the adult-worker model (Lewis, 2001a). As a result, participation in paid work or employment-related activities has become compulsory for lone parents (Haux, 2013). Several studies examine this policy development in detail. They show that lone mother conditionality in Anglo-Saxon states, excluding the US, is 'light' by international standards. Policies in Anglo-Saxon states, and increasingly Continental ones too, focus on securing rapid job placement instead by overcoming practical obstacles to lone mothers' employment, such as dealing with the benefits system (e.g. Strell and Duncan, 2001; Knijn et al., 2007; Finn and Gloster, 2010). Yet, as the family policy literature shows, working parents in Anglo-Saxon states are given minimal support to reconcile activation and childcare, and are largely expected to make their own arrangements through the market (e.g. Gornick and Meyers, 2004). Meanwhile, despite some modernisation in recent years (e.g. Häusermann, 2006), Continental states, excluding Belgium and France, remain focused on promoting mothers' caregiving over their employment (e.g. Leitner, 2003). In contrast, activation in Nordic countries focuses more positively on integrating lone mothers into employment by improving their social skills and confidence, and widespread childcare facilities and comprehensive leave policies support mothers' continuous employment (e.g. Rowlingson and Millar, 2002; Skevik, 2005), albeit less so in Finland and Norway (e.g. Ciccia and Bleijenbergh, 2014).

Thus, existing studies of lone mother activation detail how certain welfare states activate lone mothers. Yet, they do not go far enough in capturing the full diversity of policy approaches. This is because they either focus on a single country at a time or compare just a small number (three to seven) of welfare states. Hence, the extent to which the policy approaches of these select few countries are idiosyncratic to them only, or are instead representative of the approaches that other welfare states take, is unclear. Furthermore, because existing studies focus exclusively on Anglo-Saxon, Nordic or Continental countries, not enough is known about the diversity and characteristics of lone mother activation policies in Mediterranean and post-Soviet states.

More recently, Haux's (2013) typology of lone mother activation captures some of the diversity missing in earlier studies by encompassing 29 welfare states. She identifies three broad approaches to activating lone mothers. The first approach, 'voluntary activation', involves no compulsory activation, although no country any longer conforms to this approach (author's update from Haux, 2013). Conversely, countries which adhere to the 'general activation' approach expect (almost) all single parents to be available for employment. Most Mediterranean and post-Soviet states follow this approach. Finally, countries following the 'age of child' approach exempt lone parents from activation requirements until their youngest child reaches a certain age. This age threshold varies from a few weeks (many US states) to a few years (the Czech Republic, Norway and most Continental states) or compulsory school age (other Anglo-Saxon states and the Netherlands). France and Norway additionally exempt the custodial parent from employment requirements during the first year of lone parenthood. Belgium, the Netherlands, most Nordic countries and a few US states also rely on trained caseworkers to decide whether to impose job-search requirements on a case-by-case basis given a single parent's particular circumstances and/or the availability of local jobs and childcare.

While Haux's typology elucidates the approaches that a wide range of welfare states take in identifying lone mothers for compulsory activation, it still paints an incomplete picture of lone mother activation. This is because countries are categorised by variation along one dimension of lone mother activation only, namely the point at which lone mothers are no longer excused from employment for the purposes of full-time caregiving and are instead subject to compulsory activation. Thus, Haux's typology does not detail how welfare states seek to move lone mothers into jobs or support them to reconcile employment and childcare once they are deemed 'work-ready'.

This paper builds on Haux's typology by incorporating these additional dimensions into a holistic typology of lone mother activation. Specifically, it compares welfare states by: (i) the strictness of job availability and search conditions imposed on lone mothers; (ii) lone mothers' access to training measures to enhance their employability; and (iii) the degree to which family and education policies support lone mothers to balance employment and childcare. The analysis also goes beyond previous aforementioned studies of lone mother activation based on national case studies by incorporating a larger number (22) of welfare states. For comparability with the mainstream activation literature, I include a range of countries representing the three main 'worlds' of welfare for which data are available. I also incorporate Mediterranean and post-Soviet states for which data on the key indicators are available. As aforementioned, previous studies of lone mother activation and the wider activation literature generally overlook these two regions; yet, they have received increasing attention within the family policy literature. Much of this literature initially characterised family policies in these two regions as rudimentary (e.g. Leitner, 2003). However, recent studies suggest that policies in some of these countries are highly supportive of maternal employment, potentially even to the same extent as in the Nordic system (e.g. Szelewa and Polakowski, 2008; Javornik, 2012; Tavora, 2012). Thus, lone mother activation in these states deserves greater attention and to be placed within comparative context.

3.3 Method: Fuzzy-Set Ideal Type Analysis

To compare a relatively large number (22) of countries across multiple (three) dimensions, I use fuzzy-set ideal type analysis. This method is more adept than traditional statistical methods to capturing variation between welfare states across multiple policy dimensions. This is because countries are assigned to ideal types according to theoretical and substantive knowledge, rather than statistical averages or degrees of statistical association. Consequently, fuzzy-set ideal type analysis is not prone to 'outlier effects', whereby a welfare state's exceptionally high or exceptionally low score on one policy dimension determines its overall classification within a typology irrespective of its scores on other policy dimensions of interest (Hudson and Kühner, 2010).

Furthermore, as a case-based method, fuzzy-set ideal type analysis involves analysing a welfare state's various policy dimensions simultaneously, rather than looking at each dimension independently (Lee, 2013). The literatures on active labour market policies and gender regimes highlight a number of conceptually distinct policy dimensions

that are important for understanding how welfare states seek to equip, compel and encourage lone parents to work, from the availability of childcare to the strictness of job-search conditions attached to benefits. Moreover, each of these policy dimensions may assume a different meaning according to the other policy dimensions comprising a given welfare state (Ciccia and Bleijenbergh, 2014). For instance, a country with high levels of benefit conditionality may not be considered truly activating in the absence of comprehensive childcare policies to enable lone parents to meet these demands. A case-based approach is therefore necessary to give a full picture of how different welfare states seek to activate lone parents.

Fuzzy-set ideal type analysis is better equipped for comparing a relatively large number of countries than other case-based methods. Case-oriented methods typically involve comparing countries on the basis of national case studies that capture the idiosyncrasies of each individual case. The volume and complexity of data generated make it difficult to compare more than a handful of countries at a time in a systematic and thorough way. But fuzzy-set ideal type analysis is unique among case-based methods, in that it involves comparing countries using a set of fixed thresholds and agreed-on, logical principles (Fiss, 2009). By reducing the complexity of the data so that it becomes more manageable (George and Bennett, 2005; Ragin and Sonnett, 2005), these thresholds and principles permit comparison of a larger number (around 5-50) of countries (Ragin, 2008).

In fuzzy-set ideal type analysis, each policy dimension of interest is defined as a 'set' to which countries have varying degrees of membership. To determine countries' membership to each set, the set must be 'calibrated'. This involves establishing three 'qualitative breakpoints' or thresholds. The lower qualitative breakpoint of zero denotes a country as fully out of the set, while the upper qualitative breakpoint of one denotes it as fully in. The 'crossover point' (0.5) signals that a country is neither more in nor more out of the set. Hence, for a country to belong to a set, it must achieve a score greater than 0.5 to indicate that it is more in the set than out of it (Kvist, 1999). To reflect a country's partial or 'fuzzy' membership or non-membership to a set, it can be assigned a continuous score between 0 and 1; for example, if a country is fairly but not fully in a set, we assign it a score of 0.75 (Kvist, 1999; Hudson and Kühner, 2009).

Crucially, the breakpoints for determining set membership are established on the basis of theoretical and substantive knowledge, unlike in traditional quantitative research (Kvist, 1999; Ragin, 2008). So, for instance, Kvist (2007) defines a country as 'ungenerous' if benefit replacement levels are below 20 per cent of previous earnings. This

is because national consumption surveys suggest that individuals cannot afford to maintain their standard of living irrespective of whether the replacement level is 20 per cent, 0 per cent, or anywhere in between. In this respect, fuzzy-set ideal type analysis removes conceptually meaningless variation between countries from the comparison (Ragin, 2000).

A country's fuzzy score is given by the formula:

$$\text{Fuzzy score} = \frac{\text{raw data} - \text{lower qualitative breakpoint}}{\text{upper qualitative breakpoint} - \text{lower qualitative breakpoint}}$$

To illustrate: suppose the upper qualitative breakpoint for membership to the 'generous' set is a benefit replacement rate of 80 per cent of previous earnings, while the lower qualitative breakpoint is 20 per cent. Therefore, Country *A*, which offers a benefit replacement rate of 35 per cent, receives a fuzzy score of:

$$\frac{35 - 20}{80 - 20} = 0.25$$

In other words, the country is fairly out of the set and reasonably ungenerous.

Set membership provides the basis for categorising welfare states into ideal types. With k being the number of policy dimensions or sets, there are 2^k possible ideal types (Vis, 2007). So, in a study involving three policy dimensions, there are eight ($2^3=8$) possible ideal types. Two logical principles underpin the organisation of countries into these ideal types. The first is the 'negation principle'. This stipulates that the degree to which a welfare state exhibits the 'negation' or reverse of a given set is one minus its membership score to that set. For instance, if *A* has a membership score of 0.1 to set x , then its membership score to the NOT x set is $1 - 0.1 = 0.9$. The second principle is the 'minimum principle'. This states that a welfare state's membership to an ideal type is the lowest of its set scores. Thus, if *A* has a score of 0.1 for set x and 0.7 for set y , then *A*'s membership to the xy ideal type is 0.1, the lowest of these set scores (Kvist, 1999). In other words, *A* is not a member of the xy ideal type.

The most significant shortcoming of the method used in this study concerns the lack of objective standards for establishing the choice of indicators and thresholds which determine welfare states' (non-)membership to each set (Ragin, 2008). To address this, I follow Marchal and Van Mechelen (2017) in using sensitivity analyses to measure the impact of a selection of alternative indicators and cut-off points on welfare states' (non-)membership to each set. There is of course an infinite number of potential variations

in indicators and cut-off points which could be tested. However, for parsimony, I focus on six alternative ways of operationalising the sets for which the strongest justifications can be made (Appendix F).

3.4 Dimensions of Comparison

This section gives details of the three sets which represent the dimensions of comparison. Reflecting the human capital development/employment-first dichotomy, the first set captures lone mothers’ access to training opportunities, while the second set measures the strictness of employment-related conditions imposed on lone mothers. To capture how welfare states help lone mothers to combine family and employment, the third set measures the degree to which childcare services, leave policies and primary school schedules support maternal employment. Where membership to a set is measured by more than one indicator, a country’s overall set score is the lowest of its scores on each of the indicators which captures that set (minimum principle). Appendix C provides details of sources.

3.4.1 Opportunities for Training

Comparative data that zoom in on training opportunities for specifically lone mothers do not exist. Nevertheless, two indicators offer adequate proxies. The first indicator, spending on training,¹³ captures the priority given to improving the skills of the unemployed. Following previous studies (e.g. Nickell and Layard, 1999; OECD, 2003a; Vis, 2007), I use spending on training per person unemployed, expressed as a percentage of GDP per person employed. This is to adjust for cross-national differences in unemployment rates and economy size. It also ensures that high spending on training does not simply reflect high unemployment. The indicator is given by the following formula:

$$\begin{aligned} & \frac{\text{Spending on training/total registered unemployed}}{\text{GDP/total number of employed persons}} \\ = & \frac{\text{Spending on training/GDP}}{\text{Total registered unemployed/total number of employed persons}} \\ = & \frac{\text{Spending on training as a \% of GDP}}{\text{Unemployment rate, \%}} \end{aligned}$$

¹³ ‘Training’ encompasses all institutional, workplace or other training programmes and apprenticeships for persons who are unemployed, seeking employment, or at risk of involuntary job loss.

The resulting figure can be expressed more simply as the percentage of GDP spent on training for every 1 percent of unemployment.

According to existing studies focused on spending on all activation policies, 'activating countries' spend 0.20–0.25 percent or more of GDP on activation for every 1 percent of unemployment (e.g. OECD, 2003a; Vis, 2007). However, training comprises just one of five types of policy encompassed under the label of activation. Therefore, assuming that training commands at least its 'equal' share of the total activation budget in 'activating countries' – that is, one-fifth (Hudson and Kühner, 2009) – the upper qualitative breakpoint (fully in) is: $0.25/5=0.05$. Hence, when welfare states spend 0.05 percent or more of GDP on training for every 1 percent of unemployment, opportunities for training can be considered widespread.

Meanwhile, studies that focus on spending on all activation policies identify countries which spend 0.05 percent of GDP or less on total activation policies for every 1 percent of unemployment as having the lowest activation spending profiles (OECD, 2003a; Vis, 2007). Again, assuming that training commands at least its equal share of the activation budget (one-fifth), the lower qualitative breakpoint (fully out) is: $0.05/5=0.01$. So, when welfare states spend 0.01 percent or less of GDP on training for every 1 percent of unemployment, opportunities for training are few and far between. The crossover point (neither in nor out) is the mid-point between the upper and lower breakpoints of 0.03 percent.

The second indicator gives a proxy of the extent to which lone mothers' caregiving may be an obstacle to their participation in training programmes. It is based on survey data from the Adult Education Survey and Survey of Adult Skills (PIAAC), which asked women to identify the reason(s) why they did not participate in lifelong learning during the last 12 months, despite wanting to. Specifically, the second indicator is based on the percentages of women surveyed who identified family responsibilities as a barrier to their participation in education or training. The breakpoints are 40 percent for fully out, 10 percent for fully in, and 25 percent for neither in nor out (Chłoń-Domińczak and Lis, 2013). When over 40 percent of women identify family responsibilities as a barrier, this suggests strong cultural support for women's caregiving, a lack of 'care-compatible' training courses, or a shortage or lack of information about the availability of childcare services. Consequently, lone mothers' position as sole caregiver within the household is likely to prevent many from accessing available training opportunities. Conversely, when nine in ten

women do not identify family responsibilities as a barrier to training, education/childcare conflicts are less likely an issue for lone mothers.

3.4.2 Strict Conditionality

To capture the extent to which welfare states rely on compulsion to activate lone mothers, the second set is operationalised by an index of the employment-related conditions and sanctions imposed on lone mothers not currently in employment (Appendix D). The index comprises four distinct items, which are assigned equal weights. Each item is measured by one or more sub-items, and scores for each item are given by the average of scores across these sub-items. Scores range from a high of five to indicate very strict employment-related conditions, to a low of one to signify weak conditionality.

Item 1 draws on Haux's (2013) aforementioned typology of the approaches welfare states take in identifying lone mothers for compulsory activation. Countries which impose compulsory activation on all or most lone mothers receive higher scores, while countries which are more sensitive to each lone mother's particular circumstances receive lower scores. Items 2–4 are based on Langenbucher's (2015) index of the conditions attached to unemployment benefits (see Appendix F for the impact on the results of measuring the conditions attached to social assistance instead). Item 2 captures the strictness of job availability criteria and how much flexibility lone mothers have to turn down job offers. Item 3 concerns the degree of monitoring of lone mothers' job-search activities, while item 4 captures the severity of sanctions in cases of non-compliance with employment-related conditions. The extent to which welfare states treat lone mothers differently from other jobseekers varies across these different indicators. Consequently, while scoring on certain items reflects the treatment of specifically lone mothers or mothers/parents more broadly, scoring on other items reflects the treatment of all jobseekers.

Because eligibility for unemployment benefits in the United States is determined mainly at the state-level, scoring on the conditionality index is based on legislation and guidelines in Michigan. This is partly because detailed information on eligibility requirements are available for this state. Moreover, Michigan offers a good benchmark for ascertaining how the US in general treats lone mothers, since most of its policies match those in the majority of other states and are a mix of policy 'carrots' and 'sticks' (Blank and Haskins, 2001; Seefeldt and Castelli, 2009).

3.4.3 Activating Childcare Policies

The final set is also operationalised by a summary index. This index captures the extent to which a country's family policies and primary school schedule support maternal employment, regardless of whether this is their intention (Appendix E). It comprises three items. Again, a country's overall index score is the average of its scores across these three items. An overall score of one indicates limited to no support for mothers to be in or remain in employment, while an average score of five signifies strong support for maternal employment.

The first item in the index captures the extent to which childcare policies support maternal employment in the three years immediately following childbirth. It is measured by three sub-items. Sub-item (i) concerns the duration of maternity and parental leaves. Without access to paid leave, new mothers may be forced to withdraw from employment altogether. Very short leaves can have the same effect. Recent studies suggest that leave periods should be at least 30–39 weeks for mothers' employment continuity and career progression (Akgunduz and Plantenga, 2013; Keck and Saraceno, 2013). However, long leaves can be detrimental, too, through substantial losses to mothers' human capital, missed opportunities for career advancement, and potential difficulties in being re-employed by the same employer (Fagnani, 1998). Many studies mark one year as the turning point beyond which additional years of leave are associated with (marginal) wage penalties (Grimshaw and Rubery, 2015). However, Pettit and Hook (2005) find that the most detrimental effects begin after around three years' leave. Consequently, leaves shorter than 30 weeks or longer than three years receive equally low scores on sub-item (i).¹⁴

Sub-item (ii) covers the generosity of leave provisions. Leave paid at 70–80 percent of previous earnings provides strong incentives for mothers to return to their previous employer once the period of paid leave expires in order to avoid a sharp drop in income (Gornick and Meyers, 2003; Wall et al., 2009; Bonoli, 2013). In contrast, low replacement rates give limited pressure for mothers to return to their previous employer once the period of paid leave expires (Bonoli, 2013). 'Low' is here defined as 20 percent of previous earnings. This is because national consumption surveys suggest that individuals

¹⁴ In the Czech Republic, lone mothers are entitled to 147 weeks of maternity and parental leave combined compared to 138 weeks for mothers in couple households. However, this difference does not impact on the Czech Republic's positioning in relation to the 'activating childcare policies' set.

cannot afford to maintain their standard of living when replacement rates fall below this threshold (Kvist, 2007).

To capture the availability of childcare for under-threes, sub-item (iii) concerns enrolment rates in formal childcare services for this age group. Low enrolment rates indicate a potential shortage of childcare services, while high enrolment rates suggest that services are extensive and generally accessible to most parents. Countries receive a score of five on this sub-item when enrolment rates for under threes exceed 33 percent, as this figure reflects the European Union’s ‘Barcelona target’. To reflect enrolment rates in those countries which are ‘falling behind’ (37) this target, countries receive the minimum score of one when enrolment is below 15 percent (Mills et al., 2014).

The second item on the childcare index covers childcare policies for mothers with pre-primary education age children. Sub-item (iv) concerns enrolment rates in formal childcare services for three to five year olds. Countries with enrolment rates of at least 90 percent receive the maximum score of five on this sub-item, again reflecting the European Union’s Barcelona targets. Conversely, countries with enrolment rates below 70 percent receive the minimum score of one to reflect enrolment rates in countries lagging behind the European Union’s target for this age group (Mills et al., 2014). To avoid the distortion of a country having high childcare coverage but for limited hours only, full-time equivalent (FTE) childcare enrolment rates are used. These represent what enrolment rates would be if all those children attending formal childcare services did so on a full-time basis. FTEs are usually standardised by a thirty-hour week (e.g. OECD, 2017a). However, because I am interested in the extent of support for maternal employment, I define ‘full-time’ as 40 hours to reflect the dominant definition of a standard working week (Lee et al., 2007: p. 20). FTEs are given by the following formula:

$$\text{FTE} = \frac{\text{percentage of children in formal childcare arrangements} \times \text{average weekly hours of attendance}}{40}$$

The third item in the childcare index covers policies for mothers with school-age children. It is measured by two sub-items. Sub-item (v) captures the length and continuity of the primary school week. Countries with school schedules that align more closely with regular, full-time employment hours receive higher scores (Gornick et al., 1997; Plantenga and Remery, 2013). In contrast, lower scores are awarded to countries with low school weekly hours or discontinuous schedules, whereby children are sent home during their lunch breaks or have certain parts of the week off. Sub-item (vi) captures the

prevalence of out-of-school services by average enrolment rates. Countries receive the maximum score of five when 80 percent or more of children attend out-of-school services, as this figure reflects enrolment rates in countries with very high coverage of out-of-school services according to the OECD (2016b). Conversely, countries with enrolment rates in out-of-school services of below 10 percent receive the minimum score of one to reflect enrolment rates in countries where coverage is low (OECD, 2017a).

3.5 Results: Lone Mother Activation Regimes

Table 2 details the countries' membership scores to the three sets and their classification into lone mother activation models. While there are eight possible ideal types ($2^3=8$), there are no countries which belong to the 'opportunities for training' set only, or to the 'opportunities for training' and 'activating childcare policies' sets but not to the 'strict conditionality' set. This means that the countries analysed belong to one of six ideal types. However, I have subdivided the first of these ideal types comprising countries belonging to the 'strict conditionality' set only, into two separate lone mother activation models. This is to reflect significant substantive differences within this ideal type. Table 3 details each country's overall membership score to its respective lone mother activation model.

The first lone mother activation model is labelled *general coercion*. Most of the Central and Eastern European states, together with the Mediterranean states of Italy and Spain and liberal US are in this model. Here, joblessness is understood primarily as a behavioural problem. The aim is to push the jobless into (any) paid work by imposing strict employment-related conditions, while simultaneously offering few training opportunities. At the same time, policies to support the reconciliation of employment and care are limited. Although primary school schedules for lone mothers with school-age children in the Czech Republic, Lithuania and Poland are generally conducive to a 40-hour working week, this is not the case elsewhere. Instead, insufficient out-of-school services or irregular and/or part-time school hours mean that working longer than part-time hours can be difficult for lone mothers in the absence of informal sources of caregiving. Yet, the scarcity of part-time job opportunities across Central and Eastern European states may shut lone mothers out of employment altogether.

The second lone mother activation model, labelled *delayed coercion*, contains Australia, Germany, the Netherlands and the UK. Again, lone mothers' inactivity is primarily

Table 2. Membership scores of 22 OECD countries to three fuzzy sets and their classification into seven lone mother activation models.

Lone mother activation models and countries	Opportunities for training	Strict conditionality	Activating childcare policies
<i>Model 1: General Coercion</i>			
Bulgaria	0.00	0.63	0.22
Czech Republic	0.00	0.56	0.36
Italy	0.05	0.59	0.43
Latvia	0.00	0.69	0.31
Lithuania	0.00	0.61	0.40
Poland	0.00	0.64	0.43
Slovakia	0.00	0.77	0.28
Spain	0.00	0.53	0.29
United States	0.00	0.70	0.21
<i>Model 2: Delayed Coercion</i>			
Australia	0.00	0.52	0.32
Germany	0.30	0.57	0.44
Netherlands	0.00	0.66	0.42
United Kingdom	0.00	0.68	0.42
<i>Model 3: Care-Sensitive Coercion</i>			
Norway	0.00	0.54	0.63
Portugal	0.21	0.81	0.72
Slovenia	0.00	0.80	0.75
<i>Model 4: Partial Activation</i>			
Austria	0.74	0.57	0.22
France	0.59	0.55	0.40
<i>Model 5: Holistic Activation</i>			
Denmark	0.91	0.55	0.85
<i>Model 6: Optional Activation</i>			
Belgium	0.19	0.47	0.78
Sweden	0.16	0.48	0.69
<i>Model 7: Weak Activation</i>			
Finland	0.44	0.38	0.35

Notes: Scores are between 0 and 1 with bold indicating membership of a set (>0.50) and higher scores signifying stronger membership.

Source: Own calculations.

Table 3. Membership scores of 22 OECD countries to seven lone mother activation models.

Lone mother activation model	Countries (overall membership score to the model)
<i>General Coercion</i>	Slovakia (0.72); United States (0.70); Latvia (0.69); Bulgaria (0.63); Lithuania (0.60); Italy (0.57); Poland (0.57); Czech Republic (0.56); Spain (0.53)
<i>Delayed Coercion</i>	Netherlands (0.58); United Kingdom (0.58); Germany (0.56); Australia (0.52)
<i>Care-Sensitive Coercion</i>	Slovenia (0.75); Portugal (0.72); Norway (0.54)
<i>Partial Activation</i>	Austria (0.57); France (0.55)
<i>Holistic Activation</i>	Denmark (0.55)
<i>Optional Activation</i>	Belgium (0.53); Sweden (0.52)
<i>Weak Activation</i>	Finland (0.56)

Notes: Membership scores are between 0 and 1. Scores greater than 0.50 indicate membership with higher scores signifying stronger membership.

Source: Own calculations.

seen as a behavioural problem. However, the subjection of lone mothers to compulsory activation is 'delayed' in this model by the prioritisation of mothers' caregiving roles while children are small. In Germany, lone mothers are not required to engage in activation programmes until their youngest child turns three and has a guaranteed place in kindergarten. In Australia, the Netherlands and the UK, lone mothers are exempt from employment requirements until children start primary school. Furthermore, once lone mothers become subject to compulsory activation in the *delayed coercion* model, demands on their job availability are tempered by the promotion of a part-time worker/carer model. In Australia, the Netherlands and the UK, lone mothers are permitted to restrict their job availability to part-time or school hours because of their caregiving responsibilities. Nevertheless, the under-provision of out-of-school care services and a short school day, which finishes before 3.00/3.30 pm and before lunch on Wednesdays and Fridays in the Netherlands, mean that many lone mothers may have little choice but to work part-time.

Western Germany similarly promotes a part-time worker/carer model for mothers subject to compulsory activation, with most pre-primary education services and primary schools finishing before lunchtime and just one-quarter of school-age children attending out-of-school care services (Plantenga and Remery, 2013; Marcus and Peter,

2015). However, full-time childcare services for pre-primary education and school-age children are more widespread in Eastern Germany. In Eastern Germany, 68 percent of three to five year olds have access to full-time day care. This compares to 25 percent of three to five year olds in Western Germany (Zabel, 2013). Eastern Germany also contains a greater concentration of all-day as opposed to half-day schools, and three-quarters of school age children are enrolled in after school services compared to just one-quarter in Western Germany (Plantenga and Remery, 2013; Zabel, 2013). Therefore, Eastern Germany arguably sits closer to the third model, *care-sensitive coercion*.

The *care-sensitive coercion* model contains Norway, Portugal and Slovenia. This model also emphasises welfare conditionality, but there are greater provisions for lone mothers to externalise their caregiving in order that they can meet such conditionality. Pre-primary education services are widespread and available predominantly on a full-time basis. In addition, primary school schedules are either consistent with a 40-hour working week (Portugal), or complemented by widespread out-of-school care services (Norway and Slovenia). So, while this model makes few specific provisions for lone mothers' particular circumstances, there is nevertheless widespread support for full-time maternal employment, which benefits lone mothers who wish and are able to be in employment.

The fourth lone mother activation model contains Austria and France. This model takes a more encompassing approach towards lone mother activation than the previous three models, recognising behavioural and structural barriers to employment. So, while lone mothers become subject to compulsory activation when children start pre-primary education, they are not necessarily compelled to take any job. Instead, they are permitted to participate in training and other programmes designed to help them secure better jobs. Still, this model is labelled *partial activation* to signify that policy is not particularly supportive of lone mothers' participation in full-time, regular jobs. Rather, it supports a part-time worker/carer role. Despite high enrolment rates in pre-primary education, services tend to be limited to part-time hours. Furthermore, most primary schools either operate on a half-day basis (Austria) or send children home during their two-hour lunch break (France). French schools are also shut on Wednesdays, with insufficient provision of childcare services to cover this closure (Plantenga and Remery, 2013).

The fifth model, *holistic activation*, also relies on a combination of human capital oriented and employment-first measures in order to activate lone mothers. However, childcare policies are more conducive to lone mothers' full-time employment than in the *partial activation* model. Denmark epitomises this model, where 88 percent of three to five

year olds are in full-time childcare and almost all school-age children attend out-of-school services that are complementary to the school day.

The sixth lone mother activation model contains Belgium and Sweden. It is labelled *optional activation* to signify that although formal care services for children of all ages are widespread, conditionality is 'light' by international standards with limited targeted policies for lone parents. In addition, training opportunities to facilitate lone mothers' career progression are generally lacking, and lone mothers in Sweden potentially face barriers in accessing available training programmes because of their childcare responsibilities. So, while there is policy support for maternal activation, policy does not explicitly set out to activate lone mothers.

The final model, *weak activation*, comprises Finland. As in the previous model, policies to address the activation of specifically lone mothers are generally lacking. However, childcare policies are not as activating as in the previous model. The availability of a home-care allowance until children turn three explicitly promotes lone mothers' withdrawal from employment while children are small. Just half of first-grade pupils and around one-quarter of second-grade pupils attend out-of-school services, although provision has improved in recent years (Plantenga and Remery, 2013). And, once children reach school age, parents can continue to receive a reduced home-care allowance until their youngest child is around nine, provided they work no longer than part-time hours (European Union, 2016). Overall then, family policies in Finland potentially serve to deactivate mothers.

3.6 Discussion and Implications for the Activation Literature

Since the late-1990s, increased attention within the mainstream welfare state literature to gender issues and 'new social risks', which arise most acutely for women, gives the impression that this literature is now sensitised to the particular situations of women. However, by examining how policies from across a range of fields potentially (de-)activate lone mothers as a 'litmus test' for how welfare states help or hinder the employment of all mothers, this paper illuminates several surprising results from the perspective of the mainstream activation literature which highlight its gender-blindness.

Most notably, the non-membership of most Nordic countries to the 'opportunities for training' set indicates that policies to develop mothers' human capital are not as extensive as predicted by the activation literature. This finding also goes against the

assumption of a single 'women-friendly' and gender-equal Nordic model of welfare that underpins many British and North American analyses of welfare states (Lister, 2009). While other studies similarly distance Norway from the human capital development approach (e.g. Lødemel and Trickey, 2000), Sweden's non-membership to this set is more surprising. Yet, as Bonoli (2012) argues, Sweden's attention from the mid-1970s shifted away from training and towards job creation schemes designed to keep unemployment down as a result of economic stagnation. Since the mid-1990s, pressures to accelerate transitions back into work, in a context of rising unemployment and mounting evidence of the ineffectiveness of training programmes, have kept training expenditure low (Andersson and Wärvik, 2012; Bonoli, 2012; OECD, 2015). Moreover, Sweden's non-membership to the 'opportunities for training' set also reflects mothers' disadvantaged access to training opportunities: of women who wanted to participate in training, 22 percent could not do so because of family responsibilities; the corresponding figure for men is 15 percent (Eurostat, 2011). Likewise, despite high training expenditure in Finland, family responsibilities prevent 27 percent of women from participating in training compared to 17 percent of men (Eurostat, 2011). These findings support evidence suggesting that despite high female employment rates, the division of domestic and care work remains highly gendered across the Nordics. Women's greater difficulties in accessing training might also contribute to explaining high rates of gender segregation across Nordic labour markets (e.g. Lister, 2009).

In addition, by incorporating childcare and education policies as indicators of activation effort, the analysis highlights how Finland stands out among the Nordics for the de-activating potential of its family policies. Since the 1980s, Finland has provided a home-care allowance to give 'parents' (read: mothers) with young children the 'choice' to stay at home until children turn three. Although both Norway and Sweden introduced similar schemes in 1998 and 2008 respectively, take-up in these countries is much lower than in Finland at 5 percent in Sweden and 25 percent in Norway compared to 52 percent in Finland (Ellingsæter, 2012). This is firstly because, as this analysis has shown, childcare services for under-threes are not as widespread in Finland as in other Nordic states. Second, unlike Norway and Sweden, Finland supplements the basic home-care allowance, which is worth about 10 percent of the average monthly wage rate, with generous financial 'top-ups', which vary according to family income and size (Ellingsæter, 2012). The relatively high costs of childcare in Finland compared to other Nordics only strengthen the financial incentives for women, who are typically the lower earners within dual-parent households, to take up the home-care allowance (OECD, 2016c). Third, whereas the home-care allowance has faced

strong opposition in Norway and Sweden due to gender equality concerns, support for familial care has undergone a resurgence in Finland (Meagher and Szebehely, 2012).

These factors, in a context of a gender-segregated labour market and gendered parental obligations, give strong incentives and pressures for mothers in Finland to take up the home-care allowance and therefore take long and potentially detrimental career breaks (Mahon, 2002; Plantenga and Remery, 2009). Thereafter, Finland, unlike other Nordic states, provides a 'flexible care allowance' for parents working part-time or not at all until children turn nine (European Union, 2016). The availability of this allowance, short pre-school and primary school days and only moderate provision of out-of-school care services, do little to encourage mothers' re-integration into full-time employment.

By zooming in on the treatment of specifically lone mothers, the analysis also highlights that the employment-first approach typical of Anglo-Saxon states is not imposed in Australia and the UK on lone mothers as strongly as on other jobseekers. In both countries, lone mothers are exempt from job-search requirements until children start primary school. And once they are deemed work-ready, lone mothers in the UK can limit their availability to jobs that are compatible with school hours, even if no such jobs are available locally. Similarly, lone mothers in Australia can restrict their job availability to 15 hours per week and may refuse employment in the absence of suitable or affordable childcare during school holidays. These policy features reflect stronger popular and political resistance in Australia and the UK to the erosion of income support for motherhood than in the US which, as this analysis shows, imposes strict employment-related conditions on lone mothers largely irrespective of their specific needs. This is rooted in historically higher female employment rates and less extensive state supports for maternalism in the US and stronger influence of conservative and racist discourses which blame various social ills on the supposed welfare dependency of black single mothers (Orloff, 2002).

The analysis also challenges the assumptions of mainstream analysis that Mediterranean and post-Soviet states are only weakly activating or focused on emphasising the duties and obligations of the unemployed. By treating the active dimensions of childcare and education policies as integrated components of the active welfare state, the analysis suggests that policies in Slovenia and Portugal are supportive of maternal employment. In fact, both countries are situated in the same lone mother activation model as Norway on account of their comprehensive childcare policies. Historical policy legacies help to explain these findings. In Portugal, the exodus of men to fight in the colonial wars during the 1960s and 1970s, in a context of revolution and strong economic growth, facilitated women's entry

into full-time employment and the expansion of childcare services (Torres, 2006; Tavora, 2012; Rosa et al., 2016). A strong work ethic has surrounded female employment ever since (Moss and Wall, 2007). Meanwhile, the Nordic model has provided the blueprint for Slovenia's childcare policies since the 1980s. Under communism, Slovenia was more open to Western influence and had greater autonomy over its policymaking than other Soviet states following the Yugoslavia–Soviet split in 1948. The aim of upholding gender equality, pedagogical goals, and a desire to keep female employment high for economic growth have kept childcare policies activating following the transition to a market economy (Korintus and Stropnik, 2009; Formánková and Dobrotić, 2011).

Overall, this study is a first step towards incorporating gender into comparative scholarship on activation. Placing women at the centre of activation scholarship is important given that the success of the adult-worker model depends on a gender equitable order, which both accommodates workers' caregiving responsibilities and enables women to access an independent wage through the market on equal terms to men (Fraser, 2000). To build on this work, future research should likewise pay greater attention to the presence (or absence) of specific provisions within labour market policies which account for women's fertility and caregiving. In addition, it should treat childcare and other policies beyond labour market ones alone which support women's employment as integrated components of the active welfare state. Moreover, as this analysis shows, future research needs to consider how policies in other fields potentially undermine the activation agenda's employment goals by de-activating women and possibly other groups of jobseekers.

However, the social policy literature must also take a broader perspective that moves beyond the focus on women as simply mothers. This is because women's labour market position continues to be undermined by gendered discrimination in the workplace and society at large that is about more than childbearing and caregiving. For instance, Moss-Racusin et al. (2012) sent out job application materials for a laboratory manager position to around 250 professors from across research-intensive universities in the US. Half of the applications carried the name Jennifer. The other half were identical, except that Jennifer's name changed to John. The researchers found that despite the identical career histories and qualifications of Jennifer and John, both male and female faculty rated John as more competent and offered him a 13 per cent higher starting salary than Jennifer on average. Hence, future research should become more aware of broader causes of gender inequality beyond motherhood and care to develop a more sophisticated critique of the activation agenda and social policy literature more widely.

[4]

Bringing Women on Board: Legislating Gender Balance in Top Jobs to Manage Women's 'New' Social Risks

Mainstream comparative scholars of the welfare state have paid increasing attention to gender since the late-1990s and 2000s. However, reflecting the dominance of a 'social investment' paradigm aimed at increasing women's employment and fertility, analysts have focused narrowly on women's access to (any) jobs, and the work/family reconciliation policies that enable women to have jobs and children. In turn, comparative welfare state research neglects women's underrepresentation in top board and executive positions and the gender stereotypes, homosocial reproduction, and opaque and informal recruitment procedures that underpin such inequality. The disadvantaged access of highly-skilled women to privileged labour market positions may seem beyond the remit of social policy, which is concerned with analysing 'social risk'. Yet, research shows that when women comprise a 'critical mass' of at least one-quarter of top managers, they are motivated and sufficiently powerful to influence the adoption of work/family and other female-friendly organisational policies and practices which benefit all women within the organisation. Hence, through increasing the female-friendliness of the workplace, gender boardroom quotas and other affirmative action policies that legislate for gender diversity at the top of organisations can contribute to addressing some of the social risks (e.g. work/family conflicts, in-work poverty) to which low- and middle-skilled women further down the organisational hierarchy are exposed. Accordingly, future research on gender and the welfare state should consider policies that mandate gender diversity in top management as key dimensions of analysis.

Introduction

Women have made significant inroads into management in recent decades. Across OECD countries, women now comprise almost one-third of middle and senior managers on average (OECD, 2017a). However, progress towards gender equity in the very top board and executive positions has been far slower, especially in the private sector. Across OECD countries, women still account for only 20 per cent of board members and one in 20 CEOs of the largest publicly listed private-sector companies on average (OECD, 2017b). No country is immune from this problem. This includes the ‘women-friendly’ Nordics where, despite recent improvements, just 4 per cent of the 103 largest publicly listed companies had a female CEO as of 2016 (European Institute for Gender Equality, 2017).

Yet, women’s underrepresentation in the board and executive positions has largely been overlooked by comparative social policy analysis, including feminist analyses.¹⁵ While welfare state scholars have taken up some of the themes for ‘gendering’ comparative social policy analysis, their focus has mainly been on women’s access to (any) jobs and the employment/family reconciliation policies that facilitate this (e.g. Esping-Andersen, 1999, 2009; Bonoli, 2013; Hemerijck et al., 2016). This reflects the spread of a social investment paradigm within comparative welfare state analysis since the late-1990s and early-2000s, which targets women’s fertility and labour power as part of a broader strategy to increase economic productivity, secure the future fiscal sustainability of welfare states, and reduce childhood poverty. As a result, mainstream comparative welfare state analysis not only overlooks the kinds of jobs that women are doing. It also underplays other sources of women’s employment disadvantages besides those linked to women’s reproductive roles and care work, but which are important for understanding slow progress towards gender diversity at the top of companies.

Women’s underrepresentation in high-status jobs is, of course, linked to the discrimination practised by employers in anticipating the greater statistical likelihood that women will take leave, reduce their hours, or withdraw their labour for caregiving (e.g. Estévez-Abe, 2005; Mandel and Semyonov, 2006). But there is also the issue of ‘plain old discrimination’ (Orloff, 2009b: p. 139). That is, despite decades of antidiscrimination legislation, deeply-engrained cultural stereotypes of gender continue to subtly influence hiring and promotion decisions and processes for board and executive positions (e.g. Koenig

¹⁵ Although Korpi et al. (2009, 2013) and Ellingsæter (2013) mention women’s underrepresentation on boards, they do not discuss or analyse this issue in depth.

et al., 2011). Furthermore, the natural tendency of people to select others who resemble themselves means that male dominance at the top of corporations simply reproduces itself over time (e.g. Cook and Glass, 2014b). These problems are exacerbated by the opaqueness and lack of formalisation of board and executive selection procedures (e.g. Sealy et al., 2009). Thus, women may be held back from reaching top management positions not simply because of the mother/caregiver role that they (are assumed to) occupy; they may also be held back *simply because they are a woman*.

Consequently, work/family policies alone are not enough for redressing gender imbalance at the very top of the labour market. This holds for antidiscrimination laws, too. This is because while antidiscrimination legislation prohibits firms from *excluding* women from selection processes for top jobs based on sex, it cannot guarantee that women will be *included* in such processes. In turn, subtle barriers that are not intentionally gendered, but which nevertheless undermine women's access to the most powerful positions, remain unchecked. For example, recruitment to board and executive positions typically draws on informal networks and contacts. Although not deliberately exclusory, women's weaker connections to (male-dominated) informal networks can exclude women from recruitment pools (Ibarra et al., 2013). Accordingly, more radical affirmative action policies which mandate the deliberate inclusion of women in top corporate positions are required to 'jump-start' the current 'gender stall' in women's progression to the very top corporate positions (Huffman et al., 2010: p. 274).

Against this background, I argue that considerations of gender within comparative welfare state research should be broadened to incorporate affirmative action policies that legislate for women's increased numerical representation in board and executive positions. At first glance, policies to improve the advancement of already advantaged women into privileged labour market positions may seem beyond the remit of social policy analysis. Arguably, they do not fit with dominant conceptions of the welfare state as 'the public management of social risks' (Esping-Andersen, 1999: 36), whereby 'social risk' encompasses important losses to income and/or impediments to labour force participation, such as unemployment or conflicts between earning and caregiving (Esping-Andersen, 1990; Taylor-Gooby, 2004a; Bonoli, 2005). Yet, I argue that by ensuring women comprise a 'critical mass' of top managers, gender boardroom quotas and other affirmative action policies that legislate for a gender balance in top management can help to address some of the social risks (e.g. in-work poverty, employment/care conflicts) to which women further down organisational hierarchies are disproportionately exposed. This is based on

evidence that gender creates a common interest that motivates women in top corporate positions to push for and influence the adoption of work/family and other 'women-friendly' organisational policies and practices, which benefit *all* women (Cohen and Huffman, 2007).

Crucially, it is a higher share of women in the very top board and executive positions, and not just management more generally, that is key. This is because the specialised skills, knowledge and experience required for board and executive positions make women in such positions harder to replace and more attractive to competing businesses. In turn, women in top management are more likely to have the bargaining power to push for organisational change. Hence, such policies as gender boardroom quotas are potentially valuable, but overlooked, strategies for getting companies to play a greater role in the provision of social policies in line with the stated goals of various governments from across Europe (Fleckenstein and Seeleib-Kaiser, 2011).

This paper is, therefore, a 'think-piece' rather than an empirical analysis. As such, its central aim is to expand considerations of which policies 'count' in the analysis of the gendered character of welfare states. Through highlighting the potential trickle-down benefits of gender diversity in top management for managing women's social risks at the bottom, the paper seeks to stimulate future empirical research that includes such policies as gender boardroom quotas as key dimensions of variation between welfare states. Indeed, the evidence that male dominance of top management underpins persistent gender inequality at lower levels of the labour market (e.g. Hultin and Szulkin, 2003; Cohen and Huffman, 2007) suggests that by occluding such measures as quotas, social policy analysis risks confirming the existing gender inequalities that result from women's overrepresentation in part-time, short-term and poorly paid jobs.

The next section sets the background to the paper by outlining considerations of gender within mainstream comparative welfare state research. In the third section, I synthesise the evidence that women's disadvantaged access to the very top jobs results from discrimination rooted not simply motherhood, but straightforward gender bias, too. Based on this evidence and the potential trickle-down benefits of women in top management for addressing women's social risks, I make the case in the fourth and fifth sections for considering affirmative action policies in analyses of gender and the welfare state. The sixth section qualifies this argument by discussing the potential role of institutional and organisational factors in conditioning the impacts of women top managers on occupational policies. The seventh section concludes.

Considerations of Gender in Comparative Welfare State Research

Since the late-1990s and early-2000s, comparative scholars of the welfare state have taken up some of the themes highlighted by feminists for 'gendering' social policy analysis (Orloff, 2009a). The new social risks literature (e.g. Hemerijck, 2002; Taylor-Gooby, 2004b; Bonoli, 2005; Vandebroek et al., 2011) highlights the importance of women's increased employment for explaining welfare state restructuring and women's greater poverty risks under post-industrialism. This literature argues that women's mass entry into employment, and the care deficit resulting from the decline of the stay-at-home mother and caregiver, have given rise to a set of so-called 'new' social risks. These risks include conflicts between having children and having a job, lone parenthood (motherhood), and having an elderly relative in need of care. Such risks make it more difficult for individuals, but especially women given the gendered division of family care, to access adequate incomes through employment. Women are also vulnerable to the additional new social risk of inadequate social security coverage, since they are more likely to follow an 'atypical' employment path that deviates from full-time, continuous employment due to, for example, childbearing and caregiving (Bonoli, 2005). For instance, part-time work and career interruptions often result in reduced pension entitlements in old-age (Bonoli, 2003b). While new social risks have always existed, their 'newness' derives from the fact that they now arise more frequently and affect more people than before (e.g. Cousins, 2005; Huber and Stephens, 2006; Eugster, 2010; Harsløf and Ulmestig, 2013).

A related framing within mainstream comparative welfare state research, which also attends to gender, is that of social investment. As in the new social risks discourse, addressing the apparent trade-off between motherhood and employment is the central gender issue in the social investment paradigm (Jenson, 2015). On the one hand, proponents of social investment argue that stimulating fertility is important for preventing a 'demographic crisis' amidst population ageing and increased longevity. On the other hand, mobilising women into employment is critical for expanding the tax-base given concomitant pressures on 'old' social risks policies, particularly pensions and healthcare (e.g. Esping-Andersen, 2002, 2009; Bonoli and Natali, 2012; Morel et al., 2012b; Hemerijck, 2013). Increasing maternal employment is also integral to the social investment's future-oriented and child-centred vision, as it provides a means of combatting childhood poverty and so giving children, who are prioritised as the citizen-workers of tomorrow, the best start in life (Jenson and Saint-Martin, 2006; Jenson, 2006). Consequently, Hemerijck et al. claim that

'social investment strongly advocates greater gender equality in labour markets and households as the means to support employment and fertility aspirations' (2016: p. 13).

In considering gender, then, mainstream comparative welfare state research has focused mainly on women's labour force participation rates, the ways in which women's family responsibilities might impede this, and how family policies can help to reduce the conflicts of working motherhood. As a result, they typically portray the Nordics as having the most comprehensive policies for women given their generous family policies. These countries are labelled highly 'defamilialising' on the basis that universal, high quality childcare services reduce the family's care burden, so that women can participate in employment. In addition, 'activating' parental leaves, with incentives for fathers to take leave, as well as generous family allowances enable women to 'reconcile' earning and childbearing. In turn, highly-educated women who want to have children are not forced to sacrifice their careers. At the same time, affordable public childcare services and the secure and flexible jobs created by a large public sector increase employment rates among low- and medium-skilled mothers, who might otherwise be unable to participate in employment (Esping-Andersen, 1999; e.g. Esping-Andersen, 2009; van Kersbergen and Hemerijck, 2012; see also e.g. Korpi et al., 2013).

Indeed, demographic studies find that the Nordics have been the most successful of the welfare state regime types in reversing declining fertility rates *and* securing higher female employment rates in line with social investment goals (e.g. de Laat and Sevilla-Sanz, 2006; Thévenon and Gauthier, 2011; Goldscheider et al., 2015). Although English-speaking countries have also defamilialised to an extent, they have done so largely through the market rather than the state (Esping-Andersen, 1999, 2009; Bonoli, 2013). Mainly market provision of care services and limited parental leave provisions have, therefore, not produced the same advancements in terms of female employment (e.g. Esping-Andersen, 2002, 2005, 2009; Hemerijck, 2013; Esping-Andersen, 2015). Meanwhile, Continental, but especially Southern European welfare states, are considered 'laggards' when it comes to women-friendly policies (e.g. Bonoli, 2006: p. 16; Esping-Andersen, 2009: p. 23). A lack of childcare services and other work/family policies effectively forces a trade-off between motherhood and careers, with lower-educated women opting for the former, and highly-educated women opting for the latter (Esping-Andersen, 2009).

Women's lower employment rates because of the gendered division of care work is undoubtedly a principal source of unequal gender relations, and should be at the centre of any gender-sensitive analysis of the welfare state. Feminists have long highlighted

the value of women's participation in employment for granting them autonomy over their lives and bodies. By providing women with an alternative source of income to their husbands or partners, paid employment has the potential to strengthen women's bargaining power or 'voice' within relationships, and enable women to leave or 'exit' from dangerous or adverse ones (e.g. Orloff, 1993; Hobson, 1994; Ruggles, 1997; Schoen et al., 2002). And, while the proportions of women delaying childbearing or remaining childfree have increased (see e.g. Miettinen et al., 2015; Kreyenfeld and Konietzka, 2017), it remains the case that most women are mothers by the end of the reproductive period. Across Europe, 86 per cent of women born in 1970 has had at least one child (Sobotka, 2017). Therefore, policies to support working motherhood matter not only for securing women's economic independence through paid work, but because they are relevant to most, rather than only certain, groups of women (Brush, 2002). Consequently, mainstream and feminist social policy research tends to take provisions for working mothers and male breadwinner/dual-breadwinner policy logics as indicators of gendered social rights (e.g. Lewis, 1992; Gornick et al., 1997; Morgan, 2009; Daly, 2011; Kowalewska, 2017).

Still, the narrowing of considerations of gender within mainstream comparative social policy analysis to women's employment rates and the employment-enabling dimensions of family policies has attracted criticism from feminist scholars. On the one hand, in focusing on 'defamilialising' care from the family to the market and/or state, mainstream scholars underplay the original feminist intent behind the concept of defamilialisation of promoting a more equal distribution of care responsibilities *within* the family, too (e.g. Stratigaki, 2004; Lewis, 2006; Saraceno, 2015). Around the world, women continue to spend more time on domestic care work than men, regardless of their own and their partner's employment status (e.g. OECD, 2014). On the other hand, in focusing on maximising women's labour supply, mainstream social policy analysts fail to problematise the *kinds* of jobs that women are getting (Razavi, 2014). Even with comprehensive work/family policies, market and/or state services can never fully substitute for the care work provided by women in the home given the complexity of social needs and care relationships and their emotional and personal dimensions (Folbre and Nelson, 2000; Lewis and Giullari, 2005). Consequently, women continue to be overrepresented in 'flexible' forms of employment that fit around their caregiving responsibilities, but are often part-time, short-term and poorly paid (e.g. Lewis, 2001a; Lewis and Giullari, 2005; Razavi, 2014; Saraceno, 2015).

In addition, in focusing so strongly on the benefits of the Nordic model for generating high levels of female employment and fertility and even some progress towards redistributing care work within the family (e.g. Esping-Andersen, 2005), mainstream social policy analysis overlooks the Nordic gender equality 'paradox' (Mandel and Semyonov, 2006). While a large public sector provides less-educated women with relatively good working conditions, and a progressive taxation system and compressed wage structure produce small gender income gaps and low poverty rates by international standards (e.g. Korpi, 2000; Shalev, 2008; Evertsson et al., 2009), the Nordic welfare model nevertheless has adverse effects for highly-skilled women. Mandel and Semyonov (2006) argue that Nordic-style employment/family reconciliation policies and strong job protection during periods of leave make it harder for women to progress to managerial positions. By increasing the statistical probability that women will take leave or reduce their hours for caregiving, such policies potentially motivate employers to discriminate against women when hiring for managerial positions. This is because employers typically make costly investments in developing managers' firm-specific knowledge, and so may be reticent to hire or promote workers who are less likely to follow a full-time, continuous pattern of employment. In addition, women who make use of lengthy parental leaves may miss out on the acquisition of firm-specific skills necessary for progressing to managerial positions. What is more, by offering a plethora of female-typed occupations, family-friendly working conditions and job security, the large Scandinavian welfare state makes it less likely that highly-skilled women will compete with men for jobs in the private sector, which typically offer better pay and opportunities for progression (Estévez-Abe, 2005; Mandel and Semyonov, 2005; see also Estévez-Abe, 2006; Shalev, 2008).

Paradoxically, weak employment protection and residual family policies in liberal welfare regimes, together with extensive antidiscrimination legislation, mean that women's chances of reaching managerial positions are higher than in Nordic countries (see also e.g. Chang, 2000; Birkeland and Sandnes, 2003; Mandel, 2012; Blau and Kahn, 2013; Grönlund and Magnusson, 2016). Indeed, despite some gender desegregation across Nordic labour markets since the late-1990s (e.g. Bettio and Verashchagina, 2009; Ellingsæter, 2013), women's share of management stood at 34 per cent on average across the five Nordic countries in 2014 compared to 44 per cent in the United States (OECD, 2017a).

What About Gender Inequity in the Very Top Jobs?

Yet, as Korpi et al. (2009, 2013) highlight, the cross-national patterns identified by paradox theory do not hold when we differentiate by level of management and zoom in on the very top levels, in which economic decision-making and power are concentrated. Rather, progress towards closing gender disparities in these positions has been sclerotic across *all* countries. For instance, while the Nordics have made progress towards increasing women's share of board positions, only 4 per cent of publicly listed companies in Scandinavia has a female CEO compared with 6 per cent of US Fortune 500 companies (Catalyst, 2017; European Institute for Gender Equality, 2017). Moreover, the commonality of women's underrepresentation in top jobs to both residual and 'women-friendly' welfare states suggests that, contrary to the assumptions of most welfare state analyses, women's employment disadvantages are not merely a function of family policies. So, while women in less family-friendly welfare states may find it easier to reach managerial positions because their caregiving is not as institutionalised, the data indicate that women in residual welfare states find it just as difficult as their Nordic counterparts to access the very top jobs.

Hence, to existing feminist critiques of mainstream welfare state research, I add two additional dimensions. Firstly, as discussed, I argue that mainstream analysis is limited in its occlusion of women's underrepresentation in the very top labour market positions. Secondly, by overlooking this aspect of gender inequality and treating work/family policies as a panacea to women's employment disadvantages, I argue that mainstream analysis neglects that gender, and not simply motherhood and women's care work, also underpins women's disadvantaged employment position. Before presenting the evidence for this second point, I outline the limitations of individual-level explanations for women's underrepresentation in top management.

The Limits of Individual-Level Explanations

Explanations for women's underrepresentation in labour market positions carrying higher status, wages and prestige have traditionally focused on individual-level or supply-side factors. The argument that there is a 'pipeline problem' holds that a lack of women in the top jobs results from too few women with the appropriate experience and education. This is apparently a consequence of women's lower productivity and career interruptions due to their domestic and care responsibilities (e.g. Mincer and Polachek, 1974; Becker, 1985).

An alternative supply-side argument claims that women's underrepresentation in leadership positions is rooted in their different preferences and career choices. Most notably, Hakim (2000, 2006) argues that women's stronger desire to be with their families means that they are less likely to opt for high-ranking jobs, since the travel and 24/7 availability required are difficult to reconcile with family life. Other scholars similarly argue that because women place less value than men on the 'extrinsic' aspects of paid work (e.g. higher wage, prestige), women are less likely to pursue the top jobs which carry these benefits (e.g. Marini et al., 1996; Bobbitt-Zeher, 2007; Diekmann et al., 2010; Weisgram et al., 2011).

Yet, these supply-side explanations are not well supported by the empirical evidence. For a start, the convergence of men and women on indicators of human capital over the last few decades undermines the plausibility of the pipeline problem (Carli and Eagly, 2001; Eagly and Karau, 2002). In Europe and the US, women now comprise a greater share of graduates than men, including for degrees in business (Terjesen et al., 2015). Claims of an undersupply of women with the 'right' backgrounds for top management jobs are also undermined by women's increased share of managerial positions (Carli and Eagly, 2001; Eagly and Karau, 2002). True, women managers remain overrepresented in stereotypically 'feminine' staff/support roles (e.g. human resources and public relations) and are underrepresented in the line management roles that are considered necessary for attaining board and executive positions (e.g. European Commission, 2011; Teigen, 2015). But, as Higgs (2003) argues, the skills gained from staff/support roles, such as customer care, can be valuable additions to the boardroom and executive suite. Therefore, although women remain outnumbered in line management, this does not mean that there is not an adequate supply of adequately qualified women for board and executive positions. Arguably, the criteria used to determine suitability for such positions are exclusory and inadequate.

Meanwhile, preference theory is undermined by the increasing numbers of women who have entered into male-dominated and apparently non-family-friendly professions, such as medicine, law and business, which often require geographic mobility and around-the-clock availability (Mann and DiPrete, 2013). Additionally, several studies find no gender differences among managers in aspirations to the very top jobs, even after controlling for women's lower confidence in reaching such jobs (e.g. Casserir and Reskin, 2000; Catalyst, 2004; Litzky and Greenhaus, 2007). Preference theory also fails to explain how women with identical employment aspirations as men, and no children or desire of

having them, still earn less than men with the same educational and employment backgrounds (e.g. Manning and Swaffield, 2008) and are less likely to reach executive positions (e.g. Carter and Silva, 2010).

Stereotypes and 'Homosocial Reproduction'

So, what else might contribute to women's underrepresentation in top management, including in countries with residual family policies and high proportions of women in lower levels of management? A vast sociological and social psychological literature suggests that, despite changing norms and antidiscrimination legislation, (unfounded) cultural stereotypes regarding gender differences in leadership ability still impact negatively on evaluations of women for top positions. In reviewing evidence from 40 studies conducted across a range of institutional contexts, Koenig et al. (2011) find that perceptions of top managers as more similar to men than women, and as more masculine than feminine, have remained steadfast since the 1970s. So, traits stereotypically ascribed to men continue to be associated with the characteristics considered important for successful leadership (e.g. competitiveness, decisiveness, dominance and self-confidence). Conversely, traits stereotypically attributed to women (e.g. being 'nice', passive, submissive or timid) are widely regarded as incompatible with top management positions (e.g. Schein, 1973, 1975, 2001; Eagly and Carli, 2007a; Schein, 2007; Eisaid and Eisaid, 2012; Paris and Decker, 2012).

The association between men and leadership is deeply engrained from childhood (Dunham et al., 2016) and reinforced by media and news programming, hearsay, and passive exposure to gender-stereotypical attitudes, beliefs and roles (Dasgupta, 2013). For example, in a study of 120 films targeted at children and teenagers from across 11 countries, Smith et al. (2014) found that only 14 per cent of a total of 79 characters working as CEOs were women. Similarly, research shows that whereas media coverage of women politicians tends to emphasise their clothing, appearance and personality traits, coverage of male politicians focuses on their public policy stances and leadership ability (e.g. Kahn, 1994; Devitt, 2002). Consequently, a wealth of empirical studies indicates that the judgements of even well-intentioned individuals who consider themselves as gender-egalitarians can be influenced by gender stereotypes on a subconscious level (e.g. Rudman and Kiliansk, 2000; Eagly and Karau, 2002; Nosek et al., 2002; Eagly and Carli, 2007a; Moss-Racusin et al., 2012; Ibarra et al., 2013).

Consequently, despite their actual skills, qualifications and backgrounds, women can face greater difficulties than men in accessing board and executive positions because of a perceived 'lack of fit' (Heilman, 1983, 2001, 2012) or 'incongruity' (Eagly and Karau, 2002) between women's assumed competencies and the requirements of such high-status positions. In other words, a-priory gendered assumptions about personal qualities and levels of competency produce greater expectations of failure and lower expectations of success when it comes to evaluating women for leadership positions, thereby dampening their hiring and promotion chances (e.g. Eagly and Karau, 2002; Koenig et al., 2011; Whelan, 2013).

Studies examining the impact of stereotypes on evaluations of women for other similarly male-dominated and male-typed occupations provide evidence of this. For instance, Moss-Racusin et al. (2012) sent out job application materials for a laboratory manager position to around 250 professors across research-intensive universities in the United States. Half of the CVs carried the name Jennifer. The other half were identical, except that Jennifer's name changed to John. The researchers found that despite the identical career histories and qualifications of Jennifer and John, both male and female faculty rated John as more competent. They also offered John a 13 per cent higher starting salary, on average, than Jennifer.

Similarly, the success of 'blind' auditions for increasing women's representation among top orchestras in the United States illustrates how gender-career associations can undermine women's progression to favoured jobs. During the 1970s, many of the conductors responsible for handpicking musicians to fill vacant orchestra positions simply did not trust the skills and abilities of female musicians as much as those of their male counterparts. Many conductors believed that women were too 'temperamental' and 'demanding', and that a larger proportion of women in an orchestra would inevitably produce a 'poorer' quality of sound (Goldin and Rouse, 1997, 2000). To combat this, orchestras began introducing blind auditions, whereby screens concealed auditionees' identities from the jury. Goldin and Rouse (2000) found that including at least one 'blind' round of auditions increased the likelihood that a woman would be hired by 30 per cent. By the mid-1990s, women's share of top orchestra positions in the US had increased from 5 to 25 per cent (Goldin and Rouse, 1997).

Perceptions of 'lack of fit' or 'incongruity' can, of course, affect women at all levels of management. However, they are particularly acute at the very top of the labour market given the extreme lack of gender diversity among stakeholders involved in

appointing individuals to elite positions. This is because research on 'homosocial reproduction' (Kanter, 1977) suggests that decision-makers are more likely to favour same-group members and evaluate out-group members negatively. In this vein, evidence shows that the mostly male board members and CEOs involved in the process of selecting candidates to top corporate positions tend to seek out, find, and ultimately hire other men who resemble themselves (e.g. Doldor et al., 2012; Tienari et al., 2013; Cook and Glass, 2014a). Indeed, a study of US Fortune 500 companies over a 20-year period revealed that firms with an all-male or predominantly male board were considerably more likely to appoint a male CEO than companies with a boards comprising at least one-quarter women (Cook and Glass, 2014b).

'Social Identity Threat' and Role Models

At the same time, the prevailing association of masculinity and men with top management positions, alongside women's lower levels of confidence in their abilities (e.g. Durbin, 2016), may cause women to hold themselves back from pursuing such jobs. Research on 'social identity threat' suggests that when we are aware of stereotypes, we are more likely to conform to them in the hope that others will evaluate us positively (Steele and Aronson, 1995; Boucher et al., 2015). For instance, when a group of female undergraduates in a Canadian experiment were shown gender-stereotypical advertisements, they were less likely than women who had been exposed to gender-neutral advertisements to express an interest in leading a subsequent group task. However, this difference disappeared when the group exposed to gender-stereotypical advertisements was told that prior research had found no sex differences in leadership ability (Davies et al., 2005).

The dearth of female role models in top management can also deter women from seeking such positions (Ibarra et al., 2013). The importance of role models is illustrated in the example of Indian local elections. In 1993, 5 per cent of elected local leaders across India were women; however, by 2000, women accounted for 40 per cent of local leaders. This followed the introduction of a quota mandating that 40 per cent of local seats be reserved for a woman (Beaman et al., 2009; Beaman et al., 2012). What is more, the quota also had role model effects for other women. Research found that female villagers in seats with a woman leader were 25 per cent more likely to speak at village meetings than their counterparts in non-reserved seats (Beaman et al., 2010). Furthermore, adolescent girls living in villages in which the seat had been reserved for a woman in two election cycles spent less time on household chores and were more likely to want to delay marriage than

girls in never-reserved seats. Girls' parents in reserved seats also had higher educational aspirations for their children than parents in never-reserved seats, while gender gaps in educational attainment were also narrower in twice-reserved seats (Beaman et al., 2012).

A similar study found that one year after starting college, women attending colleges with a greater proportion of female professors were less likely to hold gender-stereotypic beliefs regarding leadership than their counterparts attending colleges with few female professors (Dasgupta and Asgari, 2004). Such studies suggest that women's underrepresentation in prestigious jobs can become a self-fulfilling prophecy. That is, a lack of female role models in top management, and the resulting dissociation of women with leadership, can deter other women from seeking these positions. In turn, women remain outnumbered in board and executive positions, thereby reinforcing the idea that men make better leaders and reproducing a lack of female role models (Ibarra et al., 2013).

Informal and Opaque Selection Procedures

Although not explicitly gendered or designed intentionally to shut women out, certain features of organisational hiring and promotion procedures for top management can advantage men while putting women at a systemic disadvantage (Ibarra et al., 2013). In particular, the reliance of recruitment to executive and board positions on personal recommendations and informal networks, rather than open advertising of positions¹⁶, can disadvantage women (Sealy et al., 2009; Davies, 2011). This is because, on the one hand, women are less likely than men to use networks for self-promotion or career progression, and to instead use them as a source of social support and friendship (e.g. Ibarra, 1992; Forret and Dougherty, 2004; Ballantine et al., 2016). On the other hand, women are less likely to have a mentor or sponsor who can help them reach top positions (e.g. Durbin, 2016). Moreover, women tend to have weaker network connections in the first place (Ibarra et al., 2013). The persistence of the 'old boys' network', whereby the most influential

¹⁶ However, even when executive positions are openly advertised, they can still be heavily gender-biased in their wording. For instance, a study of executive job advertisements in Denmark found that most desired traits or competencies described in executive advertisements were associated with traditional masculine attributes (e.g. 'natural authority', 'robust', 'resulted-oriented') (Askehave and Korning Zethsen, 2014). Studies have shown that such masculine wording for male-dominated jobs can deter women from applying, as it can reinforce women's fears that they will not 'fit in' (e.g. Gaucher et al., 2011).

networks almost always contain solely men and centre on masculine activities, can make it difficult for women to break into them (e.g. Oakley, 2000; Sealy et al., 2009; Stead and Elliot, 2009; Dhir, 2015). The 2001 lawsuit against Wal-Mart Stores in the United States highlighted the problem of managerial meetings at strip clubs and 'Hooters' restaurants, in addition to the organisation of events for management around stereotypically male themes (e.g. football). One female executive even received feedback that she would probably not advance up the organisational hierarchy if she did not hunt or fish (Eagly and Carli, 2007b).

An additional aspect of board and executive selection procedures that can inadvertently hinder women is their opaqueness. The process of selecting executive and board directors not only relies heavily on personal contacts, but typically lacks clear and defined criteria for assessing candidates (e.g. Higgs, 2003; Sealy et al., 2009; Davies, 2011). For instance, a cross-national study of 'head-hunters', who identify, appraise and recruit people for top positions on behalf of corporations, found that most head-hunters picked candidates based on their 'gut feeling', rather than formalised testing or standardised criteria (Tienari et al., 2013). Such a lack of clear, pre-defined criteria by which all candidates can be assessed allows for decision-makers' subjective biases to cloud their judgement (Highhouse, 2008). This might be through, for example, focusing on information that confirms decision-makers' initial (and potentially biased) impressions (Nickerson, 1998). Alternatively, decision-makers may unintentionally give more weight to the skills demonstrated by a 'typical' (i.e. male) candidate, even if a 'non-typical' candidate (i.e. a woman) is equally qualified (Uhlmann and Cohen, 2005).

A Case for Affirmative Action

To summarise: deeply-engrained gender stereotypes, which cast women as innately less capable of effective leadership than men, continue to influence patterns of interaction at the top of corporations to the detriment of women (e.g. Ibarra et al., 2013). At the same time, the natural tendency of people to select others who resemble themselves means that, without intervention, male dominance at the board and executive levels simply reproduces itself over time (e.g. Kanter, 1977). These problems are exacerbated by opaque and informal board and executive selection procedures (e.g. Davies, 2011). While not deliberately exclusory, such procedures nevertheless place women at an unfair disadvantage because of broader gender-based barriers (e.g. Ibarra et al., 2013).

The foregoing literature suggests that, while important, antidiscrimination legislation does not go far enough for reducing gender disparity in high-status jobs. This is

because while firms are prohibited from not hiring a woman candidate for a board position based on her sex under antidiscrimination law, this is no guarantee that a woman will be considered for the job in the first place. Indeed, the evidence indicates that without proactive affirmative action policies which deliberately favour women for board and executive positions, invisible and often unintentional barriers that shut women out of the boardroom and executive suite will persist.

Why Affirmative Action Policies ‘Count’ for Social Policy Analysis

Affirmative action policies designed to get more women into the very top labour market positions are not typically considered a dimension of variation between welfare states within comparative social policy research. This is seemingly because welfare state research is concerned with the management of social risks (Esping-Andersen, 1999). Providing coverage against social risks is important for reducing poverty and ensuring social solidarity given that they affect large swathes of the population (Esping-Andersen, 1990; Taylor-Gooby, 2004a; Bonoli, 2005). Accordingly, most comparative studies of social policy measure welfare effort by the generosity and comprehensiveness of fiscal transfers designed to reduce income poverty and inequality (e.g. Esping-Andersen, 1990; Goodin et al., 1999). More recently, social policy analysis has also included social services, such as education and child and elder care services, which ensure a minimum standard of wellbeing and/or enable labour force participation in line with the ‘activation’ agenda (e.g. Esping-Andersen, 1999; Bambra, 2007; Jensen, 2008; Wendt, 2009; West and Nikolai, 2013). Certain scholars additionally highlight the growing importance of market regulation as a form of state social provision amidst pressures to reduce and reform social spending under post-industrialism (see e.g. Gilbert, 2005; Seeleib-Kaiser, 2008; Mabbett, 2011). Accordingly, regulatory policies that provide economic security for (low) wage-earners (e.g. minimum wage laws, private pensions regulations), or enable continuity of employment (e.g. statutory maternity and parental leaves) have been incorporated into mainstream welfare state research (e.g. Bonoli, 2003, 2013; Bridgen and Meyer, 2009).

So, whether measured by income transfers, services or regulations, the focus of mainstream comparative social policy analysis is on policies to address social risk. In contrast, gender-based barriers to reaching the top jobs affect such a small subsection of advantaged women only, who are typically already in well-paying and high-quality jobs. Hence, some might argue that because such policies cannot produce the same benefits in

terms of poverty reduction and enhanced social inclusion and solidarity as social risk policies, they are beyond the concern of social policy analysis.

Yet, I argue that affirmative action policies designed to increase women's share of positions at the very top of organisations are just as important to the character and quality of welfare states as social risk policies. This is because redistributing the gendered division of power and decision-making within organisations can have positive 'trickle-down' benefits for other women, including those at lower echelons of organisations who are vulnerable to the 'new' social risks associated with post-industrialism. Research into the potential trickle-down benefits of having more women in positions of organisational power is still nascent, with most studies focusing on the proportion of women in total management without differentiating between the different levels of management and authority. Nevertheless, a growing body of studies indicates that gender creates a common interest that motivates women in top corporate positions to act in ways that enhance the working conditions, pay and career prospects of women further down the organisational hierarchy (Cohen and Huffman, 2007).

In this vein, studies suggest that female managers and board members help to narrow gender wage gaps among subordinates (e.g. Hultin and Szulkin, 2003; Joshi et al., 2006; Cardoso and Winter-Ebmer, 2010; Hensvik, 2014), especially among the lowest skilled (Abendroth et al., 2017). What is more, these gains do not come at a cost to men, as female management is also associated with (albeit smaller) wage increases for male workers (Joshi et al., 2006). Studies that distinguish between different levels of management have found that these positive trickle-down effects on gender wage gaps are strongest when more women reach high-status managerial positions (Cohen and Huffman, 2007; Hirsch, 2013). This may be because female top managers have greater power than lower level managers to influence firms to monitor, and undertake actions to reduce, gender pay inequalities. In addition, women board members and executives may have a say in the establishment of pay rates for different kinds of jobs within organisations, including female-dominated ones (Hultin and Szulkin, 2003; Kulik and Metz, 2017).

Another mechanism through which women in top corporate positions can contribute to narrowing gender pay gaps is by improving the entry into, and retention of, good jobs among female subordinates. A growing body of evidence finds that an increase in women's share of top management is associated with higher proportions of women in lower and middle management positions (e.g. Kurtulus and Tomaskovic-Devey, 2012; Skaggs et al., 2012; Stainback et al., 2016). Women in the top ranks of organisations can provide

greater social networking and mentoring opportunities for women below them (e.g. Hultin and Szulkin, 2003; Stainback et al., 2016). In addition, gender balance in the upper echelons of organisations can reduce the salience of sex as a social category at all levels of the organisation (Ely, 1995). This is important given that gender-career stereotypes often underpin the unequal distribution of rewards between men and women within organisations, with employers tending to reserve jobs carrying more prestigious titles and higher wages for men (e.g. Ely, 1995; Konrad et al., 2008). Consistent with this theory, evidence shows that the segregation of men and women into different types of jobs is less marked in firms with more gender balanced management structures (Hultin and Szulkin, 2003).

Furthermore, organisations approaching a gender balance in top management typically provide more comprehensive work/family and other 'women-friendly' workplace practices and policies (e.g. Ingram and Simons, 1995; Bloom et al., 2011). Crucially, it is women's share of management positions, and not simply the proportion of women in an organisation overall, that underpins this association (e.g. Pasamar and Alegre, 2015). As Ingram and Simons (1995) argue, women at lower ranks of organisations may be perceived as replaceable if their jobs are low-skilled. Hence, these women's bargaining power is very limited. In contrast, women in the highest-ranking positions, for which highly specialised skills, knowledge and experience are required, should have greater bargaining power to push for occupational policies because these women are perceived as harder to replace and more valuable by organisations (Ingram and Simons, 1995; den Dulk et al., 2014). At the same time, a greater share of women in top ranking positions might motivate firms to expand their women-friendly policies in order to retain female talent at the top, but which benefit all women (Ingram and Simons, 1995; Dreher, 2003). Indeed, Dreher (2003) examined 72 large corporations in the United States and found that as women's share of executive positions improved, so did the provision of such work-life human resource policies as flexitime, job sharing and work-at-home arrangements.

Overall, then, this research indicates that women in the highest labour market positions will potentially act in ways that benefit their female subordinates, including women in the very lowest ranks of organisations, for whom social risks arise most acutely. On the one hand, by encouraging the retention and promotion of subordinate women and helping to narrow gender wage gaps among lower levels, women in positions of organisational power can contribute to raising the incomes of women in low-wage positions. This can have important ramifications not only for reducing women's risk of in-

work poverty. As a wealth of feminist theories of the welfare state highlights, it can also protect women against the various risks associated with financial dependence on husbands and partners, such as domestic violence (e.g. Orloff, 1993; Shaver, 1994; O'Connor et al., 1999). While domestic violence against women by men is a problem that cuts across social class, research has shown that it is most acute among low-income women, and that women who seek refuge in shelters are often unemployed, underemployed, or poor (Zad, 2013).

On the other hand, women in the very top positions may successfully push for family-friendly organisational policies that help to reduce the 'new' social risk of conflicts between earning and caregiving, which fall disproportionately on low-wage women unable to afford private solutions. By extension, it is plausible that women board members and executives might use their power and influence to extend occupational pension entitlements to part-time workers or very low-earners, who may not ordinarily qualify. This can contribute to protecting women against the risk of inadequate social security coverage in old age, to which they are especially susceptible (Bonoli, 2005).

Achieving a 'Critical Mass' of Women in Top Management: The Case for Gender Boardroom Quotas

Of course, the idea that women in top management will improve organisations' provision of women-friendly policies assumes that they have the power to do so (Cohen and Huffman, 2007). On this issue, evidence shows that the trickle-down benefits of having more women in positions of organisational power appear only once women comprise a 'critical mass' at the top (Kulik et al., 2016). Social contact theory (Kanter, 1977) posits that as sex ratios in decision-making positions approach a balance, women in elite positions can begin to exert meaningful influence over organisational policies and environments. This is because greater diversity reduces the salience of differences between majority-group members (men) and minority-group members (women). Consequently, women are less prone to being denigrated as 'tokens'. In turn, they are more likely to be included in the informal networks and activities in which important socialisation happens, form coalitions with one another, and garner respect from male peers. As a result, women board members and executives may feel less pressure to minimise their differences from men or reduce their visibility by avoiding 'speaking out'. Accordingly, they can contribute to shaping organisational practices and policies in ways that improve conditions for women below them (Dreher, 2003; Elstad and Ladegard, 2012; Stainback et al., 2016). This is bolstered by research suggesting that being surrounded by, and receiving support from, women at the

same level help to increase female managers' willingness to advocate for gender equality (e.g. Cohen et al., 1998; Dutton et al., 2002).

Nevertheless, it is also possible that women in the top echelons of organisations are not motivated to push for policies that improve conditions for those below them. Some literature suggests that in seeking to advance their own careers, women managers may refrain from promoting women-friendly policies and exhibit favouritism towards male subordinates. Female managers may behave in this way to 'fit in' with the male-dominated hierarchy and distance themselves from 'women's' issues, in the hope that they will be treated equally (e.g. Penner and Toro-Tulla, 2010; Derks et al., 2011; Ellemers and Haslam, 2011; Maume, 2011; Rhoton, 2011; Derks et al., 2016). Furthermore, women in senior positions may be unsympathetic to work/family conflicts faced by their subordinates, or less willing to acknowledge or seek to reduce gender-based barriers if they themselves had to overcome these various disadvantages to rise to the top. Indeed, they may view affirmative action policies as creating an 'unfair' advantage for other women, especially if they themselves had to make personal sacrifices for their own careers, such as in relation to childbearing decisions or relationships (e.g. Stroebe et al., 2009; Derks et al., 2011; Maume, 2011; Derks et al., 2016).

But, again, numbers appear to be important. Evidence suggests that, by reducing the salience of sex, a critical mass of women in top positions means that these women are less likely to feel compelled to disassociate from their gender for fear that they will be judged negatively in light of gender stereotypes (Kulik et al., 2016). For instance, Ryan et al. (2012) carried out an experiment asking male and female professionals to rate the likelihood that they would provide support and mentorship to subordinates. The researchers found that 'token' women, defined as those working in environments in which females comprised less than one-quarter of professionals, were more likely to favour a male subordinate over an equally qualified female subordinate. In contrast, women working in environments approaching a gender balance offered equal amounts of support to male and female subordinates.

Furthermore, any potentially null or negative effects for gender equality of having more women in management are less likely to apply when it comes to women's share of the very top jobs. This is because women executive and board members have typically (almost) reached the pinnacles of their careers. Hence, personal career ambitions are less likely to be pressing issues that motivate them to distance themselves from their gender. Indeed, several studies based on interviews with women in top corporate positions in

Norway following the introduction of mandatory gender boardroom quotas found that most, if not all, female directors strongly support such radical affirmative action policies, especially if they themselves had experienced discrimination on their way to the top (e.g. Groysberg and Bell, 2013; Seierstad, 2013; Dhir, 2015). What is more, Seeleib-Kaiser and Fleckenstein (2009) find that managers tend to be 'protagonists' for firm-level family policies once they perceive of such policies as beneficial for business. Hence, women executive and board members with first-hand experience of work/family conflicts may actually be the greatest advocates of occupational family policies that make it easier to recruit and retain quality staff at lower levels.

To achieve a critical mass, evidence suggests that firms need to attain at least 23-40 per cent of women in top positions (Kanter, 1977; Cohen et al., 1998; Erkut et al., 2008; Konrad et al., 2008; Torchia et al., 2010; Torchia et al., 2011). Governments can play an important role in achieving this end, as evidenced by the success of compulsory gender boardroom quota legislation across a range of welfare state and gender regimes. For instance, women's share of board membership across large publicly listed firms¹⁷ rose from 8 per cent to 33 per cent between 2004 and 2016 in European countries that introduced compulsory gender boardroom quota legislation affecting such companies, to the extent that women now comprise a critical mass of board members in each of these countries (excluding Spain). In contrast, women's share of board seats across publicly listed firms in countries without quota legislation for private sector companies rose, on average, from 11 to just 17 per cent in this same period (Figure 5). The case in favour of quotas is further buttressed by the findings of Sojo et al. (2016) who, through a correlation analysis of 91 countries, find that countries with legislated numerical targets or quotas for female board representation had been most effective at increasing women's board representation.

While supply-side initiatives and voluntary measures on the demand side (e.g. recommendations and self-regulation) can also deliver change, progress towards gender balance on boards is far slower and more limited than under compulsory quotas (Armstrong and Walby, 2012; Labelle et al., 2015). For instance, Norway initially sought to bring more women onto boards through mentoring and training programmes and providing businesses with databases of board-ready women; however, substantial improvements in

¹⁷ Data cover the largest publicly listed firms in business and finance only.

BRINGING WOMEN ON BOARD

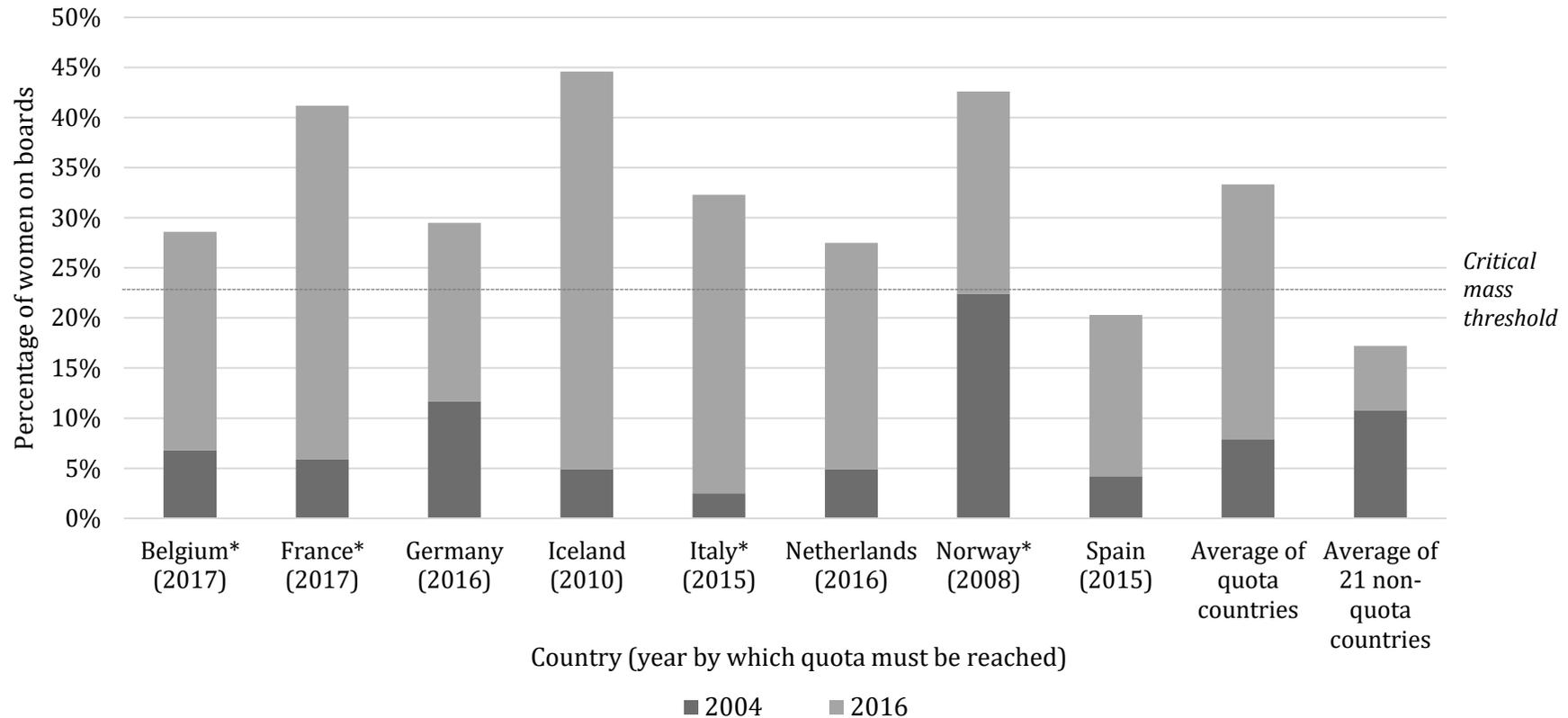


Figure 5. Women's share of board seats in large publicly listed companies in business and finance sectors across selected European countries. Notes: 'Critical mass threshold' signifies when, according to research, women comprise a sufficient proportion of board members to effectively influence board decisions and outcomes. The required shares of women on corporate boards stipulated by the quotas range from 30 per cent in Germany and the Netherlands, to 33 per cent in Belgium and Italy and 40 per cent in France, Iceland, Norway and Spain. Countries marked with an asterisk () impose sanctions on noncompliant companies. Table 10 (Appendix G) details the gender composition of boards in each of the 21 non-quota countries.*

Sources: Deloitte (2015); Terjesen (2015); European Institute for Gender Equality (2017).

women's board membership in publicly listed companies only came after the quota was implemented (Huse, 2013). Additionally, non-quota countries with the largest increases in women's share of board seats have achieved these increases partly by threatening to impose gender quotas on firms in the absence of adequate progress towards targets, as in Sweden and the United Kingdom (e.g. Bohman et al., 2012; Vinnicombe et al., 2015).

The Potential Influence of Institutional and Organisational Contexts

Despite the success of gender boardroom quotas across a range of countries, a greater share of women in top management will not necessarily benefit women further down the organisational hierarchy to the same extent everywhere. The literature on occupational family policies suggests that the motivations and abilities of managers to provide occupational work/family policies are conditional on institutional factors at the national level (e.g. Wood et al., 2003; Seeleib-Kaiser and Fleckenstein, 2009; Berg et al., 2014). So, while decisions regarding firm-level social policies are typically a product of rational cost-benefit analyses, these cost-benefit calculations are ultimately shaped by prevailing norms, laws and social expectations. In countries where the dual-earner family model prevails and maternal employment is high, strong normative and legislative pressures, employees' expectations of work/family policies, and the need to compete against other businesses for high-quality staff may underpin managerial support for occupational work/family policies (Been et al., 2016; Wiß, 2016). This is provided that public family policies are not highly-developed, as this reduces institutional pressures on individual employers to provide occupational family policies (den Dulk et al., 2012). Conversely, in countries where male breadwinning norms remain resilient, employers are less likely to see occupational work/family policies as necessary on the assumption that predominantly male employees can rely on a female homemaker to provide all family care in the home (Seeleib-Kaiser and Fleckenstein, 2009; Wiß, 2016). Overall, firm-level family policies tend to be most prevalent in countries with moderately generous public family policies (Evans, 2001).

The strength of trade unions and collective bargaining structures can also influence managers' choices regarding the provision of occupational work/family policies. Notably, where trade unions are strong, 'contagion from the left' may lead managers to adopt the demands of trade unions for occupational work/family policies (Chung, 2014). Managers may also be more supportive of occupational family policies in coordinated market economies, where social policy is an outcome not only of legislation passed by elected ministers, but formal and institutionalised negotiations between the state,

employers' associations and trade unions, too (Molina and Rhodes, 2002). Under these conditions, trade unions can yield more influence over managers' perceptions in favour of extending work/family policies, and institutionalised cooperation incentivises management to avoid conflict with unions by reaching mutually beneficial consensuses. Nevertheless, the positive relation between collective agreements and occupational family policies is contingent on whether work/life balance is a priority for trade unions (Seeleib-Kaiser and Fleckenstein, 2009). As traditionally male-dominated institutions, trade unions tend not to prioritise work/life issues (Ackers, 2003; Haas and Hwang, 2013), especially when it comes to flexible working arrangements (e.g. den Dulk et al., 2012).

The occupational family literature additionally highlights how managerial support for occupational work/family policies can vary by organisational characteristics, too. Notably, in line with the varieties of capitalism literature (e.g. Hall and Soskice, 2001; Estévez-Abe, 2005), Seeleib-Kaiser and Fleckenstein (2009) and Wiß (2016) find that managers requiring highly-qualified staff with skills that are portable between firms and industries, such as in financial and professional services, are more supportive of occupational work/life policies. Work/family occupational policies provide a way of attracting sought-after staff to their business over other competing businesses. In contrast, employees seeking low-skilled workers, as in retail, hospitality and food services, or workers with industry-specific skills, as in manufacturing, mining and construction, are less motivated to provide occupational family policies. This is because competition for such staff is not as intense. While low-skilled staff are generally more widely available and such positions have a high turnover, staff with industry-specific skills are less likely to be able to go elsewhere. Other organisational determinants of occupational family policy provision include the proportions of women employees and managers and firm size, although the directions and strength of the associations between these organisational factors and different occupational family policies vary across studies and national contexts (Ollier-Malaterre, 2009, 2017).

Whatever the direction and strength of these associations, the key message from the occupational family policy literature is that the extent to which gender diversity in top management can improve the female-friendliness of workplaces is likely to vary across different countries and industries. For instance, the association between female top management and female-friendly workplace policies is potentially weak in Mediterranean states due to weaker institutional pressures, lower female employment rates, and strong familialism. Similarly, highly-developed public policies in Norway, Belgium and France may

limit the extent to which gender boardroom quotas increase the provision of corporate childcare and leave arrangements (den Dulk et al., 2012). In contrast, strong collective bargaining structures, moderate public family policies, and the prevalence of part-time work in Continental countries might be more conducive to producing the trickle-down benefits of quotas within certain sectors of the economy (e.g. Seeleib-Kaiser and Fleckenstein, 2009; Been et al., 2016). Still, the role of managers in determining workplace family policies is likely to be especially important in Anglo-Saxon countries, where employers have more discretion over firm-level decisions due to weaker trade unions (Wiß, 2016). Nevertheless, liberal states are unlikely to implement compulsory gender boardroom quotas or other legislation that mandates gender diversity in private companies. A lack of a formalised role for private companies in social policy making means that democratic pressures on governments to legislate for gender diversity on corporate boards, in order to ensure balanced representation in decision-making, are not as strong as in corporatist countries (Suk, 2012).

Yet, as Been et al. (2016) point out, studies of managers' agency in the provision of firm-level family policies are limited by their focus either on human resource managers (e.g. Ollier-Malaterre, 2009; Seeleib-Kaiser and Fleckenstein, 2009), or supervisors only (e.g. den Dulk and de Ruijter, 2008; Wiß, 2016). Human resource managers and supervisors are important 'gatekeepers' when it comes to employees' awareness of, and abilities to use, organisational policies that are supportive of a work/life balance (Hopkins, 2005). But it is the very top managers who hold the most decision-making power within a firm, and ultimately decide whether to provide organisational work/life policies in the first place. In addition, top management establish the boundaries within which human resource managers and supervisors deal with work/life issues and implement organisational policies on the ground (Been et al., 2016). Accordingly, the role of top managers in determining firm-level family policies and other women-friendly provisions may be critical even in institutional and organisational contexts in which the support of managers more generally is not so important. Therefore, while it is plausible that the argument that gender diversity in top management can improve the female-friendliness of the workplace does not apply equally across all institutional and organisational contexts, more research is required to clarify this.

Concluding Remarks

Through a conceptual discussion of the potential for gender diversity in top management to improve the 'women-friendliness' of the workplace, this paper has suggested that addressing social risk requires more than a 'bottom-up' approach focused on the lowest skilled and most vulnerable only. It also demands a 'top-down' strategy involving gender boardroom quotas and other legislation that mandate gender diversity in the very top executive and board positions. A task for future research is to empirically assess the cogency of this argument across different institutional and organisational contexts. To facilitate such research, comparative data on women's share of top management for a wider range of companies and sectors than are currently available would be valuable. Although the European Commission provides data on gender diversity in top management across publicly listed companies within European countries, this covers large corporations from the business and financial sectors and a maximum of 50 companies per country only. Therefore, future research on gender and the welfare state could benefit from efforts to expand the numbers and types of organisations included in the database.

[5]

Conclusion:

**Implications for the Welfare State Literature,
Future Research and Policy**

The main task of this thesis has been to incorporate gender into the analysis of welfare states under the labour market ‘activation’ agenda that now dominates advanced economies. In doing so, it has illuminated the gendered dimensions of labour market activation policies and some of the assumptions regarding women’s caregiving/breadwinning that underpin activation strategies across different welfare states. The thesis has also drawn attention to other gendered dimensions of welfare states besides those relating to the care/work nexus, namely affirmative action policies to redress gender-based barriers to reaching the very top jobs. It has argued that such policies are equally important as work/family reconciliation and active labour market policies for addressing some of the social risks to which women are disproportionately exposed under activation. This argument is based on research suggesting that firms with gender-balanced top management teams are more likely to provide ‘women-friendly’ organisational policies and practices (e.g. workplace childcare).

Hence, mirroring the contributions of feminist research to welfare regime analysis in the early-1990s (1.1.5), the thesis has revealed important aspects of, and variations between, welfare states under activation that previous analyses have obscured.

5.1 Lone Parents in the UK

For a start, Paper 1 has shown that despite the rhetoric of making work pay, recent changes to taxes and benefits in the UK have done little to improve lone mothers’ financial employment incentives. This goes against the commonplace characterisation of the UK as ‘incentive reinforcing’ (e.g. Bonoli, 2012, 2013). The design of the Conservative’s flagship

CONCLUSION

Universal Credit means that the financial returns for lone mothers to take on additional employment potentially begin to diminish beyond just a few hours per week and virtually disappear once working hours fall outside of the school day. What is more, Universal Credit and swingeing benefit cuts since 2010 mean that lone parents working 16 hours or longer are financially worse-off than they would have been if the pre-existing tax-benefit system had instead continued.

Despite weak financial work incentives, the introduction of compulsory activation and subjection of lone parents to behavioural conditions until they are working 'enough' hours under Universal Credit may yet push lone mothers into taking on additional hours. Thus, in line with the typologies of Kilkey (2000) and Strell and Duncan (2001), the UK has moved away from treating lone parents as (poor) carers, i.e. promoting but not financially rewarding their caregiving. By essentially forcing lone mothers into paid work without adequate supports, current policies instead treat lone mothers as (poor) workers. The financial position of lone parents in the UK is only likely to worsen in the coming years given early evidence that they are among the most adversely affected by likely reductions in welfare spending to recover the projected fiscal shortfall due to 'Brexit' (Armstrong et al., 2016).

However, since I wrote Paper 1, Universal Credit has undergone further significant change. Policy changes include a reduction the rate by which Universal Credit is withdrawn as earnings rise from 65 to 63 per cent (HM Treasury, 2016), but also a reduction in the level of earnings disregarded before Universal Credit entitlement starts to be affected from £60.69 to £44.31 per week (Department for Work and Pensions, 2015). Furthermore, job availability and search requirements under Universal Credit have been extended to lone parents with three and four-year-olds, despite the high costs and insufficient supply of pre-school care services (Rabindrakumar, 2017). Accordingly, a task for future research is to assess the (likely negative) impacts of such changes on lone parents' incomes and financial work incentives.

In addition, lone and other mothers with more than two children will no longer receive extra financial support under Universal Credit to accommodate the additional costs of a third child and subsequent children, except in 'special circumstances'. One such special circumstance is if any subsequent children were conceived through rape or within a controlling or coercive relationship (Department for Work and Pensions, 2017a). In this sense, then, changes to Universal Credit risk not only harming lone mothers' financial wellbeing. They are also potentially very damaging to their emotional wellbeing, as women

may be forced to endure further trauma in having to 'prove' they were victims of rape or domestic abuse. Therefore, future research should also take a broader perspective that looks not just at the impact of welfare changes on lone parents' incomes and financial work incentives, but their impacts on other dimensions of women's wellbeing, too.

5.2 The Gendered Dimensions of Activation

Paper 2 also challenged mainstream classifications of activation regimes. It showed that cross-national variations in support for maternal activation across 22 countries are not well captured by the commonplace distinction within mainstream research between an Anglo-Saxon 'work-first' approach to activation, and a Nordic-style 'train-first' approach. Notably, policies for lone mothers in certain English-speaking countries are not as focused on, or supportive of, rapid job (re-)entry as for the average unencumbered (male) jobseeker. Meanwhile, lone mothers in Nordic countries appear to face greater difficulties than other jobseekers in accessing training opportunities because of their caregiving. What is more, family policies in certain post-Soviet and Mediterranean countries, typically portrayed as activation laggards (e.g. Morel et al., 2012b), are actually supportive of mothers' full-time, continuous employment.

The results of Paper 2 additionally indicate that the assumption underpinning mainstream comparative welfare state analysis of a linear, unequivocal move towards active social policy does not hold when it comes to women with caregiving responsibilities. This is apparent in the commonality of such policies as 'home-care' cash benefits for stay-at-home parents and exemptions from full-time employment for parents while children are young. Although couched in such gender-neutral terms as 'parent' (e.g. Jenson, 2012), the simultaneous failure to address the gendered division of family responsibilities means that it is mainly women who make use of such benefits and provisions (e.g. Westlund, 2007; Duvander and Ellingsæter, 2016). By extension, these policy features potentially serve to 'de-activate' mothers by promoting their withdrawal from employment, sometimes for several years at a time, and/or encouraging mothers to work part-time for caregiving purposes. For instance, Finland offers a home-care allowance until children turn three; thereafter, parents can continue to receive a reduced home-care allowance until their youngest child is around nine, provided they work no longer than part-time hours (European Union, 2016). Yet, it is well documented that women's greater propensity to withdraw or reduce their labour for caregiving purposes contributes to the gender wage

CONCLUSION

gap through foregone wages and missed opportunities for training and career progression (e.g. Budig and England, 2001; Correll and Benard, 2007; Budig et al., 2012).

Moreover, the finding that certain policies are potentially 'de-activating' for women suggests that policy frameworks are failing to keep pace with shifting assumptions regarding women's roles. On the one hand, policy rhetoric under the active welfare state increasingly expects both men and women to undertake paid employment and to make claims on the state as individuals through their independent labour market ties (e.g. Lewis, 2001a, 2002; Pascall and Lewis, 2004; Annesley, 2007). On the other hand, my paper suggests that policies in certain countries continue to promote parental (read: maternal) caregiving, while many states are not providing adequate care services or work/family policies to support women's employment. So, unless policymakers resolve the apparent conflict between the assumptions of the active welfare state and the actual policies that are in place, women will continue to be at a disadvantage in terms of their poverty rates, financial independence, and access to social protection (see also Lewis, 2001b, 2001a, 2002; Lewis and Giullari, 2005).

Yet, as Chapter 1 highlighted, not all care within the family can, or indeed should, be externalised (e.g. Lewis and Giullari, 2005). While home-care allowances and exemptions from activation requirements for caregivers may be de-activating, they are also necessary and important for recognising care. Hence, to reduce gender inequalities in unpaid and paid work, policymakers should do more to encourage men to make use of leave policies and care-sensitive dimensions of labour market policies. As discussed in Paper 2, the gender-neutral language of 'parents' that typifies current policies falls short in this regard. Rather, governments need to *explicitly* target men's domestic behaviour. For example, 'use-it-or-lose-it' quotas for fathers in the parental leave systems of Norway and Sweden, in conjunction with the relatively high replacement rates of such leaves, have substantially increased the proportions of men taking leave (e.g. OECD, 2016a).

Nevertheless, in examining activation policies for mothers, this thesis has given only partial insight into the gendered dimensions of activation. Also important are provisions for women with dependent elderly parents(-in-law) who require care. This remains an under-researched area. On the one hand, most research on work/family issues and cross-national differences in women's employment focuses on mothers, particularly those with small children (Naldini et al., 2014, 2016). On the other hand, research on older workers in their 50s and 60s, who are most likely to have elder parents in need of care (e.g. Johnson and Wiener, 2006), centres on men (Radl, 2013; Hasselhorn and Apt, 2015). Yet,

the new social risks literature highlights that having an elderly or frail relative is an important 'risk' to individuals' welfare, especially for women (Taylor-Gooby, 2004a; Bonoli, 2005). On average, one woman in 10 across European countries reduces her employment hours to care for an elderly parent (Naldini et al., 2016). This figure will likely grow as life expectancy continues to increase. What is more, the share of over-79s in the population across Europe is projected to rise from 5 per cent to 11 per cent by 2050 (Eurostat, 2017b). However, the women who typically provide unpaid elder care are also facing pressures from governments to maintain their labour market ties. For instance, the EU has identified 55-64 year olds as a key target group for labour market activation, and many countries have raised the retirement age for women (e.g. Naldini et al., 2014). Therefore, completing the agenda of 'gendering' the analysis of labour market activation requires looking at how, or indeed if, welfare states are enabling older women to balance these competing demands and promote a more equal division of elder care, both within the family and between the family and the state.

5.3 A Top-Down Strategy for Managing Women's Social Risks

Paper 3 argued that analysing women's social risks requires looking beyond policies relating to the intersection between paid employment and unpaid care work. Also important are gender boardroom quotas and other policies that achieve a 'critical mass' (23-40 per cent) of women in top management. Evidence suggests that when there is a critical mass of them, women in top managerial positions are motivated and sufficiently powerful to influence the expansion of female-friendly organisational policies (e.g. corporate childcare, flexible working arrangements) that benefit *all* women within that organisation, including those at the very bottom (Cohen and Huffman, 2007). In this way, affirmative action policies are potentially valuable top-down strategies for addressing some of the 'new' social risks to which many low- and middle-skilled women are disproportionately exposed under the active welfare state.

In considering affirmative action policies as gendered dimensions of welfare states, Paper 3 highlights important cross-national nuances in the 'women-friendliness' of states which are overlooked in existing literature. For instance, certain welfare states, seen as gender equality 'laggards' because of weak policy supports for lower-educated women's employment, are now among the European leaders when it comes to women's board representation following the introduction of quota legislation (e.g. Italy). What is more, quotas have been effective in increasing women's board representation in family-friendly

CONCLUSION

welfare state regimes, such as Norway. This suggests that, contrary to the assumptions of 'paradox' theory (e.g. Mandel and Seymonov, 2006), women's disadvantages in accessing more desirable jobs need not forever be blocked by generous family policies. Rather, their effects can be countered through regulatory policies that set numerical targets for women's representation in the top labour market positions (see also Korpi et al., 2009, 2013).

Furthermore, by presenting a social risk rationale for bringing more women into top corporate jobs, Paper 3 strengthens the case for greater government intervention in this area. International evidence suggests that compulsory gender boardroom quotas are particularly effective forms of such intervention (e.g. Labelle et al., 2015; Sojo et al., 2016). But, as Paper 3 showed, few countries have implemented quotas. And, while the EU proposed an EU-wide 40 per cent quota in 2012, strong opposition from Member States led to a 'watering-down' of this goal from a binding requirement to a voluntary target (Shelter, 2014). Nevertheless, the social risk rationale may provide a compelling reason for governments to reconsider quotas. If, as I argue, a critical mass of women in top management influences firms to implement family-friendly policies and other organisational policies that improve women's pay and incomes, then bringing more women onto corporate boards can potentially reduce demands on state social provision. In this way, quotas may be a valuable top-down strategy for governments to realise female employment and child poverty targets amidst tight public budgets.

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Appendix A. Example Universal Credit Calculation

Table 4. Example Universal Credit calculation for a lone mother.

Steps for calculating Universal Credit	Outcome
Maximum award	
Standard allowance	£73.34
Child element: first child	£63.94
Child element: second child	£53.46
Housing element	£92.01
Childcare element	85% * £59.59 = £50.65
Total maximum award	£333.40
Income	
Total gross earnings	35 * £6.50 = £227.50
Earnings after in work taxes	£213.96
Less earnings disregard	£213.96 - £60.69 = £153.27
Total applicable income	£153.27
Final award	
65% of applicable income	65% * £153.27 = £99.63
Total weekly award	£333.40 - £99.63 = £233.77

Notes: The example calculation is for Katherine, a lone mother with two children who pays for childcare when working 35 hours at minimum wage.

Sources:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/382867/proposed_benefit_and_pension_rates_2015_to_2016.pdf; own calculations

Appendix B. Assumptions in the UK Tax-Benefit Simulations

Table 5. Details of the assumptions in the Chapter 2 simulations

Assumption	Details and sources
Inflation	<p>For all uprating between April 2011 and April 2013: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/293312/abstract-of-statistics-2013.pdf (Table 1).</p> <p>Retail Prices Index, Rossi index and Average Weekly Earnings index for uprating in April 2014: http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/research/briefing-papers/SN06774/2014-benefit-uprating.</p> <p>Office for Budget Responsibility forecast of Consumer Prices Index, Retail Prices Index and Rossi index for uprating in April 2015: http://budgetresponsibility.org.uk/economic-fiscal-outlook-march-2014/ (Economic and fiscal outlook supplementary economy tables, Table 1.7).</p> <p>Forecast Average Weekly Earnings index for uprating in April 2015, based on latest available data (percentage annual change in the three-month average to April 2014): http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/publications/re-reference-tables.html?edition=tcm%3A77-311468 (Table EARN01).</p>
Earnings	<p>Minimum wage for April 2015: https://www.gov.uk/government/news/one-million-set-to-benefit-from-national-minimum-wage-rise-to-650.</p> <p>Median hourly wage for all female employees in 2014 increased by the annual percentage change from previous year (0.5 per cent) to bring it up to 2015-16 prices: http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/publications/re-reference-tables.html?edition=tcm%3A77-337425/re-reference-tables.html?edition=tcm%3A77-328216 (Table 1.5a).</p>
Childcare costs	<p>Term-time costs are average cost of a child-minder for latest available year of data increased by average change from previous year; school holiday costs are average cost of a school holiday club for latest available year of data increased by average change from previous year. The data are available from:</p>

	http://www.familyandchildcaretrust.org/annual-holiday-childcare-costs-surveys .
Rent	Average rent for Private Registered Providers of social housing for 2013 increased by annual change since 1997 (£92.01 per week): https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-rents-lettings-and-tenancies (Table 704).
Council Tax	Average Council Tax Band D (England only) as of 2014 increased by annual percentage change from previous year (£28.41 per week): https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/335851/Council_Tax_Levels_set_by_Local_Authorities_Revised_August_2014.pdf .
Income Tax	Previous system: 2010-11 rates and the 2010-11 personal allowance uprated to 2015-16 prices in line with the Retail Prices Index with rounding up to the nearest £10: http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20101124143949/http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/rates/it.htm . Coalition's system: current rates and personal allowance announced for 2015-16: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/293759/37630_Budget_2014_Web_Accessible.pdf .
National Insurance	Previous system: 2010-11 rates and the 2010-11 primary threshold uprated to 2015-16 prices in line with the Retail Prices Index with rounding to the nearest pound: http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20100202100434/direct.gov.uk/en/nl1/newsroom/prebudgetreport2009/dg_183037 . Coalition's system: current rates and the 2014-15 primary threshold uprated to 2015-16 prices in line with by the Consumer Prices Index with rounding to the nearest pound: http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/rates/nic.htm .
Jobseeker's Allowance	2010-11 rates uprated to 2015-16 prices in line with the Rossi index with rounding to the nearest 5 pence: http://www.ifs.org.uk/tools_and_resources/fiscal_facts . £20 disregard (frozen since 2001).
Tax credits	2010-11 rates uprated to 2015-16 prices in line with the Retail Prices Index with rounding to the nearest £5, except for the family and child allowances in Child Tax Credit: 2010-11 family allowance is assumed (frozen since 2003); 2010-11 child allowance uprated by the Average Weekly Earnings index. Same

	percentage of childcare costs, earnings disregard and taper rates as of 2010-11 since these elements rarely changed: http://www.ifs.org.uk/tools_and_resources/fiscal_facts .
Council Tax Benefit and Housing Benefit	2010-11 lone mother allowance uprated to 2015-16 prices in line with the Rossi index with rounding to the nearest 5 pence. Child allowance is the sum of the projected Child Tax Credit child element and projected Child Benefit rate for subsequent children under the old system. Family premium is the sum of the projected Child Tax Credit family element and projected Child Benefit rate for the eldest child minus the rate for subsequent children under the old system. Additional earnings disregard for working 16 hours uprated to 2015-16 prices in line with the Retail Prices Index with rounding to the nearest 5 pence: www.rightsnet.org.uk/pdfs/HBCTB_Circular_A2_2010.doc . Same lone mother disregard as of 2010-11 (frozen since 1990): https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/236962/hbgm-bw2-assessment-of-income.pdf .
Child Benefit	Old system: 2010-11 rates uprated to 2015-16 prices in line with the Retail Prices Index with rounding to the nearest 5 pence: http://www.ifs.org.uk/tools_and_resources/fiscal_facts . Coalition's system: current rates increased by one per cent and rounded to the nearest 5 pence as announced in the 2012 Autumn Statement: https://www.gov.uk/child-benefit-rates ; https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/autumn-statement-2012-documents .
Universal Credit	Information on how Universal Credit is calculated: http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukdsi/2013/9780111531938/body ; also see the following worked example: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/288769/foi-5950-13.pdf . Current rates uprated by 1 per cent and rounded to the nearest penny as announced in the 2012 Autumn Statement: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/275291/Benefit_and_Pension_rates_2014-15.pdf . 85 per cent childcare subsidy.

Council Tax Reduction Same allowances as for Universal Credit. Maximum Council Tax eligibility is 91.5 per cent of Council Tax bill, as the nationwide median reduction in maximum support across all English councils under the Coalition is 8.5 per cent (author's calculations using https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/ccc?key=0AkvoW4n_rBwYdG5DRGNsX3JnNTFsdIFCbXg1ZERRbXc&usp=sharing#gid=0).

Appendix C. Data Sources for the Fuzzy-Set Analysis

Table 6. Sets and indicators for the fuzzy-set ideal type analysis with data sources

Set	Indicators	Source(s)
Opportunities for training	Spending on training per person unemployed as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product per person employed, 2013	https://www.oecd.org/std/labour-stats/HUR-June14.pdf ; http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database ; https://stats.oecd.org/ ; Data for the United Kingdom are for 2011 and for France are for 2012
	Percentage of women who wanted to participate in education/training in the last year did not do so because of family responsibilities, 2011	Data for Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States: http://www.oecd.org/site/piaac/publicdataandanalysis.htm ; Data for all other countries: http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/microdata/adult-education-survey
Strict conditionality	Index of the work-related conditions attached to unemployment benefits for lone mothers, 2014	<u>Criteria to determine when lone mothers are subject to compulsory activation:</u> http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/21699763.2013.818566?journalCode=rjcs21 ; http://www.centrumvoorsociaalbeleid.be/sites/default/files/CSB%20Working%20Paper%2011%2005_April%202011.pdf ; http://eprints.port.ac.uk/6319/1/6.PDF <u>All other items on the index:</u> Data for the United States: http://www.michigan.gov/uia/0,4680,7-118-26899---,00.html ; Data for all other countries: http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/5jrxtk1zw8f2-en

Activating childcare policies	Index of the extent to which childcare services, parental leave policies and the scheduling of primary education support maternal employment, latest years of available data	<u>Parental leave policies and costs of childcare</u>
		http://www.oecd.org/els/family/database.htm <u>Enrolment rates: 0-5 year olds</u> Data for Australia: http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/4402.0June%202014?OpenDocument ; Data for the United States: https://www.census.gov/prod/2013pubs/p70-135.pdf ; http://www.oecd.org/els/family/database.htm ; Data for all other countries: http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/income-and-living-conditions/data/database Length of the school week Data for Australia, Finland and the United States: https://www.oecd.org/els/emp/4343133.pdf ; Data for all other countries: http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/documents/130910_egge_out_of_school_en.pdf Enrolment rates: out-of-school services Data for Australia, Norway, the United Kingdom and the United States: http://www.oecd.org/els/family/database.htm ; Data for all other countries: http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/documents/130910_egge_out_of_school_en.pdf

Appendix D. Coding Framework for the ‘Strict Conditionality’ Set in the Fuzzy-Set Analysis

Table 7. Coding framework for the ‘strict conditionality’ set based on a lone mother receiving unemployment benefits

Item	Sub-items	Score	Description
Item 1: Criteria to determine when lone mothers are subject to employment requirements	Employment tests for lone mothers	1	No employment test for lone mothers
		2	Caseworkers decide whether to impose employment requirements according to individual circumstances
		3	Lone mothers are automatically subject to employment requirements once their youngest child starts primary education
		4	Lone mothers are automatically subject to employment requirements once their youngest child starts pre-primary education
		5	All lone mothers are subject to compulsory activation with few, if any, exceptions
Item 2: Strictness of demands on job availability	Job availability during activation	1	Participation in activation programmes does not require job availability
		2	Participation in some activation programmes requires job availability
		3	Participation in most activation programmes requires job availability
		4	Lone mothers should always be available for employment but are not required to actively seek employment
		5	Lone mothers are expected to actively seek employment
	Demands on occupational mobility	1	Lone mothers can refuse jobs in other occupations/with lower wages indefinitely
		2	Lone mothers can refuse jobs in other occupations/with lower wages for a limited period of more than 6 months
		3	Lone mothers can refuse jobs in other occupations/with lower wages for a limited periods of up to 6 months
		4	Qualifications or other factors are taken into account
		5	Lone mothers must accept all job offers

		1	No demands on geographical mobility
		2	Lone mothers must accept a daily commute of up to 2 hours
	Demands on geographical mobility ¹	3	Lone mothers must accept a daily commute of up to 3-4 hours
		4	Lone mothers must accept a daily commute of over 4 hours
		5	Lone mothers must be willing to move
		1	5 or more reasons
	Number of 'other valid reasons' for refusing jobs ²	2	-
		3	3-4 reasons
		4	-
		5	0-2 reasons
		1	No checks of job-search activity
		2	Job-search activity can be checked upon request
	Frequency of job-search monitoring	3	Infrequent checks of job-search activity (less than once every 3 months)
		4	Regular checks of job-search activity (at least once every 1-3 months)
		5	Lone mothers must often prove job-search activity (at least once every 1-2 weeks)
Item 3: Job-search requirements and monitoring		1	No formal requirement
		2	Lone mothers must regularly affirm that they have undertaken some actions towards finding employment
	Documentation of job-search activities	3	Lone mothers must regularly affirm the specific actions which they have undertaken towards finding employment
		4	Lone mothers must regularly supply details of employers with whom they have had contact
		5	Lone mothers must regularly produce declarations from employers confirming they have applied for a job
		1	0-4 weeks
	Sanctions for refusing job offers ³	2	5-9 weeks
		3	10-14 weeks
		4	Longer than 14 weeks
Severity of sanctions		5	Lone mothers lose eligibility to benefits
	Sanctions for refusing participation in activation measures ³	1	0-4 weeks
		2	5-9 weeks
		3	10-14 weeks
		4	Longer than 14 weeks

5 Lone mothers lose eligibility to benefits

Notes: ¹Where demands on occupational mobility are subject to change over the duration of the unemployment period, countries' scores are based on the lowest expected commute time. For example, the Netherlands expects the long-term unemployed to accept a daily commute of up to three hours; however, jobseekers can refuse jobs with a daily commute of more than two hours during the first six months of unemployment. Therefore, the Netherlands scores 2 on this sub-indicator. ²Following Langenbucher (2015), 'other valid reasons' are grouped into the following types: i) family or personal reasons (e.g. caring responsibilities, lack of child care, etc.); ii) poor health or disability; iii) working arrangements of the job (e.g. part-time, temporary contract, anti-social working hours, etc.); iv) moral or religious reasons; and v) job is to replace workers on strike or lockout or working conditions do not comply with a relevant local/sectorial collective agreement. ³Average of sanctions for first-time and repeated infringements.

Appendix E. Coding Framework for the ‘Activating Childcare Policies’ Set in the Fuzzy-Set Analysis

Table 8. Coding framework for the ‘activating childcare policies’ set

Item	Sub-items	Score	Description
		1	No statutory right to paid leave
	(i) Duration of paid leave available to mothers	2	Under 30 OR longer than 156 weeks
		3	105-156 weeks
		4	53-104 weeks
		5	30-52 weeks
Item 1: Policies for mothers with 0-2 year olds		(ii) Average payment rate across the total duration of paid leave available to mothers ¹	1
	2		21-36%
	3		37-53%
	4		54-69%
	5		70-100%
	(iii) Enrolment rates in formal childcare services among 0-2 year olds	1	0-15%
		2	16-21%
		3	22-26%
		4	27-32%
		5	33-100%
Item 2: Policies for mothers with 3-5 year olds	(iv) Full-time equivalent enrolment rates in formal childcare services among 3-5 year olds ²	1	0-70%
		2	71-76%
		3	77-83%
		4	84-89%
		5	90-100%
Item 3: Policies for mothers with school-age children	(v) Length and continuity of the primary school week ³	1	Under 30 hours
		2	30-39 hours with children routinely sent home for lunch
		3	30-39 hours a week with half/full weekdays off
		4	Continuous 30-39 hour school week
		5	Continuous 40-hour week or longer
	(vi) Enrolment rates in out-of-school services ⁴	1	0-10%
		2	11-33%
		3	34-57%
		4	58-80%
		5	81-100%

Notes: ¹Average payment rate is percentage of previous earnings replaced by maternity and/or parental leave over the total duration of paid leave entitlements for a lone mother on average national earnings. Where maternity and parental leave are paid at different rates, a weighted average is used according to the length of each leave. ²Full-time equivalent enrolment rates avoid the distortion of a country having high enrolment but for limited hours and are given by: (percentage of children in childcare*average weekly hours of attendance)/40. ³Where the length of the school day varies by region, the dominant time structure is used. ⁴The age of children and type of service covered vary cross-nationally. Country-specific details are available from the author upon request.

Appendix F. Results of the Sensitivity Analyses for the Fuzzy-Set Ideal Type Analysis

Table 9 gives an overview of the impact of a selection of alternative indicators and qualitative breakpoints on welfare states' membership status to each set.

I performed six sensitivity analyses in total. The first two concern the 'opportunities for training' set. The first sensitivity analysis tests the impact of a higher upper qualitative breakpoint in measuring spending on training to reflect when spending on activation policies per unemployed person peaked in Sweden during the early-1990s, reaching around 60 per cent of national output per person employment. Thus, assuming that training commanded at least its 'equal share' (i.e. one-fifth) of Sweden's total activation budget (Hudson and Kühner, 2010), I test an increase in the upper qualitative breakpoint from 5 to 12 per cent. The mid-point accordingly increases from 3 to 6.5 per cent.

The second sensitivity analysis tests the impact of basing membership to the 'opportunities for training' set on training expenditure alone, since expenditure data is most commonly used to assess the extent of activation.

The third sensitivity analysis tests the impact of operationalising the 'strict conditionality' set by the conditions attached to social assistance instead of unemployment benefits. This is to reflect that not all lone mothers may necessarily be able to meet the minimum employment record and/or earnings requirements to qualify for unemployment insurance within a given country.

The final three sensitivity analyses concern the 'activating childcare policies' set. I test the impacts of: (i) using an alternative coding framework for enrolment rates of 3-5 year olds in formal care services based on Kvist (1999) and Szelewa and Polakowski (2008); (ii) defining 'full-time' childcare as 30 rather than 40 hours; and (iii) double-weighting childcare policies for mothers with school-age children as in Gornick et al.'s (1997) index of maternal employment support.

Table 9. Shifts in fuzzy-set membership by variations on the calibration of indicators.

Set	Original indicators	Main variations on original indicator/calibration	Countries who enter the set	Countries who exit the set
Opportunities for training	(a) Spending on training per unemployed individual as a percentage of GDP per person employed; (b) Percentage of women who wanted to participate in education/training in the last 12 months but did not do so because of family responsibilities	Alternative thresholds for (a): 12% for fully in; 6.5% for neither in nor out; and 1 per cent for fully out	None	France
		Set membership measured by (a) only	Finland; Germany	None
Strict conditionality	Index of the work-related conditions attached to unemployment benefits for lone mothers	Index of the work-related conditions attached to social assistance for lone mothers ¹	Belgium	Austria; France; Germany; Netherlands; UK
Activating childcare policies	Index of the extent to which childcare services, parental leave provisions and the scheduling of primary education support maternal employment	Alternative coding framework for enrolment rates of 3-5 year olds: 1: 0-19%; 2: 20-39%; 3: 40-59%; 4: 60-79%; 5: 80-100%	Czech Republic; Finland; France; Germany; Italy; Lithuania; Netherlands; Poland; Slovakia; Spain; <i>UK is neither in nor out</i>	None
		'Full-time' enrolment defined as 30 hours	Czech Republic; Finland; France; Germany; Italy; Latvia; Lithuania; Spain	None
		Double-weighting childcare policies for mothers with school-age children	None	None

Notes: ¹Data are unavailable for Australia, Denmark, Italy, Norway, Spain and Sweden.

Source: Own calculations.

Appendix G. Women's Share of Corporate Board Seats in Non-Quota Countries

Table 10. Women's share of board seats of the largest publicly listed companies in European countries with no quota legislation.

Country	2004	2016
Austria	6.0	18.1
Bulgaria	18.3	15.3
Cyprus	6.6	10.8
Czech Republic	10.6	10.1
Denmark	11.3	27.1
Estonia	15.5	8.8
Finland	16.3	30.1
Greece	7.3	9.1
Hungary	8.9	12.3
Ireland	5.6	16.5
Latvia	9.9	28.5
Lithuania	11.3	14.3
Luxembourg	4.3	12.9
Malta	2.3	4.5
Poland	9.1	18.8
Portugal	4.1	14.3
Romania	17.2	10.1
Slovakia	8.4	11.3
Slovenia	19.0	24.8
Sweden	21.3	36.9
United Kingdom	13.2	27.0

Source: European Institute for Gender Equality (2016)