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Программа: OSF Edinburgh
Университет: Университет Эдинбурга
Направление: Сравнительная публичная политика
Годы обучения: 2009-2010

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Тема исследования:

Гендерное измерение Европейской стратегии занятости.
Как Европейская стратегия занятости влияет на трудовую занятость женщин в
Федеративной Республике Германия и Великобритании?

Краткое резюме (не более 200 слов):

В настоящее время в Европе карьера женщин по сравнению с мужчинами является более скоротечной, менее оплачиваемой и проходит в трудных условиях. Наиболее ярко данная ситуация выражена в странах, где традиционно мужчины являются добытчиками в семье. Таким образом, гендерные аспекты Европейской стратегии занятости (далее ЕСЗ) направлены на повышение уровня и качества участия женщин труда за счет сокращения гендерного разрыва в оплате труда, профессиональной сегрегации, дискриминации по признаку пола и способствованию улучшению ухода за детьми и семьей / программ примирения в странах Европейского Союза (далее ЕС). Тем не менее, пессимисты ЕС выражают сомнение в потенциале ЕСЗ изменить социальную политику государств-членов в связи с ее необязательным характером, “замороженными ландшафтами” и жесткостью организационных структур государств-членов. Целью данной работы было провести исследование как ЕСЗ влияет на трудовую занятость женщин в Федеративной Республике Германия и Соединенном Королевстве. Эти страны объединяет культура “мужчин-добытчиков”, а отличает англосаксонский и континентальный режим благосостояния. Исследования также рассматривало исторический фон и текущую тенденцию трудовой системы государств ЕС для измерения идейно-институциональной конвергенции между принципами ЕСЗ и национальной повесткой Великобритании и Германии. В исследовании была использована теория «мягкого управления» и двухуровневый подход, а также инструменты ЕСЗ для того, чтобы объяснить, как данная стратегия реализовывает свои цели и задачи в конкретных стратегиях на национальном уровне.

Мнения, выраженные в исследовании (отчете), не отражают точку зрения
Фонда «Сорос-Кыргызстан» и Фондов Открытого Общества.

Gender Dimension of the European Employment Strategy

How does the European Employment Strategy influence female labour participation in the Federal Republic of Germany and United Kingdom?

MSc in Comparative Public Policy

Examination Number

7607247

Edinburgh, United Kingdom

August 2010

Word Count: 14,997

Abstract

Nowadays, in Europe careers of the women compared to men are shorter, less-paid and precarious especially in the countries with the strong male-breadwinner legacies. Thus, the gender dimension of the European Employment Strategy aims to increase level and quality of the female labour participation by reducing gender pay gap, occupational segregation, gender discrimination and harassment and facilitate improvement of the childcare services and family/reconciliation programs across the European Union countries. Nevertheless, EU-pessimists question the potential of EES to alter social policy of the Member states due to its non-binding nature and frozen landscapes and rigidity of the institutional set-ups of the Member states. Therefore, this study seeks to explore how EES influences female employment in the Federal Republic of Germany and United Kingdom that are both common in being male-breadwinner cultures but differ in having Anglo-Saxon and Continental welfare regimes. Research will also look at the historical background and current trends of labour systems of both Member states in order to measure ideational and institutional convergence between EES principles and national agenda of the UK and Germany. This study will focus on the ‘soft governance’ theory, ‘two-level’ approach and instruments of EES in order to explain how it transposes its objectives into the concrete policies on the national level.

Acknowledgments

First of all, I want to thank my dear family. Despite being thousands kilometres away from Kyrgyzstan I felt their support, care and empathy not only during the writing period but also throughout the whole year! I am especially grateful to my *Mamajan* who always gave me confidence and kept my spirits up.

I want to express to my endless gratitude to my supervisor, *Richard Brodie* for his constructive criticism, flexibility, open-mindedness and understanding and for being cheerful and positive yet professional during our meetings.

I am thankful to *Samora* for being there for me when times were tough or beautiful. I am grateful for sharing to him for his wisdom when I was down, for enormous for the patience when I panicked, for holding my hand when I was lost and just for making me happy during this challenging, exciting and adventurous writing period.

I would like to thank the *Strawberry* my beloved friend and my soul sister for her love, care and genuine kindness.

I am grateful to the OSI/Chevening Programme and British Embassy for providing a scholarship to study in the University of Edinburgh.

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List of abbreviations and acronyms

AGG	(Allgemeines Gleichbehandlungsgesetz) General Act on Equal Treatment
BEPG	Broad Economic Policy Guidelines
BMFSFJ	(Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend) Federal Ministry for Family, Older Persons, Women and Youth
DIW	(Deutsches Institut für Wirtschaftsforschung) German Institute for Economic Research
EC	European Commission
EC	European Council
EES	European Employment Policy
EHRC	Equality and Human Rights Commission
EU	European Union
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GL	Guideline
IMF	International Monetary Fund
JER	Joint Employment Report
LFS	Labour Force Survey
NAP	National Action Plan
NRP	National Reform Programme
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OMC	Open Method of Co-ordination
MS	Member States
UK	United Kingdom

1. Introduction

During the last fifty years within the globalization trends women became more emancipated in terms of career. However, in many countries occupational segregation is still one of the ongoing problems that hinders economic development and undermines human rights of women. They face unequal access to the job positions, denial of career ladder promotion and various types of harassment at the work place. Due to the cultural and social factors women very often are under-represented as a workforce. The “undervaluation of women’s work is widespread, complex and dynamic” (Grimshaw and Rubery, 2007). Overwhelming majority of the women occupy part-time jobs or jobs that are more ‘suitable’ for women. At the same time female workforce is under-represented in high-skilled and intellectual positions in the information technology, industry and science sectors despite the equal possession of the required qualifications and merit as of men which are employed in the upper-mentioned spheres. Not only women cannot equally compete in the labour market with the men but they are often victims of social discrimination in terms of unequal working conditions and pay. According to the Opinion note on the Effectiveness of the current legal framework on equal pay for equal work or equal value in tackling the gender pay gap in 2009 “women in the EU earn on average 17.4% less than men for each hour worked” (European Commission, 2010).

According to the Commission’s 5th annual report on the gender equality “despite better educational attainment women’s careers are shorter, slower and less well-paid” (European Commission 2010b). Reproductive and household responsibilities essentially put women in a less competitive position in the labour market compared to the men, thus gender inequality has gradually institutionalized in the labour systems throughout the world. However, one of basic human rights and equalities is the equal access to work regardless the gender. There is a positive correlation between female labour participation and access to work, amount of pay, and level of working conditions, childcare services and family/reconciliation programs. All of these factors that directly affect number of women at work and quality of jobs are shaped at the national level. As practice shows women’s rights in the labour market are not always properly addressed by the governments of the Member States (especially ones with the strong male-breadwinner legacies) due to the overarching political and economic priorities on the national agenda. Thus, women’s rights are usually lobbied through the trade unions, non-profit organizations and supranational organizations. And European Union (further EU) is among them.

Gender equality is a cornerstone of EU, thus it was numerously tackled in the Treaties and Directives since the mid 50s. However, the vague provisions on the ‘equal access for women and men to employment’ left much space for the flexible and subjective interpretation and various loopholes for the Member states (further MS) to manoeuvre. While fulfilling requirements of the EU Directives on the gender dimension MS alterations in the labour policy were too insignificant to create equal access to work and proper working conditions for the women. Thus, from the late 90s gender dimension was incorporated into the European Employment Strategy that aimed to create ‘more and better jobs’ for women in the Member States. However, EU – pessimists and optimists contested the effectiveness of EES as being an integral part of the Open Method of Coordination its provisions are non-binding. In addition to the voluntary compliance, path-dependency of the institutional and ideational set-ups of Member states are more likely to hinder work of EES in the labour markets of the Member States. While some say that EES had a tremendous success, others argue that its effect was limited. Ergo, I want to know what is level of its influence and to what extent it can exert its power despite its non-binding nature and frozen landscapes of the social policy of the Member states.

1.1. Topic rationale: Understanding the influence of EES on the female labour participation in the Federal Republic of Germany and United Kingdom

Given study addresses the question of whether or not the EES can be considered as an effective and legitimate tool to influence the female labour participation on the national level. Studies that are abundant in quantity primarily assess performance of EES in general, whereas only very few focus on its impact on the gender equality and gender mainstreaming in the Member states. Thus, it is of a particular interest to evaluate capability of EES to facilitate the consolidation of the gender equality in labour markets of UK and Germany. Given Member states are both notorious for their strong male - breadwinner cultures. Yet both countries are different in their political system, labour relations, the welfare regime and the labour market settings. Given contrast will help to understand whether EES can work similarly or not in the different countries. Differences in systems will show that the role of domestic settings and institutions is crucial in defining influence of the EES.

Influence will be researched in terms of EES being able to deliver its objectives and achieving legitimacy within the alternative governance method as oppose to the traditional method. Study will be focused primarily on EES after the re-launch of the Lisbon Strategy

as some argue that ‘upgraded’ EES is more efficient. In this Dissertation I am assessing the level of influence that EES exerts on the Member states’ policy-making in the gender dimension in employment and whether recommendations of EES can be transposed into the actual policies on the national level.

My research question is following:

How does EES influence the level of female labour participation in UK and Germany having that:

- a) Provisions of EES are non-binding thus Member states’ compliance to its provisions is voluntary?
- b) Both UK and Germany are strong male-breadwinner systems with ideational and institutional set-ups that limit the female labour participation? Labour systems of the UK and Germany are frozen landscapes as many path dependent systems are which hardly change even under hard law so what are the chances of EES to influence it?
- c) UK and Germany are different welfare regimes. What are the implications of the development of a soft social dimension for domestic processes, policies, and institutions? Does EES affect MS in similar ways?

Following hypotheses have emerged:

Hypothesis A: EES influences policy and decision making of Member States through its ‘toolbox’ (instruments) and actually its soft nature enables the influence.

Hypothesis B: Despite the path-dependency of the labour systems of the MS:

- a) EES exerts ‘indirect’ or ‘catalyzing’ influence that result in policy-initiation but its influence is rather modest.
- b) Member States follow recommendations of EES and transpose its objectives and recommendations of EU Council into policies only when if there is convergence within their national interest.

Hypothesis C: EES is likely to exert more influence under the regime where ideational, interest and institutional fit its principles.

1.2. Structure of the dissertation

This Dissertation will explain the influence of EES on the female labour participation in UK and Germany in five chapters. Chapter two will start with presenting the analytical framework that is based on ‘two-level approach’ and ‘soft governance theory’. These theories are exploited in order to explain how EES influences female labour participation in UK and Germany. Going further, I will define and elaborate on the unit of analysis, the ‘*influence*’ in researching the European Employment Strategy. I will open the research design section by presenting research methods and methodological tools that I have used in this study. I will explain what are the advantages and disadvantages of method of analysis. Further I will explain why as a part of the comparative study particularly UK and Germany were chosen in order to measure influence of EES on female labour participation. Going further, I explain what and how the information was gathered and what primary and secondary sources were used. I will also present limitations of the study and methodological challenges that include data and conceptual limitations. In chapter three, I will analyse EES on the EU level where I briefly touch upon the development of the gender equality in EU and provisions and Directives of the Treaty of the Functioning that reflect the gender dimension.

Further discussion will compare and contrast contesting points that evaluate effectiveness of the EES. In order to explain how EES works I will elaborate discussion on its instruments. In the last section of the chapter, I will talk about obstacles that undermine work of the EES. Chapter four will discuss the role of women in the labour market in Germany and United Kingdom because path dependency and a long history makes historical background very important as it is one of the key figures that defines level of influence of the EES. Chapter five will compare level of influence of EES in UK and Germany through analysis of the primary data (NRPs, statistical data, reports and employment indicators). Chapter six will summarize the discussion and results of the study and will provide recommendations. Chapter seven will present literature and sources that were used to conduct the given study.

2. Theories, analytical framework and research design

Given chapter will present ‘soft governance’ and ‘two-level’ approach in order to explain how EES influences female labour participation in UK and Germany. Next section will define and explain the concept of ‘influence’ in researching EES. Further, research design section will elaborate on methods and limitations, data collection and advantages and disadvantages of the method of analysis.

Theoretical framework: ‘Soft governance’ theory and ‘two-level’ approach

“Learning is based on the various psychological, pedagogical and philosophical theories that either explained learning as an internal mental and endogenous process or as an exogenous process” (Gergen, 2001:118). EES is an exogenous and path-breaking process that enables its influence through its toolbox that contains cognitive instruments as framing effect, ‘mutual learning’ and ‘exchange of good practice’ (Bruno, 2006:522).

Framing effect of EES “expands the courses of action available to policy-makers by providing information and opening new spaces for coordination while simultaneously restraining their options by framing good and bad policy” (Hatzapolous, 2007:315). According to Lopez Santana (2006:491) “100% of the interviewees in Belgium, over 70% of Sweden and Spain confirmed that the EES as a force initiates domestic debates about what constitutes good and necessary policy and (re)formulate their courses of action – what once was good policy may not be good anymore”. In Spain, EES enhanced policies to “reinsert women in the workforce, promote equality in the workplace and reduce pay gaps” (López-Santana, 2006:488).

In accordance with the Title X, article 148 of the Lisbon Treaty “Member States shall take into account in their employment policies” provisions of EES guidelines, and on basis of NRPs the Council produces its recommendations to the Member States (European Commission, 2010). EU Council points in on the existing and potential problems, ergo EES can influence prioritization of issues on the national agenda of the Member states. Findings of Tversky and Kahneman (1981) show that people’s cognitive choices are decision-making process are influenced by what is available to them.

Even though EES works through non-binding instruments they have power to frame problems and issues and to form ‘logic of the appropriateness’ of the policy-makers. Its cognitive mechanisms send strong signals to the Member states as “*the shadow of Europe* and most importantly the *threat of falling behind*” (López-Santana, 2006:493). EES

increases its geography and level of influence through its cognitive instruments that create mental threat of being left behind and out of the crowd for MS.

According to the ‘two-level’ approach, EES places both EU and Member states in a ‘win-win’ situation (Büchs, 2008:10). In this pareto-optimum case, where on one hand by introducing EES principles into its social system a government is well ‘insured’ because if policy does not ‘fit’ or performs poorly then the liabilities and guilt are on the EU, however if policy succeeds then MS will reap the laurels. As EU is a substantial authority Member states could use a tactic ‘it is necessary because Europe said so’ to convince or bring other national actors on its side if moot cases arise (López-Santana, 2006:493). EU benefits as well, as its objectives without much resistance and passiveness are implemented on the national level the Member States. So, it can be concluded, that MS transpose into policies recommendations of EES that best fit within their national agenda.

Explaining the concept of ‘influence’ in researching the EES

‘Influence’ is the unit of analysis of the given research thus it is important to clearly explain the given concept. Without influencing and changing policy schemes EES will not be capable of ensuring coordination and providing directions in policy-making of the Member states. Yet influencing is not regulating or harmonizing because nature of EES is legally non-binding so its primary function is to recommend what is ‘good or bad’. While emphasising the final responsibility of the member states, Rubery (2002:503) characterises EES as the ‘catalyst’ for the gender mainstreaming. Despite EES cannot influence the labour policy-making directly as its provisions are not legally-binding it can exert indirect influence or ‘catalysing’ influence (Büchs, 2005:57). Factors that directly influence women’s access to the labour market and working conditions are pay, parental leave conditions and level of the childcare services. Thus mentioned factors are the indicators of the influence of EES on the female labour participation that will be measured through assessment of German and British National Reform Programmes (2005-2010).

The general problem with identifying ‘influence’ is that “like all other ‘influences’ in social science – it cannot be directly observed” (Hammersley, *et al*, 2000: 239). Another limitation in researching ‘influence’ is that it’s hard to measure its level and depth. It is impossible to track whether there was an actual impact of EES or not because implementation of the European Employment strategy is voluntary. So say if a Member state follows recommendations of EES then it is not possible to say for sure whether exactly the EES influenced the outcome. Thus, various scholars pose problem of

the ‘multi-causality’, where “there are always several factors or reasons at work, contributing to changes of the ‘variables’ under observation, and therefore it is difficult to isolate influences of one variable on another” (Buchs, 2005:57).

Relationships can also exist between various independent variables or even circular relations between independent and dependent variables (Goldthorpe 1997; Ragin 1997; Ragin 2000 cited in Buchs, 2005:57). For example, increased female labour participation in a Member state can be a result of various factors such as GDP growth, increased divorce rate or high flow of the female immigrants. Given study seeks to observe whether EES is capable of influencing indirectly the policy-making and issues such as working conditions, pay, parental leave that directly influence quantity of women in the labour market its soft method and mechanisms such as framing, cognitive effect that will be discussed in the further chapters.

Research design

Research methods and methodological tools

This study seeks to understand how EES influences participation of the women in the British and German labour markets. Given study will employ qualitative two-country comparison method in order to explore how EES works in the gender dimension. Since it is a comparative study, I will open discussion by explaining why particularly UK and Germany were chosen as the case studies. Further, I will depict what are the advantages and disadvantages of using a small sample analysis (further SNA) in scrutinizing the influence of EES on decision-making process in the field of the female labour policies. Then, I will explain what indicators will be used to measure impact of EES and what data was used and how it was collected in order to conduct the given research.

Comparison and case selection

The study aims to gain deeper understanding of these processes by following the idea of “exploring diversity, according to which meanings of phenomena and relationships are established by contrasting them across different contexts” (Ragin, 1994). While Germany and the UK are selected as the examples of different welfare regimes, both are described as the ‘strong male breadwinner models’ (Lewis & Ostner, 1995), where role of “women in the labour markets for the centuries had been predicated by the male-breadwinner model”. There are various factors that differentiate both states, for example the institutional set-ups, historical backgrounds, political and welfare regimes and

particularly labour market policies. In fact, these sharp distinctions between two EU Member States will facilitate assessment of EES effectiveness. It will show how EES works under the different conditions.

One of the studies hypothesizes that the strongest influence of the EES on the national employment policies can be expected in the conservative Bismarkian of the Continental Europe, where “the significant discrepancies between national employment patterns and EES and administrative capabilities to face new challenges and use new policy concepts” (Heidenreich & Zeitlin, 2009:30). So from here it can be inferred that the higher the deviation from the common standards (set by other EU member states and EES guidelines and globalization trends) the higher probability that a Member state restructures its national agenda to reach those standards. Influence of EES is shaped by the institutional set-ups, traditions, culture and etc, thus some countries still find it difficult to abstract from the old forms of social exclusion because of persistence of the past legacies. Ergo, it is necessary to look at the factors that influenced current labour policy and analyse societal and political factors. Despite it is argued that EES is more compatible with the Continental rather than Anglo-Saxon model but I will argue that there has to be institutional, interest and ideational fit and political will of the Member states. In order to access level of ‘fit’, first historical backgrounds and present female labour legislation should be examined. For example, the anti-discrimination law (that includes provisions on the gender equality in employment) in UK was adapted in 1975 (International Labour Office, 2007), whereas in Germany it came to power only in 2006 (Mengel, 2006) not by default but by design as the fulfilment of the EU’s Directive. So I will argue that EES is more likely to ‘fit’ in UK as it is more liberal towards female employment as it provides female-friendly policies.

Let’s briefly look at advantages of using SNA in the given research. Choice of the two country case study can be justified by a fact that SNA allows to reduce time-energy costs. This factor is especially favourable for the given research due to limited timeframe and differences associated with measuring influence of the independent variable of the study. However, Mill (1872) illustrates the “inapplicability of the method of difference by describing differences between nations”. I believe that given method can applied for example application of the quantitative methods would be decent if for example research would seek to answer not how much or does it or not but ‘how’ question. Indicators that measure influence of EES will be shown in more detail in the empirical part of the study. Main measurement instrument are German and British NRPs which will be analysed and compared and legislation that conditions access of women to the labour market.

SNA allows acquirement of more precise results and gives chance to look in-depth and concentrate on the variables. Its great strength is “juxtaposition of both similar and contrasting cases, helping to make transparent the operationalization of concepts that are largely hidden in the analysis of a statistical dataset” (Lieberman, 2005:441). Scrutiny of the NAPs (2004) and NRPs (2005-2010) will allow seeing the way EES performance transcends within the time, in other words tracking its effectiveness. For example if study finds that within time EES was effective in female labour policies then it can concluded that it influences and also there is a potential for further development. Thus SNA provides more flexibility and freedom. Given study will combine primary and secondary sources it allows to pull information from various sources and precedent cases and track whether there was improvement.

Limitations of the study and methodological challenges

Data limitations

Even though relationship between EES and female workforce in the Europe is a broadly anchored and emphasized topic there are only few available studies on the given subject. Talking of the data presentation and freedom of bias, the fact that under SNA this is a small scale research, its “outcomes might be opened to biases” (Desai, *et al*, 2006:120). There are also factors that might hinder validity and reliability of the study such as subjective nature of the EU sources that sometimes are tempted to praise and overestimate achievements of the EES. Most of available evaluation reports on performance of EES and evidence on its effectiveness mostly come from the EU sources thus information can possess subjective character that might hinder validity of the research outcomes. However, qualitative research allows pulling both primary and secondary data, thus persistence of various opinions will help to keep argumentation and flow of the study more or less objective. According to Vandana Desai *et al* (2006:120) “purposive sampling enables close focus on the cases and issues of interest and captures subjectivity”. EU documents on the gender-related issues will be focused on post-Lisbon strategy. There are numerous studies that refer to the post-Lisbon strategy, thus outcomes will be more valid as data is pretty much recent, i.e. from 2005 till present.

Conceptual limitations

The research is conducted in the form of a case study that focuses only on the two countries. Therefore the scope of analysis is inevitably limited. This means that the findings

might not always be applicable to the other countries. Because of the multi-causality problem this method is also biased. Say, changes in female employment that are presumably caused by EES could be also caused by other factors such as GDP rise, increase in quality of life and etc. Here it is important to take into the consideration role of the intervening variables such as divorce or birth rate. For example, high divorce rate might also lead to the increased female labour participation, for example single mothers are more likely to be extensively involved in the labour market rather than the married ones. As oppose to EES which might or not might effect employment as it carries non-obligatory character upper-mentioned factors will definitely affect and lead to changes.

Michael Coppedge (2002:4) comes with the criticism of SNA in which “relationships are hypothesized to be true or false, necessary or sufficient, rather than partially true, stronger or weaker”. Rigidity of the given method can restrain from achieving detailed and measurable results. This study researches ‘how’ question so it would be more desirable to have an open-ended, critical and thought provoking outcomes rather than constrained results. SNA is good at “uncovering processes and causality” (Desai, *et al*, 2006:121). Ergo, analysis of NRPs level of seriousness and professionalism in addressing recommendations of the Council and will unleash processes and relations in influence of EES on Member States’ decision-making in female labour policy area. Analysis of the primary data (NRPs) will help to understand what the impact of EES on a Member State is. Analysis of the primary data in two UK and Germany will be juxtaposed that will allow to access achievement of one goal by EES under two different welfare regimes and conditions.

Data collection

Data for the literature review will be retrieved mostly from the secondary sources such as scholarly articles, dissertations, journals, whereas the empirical part of the study will pull evidence from the primary sources available from the Eurostat, interviews, opinion notes, NRPs, Council recommendations and reports, EES guidelines and etc. Research that concentrates on the gender dimension of EES is not in abundance but is available in the comprehensive and detailed studies for example carried out by Milena Buchs (2008) who has various publications on the given topic. The area of the focus and departing point of research starts from 2005- the year of re-launch of the Lisbon Strategy and substantial upgrade of the European Employment Strategy. In order to understand political cleavages at in the interplay between influence of EES and outcome in labour female policy-making qualitative research methods will be used to examine the

sociological, cultural, economic and political spheres of UK and Germany. *Therefore given research is based on the following sources:*

a. EU sources

This is a primary data that particularly consists of the evaluation reports on the gender dimension of the EES conducted within EU organizations and other independent bodies. Thus, it is possible to get relatively objective results as assessment of EES was procured not only within the scope of the EU based sources. Focal point of the empirical analysis such as Integrated Guidelines for Growth and Jobs from 2005-2010, Directives, Provisions of the Lisbon Treaty on the employment are available in the National archives of UK and Germany, EU Council and Commission websites. Lately, especially after the re-launch of the Lisbon Strategy, EU has been rigorously emphasizing on the promotion of equality at work between women and men. In order to test given claim, the Integrated Guidelines for Growth and Jobs covering 2005-2010 periods will be analyzed in order to see whether role of the gender dimension has declined or gained significance.

b. Existing studies and literature on the EES

Available secondary data was an integral part in formulating the research question and designing a research topic focusing on an area of gender dimension that is often scarcely documented. Availability of the of the online and newspaper articles, formal documents, evaluation reports, relevant websites that provide full evaluation reports and statistical and quantitative data on employment rates made it possible to facilitate depth and the process of the research.

3. Literature review. EU level: Development, instruments and the gender dimension of EES

Given section will look at the provisions of Lisbon treaty and Integrated Guidelines for Growth and Jobs 2008-2010 on the gender dimension. That will allow analysing the way EES addresses gender dimension and influences national agenda of MS. Following section will discuss how the EES works and how it can be examined. The following instruments: guidelines, employment recommendations, the National Reform Programme, the peer review programme and benchmarking strategy will explain how EES can influence indirectly policy-making of Member states and also given section will touch upon what are the obstacles that might undermine its work.

Development of the gender dimension of EES

The goal of eliminating inequalities and promoting equality between men and women in the European Union can be traced back to “1993 White Paper on Growth, Competitiveness and Employment, the 1994 Essen Strategy and most immediately in the new Title on Employment in the Amsterdam Treaty agreed in 1997” (O’Connor, 2007:3). Article 141 of the EC Treaty, which requires Member States to ensure that the principle of equal pay for men and women for equal work or work of equal value is enforced followed by five gender equality directives between 1975 and 1986, three others in 1992, 1996 and 1998 and the amendment of the Directive on Equal Opportunities in 2002 (O’Connor, 2007:3). As the numerous studies have shown, EU Directives in the field of the gender equality were successful in forcing new EU member states to adopt laws regulating non-discrimination (Fagan, *et al*, 2006). European Employment Strategy, also known as the Lisbon Strategy was launched in 1997 to facilitate compliance to the one of the EU goals in “increasing women’s labour force participation, and to reduce gender inequality in the quality of work men and women” (Fodor, 2006:10). The achievement of the objectives of gender equality has been supported by the “European gender equality legislation, gender mainstreaming and specific measures for the advancement and empowerment of women, promoted by the European Union, and the internationally recognised agreements”¹.

In 2005 Council and Member States have re-launched the Lisbon Strategy by organizing it in three year cycles and approved a set of integrated guidelines that is an

¹ UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW, 1979), UN Beijing Platform for Action and its 12 critical areas of concern (1995), UN Millennium Development Goals and the commitments recently taken by Governments at the 98th session of the International Labour Conference - 2009 (European Commission, 2010).

instrument to implement Strategy and also a guide for Member States to implement national reforms through the National Reform Programmes (Commission of the European Communities, 2007). The four pillars of the employment guidelines established at Luxembourg— employability, entrepreneurship, adaptability and equal opportunities for women and men were replaced by three objectives: “full employment, quality and productivity at work, and social cohesion and inclusion” (Rubery, *et al*, 2003). Many argue that the recent amendments to EES undermined significance and position of gender mainstreaming on the EU agenda. The abolition of the pillar structure was criticised as vague *meanings* of ‘gender equality’ and ‘gender mainstreaming’ (Verloo, 2005:14), a “loss of visibility of equal opportunities in general and as removal of detail clarifying the meaning of gender mainstreaming” (Rubery, *et al*, 2004) and a “new risk that the EU’s commitment to advancing gender equality would not survive in this new round of more ‘focused’ policy” (Fagan, *et al*, 2006:572).

However, despite there is no longer explicit provision on the gender equality in the objectives of the ‘Integrated guidelines for Growth and Jobs – 2008-2010’ in fact there is more emphasis on promoting rights of women in the labour sector. For example, its fifth, sixth and seventh commandments “promoting gender equality in employment and pay; combating discrimination against disadvantaged groups; making work pay; reducing undeclared work; promoting occupational and geographical mobility” (EC, 2003) explicitly assert rights of working women. According to GL 22 and 14 Member states should “ensure employment-friendly labour cost developments and wage-setting mechanisms by encouraging social partners within their own areas of responsibility to set the right framework for wage bargaining in order to avoid gender pay gaps”; GL 17 emphasises on “promotion of the reconciliation between work and family life, aspect of childcare provisions “90% of children between 3 years old and the mandatory school age and at least 33% of children under 3 years of age by 2010 is a useful benchmark at national level” and GL 18 suggest that MS should “resolute action to increase female participation and reduce gender gaps in employment; better reconciliation of work and private life and the provision of accessible and affordable childcare facilities” (Council of the European Union, 2008). Principle of the equal pay under the Directive 75/117/EEC: “equal or equivalent work must be paid the same; job classification system used for determining pay must be based on the same criteria for both men and women and drawn up so as to exclude any discrimination on grounds of sex” (Europa, 2010).

In the newly adopted 'Europe 2020 strategy for jobs and growth' in accordance with GL 6, EU Council calls for the 'inclusive growth' where it explicitly points out that Member States should "ensure access and opportunities through removing barriers to labour market participation especially for women..." and promote female entrepreneurship (EU Council, 2010). Article 23 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights states that "Equality between women and men must be ensured in all areas, including employment, work and pay... the principle of equality shall not prevent the maintenance or adoption of measures providing for specific advantages in favour of the under-represented sex" (European Parliament, 2010). And fact that Charter is legally binding under the Lisbon Treaty creates favourable conditions for the enforcement of provision on the gender equality and facilitation of the EES influence on the policy-making of the Member States in the field of labour policies regarding women. Plus, EU works in gender-mainstreaming strategies of a double focus (1) incorporating gender into conventional project or work targeted interventions or affirmative action to support women (or men) – focused activities where situation deems this necessary (EC, 2003; UN, 2002 cited in Mikkelsen, 2005:234).

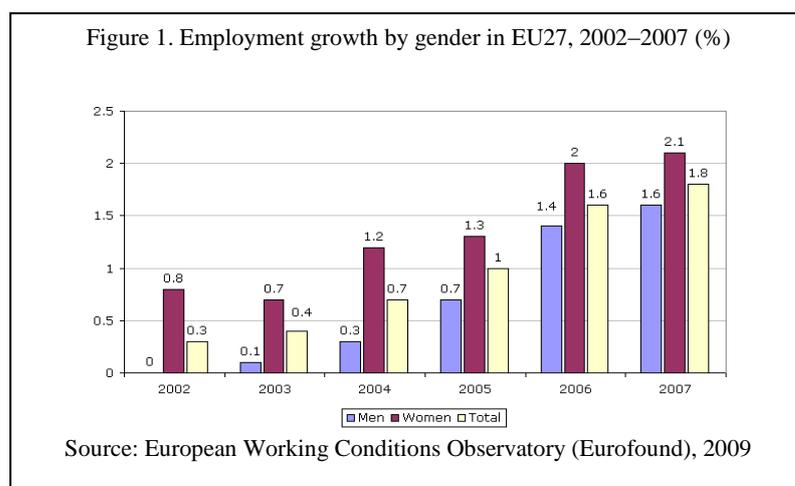
Let's look at the general provisions under the Lisbon treaty that ensures gender equality and equal access to employment. To start with, part 1, Article 10 of the Treaty of the Functioning states that "the Union shall aim to combat discrimination based on sex" (European Commission, 2010). Going further, title X, article 153 the achievement of the objectives of Article 151 (promotion of employment, improved working conditions, social protection, combating of exclusion) targets "equality between men and women with regard to labour market opportunities and treatment at work" (European Commission, 2010). Title X, article 157 states that each Member State "shall ensure that the principle of equal pay for male and female workers for equal work or work of equal value is applied" (European Commission, 2010). Where concepts of 'pay' concept and equal pay without discrimination based on sex means are explicitly depicted in the article in order to avoid vagueness.

EES in action

Rubbery *et al* (2002) argue that progress of EES was partial as "incomplete and still neglectful of issues of the quality of women's jobs as a consequence of the emphasis placed upon raising the female employment rate". Despite general employment estimates were 73.2% part-time jobs employment equalled 52.7% (Raveaud, 2007:416). Therefore, fact that EES has given increasing priority to 'more jobs', including part-time and temporary jobs, over 'better jobs' (Raveaud, 2007:415) was highly criticised. If employment rate

increases then more jobs criterion is fulfilled, however it's mainly constituted by the part time, short-term contract and low-paid jobs what. However, according to 'quality view' fixed term jobs equal to high risks of unemployment and premature exit from the labour market (Raveaud 2007:416).

Employment by the gender in EU27 in 2005 comprised 70% of men as a workforce, compared to 56.3% of women that in 2009 increased to 58.9% (European Commission: Eurostat, 2010). According to the figure 1, there has been a substantial growth in employment by gender among European member states from the period of 2002-2007 (Eurofound, 2009). One could argue that it can be attributed to the EES.



However, in 2008 the rate of female employment almost reached 60% target set by the Lisbon strategy for 2010 but proportion varied between 36.9% and 73.2% according to the Member State and women were over-represented in precarious, short-term or part-time jobs (Europa, 2010). Apart from the high percentage of the part-time jobs hindering success of EES, one has to consider the multi-causality factor. Due to non-obligatory nature of European Employment Strategy its doubtful that EES in fact triggered rise in the employment as it is “unclear which policy was influenced as objectives of EES is broad, thus it is possible to argue that results were caused by the internal factors” (Büchs, 2008:4).

According to Jill Rubery (2002:500-503) EES is “by far the most important EU influence on equal opportunities policies”. However, results indicate that the influence of the EES on national orientations is generally modest (Barbier 2004; de la Porte and Pochet 2002; and Zeitlin, *et al*, 2005 cited in Raveaud, 2007:426). According to The Netherlands report, EES had little impact on its employment policy as many elements were implemented before 2000 (Mosher *et al* 2003:75).

As the EES objectives are not legally binding “national Parliaments are not obliged to transpose them into national law and the EU cannot impose any formal sanctions if the objectives are not achieved” (Büchs, 2008:19). However, EU Members that took advantage of ‘cookbook’ have already benefited, for instance, despite fact that the French welfare system was always characterized as an “immovable object” (Pierson, 1998), during last twenty years its social policy was subjected to the new policies and new instruments (Palier, 2005:127). Ergo, EES has not delivered its promises not because “its recipe is wrong but because the chefs, the MS have not cooked it” (Raveaud, 2007:428). Utilization of the EES resulted for French in the “expansion of activation policies, more employment-friendly tax systems, better integration of employment and education policies and simplification of rules and procedures affecting job creation by smaller enterprises” (Mosher, *et al*, 2003:75).

3.3. EES and its ‘toolbox’

Member states are required to produce National Reform Programmes which are later subjected to peer-reviews, discussions and approvals. The role of the NRPs is defined in the Treaty of Lisbon, Treaty on the Functioning, Part 3, Title IX, Article 148: “each Member State shall provide the Council and the Commission with an annual report on the principal measures taken to implement its employment policy in the light of the guidelines for employment” (The Lisbon Treaty, 2008). Despite EES is a soft law, production of the NRP is binding. Governments and non-governmental organizations at the EU and national levels are ‘socialized’ by EES discourse what in turn “effects national policy-making as governments and non-governmental actors behave according to a ‘logic of appropriateness’, adhering to the promoted policy approaches because they think it is the right thing to do” (Büchs, 2008:7).

EES provides opportunities for ‘shaming and blaming’ through its benchmarking and evaluation procedures, including quantitative targets and precise timetables that make outcomes measurable and easily comparable (Trubek, *et al*, 2005 cited in Büchs, 2008:6). In the given strategy the shortcomings of the Member states in implementation and labour market performance are made public (Büchs, 2005:80). The success of the approach is based on the belief that Member states will be motivated to learn about more effective policies because they jointly and individually benefit from the adoption of better policies in case of non-adoption they will individually and jointly suffer (Visser, 2009:42). Nonetheless, having that Member states are interdependent economically it is less likely they would place ‘proper European’ status before doing business. In addition to that,

‘shaming and naming’ strategy can work if Member states acknowledge importance and necessity of EES and if it is “extensively covered with the sources of mass media” (Büchs, 2008:6). Findings of Brian Ardy *et al* (2004) report on “EES’s low public awareness and media presence”.

EES and the Frozen Landscapes

Peter Hall (1993:278) argues that the policy learning takes place when political decision makers “assimilate new information that based on past experience and apply it to their subsequent actions’ by changing policy goals, instruments and/or their precise settings”. However, there is a small possibility that new information can integrate within the social policy system that is impenetrable to changes as its institutions, norms and values are path-dependant. Thus, absence of the political will and frozen landscapes of the labour systems might hinder implementation of EES objectives. In addition, if there is no institutional and ideational convergence then governments are reluctant to change existing systems because of high transaction costs and risk. Many aspects of the EES are based on the Swedish employment policy, ergo “Scandinavian regime has high levels of fit, Continental regimes - medium fit and low levels of fit for Southern regimes” (López-Santana, 2006:483). For example, Italy reports little impact because the EES guidelines do not fit their labour market (Mosher, *et al*, 2003:74). If one thing is suitable for one country is it applicable for other given variances in political and economical systems, culture, logic of appropriateness and etc? However, while some authors state that national institutions are too strong and resilient to provide EES with decisive influence (Büchs, 2005b), others argue that ESS is a new way of governance that is subtly transforming national systems (Lopez Santana, 2005).

4. Background and current trends of female labour system in the Federal Republic of Germany and United Kingdom

This section will discuss the history and role of women in the German and British labour markets because path dependency and a long history are play vital role in that defining the level of influence of the EES. Given analysis will allow assessing ideational, institutional and interest-based fit of German system and the EES principles. First, I will provide a brief background on the development, welfare state settings, political and cultural connotations and role of women in the labour and detailed analysis of current labour situation. Then I will present what obstacles result in a low economic activity of the female population.

Federal Republic of Germany

Despite the fact that Germany is a progressive and developed economy that is moving hand in hand with the newly emerging technologies and globalization trends, the role of the women in the labour market is the same as it was fifty years ago. Old-fashioned thinking ‘man works and wife slaves for kuche and kinder’ still persists and circumscribes women in their career and personal growth. “On average in the Germany the man works six hour per week in the household and woman works 25 hours” (The Local: Germany's News in English, 2009). In fact, not only the situation with the female workforce remains with no alterations but it has been following regression patterns during the last couple of years despite the international call for the gender equality and efforts of the activists and trade unions to influence policy-makers. For example, one of the important indicators that effects female participation, the pay, which historically has been lower then of men went even lower within last four years. According to the Germany's Federal Statistical Office “in 2007 the pay gap was 23%, whereas in 2006 it has increased to 22.7%, year later pay gap estimated 23.2% and recent indicators of 2009 showed 24%” (Spiegel International, 2010) difference between what average man and woman earn in Germany. It is greatest in West Germany, largely because the average hourly wage for men in this part of the country is almost 50% more than for men in the former East Germany (Plass, 2008).

In the West Germany equal opportunities policies originated in 1970-80s, whereas in the East Germany equal pay regulation was already introduced in 1946 (Young and Töns cited in Benhing and Pascual, 2001:129). Nevertheless, despite the Basic Law of 1949 in the West Germany declared that men and women were equal, only in 1957 that the civil

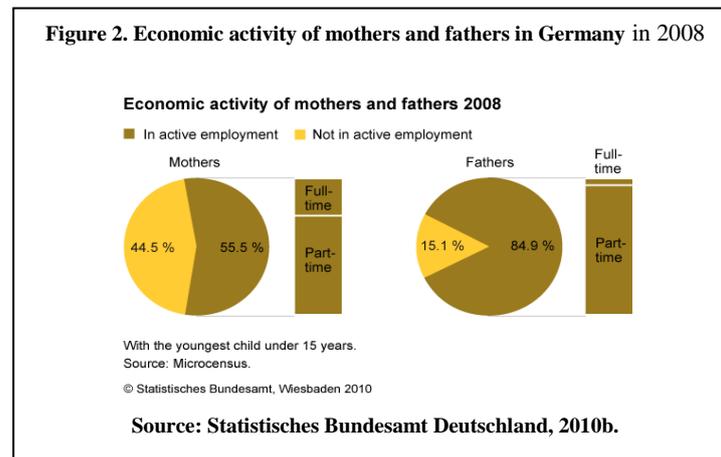
code was amended to conform with this statement so it was normal case to dismiss married women from civil service work in the early 1950s (Johnson, 1995). Nowadays, General Act, the 'Equal Treatment' (Allgemeines Gleichbehandlungsgesetz, AGG) of 2006 prohibits from the "discriminating against job applicants or employees on the basis of gender, race or ethnic origin and etc and ensures implementation of EU directives on anti-discrimination; according to the law, in any form of discrimination a job applicant or an employee has right to file claim damages within two months, plus employer is also obliged to protect employees from discriminatory harassment by co-workers or other third parties" (Mengel, 2006).

However, despite attempts to equalize men and women the "German corporatist model relies on the reciprocity of the male breadwinner and female carer and has only limited care services, but high levels of social transfers to mothers leaving the labour market during periods of childrearing" (Ghysels, 2003:2; Perrons, 1995:03-105 cited in Taylor-Gooby, *et al*, 2004:10). This regime division has been criticised as the "gender blind, neglecting informal work done by women, as the concept of citizenship is based on access to paid work, which predominantly relates to men" (Wehner & Abrahamson, 2003:4).

Legislation and institutional settings prevent women from entering the labour market and marginalize rights and working conditions of ones which are currently employed. This can be explained by a fact that women are expected to be involved in household rather than 'winning the bread'. According to the EU Equal Opportunities commissioner, Vladimir Spidla the main reason for the wage inequalities in Germany is "high number of women who work part-time jobs or low-paying jobs" (The Local: Germany's News in English, 2009). Thus even though, equality pillar was eliminated from updated EES guidelines still male and female equality can be provided through the 'quality' of the jobs, which is highly emphasized in EES. Say if achievement of the pre-2005 EES goal that was based primarily on the 'quantity' to be continued that would probably lead to the substantial increase of the gender gap in the German female labour market.

In 2003 and 2004 the share of women in the group participating in promotion measures nationwide exceeded 41% in both years (target rate for 2003 - 40.8%, 2004 - 40.7%) and with employment rate of 59.6% in 2008 (men - 71.2%), Germany has almost reached the target rate of 60% among women stipulated by the Lisbon Strategy for 2010 (Documentation, 2010). However, German women workforce is generally located at the

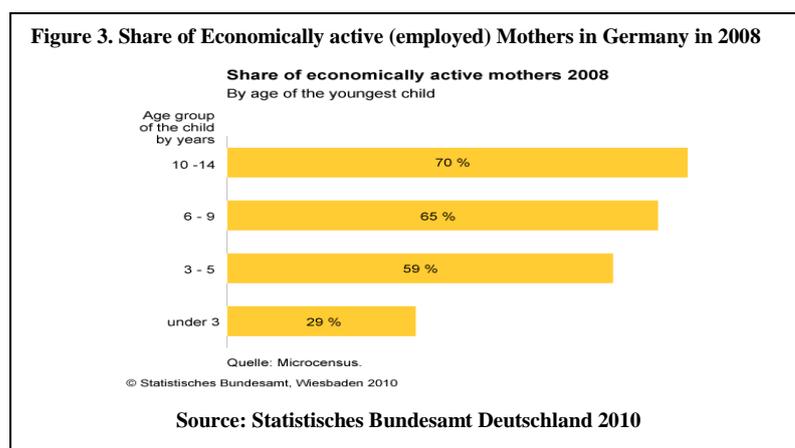
low-paid, part-time and self-employed jobs. According to the figure 2 only 1/5 of 84% of working fathers were unemployed in 2008, whereas figures for the mothers show that almost half of them were economically inactive. In addition to that gap between working mothers is fathers is around 35%. In 2008, 60% of married couples with children younger than 3 years follow the same pattern: fathers keep working full time, while mothers stay at home (Plass, 2008).



Since the past, the status and role of women in German society had been defined the notorious “three K’s: Kinder - children, Kirche - church and Küche - kitchen” (Johnson, 1995). Ergo, low participation of women in the labour market can be explained by the ‘kinder’ phenomena or unavailability of childcare services. However, childcare provisions are different in across Germany. In the West Germany “day care and all-day schools were long synonymous with communism” (Johnson, 1995). In many respects formation of the policy-making and content of the labour policies has ideological and cultural connotation. On the other hand, East Germany influenced by Soviet Style encouraged female participation in the economy system and after world-war rehabilitation “marriage and family laws had been rewritten to accommodate working mothers” legalized abortions, provision of vocational training (Lewis, 1995). Economical need led to rational decision-making that overpowered ideological and cultural reasoning. So after fall of the Berlin Wall the “female employment in the East was near 90%, in the West 55%” (Bennhold, 2010).

In West Germany, chain of the obstacles created by design or default restrains women from fulfilling their career needs. For example, only 9% of children age 3 years and younger have access to day care, compared to 23% in advanced countries and 40 – 60% in northern European countries (Plass, 2008). However even the limited availability of the day care services does not solve problem of the working mothers. That lucky 9% who have

access to the nursery services still has to cope with another problem as majority of the “services end the day at 3 or 4 pm” (Plass, 2008), which is obviously is still substantial inconvenience for mothers that work. Rigidity in the working hours disables women to work full-time. Thus, “child care and a school system that covers the working day is the key” (Bennhold, 2010). According to figure 3 there is apposite correlation between age of a child and mother’s opportunity to work. As it can be seen only 29% of women with children under three years old are in the labour market, compared to 70% of working mothers with children over 10 years.



Working mothers sometimes labelled as ‘Rabenmutter’, the ‘raven mothers’². Thus childcare provision is a vital in determining level of female labour participation. “Highly qualified women tend to want to work, even if that means forgoing children, so by their mid-40s, 1/3 of German women live in childless households” (Bennhold, 2010). Ergo, women nowadays are contending with a dilemma: having successful carrier or children. So it is not only legal barriers but psychological ones imposed by the society. Women hesitate to have children and choose career over family that is especially evident in the West of Germany rather than East. Women's access and participation in the labour market is inhibited by the ideological and cultural reasons. Women are caged by traditions and stereotypes in their homes. Due to its indirect influence that is mostly tied to effecting Member states in the psychological way, EES is a ‘social and mental’ revolution to reconcile work and family issues.

Even young women that are not married and have no children face obstacles when entering the labour market. According to the German young woman that wished to remain

² ‘Raven mothers’ are women who pursue careers instead of being homemakers compared to ravens that fly away and leave their nests behind with (Plass, 2008).

anonymous “management, executive posts, information technologies, accounting, banking are mostly occupied and are expected to be occupied by men. Thus, my job prospects are not as good as men’s are. I am more likely to get a job that requires feminine and soft ‘touch’. Many companies do not have non-discrimination office, ones that do, do not really work. In many job advertisements ‘We treat and hire everybody the equal basis regardless sex’ notice is absent”. Ones that manage to get a job still have difficulties keeping it. According to Heiner Thorborg, a human resources consultant in Frankfurt “the dilemma is that while 50% of the junior employees are female they pretty much disappear on their way to middle management when they get married” (Plass, 2008). Currently, 21 members of the board of directors and governors at German companies are women what mean that only 3% of top level managers are female (Donath, 2010). And only 2% of those running fortune 500 companies are women (Bennhold, 2010). There are plenty of informal barriers that hiring companies or organizations create cannot tackled or addressed by the government or prosecuted by the law. For example, fact that “women in child-bearing years are often asked in job interviews if they plan to have children” (Plass, 2008) is not only against the law but also absolutely unethical and unprofessional.

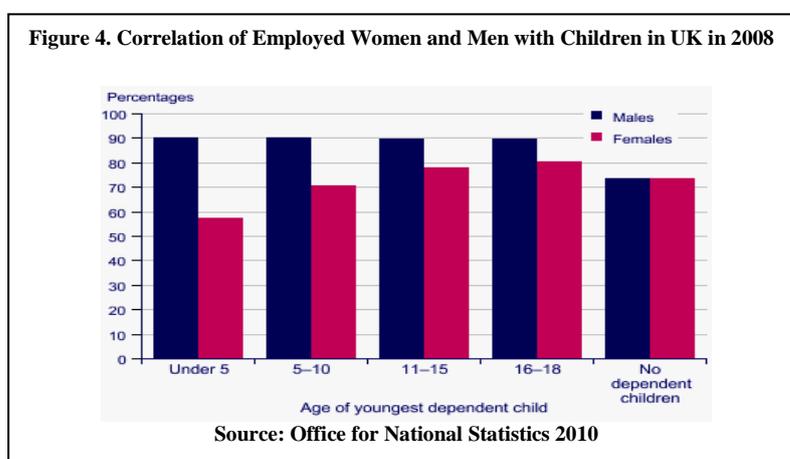
From other perspective, rather than blaming the resilience of the intuitional set-ups that hinder female labour participation, women should ‘point that finger’ on themselves. The study conducted by the Universities of Bielefeld and Constance showed that “women are satisfied with lower salaries and do not insist on their rights” (Teevs, 2010). Plus, according to the German Institute for Economic Research (Deutsches Institut für Wirtschaftsforschung, DIW) report women usually ask for less than men when negotiating their employment contracts (Teevs, 2010). Findings of the Research by the DIW state that “61.8% of men on an hourly wage lower than €8.50 (\$10.68) were dissatisfied, only 50.3% of women felt the same” (Teevs, 2010).

United Kingdom

Liberal or Anglo-Saxon welfare model is known for being modest on benefits and social insurance that mostly caters to low-income population but rather encouraging people to rely on the market by subsidizing private welfare schemes (Esping-Andersen, 1990:27). Despite British Government produces women-friendly legislation regarding equal access and work protection, it does not provide sufficient conditions to encourage women to work. The genesis and development of equal opportunities legislation stems from the adoption of Equal Pay Act and establishment of the Equal opportunities Commission in 70s that

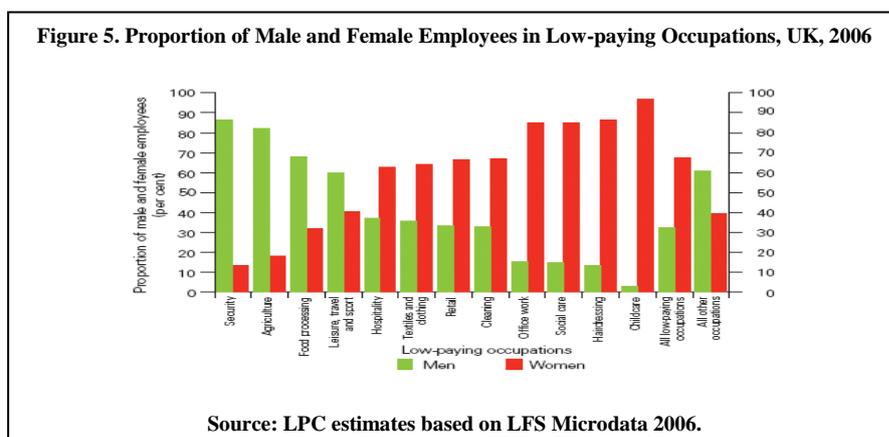
resulted from a joint pressure on national level (women's coalitions) and international organizations (as joining Common Market required fulfilment of the equal pay criterion), followed by Equal Value Amendment act in 1984 that promoted “use of equal opportunities legislation in the context of occupational segregations by sex” (Walby, 2001:221). The Sex Discrimination Act 1975 (SDA) applies to all discrimination in the workplace, such as, selection for a job, training, promotion, work practices, dismissal or any other disadvantage such as sexual harassment; service providers and public sector employers have to design employment and services with the different needs of women and men in mind (Thompson’s Solicitors, 2010).

Even though, UK always aimed to pursue equality, including equality for women many still argue that British women are marginalized in terms of career and access to labour market. Equal Opportunities Commission report states that “30,000 women in UK each year lose their jobs because of their pregnancy, and only 3% of those who experience a problem lodge a claim at an employment tribunal” (International Labour office, 2007). According to the findings of the Fatherhood Institute Briefing on Paternity, Maternity and Parental Leave (2010) current British system “underpins gaping gender pay gap and perpetuates inequalities between men and women in the work place and in wider society”. Some employers’ attitudes to hiring women (or promoting them to positions that require costly investment in firm-specific knowledge) are informed by the likelihood that they may be unavailable for work for long periods because of child caring responsibilities (Fagnani & Boyer, 2007). According to the figure 4 that illustrates correlation between employed women and men with children in UK it is vivid that mothers face gender discrimination at the labour market, especially ones with child(ren) under five years old, whereas women and men with no children share equal percentage level.

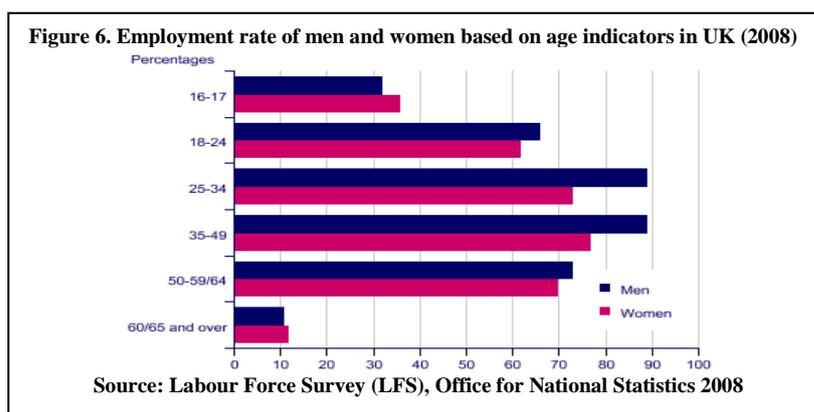


It is interesting that in the late 18th century despite the male breadwinner model was regarded as the ideal, in “practice many households were dependent upon female earnings, especially those households run by widows” (Hudson, 2009). Despite strong male-breadwinner ideology Victorian women were not perceived as the ‘angels in the house’ because widows and spinsters carried on family businesses after the death of their husbands and worked as governesses or in trades such as millinery and inn-keeping (Hudson, 2009). Even though women were seen as ‘keepers of the home fire’ still nobody denied their right to be occupied with work that is suitable for women. Nevertheless, in 19th century within expansion of the “heavy industries such as iron, steel, mining, engineering and ship building men monopolized supervisory roles and high status and higher paid jobs that endorsed the male breadwinner ideal” (Hudson, 2009).

UK labour market has major weaknesses in terms of the “gender pay gap, regional disparities, the skills gap, and a shortage of affordable childcare” (Milner, 2004:11-15). Women in 2006 earned around 15% less than men –when including the gap between part-time and full time this gap can even reach 41% (Women and Work Commission, 2006). Not only women work on low paid and precarious jobs but also as opposed to men many of them work in service areas. For example, according to Figure 5 that reflects Proportion of Male and Female Employees in Low-paying Occupations in UK (LSF, 2006) in 2006 women occupied niche of the labour market that is essentially designed for the women. 70% of textile and clothing and hospitality businesses are predominantly occupied by of women. What is more striking is that over 90% of childcare, social care and hairdressing sectors hold female participation. British labour market represents strict division of gender responsibilities, where around 90 percent of males in security sector and 84% in agriculture. Thus, John Scott (2008) suggests that “transformation of women’s role still remains partial as employment rate of married women reached is only 60%”.



Supposedly, in a strong male-breadwinner society married women are supposed to be less economically active, well at least this is the case in Germany. According to the British Office for National Statistics (2010c) average marrying age for women is 28 years. So in case of UK from the Figure 6 it can be inferred that around 70% women whose age range is from 25 to 64 are employed. That means that as opposed to Germany married women are less constrained in entering labour market.



New Labour brought “a new ideological commitment and policies intended to sustain women’s participation such as Childcare Strategy a New Deal for lone parents, Working Tax Credits and Child Tax Credits with a childcare component” (Pascall, 2008:4). Government invested 25 billion to childcare services Childcare places were increased to over 1.3 million and opened 3,500 Sure Start Children’s centres, helping over 2.7 million children with parenting support, childcare for children and job training for adults (Labour, 2010). Increased paid maternity leave from nine months to a full year and doubled maternity pay and given millions of parents the right to request flexible working for children under 16 years of age from May 2009 and ‘New Deal for Lone Parents’ has helped 635,000 lone parents into work (Labour, 2010).

The Equality Bill that was initiated under the Labour Party “will make life fairer for women by bringing in compulsory gender pay gap reporting for businesses in 2013” (Labour 2010). Part five (on Work), the Chapter on Employment of the Equality Act of 2010 has major provisions on the ‘equal work, sex equality clause, sex equality rule, maternity equality clause, maternity equality clause: pay, maternity equality rule (Stammering law, 2010). Given provisions guarantee protection of women’s rights

(especially of mothers) at the workplace. In addition, in accordance with provisions of the Equality Act, organizations will adapt “compulsory pay transparency in the workplace to show the gap between men and women in pay” (Labour, 2010). Within New Labour women’s pay compared to men increased to 73% in 2003 and to 77% in 2005 (Pascall, 2008:5). ‘Make work pay’ idea is expected be put from the talk to practice by rise of National Minimum Wage by “2.2% to £5.93 in October 2010” (Labour, 2010). Usually as less privileged group of the workforce is often constituted by the women, given action will lead to the overall rise in the salaries of both men and women but it will not resolve unequal allocation of the salaries based on the gender factor.

In UK paid maternity leave (£123.06 per week) is 39 weeks, plus right to use the parental leave of 13 unpaid weeks unpaid before child’s 5th birthday (British Employment Law 2010). Whereas, the Employment Act 2002 entitles fathers to take two weeks paid leave at the same rate as Statutory Maternity Pay (Compact Law, 2010). Current amendments on the paternity leave create more favourable conditions for the fathers, allowing them to “take the place of the mother at home for the *last three months* of her nine-month maternity leave with statutory government pay of £123 a week” (Mulholland, 2010). That means that instead of only two paid weeks they get to have full 13 weeks of paternity leave covered by the government. “Some employers could not conceive that fathers might actually want to stay at home and look after their children. It (paternity leave) was much more opposed by employers than anything else” (Interview; EOC cited in Taylor-Gooby, *et al*, 2004:9). Many employers refuse to top up the rate of paternity pay from the statutory minimum of £123.06 a week, thus 72% of fathers said they could not afford the time off (Snowdon 2010). So was the Labour party so active in promoting women’s rights at workplace because of influence of EES? Or was its women-friendly policies were initiated to win electorate? Or was those policies are result of pressure of trade unions and non-profit sector?

Most of the policies and decisions result from the cultural assumptions. Victorian women's work was often part-time and casual because they preferred to “keep their income-earning a secret from their husband” (Hudson, 2009). Women did not really consider their work important and thus never affirmed their right to work. It was appropriate to and these sentiments still persist in the modern world. Those sentiments still partially persist in the modern world. So women are also to blame themselves for not actively lobbying their rights and not standing up for themselves. In EHRC survey- 2009 found that under 50% of men (and fewer than 33% of women) believing the provider role

to be the man's and a wealth of evidence shows fathers and mothers keen for greater sharing of caring and earning roles (EHRC, 2009). However, only 23% of fathers surveyed (compared to 34% of mothers) think childcare is the primary responsibility of the mother; and over 50% of the fathers believe that the parent who is paid more should stay at work, regardless of whether they are male or female (EHRC, 2009b). That means that perceptions are changing, parents are making decision not on what culture dictates but what is more economically sound.

Comparing Federal Republic of Germany and United Kingdom: the level of fit within EES

According to findings there is very small ideational and institutional fit between Germany and EES objectives. Path-dependencies of the labour market and government itself highly discourage women to work. In addition, women are content with standing behind men in the labour market because they accept the male-breadwinner reality. While fulfilling requirements of EES, Germany still maintains its national interest. As Germany copes with demographic crisis by discouraging female participation there is a small ideational and interest-based fit between EES principles and German government. Very often women do not address gender inequality issues at the workplace because of cultural factors, society and crowd pressure. Ideational resistance EES cannot confront or alter. Change has to start in the mind. Whereas, current system of UK a synergy of liberalism and socialism, on one hand it promotes gender equality and on the other, maintains its traditions by not infringing it upon female emancipation in labour system. Despite pay-gaps and gender discrimination are still predominant in UK government is actively working towards equality and progress. Thus, it is possible to argue that there is convergence between objectives of EES and British national agenda. However, these are only theoretical conclusions mostly based on the secondary data. In order to get insight what how does EES *de facto* influences female labour participation let's turn our attention to findings that are based that are explained in the Chapter five.

5. Comparing the Federal Republic of Germany and United Kingdom: Influence of EES on the female labour participation

In this section I will compare the level of influence of EES on female labour participation in UK and Germany through analysing NRPs, statistical data and the employment indicators. As the childcare services and parental leave are in positive correlation with the female labour participation, these two factors will be used as the indicators of EES influence on the level of the female business in the labour markets of both Member states. In order to conduct this analysis I will analyse two cycles (from 2005 till 2010) of the British and German National Reform Programmes.

Comparing the Federal Republic of Germany and United Kingdom: female employment and compliance within EES objectives

This section will analyse level of participation and level of performance of Germany and United Kingdom in the re-launched Lisbon process, elaborate discussion on the female labour indicators and analyse to what extent both Member states have incorporated the recommendations of the EU Council and considered Integrated Guidelines for Growth and Jobs when composing their National Reform Programmes.

According to the OECD and the IMF, it could be argued that “UK is not as much interested in policy learning rather than in *policy-teaching*” (United Kingdom NAP, 2006:2). UK is prompt to take measures regarding problems with gender equality in the employment. And not only it takes recommendations of EU Council into the consideration but also transposes them into the concrete policies that help to reconcile family/work matters to ease access of women into the labour market. For example, in the employment recommendations of the EU Council for UK, it emphasised on the “lack of childcare facilities and lone parents (mostly mothers) are identified as facing particular risks social exclusion” (Pfister, 2007:12). In response, UK has presented in its NAPs report the ‘New Deal for Lone Parents’ as main instrument tackling the problems of lone mothers that aims to “assist single parents to re-enter the labour market by a mix of personal advice, job search support, training, childcare, and in-work benefits” (Pfister, 2007:12). Going further, according to the NRP – 2005-2008, the employment rate of lone parents has risen by 11.3 percentage points to 56.6% since 1997 (NAP United Kingdom, 2005:41).

Main measures regarding the gender dimension that were outlined by the German Federal Government in its National Reform Program 2005 – 2008 were enhancing the

availability of all-day child care and improving the work-life balance (Documentation, 2010). EU Council is usually highly critical of Germany's resilience and ignorance to deal with the gender inequality. For example, despite the EU Council in the employment recommendations has repeatedly addressed the issue of the "gender equality, particularly the high gender pay gap that influences tax and benefits system on women's employment and the lack of child care, the responses in the German NAPs were limited and hesitant" (Pfister, 2007:7). However, in 2006 the EU Council provided a positive feedback on its performance regarding women and employment. It pointed out "the determined approach to increasing childcare facilities as one of the strengths shown by the 2007 German Implementation Report (Europa, 2007).

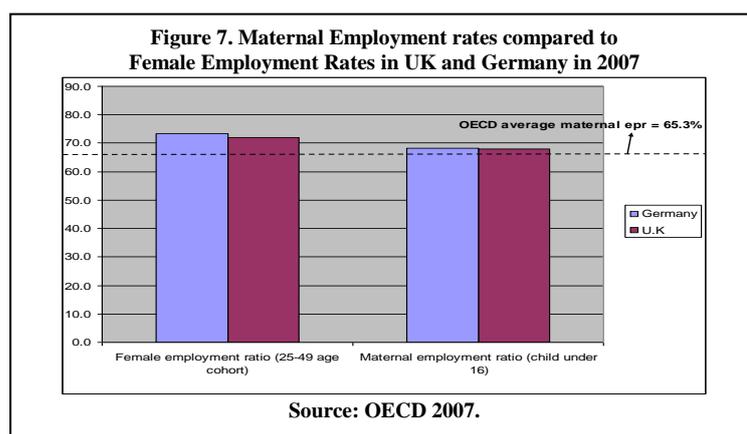
Latest German NRP devotes particular attention to flexicurity that is highly anchored on EU level and in Lisbon Strategy. According to the German NRP of 2008-2010 "in order to further reduce structural unemployment, the reforms on the labour market are implementing various elements of flexicurity" (Documentation, 2010). Flexible hiring and firing is vital factor that will allow female population easily access the labour market. Flexicurity involves the deliberate combination of flexible and reliable contractual arrangements, comprehensive lifelong learning strategies, effective active labour market policies and modern, adequate and sustainable social protection systems (Council of the European Union, 2008:12).

In addition, Germany made step forwards to represent women in the technology, science and industry sectors that are predominantly occupied by men. According to the NRP 2008-2010 in order to attract women into engineering and natural science professions the Federal Government announced measures such as training bonus, advancement scholarships, education vouchers, National Pact for more women in MINT occupations, skills upgrading for unemployed academics (Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology, 2010). Given provision coincides with the Guidelines 23 and 24 of the Integrated Guidelines for Growth and Jobs of 2008-2010. In addition, the Federal Government and umbrella business associations have signed an agreement to promote gender equality in the private sector (Documentation, 2010). For example, "21% of Siemens's staff is female and 34% among new recruits is female workforce including 400 places for employees' children in day care centres near production sites and it plans to double that figure by next year" (Plass, 2008).

Both Germany and UK self-praise themselves for achieving high female employment rates. For example, labour force participation rate of female population with a

child(ren) under 3 years old in Germany in 2004 was 31.2% (Statistisches Bundesamt, Mikrozensus, 2004 cited in OECD 2006), whereas in UK in same year employed women with child(ren) under 6 years constituted 57% (OECD, 2006) and in 2006 it equalled 65.6 %, which by that time was one of the highest in the Europe (HM Treasury, 2010a:38) and in “2007 and in 2008 is 70.3 per cent” (Labour Force Survey, 2008).

If we look at the figure 7 that shows correlation between maternal employment rates and female employment in UK and Germany in 2007 there is slight standard deviation between women with children and without and both indicators exceed 65% OECD average. Data of the given figure overhauls earlier statement that women with children in Germany have limited access to the labour market as female employment is 73% whereas maternal employment is 67%. Interesting observation is that is that despite more UK has more women-friendly legislation compared to Germany the female workforce indicator in UK is slightly lower than in Germany, comprising 71%.



The workforce level in Germany has risen from 58.7% (2001) to 66.2% in 2009 compared to 75.6% for men (European Commission: Eurostat, 2010). In addition, despite it’s notorious male breadwinner reputation today in Germany “every fifth household is already sustained by the female income” (Bennhold, 2010). Can that success be attributed to the EES? However that fact cannot be celebrated neither attributed as a success to the EES because among “230,000 which have lost jobs only ten thousand were women” (Bennhold, 2010). As financial crisis hit mostly information technologies, industrial and science sectors which in Germany are predominantly occupied by men, its no surprise that out of ones who lost their jobs as a result of crisis only 4.35% were women. Thus it’s important to take into consideration the effect of the multi-causality, where any other process could influence the outcome.

For example, female participation boosts economic growth and has positive impact on society. Women and Work Commission has estimated that Britain is losing £15bn-£23bn per year due to the under-use of women's skills (EHRC, 2009). Women are seen as a hidden workforce that could take up newly created jobs and help release the pressure on the welfare states (Rees, 1998:178). So it means that UK and Germany create incentive for women to work not to comply with the EU recommendations but because it is economically sound to attract women to the labour markets.

Earlier, I discussed that divorce rate can also influence the level of the female labour participation. Since 2001 divorce rate in UK was below 15 %, whereas between 2007 and 2008, it fell by 5.5 % (Office for National Statistics, 2010). Talking of Germany, even though divorce rate has dramatically increased since 1970 from 1.5 % per 1000 people to 2.3 % in 2007, it has been stable from 2006 to 2008 (OECD Family Database, 2010). Thus, it is less likely that the divorce rate played a big role in the increased female labour participation.

5.2. Comparing Federal Republic of Germany and United Kingdom: women, family and childcare policies

Employment by gender in Germany is 60.6%, whereas in 2009 UK it is 65.8% (was stable since 1999 with standard deviation of around 0.5%) (European Commission: Eurostat, 2010). However, an optimistic claim that Germany has “surpassed the objective of the Lisbon Strategy”³ (Germany's National Reform Programme 2008-2010) to have at least 60% of female population working by 2010 can be challenged by the fact that 44.8% of women are occupied by the part-time jobs (European Commission: Eurostat, 2010). According to the part time employment data in UK 41.7% of women are employed in part-time jobs, whereas 44.8% women in Germany (European Commission: Eurostat, 2010). Thus, the rise of the employment rates was in quantity rather than in quality. EES deals with the surface of the problem rather than dealing with its causes. Thus my argument is that EES possesses catalysing or indirect influence to initiate policy-making however that does not change much because Member states act within their national interest when producing women, family and childcare policies.

³ According to GL 17, “at least 60 % of the female labour participation has to be achieved in EU countries” (European Commission, 2010b).

Esping-Andersen (2009:23) argues that it is norm for women in the Germany and Britain to be occupied with the part-time jobs, whereas in “Nordic states the housewife has essentially disappeared and part time employment is used as a bridge between maternity leave and return to normal work” (Blossfield and Hakim 1997; Boeri, *et al*, 2005). Part-time and Temporary Employment Act’ (Teilzeit- und Befristungsgesetz) that allows parents’ envisaged statutory entitlement to work part-time so that they can look after their young children during their parental leave can cover pretty much large scope of organizations as its jurisdiction applies to companies “that have more than 15 employees” (Germany’s National Reform Programme, 2008-2010:34).

It is interesting to note that the given policies mostly encourage the part-time job rather than create facilities for women to work full-time. Expansion of the childcare services might enable women to work on full-time jobs but it is less likely to ease the access to the labour market. It will open a window for women to the labour market but not the door so they will still face obstacles in order to get a job. High financial incentive under the *Maternity Leave and Job Protection (Mutterschutz)* policy (Federal Ministry for Family, Seniors, Women & Adolescents, Maternity Protection Guide, 2010) is also another way to encourage women to have babies while government ensures them that their jobs are secured while they are at busy with the childrearing.

If in early 90s there was no paternity leave nowadays German government is actively encouraging fathers to take part in childrearing. Federal Government provides paid maternity leave – “14 weeks at 100% of pay 6 weeks of which can be taken before birth and a further 12 months at 67% of pay which can be shared with the father” (British Employment Law 2010). Although fathers’ rights have improved in Germany with respect to parental leave, the new reforms continue to follow the traditions of a conservative regime, as paternity leave remains a non-statutory right and the financial incentives for fathers’ to use their rights remain poor (Taylor-Gooby, *et al*, 2004:7).

Corporatist-statist legacy typically is shaped by the Church thus “social insurance excludes non-working wives, day-care and family services are underdeveloped and family benefits encourage motherhood” (Esping-Andersen, 1990:27). According to NRPs it becomes vivid that Germany acknowledges the lack of childcare facilities as one of the main obstacles to increase female labour participation, especially in the West Germany. Thus, on 30 April 2008, the Federal Cabinet adopted the bill for a Child Support Act (Kinderförderungsgesetz) that regulates the further expansion of day care in a binding way (Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology 2010). As a part of the reconciliation of

family and work, German government launched in July of 2008 the ‘Nursing Care Leave Act’ (Pflegezeitgesetz) that “allows employees to take leave of absence if they need to take time off work in order to care for a sick relative” (Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology 2010).

In addition, on decision of the Federal Government (the Federal Länder) number of places at childcare facilities and day care facilities under the age of three across Germany will increased to 750,000 by 2013 at a cost of € 4 billion; plus the Federal Government has undertaken a commitment to appropriate to this task that is incumbent on the Federal Länder and the municipalities (Documentation, 2010). Expansion of all-day child care for children under three is enshrined in the *Day - Care Expansion Act* which obliges the municipalities to provide sufficient day-care facilities for the under-threes by 2010 and provide with 1.5 billion euro per annum by the Federal Government (Documentation, 2010). Key word here is ‘all-day’ and that is perhaps the most significant contribution of the Federal government to help parents, especially to mothers in reconciliation of the professional activity and family commitments.

Given provisions could be attributed to EES however Germany has undertaken following measures to deal with the demographic crisis. Currently, Germany is facing serious demographic problems as “birth rate in 2010 estimated 8.21 births/1,000 population” (CIA, 2010) compared with 9.3 in 2000 (Connolly 2010) which is the lowest rate in the Europe. Especially now when Germany has to cope with the demographic crisis, it encourages women to stay home and utilize their reproductive system by extending of the nursery services, provision of friendly childcare policies. Government is trying to prolong absence of women from work by giving them long maternity leaves so getting back to work would be more complicated. Government’s policies are ensuring women that their workplaces are protected, childrearing responsibility will be shared with husband and plus accompanied with generously financed and long-term maternity leave. According to Ms. Hagemann, an expert on the German care system “high birth rates and female employment rates tend to move together” (Bennhold, 2010), so the fewer women are in the labour market the higher the fertility rate.

Thus, here we can apply ‘two-level’ approach where Germany is seemingly increasing female labour participation but in fact pursuing it own national interest. Germany extended its childcare facilities to allow women to work but also created generous conditions on the maternity leave and plus introduced paternity leave to encourage women to work part-time. According to Pfister (2007:8) administrative culture

hinders the work of EES as “fragmented power structures certainly complicate the exchange within the strategy. In addition, bureaucratic obstacles usually undermine activity of EES and do not allow exploitation of its full potential. For example, while the gender issues are within the jurisdiction of the Ministry for Family, Seniors, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ), the main responsibility for the EES lies within the Chancellor’s office, so this “prevents the gender equality and gender mainstreaming expertise of the BMFSFJ from travelling beyond its departmental sphere of influence” (Pfister, 2007:10).

Talking of UK, ‘credo’ of its National Reform Programme 2005 - 2008 is “increasing and delivering employment opportunity for all” (Documentation, 2010) was substantially evident in the provisions on the childcare and reconciliation of the family and work in order to increase equal access of women and men to the labour market. The increasing attention in the NRR 2005-2008 was given to the lone mothers who in 2005 comprised “21 %” (BBC, 2007) of the female population in the United Kingdom. Measures to keep the single mothers within the labour market included the “New Deal for lone parents, mandatory work-focused interviews, the Sure Start programme, offering a range of support to children and parents, including the National Childcare Strategy, the National Minimum Wage and the Tax Credits” (HM Treasury, 2010a:41).

In 2007, Council of the European Union recommended that the UK should “implement recent plans to substantially improve skill-levels and establish an integrated approach to employment and skills in order to improve productivity and increase opportunities for the disadvantaged” (Europa, 2007). Even though Council did not explicitly state about role of the women in the employment UK took measures. In British NRP 2008-2010 there are substantial improvements regarding the gender dimension. First of all, there is more attention devoted to improving the childcare services and measures taken to reconcile family and work.

From 2008 onwards, lone parents who are starting jobs will receive “sustained assistance to help them remain at work, in-work advisory support from Jobcentre Plus and an in-work credit of £40 a week (£60 in London) payable for 52 weeks” (HM Treasury, 2010b:37). As a measure to address family and work reconciliation dilemma British government in May of 2008 announced “an additional right to request flexible working was to help 4.5 million more parents with children up to the age of 16” (HM Treasury, 2010b:37). By 2008 the network of Sure Start Children’s centres in UK increased to 2,500 across the country, with expected rise to 3,500 by 2010 with access for children aged from

3-14 with from 8am to 6pm working hours on each weekday (HM Treasury, 2010a:38). Main strength of the British NRP is that provisions, particularly ones on childcare and family are provided in detailed manner. It is important to remember that one of the important factors that determine the ability of mothers to work is not only accessibility to nursery services but also its flexibility in terms of working hours.

Regarding childcare, since 1997 the British government had created over 1.28 million places in England, “reaching its 2008 target of 2,500 Sure Start Children’s Centres and increasing number by 2,900 by July of 2009” (HM Treasury, 2010b:38). In 2008 more than 8,400 British schools already offer access to the core extended school services (HM Treasury, 2010b:38). In order to reduce gender based pay gaps “the equality-oriented initiative ‘Prospects for Re-entering the Workforce’ to help women who have taken a career break to raise a family to re-enter the workforce successfully” (Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology, 2010). In 2006 parental allowance was introduced “to support families in the first 14 months of a child’s life with maintaining a livelihood which will allow women to return to work sooner, thus reduce gender-specific differences concerning employment, unemployment and pay” (Documentation, 2010). Before the parent money was introduced only about 3 % of fathers took parental leave, whereas in 2009 that had jumped to 21% even though 60 % took only the minimum two months (Bennhold, 2010).

Findings of the given research overhaul the common perception that UK as a liberal welfare state usually described as a system that rather fuel market to provide social care then be more generous on the social spending especially when it comes to childcare services. In addition, to creating favourable legislative environment British government also ensures generous provision on childcare and conditionally and financially improved paternity leave. And considering the fact that as oppose to Germany, UK is not coping with demographic crisis it can be said that recent provisions to boost female employment symbolise strive for the true gender equality.

6. Conclusion

This two-country comparative study sought to explain how EES influences the female labour participation in the male-breadwinner countries such as UK and Germany. ‘Soft governance theory’ provides solid base to state that EES despite its non-binding nature and institutionalized path-dependencies in the labour systems of the Member states, exerts catalyzing and indirect influence on the Member states’ policy-making in the gender dimension mostly through the it’s cognitive instruments such as framing. In addition to that, according to the ‘two-level’ approach while transposing particular provisions of EES that best match interest of the Member states they also fulfil objectives of EU.

Both UK and Germany received positive feedbacks from the EU Council as both managed to sustain successful childcare and family policies in order to increase quality and level of the female labour participation. Even though Eurostat and OECD report a substantial increase in women’s activity in British and German labour markets within last couple of years, still roughly 50 percent of them work part-time at the precarious and low-paid jobs. On the other hand, it was found that the influence and effectiveness of EES might be discredited under the multi-causality effect. For example, it was found that high level of female labour participation was a result of economic growth, divorce rate, female immigration and etc.

Outcomes based on the primary data, mostly results of the National Reform Programs, OECD and EU Commission reports in fact challenged findings of the research constructed on the secondary sources that emphasise total absence of ideational and interest-based convergence between EES objectives and the German government. According to the empirical findings, EES does exert catalyzing influence on the policy-making in female employment in Germany as EU Council and Commission address issues such as lame childcare services that hinder economic activity of women. In fact, according to the last two cycles of the National Reform Programmes, Germany made substantial step forwards in extending childcare services to full-day thus removing major obstacle that hindered maternal employment and producing women-friendly policies as launching paternity leave, fuelling maternity leave financially and creating special programs to increase women in the unrepresented sectors such as science and information technologies. However, from the two-level approach perspective, Germany in order to cope with the demographic crisis produces legislation that enhances female participation yet encourages women to occupy part-time jobs and utilize their reproductive systems.

Decision-making on gender issues is highly influenced by strong male-breadwinner legacies, therefore institutions work in a way to itself highly discourage women from entering the labour market. Very often women do not address gender inequality issues at the workplace because of cultural factors, society and crowd pressure. In Germany that partially can be attributed to self-perception of women because they consciously place themselves at the lower niche at the labour market. Thus, one of the aspects that should be addressed both on supranational and national level is cultural dimension in parallel with gender equality. Change starts in mind. Programs that involve women and youth such as academic-cultural exchange programs, summer leadership camps that tackle gender equality, fellowship programs for German women in countries that are known for high gender movement and most emancipated women. Increase awareness about laws that protect women at workplace and ensure gender equality such as social advertisement, provision of trainings at workplace, encourage extensive coverage in media and etc. Whereas, future areas of research that can be suggested are 'How EU should cope with and change the ideational resistance'.

On the other hand, despite various scholars depict United Kingdom as a welfare state with women-friendly policies yet with limited social spending on provision of the childcare services, empirical findings show different social care dimension of the current British reality. The Labour party has extended the childcare services that were one of the main problem that precluded women from working. UK is policy-teacher rather than policy-learner as it is quick and savvy in utilizing benchmarking, good practice and EU Council recommendations in order to incorporate them into the policy-making.

As UK does not encounter demographic problems it does not have any hidden agenda when it transposes recommendations of EES into policies that increase level and quality of female labour participation. However, there is always a hidden agenda and self-interest involved in policy-making. Despite pay-gaps and gender discrimination that are still predominant in UK, government is actively working towards equality and progress. Thus, it is possible to argue that there is convergence between objectives of EES and British national agenda. Given childcare and women – friendly policies might be directed to win electorate. British social system is a synergy of liberalism and socialism, on one hand it promotes gender equality and on the other, maintains its traditions by not infringing it upon female emancipation in labour system.

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