

IRISS-C/I

*An Integrated Research
Infrastructure in the
Socio-economic Sciences*

**Women's Perceptions of Consequences
of Career Interruption due to Childcare
in Central and Eastern Europe**

by

Nevena Zhelyazkova

Marie Valentova





Women's Perceptions of Consequences of Career Interruption due to Childcare in Central and Eastern Europe

Nevena Zhelyazkova

PhD fellow at Maastricht Graduate School of Governance, The Netherlands

Marie Valentova

researcher at CEPS/INSTEAD, Luxembourg

Abstract The paper aims to examine the effect of the transition from a socialist regime to democracy and liberal economy on women's perceptions of the consequences of breaks in labour market participation due to childcare on their further careers in seven post-socialist countries. More precisely, it investigates whether women in Central and Eastern Europe who gave birth to at least one child after 1987 were more likely to experience negative consequences for their further professional life as a result of career interruptions due to childcare than women who had their children during the socialist era. The analysis is conducted in two steps. In the first step, the effect of the political transition is examined in the Central European region as a whole, thus on the pooled data including all the seven countries. In the second step, the paper tests whether the effect of the transition varies significantly from country to country, and if yes, in which countries it had the biggest impact. In both steps, the effect of the transition is examined while controlling for selected individual characteristics that are mentioned in the literature as possible predictors of subjective evaluation of consequences of career breaks on women's further professional development. In the paper we use data from the 2004 European Social Survey.

Reference IRISS Working Paper 2009-01, CEPS/INSTEAD, Differdange, Luxembourg

URL <http://ideas.repec.org/p/irs/iriswp/2009-01.html>

The views expressed in this paper are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect views of CEPS/INSTEAD. IRISS Working Papers are not subject to any review process. Errors and omissions are the sole responsibility of the author(s).

Women's Perceptions of Consequences of Career Interruption due to Childcare in Central and Eastern Europe

Nevena Zhelyazkova, PhD fellow at Maastricht Graduate School of Governance, The Netherlands, nevena.zhelyazkova@governance.unimaas.nl

Marie Valentova, researcher at CEPS/INSTEAD, Luxembourg, marie.valentova@ceps.lu

Abstract

The paper aims to examine the effect of the transition from a socialist regime to democracy and liberal economy on women's perceptions of the consequences of breaks in labour market participation due to childcare on their further careers in seven post-socialist countries. More precisely, it investigates whether women in Central and Eastern Europe who gave birth to at least one child after 1987 were more likely to experience negative consequences for their further professional life as a result of career interruptions due to childcare than women who had their children during the socialist era. The analysis is conducted in two steps. In the first step, the effect of the political transition is examined in the Central European region as a whole, thus on the pooled data including all the seven countries. In the second step, the paper tests whether the effect of the transition varies significantly from country to country, and if yes, in which countries it had the biggest impact. In both steps, the effect of the transition is examined while controlling for selected individual characteristics that are mentioned in the literature as possible predictors of subjective evaluation of consequences of career breaks on women's further professional development. In the paper we use data from the 2004 European Social Survey.

I. Introduction

Central and Eastern European countries share a legacy of over 40 years of socialist domination characterized by a set of distinctive assumptions about gender (Pascall and Kwak 2005), which molded behaviors and social values of both men and women in a unique way. Governments sustained the role of women as both "workers and mothers" (Pascall and Kwak 2005; Gal and Kilgman 2000), providing generous parental leave schemes and childcare and guaranteeing (or requiring) full-time employment for all. Thus, the socialist regime supported the reconciliation of paid and unpaid work (Rostgaard 2004) while at the same it preserved the traditional domestic division of labour and did not encourage men to participate in unpaid domestic work or care (Pascall and Kwak 2005) to an extent that women were more dependent on the state than they were on men (Gal and Kilgman 2000).

The fall of the socialist regime was followed by profound political, social and economic reforms and accompanied by an economic crisis, which inevitably reshaped the above-described gender relations. The fact that a number of Central and Eastern European countries were exposed at about the same time to the same external shock (regime change) allows us to ask interesting questions regarding the differences and similarities in their particular gender regimes during and after the socialist era, and at the same time to formulate hypotheses with respect to the consequences of the regime changes.

In this paper we focus on the effect of the system changes on women's perceptions of the consequences of full-time childcare on their position in the labour market. The main goal of the paper is to investigate whether women in Central and Eastern Europe were more likely to experience negative consequences in their further professional life as a result of career interruptions due to childcare in the period before or after the fall of a given socialist regime. We do so by examining the perceptions of the consequences of career interruptions of women from seven Central and Eastern European countries: the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Ukraine. In the first step, the effect of regime change is examined on the pooled data of all seven countries. In the subsequent steps, we investigate the effect of the transition country by country, meaning that we ask whether we can observe significant differences in the effect of the transition away from socialism on the perception of career interruptions due to childcare across analyzed countries.

The paper builds upon previous research on negative consequences of motherhood for women's careers (McDonald 2000, Stier and Lewin-Epstein 2001) and uses a subjective variable from the ESS 2004 survey asking women to evaluate the extent to which the fact that they interrupted their participation in the labour market in order to take care of their children influenced their further career. Using a subjective variable allows us to explore the effect of career interruption from the perspective of concerned individuals. In addition, this approach does not require making a normative assumption about what is good and what is bad for women in the labour market (Pascall and Manning 2000). This is all the more important because the study is set in the context of Central and Eastern Europe, a region with significant economic and cultural variation, which would have rendered a universal normative assumption difficult (Pascall and Manning 2000).

II. Theoretical framework and hypotheses

Through a variety of mechanisms, such as taxation, labour market legislation, provision of institutionalized care, availability of anti-discrimination policies, length and transferability of parental leave (Hofmeister et al 2006), the institutional context within which women live and work affects the ways in which individual women make decisions (van der Lippe and van Dijk 2002). Empirical research carried out by Esping-Andersen (2002) is highly relevant for addressing the question of consequences of career interruptions due to childcare, as it clearly demonstrates a link between institutional provisions and outcomes for women's employment. Women's employment rates are dependent on provision of so-called 'women-friendly' policies, including the basic elements of maternity and parental leave, affordable childcare and sick leave for caring for children. In the following subchapter we briefly describe the institutional context in Central and Eastern European countries before and after the fall of the socialist regimes.

2.1. Welfare and gender regimes before and after the fall of socialism

Despite significant differences among countries in the post-socialist block in terms of the ways in which socialism was imposed (Hamplova 2003, Manning 2004), a number of authors (Hofmeister 2006, Plomien 2004; Rostgaard 2004) have referred to the shared characteristics of the socialist systems with regard to gender: a high level of support for women's labour market participation, generous support for maternal employment through provisions of childcare facilities, and long paid parental leave policies. On the surface, researchers have also often

compared socialist gender regimes to Scandinavian countries, where, similarly, both female employment and fertility rates have historically been very high (Saxonberg and Sirovátka 2006, Pascall and Kwak 2005). On a deeper level, however, the Swedish egalitarian model differed significantly from the coercive socialist regimes, (Hofmeister et al 2006; Pascall and Kwak 2005), which required rather than enabled women to participate as full-time workers in the labour force despite having children. In addition, it has often been pointed out that the public and political discourse placed significance on the issue of gender equality in terms of labour market participation, while largely ignoring the issue of the gendered division of work in the household (Pascall, Manning 2000; Manning 2004; Večerník 2007).

After the fall of their socialist regimes, Central and Eastern European countries have undergone a profound transformation followed by a deep economic crisis. As a result, problems such as unemployment, poverty and social inequality called for restructuring and reforming the old social policies and adapting them to the new market-based context, in which they now needed to operate (Fultz 2002 in Fenger 2005). It is therefore not difficult to agree with the idea that the transition was synonymous with changes in the state and welfare services (Pascall and Kwak 2005).

Despite the fact that some researchers argue that post-socialist states have followed individual trajectories of policy development, especially with regard to gender (for example Rostgaard 2004), the majority of authors dealing with welfare issues in post-socialist countries (for example Cerami 2005; Fenger 2005; Hofmeister et al. 2006; Luck and Hofacker 2003; Pascall and Kwak 2005) have argued that post-socialist states exhibit certain commonalities and can be treated as a separate welfare state model. This paper draws on the comprehensive work of Pascall and Kwak (2005), who develop and apply a framework based on five measures -paid work, income, care, time and power -to analyze gender relations across post-socialist states and then claim that the post-socialist gender regimes exhibit shared characteristics resulting from their common historical experiences, namely, a 40-year period in which both men and women were in the labour force and the subsequent shared economic crisis in the transition away from socialism. The authors conclude that Central and Eastern European countries can be classified as “dual-earner regimes, with comparatively strong collective support for women’s employment and for parents” (Pascall, Kwak, 2005:67). Nevertheless, it needs to be pointed out that those regimes have been significantly undermined by the challenges of economic transition, which has eroded/compromised the states’ ability to support gender equality.

In order to formulate a working hypothesis about perception of the consequences of women’s career interruptions due to childcare and how those consequences have been affected by the transition, it is important to look in more detail at the specific policy mechanisms that post-socialist states have developed to respond to women’s need to combine work and family. As pointed out by Cerami (2005), the general trend across the region is toward reserving a larger role for the family, or, in other words, shifting the responsibility of childcare from the government to the parents. Saxonberg and Sirovátka (2006) have been very critical of this approach, as they see the adoption of such policies as ways to “explicitly” or “implicitly” encourage women to remain at home, especially in the absence of efforts to challenge the traditional division of childcare within families. Rostgaard (2004) has also pointed to a trend among post-socialist governments to encourage the mothers’ role in providing primary care, evident, on the one hand, in the restriction of state support for nursery schools in some countries and, on the other, in the continuation of relatively long durations of parental leave, which ultimately results in mothers either not fully exploiting the granted benefits because they were

eager to return to work in order to keep their position in the labour market, or in relatively large losses in both income and opportunity. Plomien (2004) has also pointed out that new labour market conditions have made women more vulnerable to different forms of gender discrimination, especially in the private sector. This can be explained by the greater vulnerability of private companies to market developments and shocks and by the difficulties of implementing legislation regarding equal opportunities in the private sector in post-socialist countries (Čermáková 1997, Hašková and Křížková 2008).

Considering the above arguments and the effect of increased unemployment, economic restructuring and welfare state reforms/restrictions in post-socialist states after the fall of the socialist regime, we assume that post-socialist countries can be treated as one for our analysis. Our first hypothesis is that women who gave birth during the transition period (after 1987) and subsequently interrupted their career would be more likely to experience negative consequences on their career development than women who had children during the socialist era. This trend should hold even after controlling for various individual characteristics that are specified in subchapter 3.5.3.

Despite the shared shocks and characteristics, which allow us to test the above hypothesis on the pooled data, we cannot ignore that post-socialist countries exhibit well-documented within-group social, cultural and gender-related differences. Pascall and Kwak (2005) consider Slovenia to be on the upper end of the distribution, with its exemplary generous support for gender equality, while Poland would trail near the tail, as its re-traditionalization trends in family policies seem more pronounced than in other countries, possibly due to the influence of the Catholic church. Szeleva and Polakowski (2008) claim that the post-socialist countries can be clustered in four distinctive regimes depending on the structure and level of work-family reconciling policies and common patterns of childcare.. The authors argue that countries like the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Slovenia fall under the label of *explicit familialism*, which can be characterized by long paid parental leave and a low level of support for public childcare services, as women are perceived as the main caregivers and their labour market participation is not directly encouraged. An *implicit* form of *familialism* can be found in Poland, where women are seen as the main caregivers, formal childcare is not available, women's participation in the labour market is not encouraged, and parental leave provisions are not generous. Estonia belongs to the *female mobilizing type* where, on the one hand, childcare facilities are easily accessible and of high quality and, on the other hand, parental leave provisions are not very generous, a combination that does not motivate women to take parental leave for long periods of time. Hungary can be defined as a country with comprehensive state support due to its widely available childcare facilities and generous family provisions, which allow women to choose whether to outsource or keep their childcare responsibilities.

In the context of this article it is important to mention that countries in the region also differ from each other with respect to the gravity of consequences of the labour market re-structuralization on women's employment. In order to demonstrate this cross-country diversity, we present the following figures: unemployment rates concerning young females in Hungary, Slovenia and the Czech Republic oscillate around the EU-15 average (11% in 2004), while in Poland and Slovakia between one fifth to one fourth of women aged 15-39 are unwillingly out of the labour market. A look at labour market inactivity rates of mothers of young children shows that in 2004 more than half of mothers in Hungary and the Czech Republic were out of the labour market. Slovakia, Estonia and Poland exhibit inactivity rates between 30- 40%, yet in

Slovenia less than 10% of women with children up to 6 years old were not engaged in paid labour. The table below summarizes the key indicators mentioned in the previous paragraphs.

Table 1: Selected characteristics of seven post-socialist countries

	Inactivity rate of mothers of children 0-6 years old in 2004, (%) *	Unemployment rate of women 15-39 years old in 2004, (%)*	Parental leave duration in 2004 (in years) **	Generosity of parental leave provisions in 2004, fuzzy set membership ***	Extensiveness of childcare services in 2004, fuzzy set membership***
Czech Republic	53.5	12.1	4	0.87	1.0
Estonia	40.8	13.0	3	0.41	1.0
Hungary	58.1	7.8	2	1.00	1.0
Poland	30.7	24.8	3	0.52	0.33
Slovakia	41.4	21.9	3	0.60	0.71
Slovenia	9.5	8.7	1	0.68	0.54
Ukraine	-	-	3	-	-
EU-15 average	34.1	11	1	-	-

*Eurostat <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu>

** Drew, E. (2004). Parental leave in Council of Europe member states. Council of Europe publication, Strasbourg,

[http://www.coe.int/T/E/Human_Rights/Equality/PDF_CDEG\(2004\)14%20FINAL_E.pdf](http://www.coe.int/T/E/Human_Rights/Equality/PDF_CDEG(2004)14%20FINAL_E.pdf)

***The higher the number, the higher generosity and extensiveness. (Szelewa, Polakowski, 2008: table 2 and 4)

Given the arguments pointing toward notable heterogeneity of post-socialist states, the second goal of the paper is to test whether any substantial differences exist among the countries included in the analysis: first, regarding the perception of consequences of the career interruptions due to childcare and second, regarding the effect of the transition on perception of consequences of career breaks. Thus we formulated two additional hypotheses: First, that in different countries there will be differences in the likelihood of experiencing negative consequences. Second, that analyzed countries will differ in the ways in which the transition affected women's perceptions of the consequences of their career breaks.

Testing for country-level differences allows us to compare the situations in countries that can be seen as the opposite poles of the Eastern European gender-regime axis: Poland, referred to as the "strongest case for a return to the male breadwinner model" (Pascall and Kwak 2005: 66) and Slovenia, considered "the Sweden of the south" (Cousins and Tang 2004 in Pascall and Kwak 2005:66). The inclusion of Ukraine makes it possible to consider a country that, although it shares the socialist legacy of the other six countries, has made somewhat less progress in its transition to democracy and a market-based economy (USAID 2006).

III. Empirical Analysis

3.1. Approach

The analysis is structured in three parts. Initially, following the theoretical assumptions according to which the post-socialist countries can be seen as members of a coherent gender- and welfare-regime, the effect of having children before or after socialism (transition effect) on subsequent experiences in the career development of women is analyzed using binary logistic

regression on a pooled sample including all the seven Eastern European countries. The second part of the analysis aims to investigate whether the different cultural and institutional contexts in each of the seven countries affect the experience of negative consequences in career development following interruptions due to childcare. This is achieved by introducing dummy variables for countries in the previous binary logistic regression. In the third step, we elaborate the model further by including interactions between country and transition variables. With this we try to measure, at the country level, the effects of the transition from socialism to democracy on perceptions of the consequences of career interruptions. Thus, significant interactions between a country and the transition variable can suggest that there are differences among countries regarding the consequences of taking time off to care for children.

3.2. Data Source: The European Social Survey

Data for the analysis was obtained from the European Social Survey (ESS), which traces values, attitudes and behaviors across Europe. The ESS is administered every two years, via face-to-face interviews. The survey questions include a ‘core’, which remains relatively stable in each round, and two ‘rotating’ supplementary modules, which change in each round and aim to provide in-depth information on areas of particular academic and policy-making interest.

In the paper we use data from the second round of the ESS project completed in 2004, in particular from the supplementary question module called *Family, Work and Welfare in Europe*. The module was designed to reveal how individuals in different European countries interpret their work-, family- and general life-experiences through the lens of their subjective attitudes and preferences. In our analysis we could easily adapt one of the questions to the purposes of the research questions and use it as a dependent variable. In addition, information available in the module allows for the incorporation of both ‘objective’ and ‘subjective’ indicators as explanatory variables.¹

3.3. Sample

The analysis included the responses of a total of 4321 women from seven countries (1012 from the Czech Republic, 761 from Estonia, 481 from Hungary, 435 from Poland, 401 from Slovenia, 403 from Slovakia and 823 from Ukraine²). Only women who had spent at least some time caring for children full-time were included, as women were asked to provide an evaluation of the consequences for their career development only if they had actually spent at least some

¹ However, it must be noted that the ESS dataset, and consequently our paper, has several important limitations. To begin with, the study design is cross-sectional and not longitudinal. While working with cross-sectional data enables the tracing of the experiences of different groups of women, i.e. the ones who have borne children before and after the fall of socialism, the results will need to be interpreted with caution, as it is not possible to completely separate the effects of the transition, other historical events, cohort effects, or the effects of the present life-course stage of individual respondents, on how women evaluate the effects of their career interruptions at the time of data collection. In addition, the cross-sectional design does not allow for some theoretically important variables, such as the level of income, the presence of a husband/partner, occupational status, or experience in the labour force prior to childbirth, to be included in the analysis, as the dataset does not provide information on the status of those variables at the time when the decisions of reconciling paid work and care or even having children at all were made. Furthermore, some additional challenges were presented by the specific phrasing of some of the questions in the survey module.

² The numbers represent unweighted sample sizes.

time away from work due to their childcare responsibilities. Such a restriction of the sample does not pose a problem for the design of the present study, as its goal is to investigate the consequences for those women who actually reduced their labour force participation due to childcare. However, it must be mentioned that the sample may thus have become inherently biased, as it is possible that the women who did not spend any time caring for children after birth were not a random group, but rather, differed systematically from the rest, for example, by the level of their commitment to their career. Furthermore, for the eastern European region, where a decline in fertility rates has been documented since the 1990s (Rostgaard 2004), it is also possible that the women who both gave birth to children and stayed at home caring for them full time are a systematically different group from the ones who chose not to have children at all and were thus not included in our study.

3.4. Dependent Variable: Negative consequences of career interruption due to childcare

A variable was constructed from the question: “Do you think that this full time spent at home caring for children has had negative consequences for your occupational career?”(G122). Women’s answers included five options (“Yes, definitely”, “Yes, probably”, “No, probably not” and “No, definitely not” and “Don’t know”). Only the first four categories of responses were included in the analysis, and they were merged into two broader categories (“Yes” and “No”), so that the variable could be used as dependent in a binary logistic regression equation.

Some remarks must also be made on the subjective nature of the variable. Using women’s own perceptions of whether or not career interruptions due to childcare had negative consequences on their career, as pointed out by Pascall and Manning (2000:244), spares the need for the analysis to make an assumption of “what is best for women”. This is all the more important in a context where objective measures for women’s employment developed in the West may have dramatically different meanings within the cultural and institutional configurations of eastern European states. For example, taking only the question of whether a woman re-enters the workforce after having children may not be a good indicator of the extent to which it is possible to reconcile work and family, as in the region economic necessity is often quoted as a reason for high female employment rates (Saxonberg and Sirovátka 2006), and thus many women, although employed, may actually not have the jobs they aspire to, and the reasons for that may be their career interruptions due to childcare. Using another objective indicator of career advancement, such as moving to jobs with more responsibility and higher prestige would also not provide a complete picture, as it would not take into account the fact that not all women aspire to “climb the professional ladder”, that is for some of them, it may be more valuable if they find a stable and secure occupation that allows them to combine work with family, and thus basing an analysis on such variables may lead to misleading conclusions.

Furthermore, as a self-reported and also retrospective measure, the variable may be influenced by women’s mood at the moment or, even more, by the stage of their career. A woman who has recently returned to work, for example, may be more inclined to answer “Yes”, compared to a woman who has already had time to overcome the challenges of adjustment after returning to work.

3.5. Key Explanatory Variables

3.5.1. Transition

Given the main aim of the paper that is to analyze the effect of the transition from socialism to democracy and liberal economy on perception of the consequences of employment breaks on further career of women, we need to specify how the transition period can be operationalized in this particular context. Since we want to compare the perceptions of women/mothers who have had personal experience with the socialist regime with those who have been exposed to the system changes and situations that came after the fall of socialism, we decided to construct the transition variable using the birth years of the children of women in the analysis. Thus, the analysis distinguishes between women who had all their children prior to 1987 and women who had at least one child in the period after 1987.³ 1987 and not 1990 was taken as the threshold because the parental leave granted by legislation in post-socialist countries prior to the transition was on average about 3 years (Paukert, 1991; Sziraczki and Windell 1992 cited in Brainerd 1997) and thus it can be assumed that women who gave birth during the later years of socialism experienced the consequences of their career interruption in the new market situation post-1990. This assumption has been confirmed by regression analysis in which we could not observe a difference in the obtained coefficients and significance levels for women whose children were born between 1987 and 1989 and women who gave birth during or after 1990.

The data show that 25% of women who had at least one child after 1987 state that career interruptions due to childcare had negative consequences for their further career, while only 14% of women who interrupted their career before the fall of socialist regime had the same experience. The chi-square test revealed a significant relationship between our dependent variable and transition ($\chi^2=63.954$, $df = 1$, $p = 0.000$).

3.5.2. Country

On average about 19% of the women in the seven post-socialist countries in the analysis perceive their career interruption due to childcare to have had negative consequences for their career⁴. Women in Poland, Hungary and Ukraine have the highest proportion of negative experiences regarding consequences of career interruption due to childcare (21%, 20%, and 19%, respectively). On the other hand, Estonia, Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Slovenia exhibit the lowest proportions of negative responses (11%, 13%, 14%, and 15%, respectively). A chi-square test reveals a statistically significant relationship between the country and the dependent variable

³ Using the transition variable as defined above, we have to take into account that we will not be able to clearly separate whether the effect of the transition variable on the dependent variable can be attributed to the effect of the period during which women had their child (so called period effect) or to the generation effect (the fact that younger cohorts of women in general tend to be more work and career-oriented compared to older cohorts (Esping-Andersen 2002)). As the data presented in appendix 1 indicate, in all the analyzed countries the majority of women gave birth to their children prior to 1987. Additional analyses have proved that there is a significant association between age of the women in the analysis and whether their children were born during socialism or not. Additionally, Večerník (2007) claims that in the Czech Republic women's work attitudes have changed significantly between 1997 and 2004, becoming similar to those of men, which can be attributed partially to the effect of transition.

⁴ Following ESS recommendations on weighting the survey data, the percentages were obtained using a combination weight variable calculated using the recommended design weight and the population weight. Therefore the total percentages for the whole region reflect to a large extent the experiences of women from the two largest countries, Poland and Ukraine,

($\chi = 37,406$, $df = 6$, $p = 0.000$). However, those results have been obtained without controlling for any other variables and may thus change in the explanatory analysis.

3.5.3. Controlling variables

Focusing on the structural level alone would fail to give credit to the role of the individual in shaping career outcomes across the life-course (Giddens 1981 in Anxo et al 2006). Thus, in this paper, the transition as a structural-level factor is investigated in combination with individual-level factors that could also have played either a positive or negative role for producing negative consequences of career interruptions due to childcare. In particular, the analysis takes into account women's attitudes toward paid labour, career and family responsibilities/work-family orientation (Hakim 2003, Adler 2002), number of children, factors related to their attainment of human capital: that is, educational level (Manea 2005, Roman 2006), duration of career interruption (Ruhm 1998, Roman 2006) and combining the career interruption due to childcare with part-time work (Olah and Fratzak 2004, Manea 2005, Hofmeister 2006). The variable describing duration of career interruptions was constructed using the question: "Including any time spent on maternity or parental leave, around how long in total have you spent full time at home because you were caring for your child(ren)?"(G121). Respondents choose one of seven options, starting with "no time at home full-time because of children" and ending with "more than 10 years". For the purposes of the present analysis, the variable was regrouped into three categories in order to ensure sufficient number of data points per cell.

To measure women's attitudes toward paid work and family responsibilities, we opted for the question: "For you personally, how important do you think each of the following would be if you were choosing a job?". The two dimensions that were analyzed were "a job with good promotion opportunities" (G113), and "a job which allowed you to combine work and family"(G115). In the dataset women's responses are on a five-point scale (1 = not important at all, 3 = neither important nor unimportant, 5 = very important). For the analysis, the first three categories were merged into one, coded as "not important or neutral", because otherwise there would have been too few responses for each category.

Education is measured by a variable adapted from the question "highest level of education you have achieved"(F6). The question is asked on a country-specific scale and then harmonized to form a common scale with 7 points starting with 0 = "not completed primary education" through 6 = "second stage of tertiary education". For the purposes of the present analysis the categories were reduced to three: lower secondary or basic, upper secondary, and higher education.

Regarding part-time employment, we chose the question asking women to estimate how much time they have spent in part-time work due to caring for children (G123). The variable is measured on the same scale as the total duration of time spent at home due to childcare. However, as very few women in the sample worked part time, the only possible way to include the variable in the analysis was to distinguish between the ones who spent at least some time working part time due to childcare responsibilities and the ones who did not.

3.6. Regression Analyses

At the first level of the regression analysis the effect of the transition variable is examined on the pooled sample of all countries, while controlling for the theoretically important variables mentioned in the literature review, such as educational attainment, duration of career interruption, number of children, importance of promotion at work, importance to reconcile family and work and part-time work due to childcare. The results of the regression analysis are summarized in the second column of the table below. The effect of the variable representing the transition is statistically significant, and its coefficient indicates that the odds for women who gave birth to a child after 1987 to experience negative consequences are twice as high as the odds for women who gave birth before the transition. This applies in the pooled sample including respondents from all seven countries. This result is in line with our first hypothesis, which stated that women in the seven countries would be more likely to report negative consequences of their career interruptions due to childcare if they had experienced childbirth in the period after the transition.

Table 2: Logistic regression

Dependent variable: Do you think that fulltime spent at home caring for children has had negative consequences for your occupational career? 1= Yes 0 = No			
	<i>First reg. model Exp(B) - odds ratios</i>	<i>Second reg. model Exp(B) - odds ratios</i>	<i>Third reg. model Exp(B) - odds ratios</i>
Constant	0.055***	0.042***	0.039***
Transition			
<i>at least one child born after 1987</i>	1.549***	1.879***	1.905***
Number of children			
<i>1 child (reference)</i>			
<i>2 children</i>	1.088	0.981	0.987
<i>3 or more children</i>	0.919	0.900	0.930
Duration of interruption			
<i>less than 1 year (reference)</i>			
<i>1-4 years</i>	2.492***	1.810**	1.850**
<i>more than 4 years</i>	4.892***	3.343***	3.464***
Education			
<i>upper secondary (reference)</i>			
<i>up to lower secondary or basic</i>	0.98	1.040	1.045
<i>postsecondary</i>	1.134	1.254	1.302
Importance of promotion opportunities while choosing a job			
<i>not important or neutral (reference)</i>			
<i>important</i>	1.613***	1.464***	1.491***
<i>very important</i>	1.283	1.081	1.126
Importance of reconciling family and work			
<i>not important or neutral (reference)</i>			
<i>important</i>	0.628**	0.809	0.795
<i>very important</i>	0.562***	0.891	0.859
Part-time work due to child care			
<i>No time spent due to childcare (reference)</i>			
<i>At least some time spent working part time due to childcare</i>	2.141***	1.901***	1.866***
Country			
<i>(reference; effect coding, the Czech Republic automatically excluded)</i>			
<i>Estonia</i>		0.688**	0.621*
<i>Hungary</i>		1.260	1.026
<i>Poland</i>		1.498**	1.607*
<i>Slovenia</i>		0.805	1.059
<i>Slovakia</i>		0.723*	0.569*
<i>Ukraine</i>		1.367**	1.818***
Country*transition			
<i>Estonia*transition</i>			1.072
<i>Hungary*transition</i>			1.443
<i>Poland*transition</i>			0.911
<i>Slovenia*transition</i>			0.624
<i>Slovakia*transition</i>			1.444
<i>Ukraine*transition</i>			0.600*
<i>-2 Log likelihood</i>	2282.4	2791.9	2780.3
<i>Nagelkerke R Square</i>	0.112	0.101	0.106
<i>Chi-square (Model)</i>	182.9 sig. 0.000	206.8 sig. 0.000	218.4 sig. 0.000

<i>Weight applied on the data</i>	design*population	design	design
-----------------------------------	-------------------	--------	--------

Source: ESS2-04

*** =0.001 significance level, **= 0.01 significance level, *=0.05 significance level

Variables used in the logistic regression are described in detail in appendix 1.

Interpretation of Exp (B) = odds ratios = how many times more/less likely it is for a particular category of an independent variable to report negative experiences on career breaks compared to the reference category.

Model characteristics: Chi-squares are statistically significant (the data-based model explains the dependent variable better than the constant-based model), the Hosmer and Lemeshow test is not significant in the second model (meaning that model data and real data do not differ) and is significant in the third model

The third column of the table above shows the results of the second regression model, which was designed to test our second hypothesis. That hypothesis states that, with the transition from socialism and selected individual characteristics controlled for, women's perceptions of consequences of career breaks due to childcare will vary significantly by country. Thus we have introduced country dummy variables in the model. The hypothesis was confirmed: Women in Poland and Ukraine have respectively 50% and 40% higher odds of experiencing negative consequences compared to the odds for all countries on average, whereas women in Estonia and Slovakia are statistically significantly less likely to perceive their career interruptions due to childcare as negative for their further participation in the labour market than women in the post-socialist countries on average.⁵ The results indicate that Central and Eastern European countries can not be seen as a homogenous group regarding subjective appreciation of the consequences of labour market withdrawal due to childcare on the continued careers of women.

The last column of the table summarizes the results of the last regression model, used to test the third hypothesis, which suggests that the effect of having a child shortly before or during the transition period (that is, after 1987) on perceptions of career interruptions due to child care would differ across post-socialist countries, given their diverging economic and welfare state development after the fall of the socialist regime. To test this hypothesis we include product terms of country and transition variables in the model. The results of the model suggest that the third hypothesis can not be fully confirmed, because in the majority of the countries analyzed the effect of transition does not differ significantly from the effect found in the analyzed countries on average. The only exception seems to be Ukraine where the effect of the transition appears to be statistically different compared to the effect found in the analyzed countries on average. The magnitude of the odds ratios suggest that Ukrainian women who gave birth after 1987 are less likely to report negative consequences of career interruption due to childcare than their counterparts in the analyzed countries on average. More in-depth analysis shows that these women were more likely to experience negative consequences than their counterparts who had children during the socialist era but less compared to the post-socialist countries on average. This finding is in agreement with our expectation regarding a special position of Ukraine among analyzed countries.

IV. Conclusions

The aim of the present paper was to investigate whether women in Central and Eastern Europe were more likely to experience negative consequences for their career development as a

⁵ Due to usage of the effect coding one country had to be taken out from the comparison, in our case the Czech Republic. Effect coding allows us to compare the obtained coefficients of 6 out of 7 countries with the average of all analyzed countries. The coefficients for Hungary and Slovenia are not presented in the text because their significance does not reach the level of 0.05.

result of career interruptions due to childcare in the period after the political and economic transformation began in the post-socialist block, compared to the preceding period of the socialist regimes. As expected, the first regression analysis confirmed that women from all seven countries in the analysis had higher odds of reporting negative consequences if they had given birth and thus very likely experienced a career interruption in the period after 1987 compared to women who had the same experiences during the socialist regime. The difference was observed controlling for the duration of the leave, number of children, individual preferences and human capital characteristics. Thus, it can be concluded that having a child before or after the fall of socialist regimes in Central and Eastern Europe has a markedly different effect on women's perceptions of the consequences of career interruption. Women who interrupted their careers due to childcare during the transition period are more likely to report negative consequences of these decisions compared to women who had their children during socialism. As mentioned in the theoretical part of this paper this phenomenon can be explained by the shifts in family and family-work reconciliation policies, and by the appearance of unemployment and the consequent increasing competitiveness in the labour market. Nevertheless, as pointed out earlier in the text, it is possible that the significant effect of the transition away from socialism can be partially moderated by age and even generational differences. Women who had children after the fall of the socialist regimes are more likely to be young and thus exhibit more work- and career-oriented attitudes.

The second goal of the analysis was to investigate whether, while controlling for transition and selected individual characteristics, the specific institutional and cultural context of a particular country played a role in increasing or decreasing the probability for reporting negative consequences. It was expected that the probability that a woman would experience negative consequences of a career break would vary by country. Our results suggest that women living in Poland and in Ukraine faced more obstacles to reconcile care with their career aspirations. On the other hand, Estonia and Slovakia exhibit less negative perception of consequences of career interruptions compared to the average of the seven countries considered. Regarding Poland, the finding can be explained by weak state support for families and family-work reconciliation and a very high unemployment rate of women of reproductive age. In the case of Estonia, the result of the analysis can be attributed to that country's work-family policies, that, among other things, help mobilize women. For Ukraine, we would need to find more contextual data to be able to comment on the outcome of our analysis.

The third main finding of the paper is that the effect of transition, or more precisely the effect of having and raising a child during the transition period, does not differ significantly across Central and Eastern European countries, with the exception of Ukraine. In other words, living in Estonia, Slovakia, Poland, Slovenia or Hungary does not make a difference regarding the effect of transition on the perception of career interruption due to childcare, whereas living in Ukraine does.

The above findings allow us to sum up that in the post-socialist countries analyzed here, the transition has a significant impact on perceptions of the consequences of interruption of labour market participation due to childcare. At the same time, we conclude that most of the post-socialist countries do not differ significantly regarding the effect of the transition on perception of the consequences of career breaks. This implies that social and economic processes and changes happening after the fall of the socialist regimes affected women who had children during this period similar way in majority of the analyzed countries.

Acknowledgement: the paper has been inspired by the Master dissertation written by the authors of this article for the IMPALLA (International Master in Social Policy Analysis) program based in CEPS/INSTEAD, Luxembourg

References

- Adler, M. (2002). German unification as a turning point in East German women's life course: biographical changes in work and family roles. *Sex Roles: A Journal of Research* http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m2294/is_2002_July/ai_94775615
- Brainerd, E. (1997). Women in transition: changes in gender wage differentials in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. *The Industrial and Labor Relations Review*, 54 (1), pp. 138-162. LIS working paper No 171 <http://www.lisproject.org/publications/liswps/171.pdf>
- Cerami, A. (2006) Social Policy in Central and Eastern Europe: The Emergence of a New European Welfare Regime. LIT Verlag Berlin-Hamburg-Münster
- Čermáková, M. (1997) Postavení žen na trhu práce. Sociologický časopis. Vol. 33, No.3, pp.389-404
- Esping-Andersen, G. (2002) A new gender contract. In G. Esping-Andersen, D. Gallie, A. Hemerijck, J. Myles (Eds.). *Why we need a new welfare state*. (pp. 173-213). Oxford: Oxford University Press
- ESS (n.d.) Weighting European Social Survey Data <http://ess.nsd.uib.no/files/WeightingESS.pdf>
- Fenger, H.J.M. (2005) Welfare regimes in Central and Eastern Europe. Incorporating post-communist countries in a welfare regime typology. Nijmegen: Paper for the NIG Conference.
- Gal, S. & Kilman G.(2000) Chapter 1. After socialism. In *The Policies of Gender after Socialism*. Princeton University Press <http://press.princeton.edu/chapters/s6859.html>
- Hakim, C. (2003) A New Approach to Explaining Fertility Patterns: Preference Theory *Population and Development Review*, 29 (3), pp. 349-374. Stable URL: <http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0098-7921%28200309%2929%3A3%3C349%3AANATEF%3E2.0.CO%3B2-E>
- Hamplová, D. (2003) Women and the labor market in the Czech Republic : Transition from Socialist to Social Democratic Regime ? http://web.uni-bamberg.de/sowi/soziologie-i/globalife/downloads/wp_zipped/wp046.pdf
- Hašková, H., A. Křížková (2008) The Impact of EU Accession on the Promotion of Women and Gender Equality in the Czech Republic in S. Roth (ed), *Gender Issues and Women's Movement in the European Union*. Oxford, UK: Berghahn Books (forthcomming).

- Hofmeister, H., Blossfeld, H. & Mills, M. (2006) Globalization, uncertainty and women's mid-life courses: a theoretical framework. In: Blossfeld, Hans-Peter and Hofmeister, Heather (2006) *Globalization, Uncertainty, and Women's Careers: An International Comparison*, Cheltenham, UK and Northampton, MA, USA: Edward Elgar. http://www.heather-hofmeister.de/texts/Globalization_WomenCareers_Ch01_Introduction.pdf
- Lück, D. & Hofäcker, D. (2003) Rejection and acceptance of the male breadwinner model: which preferences do women have under which circumstances? "Paper for the Annual Conference of The Network for European Social Policy Analysis (ESPAnet) >> Changing European Societies: The Role for Social Policy << in Copenhagen, Denmark, November 13th-15th 2003". http://web.uni-bamberg.de/sowi/soziologie-i/globalife/downloads/wp_zipped/wp060.pdf
- Lück, D. (2006) Cross-national comparisons of gender role attitudes and their impact on women's life courses http://web.uni-bamberg.de/sowi/soziologie-i/globalife/downloads/wp_zipped/wp067.pdf; A modified version of this paper will appear in: Hans-Peter Blossfeld and Heather Hofmeister (Eds.): *Globalization, Uncertainty, and Women in Society* (Forthcoming)
- Manning, N. (2004) Diversity and Change in Pre-Accession Central and Eastern Europe Since 1989. *Journal of European Social Policy*. Vol. 14, pp: 211-232.
- Manea, B.E. (2005) Balancing Work and Family: Western Versus Eastern Europe. <http://iussp2005.princeton.edu/download.aspx?submissionId=50055>
- Mc Donald, P. (2000) Gender Equity, Social Institutions, and the Future of Fertility. *Journal of Population Research* Vol. 17 No. 1, pp. 1-16
- Olah, L. & Fraczak, E. (2004) Becoming a mother in Hungary and Poland during State Socialism. *Demographic Research*, Special Collection, 3, pp. 214- 235 <http://www.demographic-research.org/special/3/9/S3-9.pdf>
- Pascall G. & Kwak A. (2005) *Gender Regimes in Transition in Central and Eastern Europe*. Bristol: Policy Press.
- Pascall, G. & Manning, N. (2000) Gender and social policy: comparing welfare states in Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. *Journal of European Social Policy*, 10, p.240 – 266. <http://esp.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/10/3/240>
- Plomien, A. (2004) From Socialism to Capitalism: Women and their Changed Relationship with the Labor Market in Poland. http://web.uni-bamberg.de/sowi/soziologie-i/globalife/downloads/wp_zipped/wp068.pdf
- Roman, A. (2006) Deviating from the standard: effects on labor continuity and career patterns
Doctoral thesis Utrecht University

- Rostgaard (2004) Early Childhood Policy in Central and Eastern Europe – a Decade and Half of transition. Early Childhood and Family Policies Series, Issue 8.
<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0013/001337/133733e.pdf>
- Ruhm, Ch.J. (February 1998) The Economic Consequences of Parental Leave Mandates: Lesson from Europe. The Quarterly Journal of Economics, Vol.113, No.1, pp. 285-317
- Saxonberg, S.& Sirovátka, T. (2006) Failing family policy in post-communist Central Europe. Journal of Comparative Policy Analysis, 8(2), pp.185-202.
- Stier, H. & Lewin-Epstein.(2001) Welfare regimes, family-supportive policies, and women's employment along the life-course. AJS. 106 (6).pp. 1731-60.
- Szelewa, D., Polakowski, M.P. (2008) Who cares? Changing patterns of childcare in Central and Eastern Europe. Journal of European Social Policy, Vol. 18, pp. 115-131
- Van der Lippe, T. & Van Dijk, L.(2002) Comparative Research on Women's employment. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 28, pp. 221-41.
- Veenhoven, R.(2002) Why social policy needs subjective indicators. *Social Indicators Research*, 58, 33-45.
- Večerník J. (2007) Work Values and Job Attitudes in the Czech Republic between 1997 and 2005. Czech Sociological Review. Vol. 42, No. 6, pp.1195-1219

Appendix 1

	Frequency (N)
Transition	
<i>All children born before 1987</i>	2642
<i>at least one child born after 1987</i>	1679
<i>N</i>	4321
Number of children	
<i>1 child (reference)</i>	1370
<i>2 children</i>	2066
<i>3 or more children</i>	885
<i>N</i>	4321
Duration of interruption	
<i>less than 1 year (reference)</i>	509
<i>1-4 years</i>	1570
<i>more than 4 years</i>	2065
<i>missing values</i>	177
<i>N</i>	4321
Education	
<i>upper secondary (reference)</i>	1172
<i>up to lower secondary or basic</i>	1908
<i>postsecondary</i>	1224
<i>missing values</i>	17
<i>N</i>	4321

Importance of promotion opportunities while choosing a job		
<i>not important or neutral (reference)</i>		1426
<i>important</i>		1567
<i>very important</i>		672
<i>missing values</i>		656
<i>N</i>		4321
Importance of reconciling family and work		
<i>not important or neutral (reference)</i>		538
<i>important</i>		1934
<i>very important</i>		1187
<i>missing values</i>		662
<i>N</i>		4321
Part-time work due to child care		
<i>No time spent due to child care</i>		3458
<i>At least some time spent working part-time due to child care</i>		698
<i>missing values</i>		165
<i>N</i>		4321
Country		
<i>Czech republic</i>		1012
<i>Estonia</i>		761
<i>Hungary</i>		481
<i>Poland</i>		435
<i>Slovenia</i>		401
<i>Slovakia</i>		403
<i>Ukraine</i>		828
<i>N</i>		4321

Source: ESS2-04

Cross tabulation of dependent variable, transition and country

			NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES (number of cases)		
Country			0	1	Total
Czech Republic	TRANSITION	0	600	59	659
		1	232	80	312
	Total		832	139	971
Estonia	TRANSITION	0	424	24	448
		1	244	56	300
	Total		668	80	748
Hungary	TRANSITION	0	235	36	271
		1	130	68	198
	Total		365	104	469
Poland	TRANSITION	0	186	33	219
		1	152	54	206
	Total		338	87	425
Slovenia	TRANSITION	0	201	39	240
		1	135	21	156
	Total		336	60	396
Slovakia	TRANSITION	0	197	14	211
		1	144	38	182
	Total		341	52	393

Ukraine	TRANSITION	0	441	77	518
		1	198	72	270
	Total		639	149	788

ESS2-04



IRISS Working Papers

The IRISS Working Paper Series has been created in 1999 to ensure a timely dissemination of the research outcome from the IRISS-C/I programme. They are meant to stimulate discussion and feedback. The working papers are contributed by CEPS/INSTEAD resident staff, research associates and visiting researchers.

The fifteen most recent papers

Zhelyazkova N. & Valentova M., 'Women's Perceptions of Consequences of Career Interruption due to Childcare in Central and Eastern Europe', IRISS WP 2009-01, January 2009.

Pi Alperin M., 'A comparison of multidimensional deprivation characteristics between natives and immigrants in Luxembourg', IRISS WP 2008-14, December 2008.

Lincaru C., Predosanu G. & Brinza R., 'Process of transition from school-to-work: generator for the initial stage of path dependence in career development', IRISS WP 2008-13, December 2008.

Pavlopoulos D. & Fouarge D., 'Escaping low pay: do male labour market entrants stand a chance?', IRISS WP 2008-12, December 2008.

Abatamarco A., 'Measuring Inequality of Opportunity through Between-Group Inequality Components', IRISS WP 2008-11, November 2008.

Nichols A., 'Trends in Income Inequality, Volatility, and Mobility Risk', IRISS WP 2008-10, November 2008.

IRISS-C/I 10th Anniversary Conference on 'The measurement of discrimination, inequality and deprivation: Recent developments and applications: Book of abstracts', IRISS WP 2008-09, November 2008.

Ayllón S., 'Modelling poverty transitions in Spain: Do attrition and initial conditions really matter? ', IRISS WP 2008-08, October 2008.

Neocleous T. & Portnoy S., 'A Partially Linear Censored Quantile Regression Model for Unemployment Duration', IRISS WP 2008-07, September 2008.

Kankara M. & Moors G., 'Measurement Equivalence and Extreme Response Bias in the Comparison of Attitudes across Europe', IRISS WP 2008-06, May 2008.

Prejmerean M. & Vasilache S., 'What's a university worth? Changes in the lifestyle and status of post-2000 European Graduates.', IRISS WP 2008-05, February 2008.

Takhtamanova Y. & Sierminska E., 'Gender differences in the effect of monetary policy on employment: The case of nine OECD countries.', IRISS WP 2008-04, February 2008.

Tamilina L., 'The analysis of welfare state effects on social trust in a multidimensional approach', IRISS WP 2008-03, February 2008.

Corsini L., 'Institutions, Technological Change and the Wage Differentials Between Skilled and Unskilled Workers: Theory and Evidence from Europe', IRISS WP 2008-02, January 2008.

Gerber P. & Fleuret S., 'Cartographier une enquête à l'échelle intra-urbaine: bien-être et personnes âgées de la ville de Luxembourg', IRISS WP 2008-01, January 2008.

Electronic versions

Electronic versions of all IRISS Working Papers are available for download at
<http://www.ceps.lu/iriss/wps.cfm>



IRISS-C/I is a visiting researchers programme at CEPS/INSTEAD, a socio-economic policy and research centre based in Luxembourg. It finances and organises short visits of researchers willing to undertake empirical research in economics and other social sciences using the archive of micro-data available at the Centre.

What is offered?

In 1998, CEPS/INSTEAD has been identified by the European Commission as one of the few *Large Scale Facilities* in the social sciences, and, since then, offers researchers (both junior and senior) the opportunity to spend time carrying out their own research using the local research facilities. This programme is currently sponsored by the European Community's 6th Framework Programme. Grants cover travel expenses and on-site accommodation. The expected duration of visits is in the range of 2 to 12 weeks.

Topics

The major resource offered to visitors is access to a series of internationally comparable longitudinal surveys on living conditions at the household and individual level. The anonymised micro-data provide information on wages and income, health, education, employment and professional activities, accommodation, social relations,... Comparable micro-data are available for EU countries, Central European countries, as well as the USA. These data offer opportunities to carry out research in fields such as *survey and panel data methodology, income distribution and welfare, income and poverty dynamics, multi-dimensional indicators of poverty and deprivation, gender, ethnic and social inequality, unemployment and labour supply behaviour, education and training, social protection and redistributive policies, fertility and family structures, new information technologies in households and firms, ...*

Who may apply?

All individuals (doctoral students as well as experienced academics) conducting research in an institution within the EU-25 or an FP6 Associated State. IRISS-C/I can be meeting place for groups of researchers working on a joint project. We therefore encourage joint proposals by two or more researchers.

For more detailed information and application form, please consult our website: <http://www.ceps.lu/iriss> or contact us at

IRISS-C/I, CEPS/INSTEAD
BP 48, L-4501 Differdange, G.-D. Luxembourg
Tel: +352 585855 610; Fax: +352 585588
E-mail: iriss@ceps.lu