

# Family policies and the departure from the male breadwinner family model – different development paths in European welfare states

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### **Abstract**

*Main aim of the paper:* In many West European societies, change in family policies has contributed to the departure of the male breadwinner model of the family. However, there were in part substantial differences with regard to the type of family policies. In this paper I will analyse different development paths of family policies in West European countries between 1965 and 2009 in a comparative cross-national perspective. The main question of the paper is: How far can historical development contribute to explaining why different types of family policies exist in these countries today?

*Theoretical framework:* I'm using the theoretical approach of the 'arrangement of work and family' that I have developed for international comparative analyses. It is based on historical institutionalism and sociological institutionalism (Hall und Taylor 1996; Thelen 1999) and consequently analyses institutional development in its cultural, social and economic context and in the context of the relevant actors.

*Methodological approach:* The study will include Denmark, Finland, Germany, Great Britain, Switzerland and Poland. Analyses of family policies will be based on published policy documents and historical empirical studies about the historical context of the decision making process. The social, cultural and economic context will be analysed on the basis of national and international economic, social and attitude data at different points of time, and secondary analyses of empirical studies. Analyses will include the interaction of these different types of factors with the development of family policies over time.

*Results and discussion:* I argue that the development of family policies can mainly be explained on the basis of the cultural family model that was dominant in the population of each of these countries in the 1960s, of the role that was given the welfare state vis-à-vis society in these countries, and the main type of collective actors who has introduced the modernised cultural family model into family policies.

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