

**Framing public policy from an intra-household gendered perspective.
The cases of the UK, Australia and Germany since the mid-nineties.**

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Aims

- Exploring changes in family-related policies over last 15 years
- Effects of policy changes on intra-household inequalities in
 - Access to income (direct financial support)
 - Division of roles (work and care incentives)
- Four areas
 - Childcare services
 - Parental leave
 - Flexible working
 - Tax-benefit support

Policy effects on IH inequalities

- 1) Effect on **individual access** to resources, within intact couples but also after separation;
 - Cash and tax support to carers/lower earners
 - Financial support to lone carers= Valuing '**gendered specialisation**' (familialism)

- 2) Effect on **caring and earning roles** (known to improve individuals' relative power and access to resources within the household);
 - Work and care incentives (second earner, childcare costs)= Valuing **equal sharing** (autonomous individuals)

- 3) Effect on gender **inequality** more generally in **society**
 - Jobs / pay / care work / gender norms

Employment indicators 1997-2007

	Australia			Germany			UK		
	1997	2002	2007	1997	2002	2007	1997	2002	2007
Male employment rate	77%	78%	81%	73%	71%	75%	75%	76%	77%
Female employment rate	60%	63%	67%	56%	59%	64%	63%	65%	66%
Empl. rate of mothers of child<6y	44%	45%	48%	50%	57%	60%	56%	57%	56%
Incidence of male part-time employment	15%	12%	12%	4%	6%	8%	8%	9%	10%
Incidence of female part-time employment	41%	39%	38%	31%	35%	39%	41%	40%	38%
Gender pay gap (FT)	15%	15%	15%	24%	26%	25%	25%	23%	21%
Usual weekly hours men		41.4	40.7		40.6	40		42.8	41.8
Usual weekly hours women		30.7	30.9		31.4	30.2		31.1	31.4
% PT women involuntary		26.2	24.7		9.3	16.3		5.6	6.5
% PT men involuntary		42	36.9		30.7	27.9		40.3	41.2

Parental leave and working time

1. Access to income (mothers)

- Paid leave (replacement rates)
- Job protection
- Danger is entrenched gender roles if support only to mothers

2. Equal sharing caring/earning

- Paid leave for both parents (individual right)
 - Flexible work for both (equal take-up)
 - Well paid/protected
 - Reduction in full-time hours for all
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- E.g. Hegewisch and Gornick (2011); Moss (2011) on PL
 - E.g. Hegewisch (2009); Himmelweit (2008) on WT

Childcare and cash support

1. Access to income

- Subsidising childcare services (tax credits)
- Cash for care (at home)
- But benefit income not as valued as earnings

2. Equal sharing caring/earning

- May sustain gender roles if cash for care is gendered
- Work disincentive for second earner: joint taxation (including joint means-testing of benefits)
- De Henau et al. (2007); Himmelweit and Sigala (2004) (CC)
- De Henau et al. (2010); Bennett and Sutherland (2011) (TB)

Policy changes 1996-2012

- All: welfare to work (conditionality and incentives) / 'family' choice
- Australia
 - Lib-Cons: activation policies but one-earner incentives
 - Labor: no big changes except for parental leave (relaxing strength of second-earner trap)
- Germany
 - Red-Green Coalition: activation policies but more consideration for gender equality
 - Grand Coalition: Major changes in childcare and parental leave
- UK
 - New Labour: activation policies with child poverty reduction
 - Lib-Dem Coalition: same but welfare reform and cuts

Parental leaves

	UK (<2010)	AU (<2007)	GE (<2005)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Low paid job-protected maternity leave - Introduction of two weeks low paid paternity leave - Additional paternity leave (conditional) - Unpaid individual parental leave with very low take-up 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No statutory paid parental leave but provided by some employers - Introduction of lump sum baby bonus (for all mothers of new born) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 100% earnings replacement maternity leave (14 wks) - Low paid individual parental leave (flexible but low take up by fathers) - No specific paternity leave
Then		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - paid parental leave 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shorter earnings-related parental leave and 2 daddy months

Working time

Then

	UK (<2010)	AU (<2007)	GE (<2005)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 48 h max. week (with individual opt-out) - Introduction of right to request flexible working (extended) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Individual WT agreements - Protection of carers from discrimination (NSW and VA) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 48 h max. week (no individual opt-out) - Right to request change to hours after period of leave - Creation of poor quality mini-jobs
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction of right to request flexible working 	

Childcare

Then

UK (<2010)	AU (<2007)	GE (<2005)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Private provision - Means-tested subsidies (WTC) - Limited tax rebates - Free part-time pre-school education for all 3-4yr olds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Private provision (Subsidies) - Means-tested childcare benefit for all and tax relief for working families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Public provision - Extensive free part-time coverage for over 3s - Low coverage for under 3s in the West, relatively high in the East
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Austerity measures: Reduction in working and childcare tax credit payments 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase in direct public funding of childcare places for under 3s (target 33% in 2013)

Tax-benefit systems

Then

	UK (<2010)	AU (<2007)	GE (<2005)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Universal child benefit - Individual taxation - Means-tested tax credits - Stricter activation conditions for benefits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Individual taxation - Means-tested family tax benefit for each child - Stricter activation conditions for benefits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Universal child benefit - Joint taxation of married couples (income splitting)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Austerity measures: child benefit frozen and withdrawn from families with a higher earner - Universal Credit 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase in direct public funding of childcare places for under 3s (target 33% in 2013)

AETR of second earner on full-time job at 67% AW

	(100+67)% AW, 2 c			(100+0)% AW, 2 c		
	AU	GE	UK	AU	GE	UK
Gross earnings	167	167	167	100	100	100
Family Benefits	6.8	8.9	6.9	17.7	8.9	6.9
Income Tax	-37.6	-31.9	-27.7	-24.0	-11.5	-17.5
SSC	0.0	-34.8	-14.7	0.0	-20.8	-9.2
Total Net Income	136	109	131	97	76	80
Net tax burden	18%	35%	21%	3%	24%	20%
AETR to 67% w/o cc	41%	51%	24%			
Childcare fee	-44.7	-16.0	-47.8	0	0	0
Childcare relief	15.1	6.9	4.7	0	0	0
Tax reduction	16.4	0.0	0.0	0	0	0
Net cost of cc	-13.3	-9.1	-43.1	0	0	0
Net income (- cc cost)	123	100	88	97	76	80
Net tax burden	26%	40%	47%	3%	24%	20%
AETR to 67% w/ cc	61%	65%	88%			

Effects of changes

- One-and-a-half earner model in all three countries
 - Family-centred parental leave (even new German system)
 - Family-centred tax-benefit system (work disincentive for second earner when childcare costs are taken into account)
 - AU, UK through joint means-testing of child-related benefits
 - GE through joint taxation (income split)
- Germany's childcare policy is promising and attempt to increase fathers' take-up of parental leave too but more to be done

Conclusion

- Big changes in policies but **little consideration** of gender inequality, let alone intra-household **inequalities**
- **Ideology** of choice everywhere, mostly **family choice** (intra-household decisions are a private matter)
- Many policies **reinforce traditional gender roles** rather than counteract them be it through second earner work disincentive, lack of focus on paternal care and cash for carers
- So limited attempt to direct cash to lower earner/main carer but **no consideration of long-term effects on gender roles**

- **Ideal: direct cc services, individual tax, more progressive, uni CB, individual PL, reduced FT working hours**