



***Childcare Regimes in Europe:  
Dedomestication and Reconciliation***

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# The paper

## ■ Part I: Dedomestication

- Why another de-concept?
- A comparison of formal childcare service provisions of 15 OECD countries from the perspective of dedomestication
- Conclusions I

## ■ Part II: Reconciliation

- Reconciliation for families with young children: one policy package or two?
- A comparison of reconciliation policies of EU member states
- Conclusions II



# Part I: Why another de-concept?

De-concepts: implying welfare state action against social phenomena and processes that are understood as problematic

*Decommodification*: the degree to which social policies permit people to make and maintain their living at a socially acceptable level independent of market forces, without having to sell their labour power on the labour market (Esping-Andersen 1990)

*Defamilialization*: the degree to which individual adults can uphold a socially acceptable standard of living, independently of family relationships, either through paid work or through the social security system (Lister 1994)



1934 2009

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# Why another de-concept?

Both decommodification and defamilialization focus on the incomes of people (*cash*), on the opportunities to have a living (without participation on the labour market/a family)

Originally they say nothing about support needs (*care*) of children or disabled or older people nor about the needs of people who are providing this support (carers)

Defamilialization remains short of becoming a functioning care-centred counter concept to the benefit-centred decommodification (N.B. which is *not* called demarketisation)



# Why another de-concept?

Later both (de)commodification and defamilialization have become used in connection with care by some other writers

Ungerson 1997: commodification to mean the formalisation of informal care (or the privatisation of public care services)

Ostner 1998/Leitner 2003/Rauch 2007: defamilialization as relieving family members from their care responsibilities

However these later uses of the two de-concepts have partly changed their original meanings, bringing conceptual confusion

→ Decommodification and defamilialization are not useful concepts for comparative research on care, instead new concepts are needed



# Dedomestication

The degree to which social care policies make it possible for people to participate in society and social life outside their homes and families

Reducing enforced confinement to the domestic sphere and waste of social contributions from groups of people

Making possible

- participation in paid work
- civil participation
- social life



# Dedomestication index

In order to be able to compare the level of dedomestication level of care policies of different welfare states, I have developed a dedomestication index (DDI), following the model of Esping-Andersen's original decommodification score (DCS)

Esping-Andersen included three social policy fields in his score (pensions, sickness benefits and unemployment benefits), so would also DDI: 1) childcare services, 2) care services for older people, 3) care services for disabled people

For each policy field, Esping-Andersen used four indicators, so will also DDI: 1) "time replacement rate", 2) availability, 3) affordability, 4) quality

Like in DCS, the results of these indicators will be weighted by take-up levels



# Dedomestication index

Unfortunately, reliable and international quantitative data on the mentioned indicators is available

- Only for care services for children under 3
- Only for 15 countries (excl. all Asian nations)

Data come from the OECD Family Database, ca. 2005, each of the four indicators given a rough value 1-3

- Time replacement rate: average hours of attendance per week (indicator value doubled due to its significance)
  - Availability: full/limited/no legal right to childcare
  - Affordability: childcare costs as percentages of family net income for dual earner and sole parent families
  - Quality: child-staff ratio
- + Take-up rate



# Dedomestication indicators

	Time replacement rate	Availability	Affordability	Quality	<i>Sum</i>	Take- up rate
Australia	2	1	2	2	7	25
Austria	2	1	1	1	5	10
Belgium	4	2	3	1	10	42
Canada	6	2	1	1	10	24
Denmark	6	2	2	3	13	70
Finland	6	3	2	3	14	25
France	4	1	2	2	9	43
Hungary	4	2	3	2	11	10
Ireland	2	1	1	3	7	25
Netherlands	2	1	2	3	8	54
Norway	6	1	3	1	11	35
Portugal	6	1	3	1	11	44
Sweden	4	2	3	2	11	44
UK	2	1	1	3	7	40
US	6	1	1	2	10	31



# Dedomestication index

<i>Country</i>	<i>Dedomestication index</i>
<b>Denmark</b>	<b>9.1</b>
<b>Portugal</b>	<b>4.8</b>
<b>Sweden</b>	<b>4.8</b>
<b>Netherlands</b>	<b>4.3</b>
<b>Belgium</b>	<b>4.2</b>
<b>France</b>	<b>3.9</b>
<b>Norway</b>	<b>3.9</b>
<b>Finland</b>	<b>3.5</b>
<b>US</b>	<b>3.1</b>
<b>UK</b>	<b>2.8</b>
<b>Canada</b>	<b>2.4</b>
<b>Australia</b>	<b>1.8</b>
<b>Ireland</b>	<b>1.8</b>
<b>Hungary</b>	<b>1.1</b>
<b>Austria</b>	<b>0.5</b>
<b>Mean</b>	<b>3.5</b>

Sources: OECD 2006; 2007b; 2007c; 2009.



# Conclusions I

- ❏ Dedomestication is suggested here as a new conceptual tool for comparing care service provisions of different welfare states
- ❏ Dedomestication means the degree to which social care policies make it possible for people to participate in society and social life outside their homes and families
- ❏ This approach covers all user groups (children, older people, disabled people)
- ❏ This approach covers both care receivers and care givers
- ❏ This approach could be used to study the level of care policy in any country
- ❏ Quantitative comparisons could be accompanied by qualitative studies of dedomestication



# Conclusions I

- ❏ Empirically, due to lack of reliable international data, this paper is limited to a comparison of 15 welfare states concerning their childcare services for under-3-year-old children
- ❏ Four indicators + take-up rates were used to measure dedomestication
- ❏ The final dedomestication index presents a new ranking order of welfare states and regimes
  - Denmark
  - Norden and Western Europe
  - Liberal English-speaking world
  - Central Europe
- ❏ Unfortunately many, many countries lack from the comparison (incl. all Asian nations)



# Part II: Reconciliation policy

- ❏ The introduction of reconciliation between work and family to the European policy discourse in the 1990s has been a major change
- ❏ Both main reconciliation policy instruments have become addressed by new specific EU policies
  - Parental leave directive (1996, 'hard law' but rather soft in practice)
  - Barcelona childcare targets (2002, 'soft law' but with defined quantified targets)
- ❏ Both policy fields have seen expansion at the national level



# Research questions

- Are policy developments of childcare and parental leave policies closely connected in Member States?
- How do Member States cluster based on their reconciliation policy profiles?
- How are reconciliation country clusters doing in degendering their labour markets?

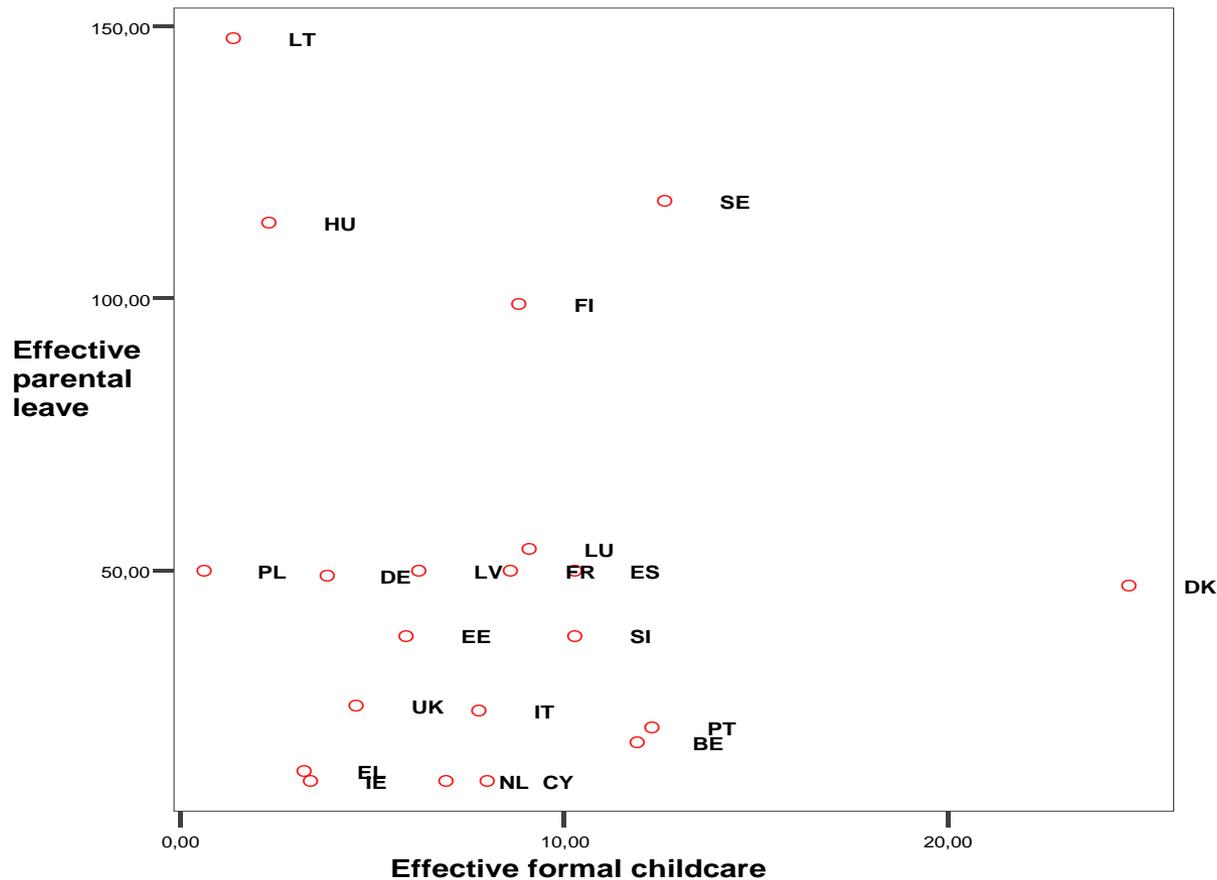


# Data

- Data come from EU statistics, published in two reports (EGGSIE report 2005 & Eurostat statistical book on reconciliation 2009)
  - Effective parental leave  
(temporal coverage\*compensation rate)
  - Effective formal childcare  
(take-up rate\*average weekly hours for under 3s)



# Reconciliation policy variation within EU Member States

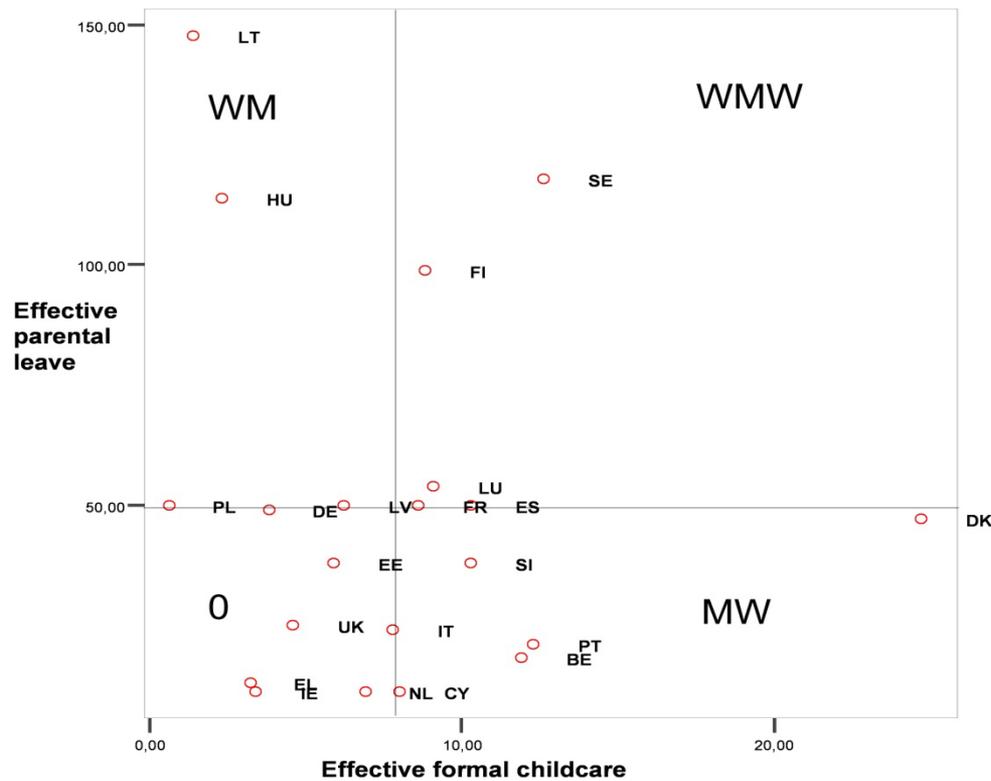


# Childcare and parental leave: one 'policy package' or two?

- There is a weak correlation ( $r=-0.114$ ) between effective parental leave and effective formal childcare provisions of EU Member States.
- However, this correlation has absolutely no significance ( $p=0.624$ ).
- These two policy fields are thus distinctively independent from each other, there is no systematic covariance between them.
- Parental leave and childcare schemes both have logics of their own and European welfare states are building them as two separate systems.



# Reconciliation policy country clusters



# Reconciliation policy country clusters

- Based on median values of the two policy indicators, four country groups are formed
  - Group supporting primarily ‘working mothers’ (WM) with broad parental leave
  - Group supporting primarily ‘mothering workers’ (MW) with broad childcare provisions
  - Group supporting both ‘working mothers’ and ‘mothering workers’ (WMW)
  - Group supporting neither kind of reconciliation (0)
- According to reconciliation policy profile index (eff par leave/eff cc), the country clusters are distinctively separate from each other (ANOVA:  $F=10.759$ ,  $p=0.000$ )



# Degendering of labour markets within country clusters

(Median)	Mothers' employment rate	Women's PT employment rate	Gender gap in FTE employment	Employment impact of motherhood
WM	59.3	6.7	<b>10.6</b>	15.6
MW	73.5	5.5	17.6	2.9
WMW	63.5	24.8	17.0	9.2
O	59.1	25.3	28.3	15.5
F value	3.268*	1.686	3.077*	3.099*



# Degendering of labour markets within country clusters

- ❏ The MW cluster with developed childcare provisions displays highest maternal employment rates, low part-time female employment and a very low motherhood employment impact – but a surprisingly high gender gap in full-time equivalent employment
- ❏ The WM cluster with developed parental leave provisions displays low rates for both maternal and part-time female employment and a high employment impact of motherhood – but the lowest gender gap in FTE employment



# Degendering of labour markets within country clusters

- ❖ The WMW cluster with developed childcare as well as parental leave provisions shows a medium-level maternal employment rate, high part-time female employment and medium-level values in gender gap in FTE employment as well as in motherhood employment impact
- ❖ The 0 cluster without developed provisions shows a low rate for maternal employment but high values for PT female employment, gender gap in FTE employment and motherhood employment impact
- ❖ Thus, in some respects, these two groups are surprisingly close each other



# Conclusions II

- ❏ The Lisbon employment targets have become flesh: reconciliation policies are now part of mainstream European employment policies and being extended in almost all Member States
- ❏ The two main reconciliation policy instruments, parental leaves and formal childcare, do not form a unitary policy package as their development within Member States is not strongly correlated
- ❏ Instead, Member States differ significantly (and surprisingly) from each other concerning their reconciliation policy profiles
- ❏ They can be grouped in four country groups based on their policy profiles and these groups can be seen as distinctive clusters as between-groups variation exceeds within-groups variation



# Conclusions II

- ❏ Different reconciliation policy strategies of welfare states are connected with gender structures and gender inequalities of national labour markets.
- ❏ As could be anticipated, the cluster with high childcare provisions has high maternal employment and the cluster with high parental leave has a considerable motherhood employment impact
- ❏ However, gender gap in FTE employment does not follow initial expectations: it is lowest in 'the parental leave regime', not in the 'childcare regime'
- ❏ Promoting reconciliation as well as degendering labour markets are complex issues and policy-making needs to go beyond the simple choice between either aiming or not at gender equality within the world of employment

