

Alzbeta MULLEROVA

Maternal employment in the Czech transition
Effects of family policy and gender norms

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Jury :

Président:	Mme Claudia SENIK	Prof., PSE
Rapporteur:	Mme Ariane PAILHE	Dir. de recherche, INED
Rapporteur:	Mme Mariola PYTLIKOVA	Assoc. Prof., VSB Ostrava
Membre du jury:	M Patrick A. PUHANI	Prof., Leibniz U. Hannover
Membre du jury:	M Florent FREMIGACCI	Asst. Prof., U. Paris Nanterre
Directeur:	Mme Dominique MEURS	Prof., U. Paris Nanterre

LABEL « DOCTORAT EUROPEEN »

Je soussigné Monsieur Jean-François BALAUDE

Président de L'université : Paris Ovest Nanterre La Défense

certifie que Mme MULLEROVA Alzbeta

né(e) le 12/07/1988

A rempli les quatre conditions requises pour l'attribution du label « Doctorat Européen » lors de la préparation de sa thèse et de l'obtention de son diplôme de docteur d'Université de L'enseignement supérieur et de la recherche.

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Directeur de thèse : Mme Dominique MEURS

Etablissement : Université Paris Ovest Nanterre La Défense (France)

Rapporteurs¹

Directrice de Recherche CNRS Mme Ariane PAILHE	INED (France)
Professeur d'Enseignement Supérieur Mme Mariola PYTLIKOVA	VSB-Technical - Université Ostrava (République Tchèque)

Jury² :

Directrice de Recherche CNRS Mme Ariane PAILHE	INED (France)
Maître de Conférences M. Florent FREMIGACCI	Université Paris Ovest Nanterre La Défense (France)
Professeur des Universités Mme Dominique MEURS	Université Paris Ovest Nanterre La Défense (France)
Professeur d'Enseignement Supérieur M. Patrick PUHANI	Leibniz Universität Hannover (Allemagne)
Professeur des Universités Mme Claudia SENIK	Paris School of Economics - PSE (France)

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Introduction

From an economic perspective, childbearing is a time of crucial decisions for households, affecting their immediate as well as medium and long term outcomes, with both micro- and macro- scale consequences. That is why economists scrutinise employment and fertility choices and their determinants, and it is also the *raison d'être* of this dissertation. Set in the political and socio-economic context of the Czech Republic during its post-1989 systemic transformation, I ask how, when and why mothers combine child-rearing with labour market participation. I evaluate the impact of extensive family policy reforms on their employment, and I examine associated cultural norms. The geographical focus allows for precise analysis within a well-known institutional framework, but of course its relevance increases if the lessons learned can prove to be useful beyond the country's borders. Thanks to their historical, and to a certain extent cultural, political and economic proximity, the conclusions of this research can be complementary with studies on other Visegrad Four countries (Slovakia, Poland and Hungary). Beyond the Central and Eastern European region, these kinds of economic studies and policy evaluations can be useful in bridging the gaps in knowledge on the enlarged European Union.

Although female employment in general and maternal employment in particular are politically and academically active issues at the European level, the same cannot be said of the Czech landscape. My doctoral research began with fieldwork carried out over the winter of 2012, which I dedicated to a thorough review of local policy documents and interviews with Czech researchers and policy makers from the University of Economics, the Institute of Sociology of the Academy of Sciences, the Gender Studies CSO, the Research Institute for Labour and Social Affairs, and the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs¹. This provided me with insights into the broader context and institutional reality of the topic of maternal employment and work-family reconciliation, and enabled me to frame my research and to anchor it within novel and hopefully relevant angles with respect to the existing literature. Immediately apparent was the scarcity of Czech economic literature on maternal employment as well as the non-existence of impact evaluations of family policies, all despite large and comprehensive benefit and leave schemes, and two far-reaching reforms with a quasi-

¹ For a detailed list of the interviewees and their affiliations, please see the Table A in Appendix.

experimental character. What then struck me was the normative atmosphere surrounding the scientific void². That is how my research project acquired its structure: two natural experiments to exploit thanks to Labour Force Survey data, and a cultural norms study to perform on harmonised values survey data. But before presenting the empirical contributions, the following sub-sections of the introduction will review the existing literature, present the economic and political background of the Czech Republic in transition, and outline my analyses and their results.

1. Work – family reconciliation: State of the art

The economic and cross-disciplinary literature (social policy, sociology, and demography) which framed and fuelled my research can be sorted into three categories. First, the economic literature on households' work-family related decisions and, more specifically, the programme evaluation literature focused on changes in parental leave (PL) legislation and their impact on post-birth labour supply and fertility outcomes. The seminal papers investigate mostly Western European, or more broadly, traditional OECD countries. The second body of literature borrows from other social sciences, and questions gender norms (we might call them preferences, identities, beliefs, values, cultures, etc.) and their effect on economic outcomes. These different representations of female and male social roles underlie not only individual behaviours but also family policy orientations, leading comparative social scientists to establish typologies of the welfare state with respect to the (implicit or explicit) gender roles convergence or divide promoted by family policies. Last but not least, I rely on literature focused specifically on the Central and Eastern European (CEE) region. Given the country's socialist past, i.e. 40 years of centrally planned economies with zero unemployment and paternalist interventionist social policy, I draw on the notions and approaches developed in this literature in order to ensure coherence and relevance to my interpretations.

² The void applies to economic academic literature, as sociology and demography have been active in studying family policy, mainly with respect to childcare provision.

1.1 Family policy and household outcomes

It has long been established that female labour market participation is to be modelled with consideration for intra-household division of tasks (Becker, 1985). Indeed, across societies, household production lies more heavily with women, and therefore they face more conflicts in time and effort allocation and suffer consequences for their careers, wages and pensions (Browning, 1992). Among OECD countries, women's labour participation levels and outcomes with respect to men are no longer primarily associated with human capital and institutionally constrained vertical and horizontal segregations, as female educational attainment has become equal or superior to that of men, and discriminatory practices based on gender have been outlawed. Researchers' attention has thus increasingly focused on the role of family constraints, and by extension, on the role of conciliation policies in relaxing these constraints (Ponthieux and Meurs, 2015).

Historically, women could durably enter the labour market as soon as they were able to efficiently control the timing of family formation with the use of contraceptives (Goldin, 2006). Women now enter the labour market before childbearing, and their human capital investment decisions are prior to family formation, i.e. before time and effort allocations are optimised with respect to household production and partner's labour market decisions. In this context, where young men and women enter employment in converging conditions, home production remains the major driver of persistent gender differences on the labour market. Among different household activities, childrearing is the main source of increased home production pressure on women, as empirical studies show that even in the most undifferentiated couples, women lean towards the main caregiver role when childbearing occurs (Dribe and Stanfors, 2009). As a result, fertility is laden with implications for maternal labour supply at the individual level (Angrist and Evans, 1998). However, in most developed countries family policies have intervened to lower the cost of children and to encompass motherhood-related transitions out of and back to employment. At the macro level, fertility and employment no longer compete (Ahn and Mira, 2002) and adapted family policy schemes are acknowledged as efficient tools in promoting both fertility and female employment. Blau and Kahn (2013) even argue that from an international perspective, the presence or absence of work-family conciliation policies is a decisive determinant of female labour market participation levels, and the lack of family policies in the USA explains why it has been recently "falling behind" other OECD countries. In this section, I will review a few of the seminal papers which emphasise

the importance of family policy, namely parental leave policy, in cross-country comparisons and national studies.

In a study of 16 European countries over the 1970s and the 1980s, Ruhm (1998) exploited changes in legislation to estimate the effect of parental leaves on labour market outcomes in difference-in-differences and triple difference settings. He shows that PL schemes positively affect female employment, as even short job protection (less than 3 months) increases women's job continuity. It should be noted that the sample is composed of Western countries with an average paid leave duration of 22,6 weeks (6 months) in 1998, very far from the 2 years – later on even 3 and 4 years –in the Czech Republic. The results indicate that although leaves have a positive effect, durations longer than 6 months might hinder the upward progression of wages and decrease the relative wage with respect to men. To these founding comments, many subsequent studies have added further precisions. Thévenon and Solaz (2013) specify that the positive relation between PL and female employment holds for countries with a PL duration up to 2 years. After this threshold, both employment rates and hours worked are negatively affected. In a recent handbook chapter on PL policies, Rossin-Slater argues that parental leaves have positive effects on employment continuity if their duration does not exceed one year, longer leaves having been shown to increase the time that mothers spend with their children, yet coming with a significant cost for further employment (Rossin-Slater, forthcoming). Thévenon (2013) also underscores the importance of interactions between family policies. Institutional complementarities affect the outcome in a way which is not reducible to “the sum of marginal effects of isolated changes” (p.31). He notes that the efficiency of the provision of childcare with respect to female employment is stronger in countries where the parental leave scheme is extensive and the job protection is high.

Case studies across OECD countries have confirmed the central role played by parental leave and childcare provisions, as these two are the main focus of family policy evaluation literature. In continuing Ruhm's approach, scholars have focused on family policy reforms and have turned to quasi-experimental designs as the purest approximation of randomisations, and this allowed them to apply rigorous impact evaluation techniques (including instrumental variables, difference-in-differences, regression discontinuity design, matching and propensity scores). These causal inference approaches became prolific in the microeconomic research in the 1990s, after Angrist's well-known IV identification strategy in studying the effect of the Vietnam war on further earnings (1990), Card and Krueger's school quality study (1992), Angrist and Lavy's use of RDD to estimate the effect of class size on students' achievement,

(1997) or Duflo's application to school construction and labour market outcomes in a developing country (2000). With respect to family policy and labour market/fertility outcomes, studies are abundant³ today, but the extreme variety in PL settings and reforms makes it impossible to draw one general lesson on their effects. In countries with relatively short parental leave, there is strong evidence that parental leaves correlate positively with female employment. The USA is an interesting case given the absence of parental leave at the federal level until the 1993 Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). Although this scheme only requires certain employers to grant eligible mothers unpaid job-protected leave, it had a significant impact on leave uptake, and no negative impact on female employment or wages (Waldfogel, 1999). With no federal law on paid leave, California⁴ passed a paid family leave statute (CA-PFL), which provides a nearly universal 6-week leave. This very short leave is shown to have positive effects on job continuity and positive medium-run effects on hours worked and wages (Baum and Ruhm, 2014). Positive results are also reported for Canada, although the scope of the PL scheme is already significantly larger. A leave extension from 6 months to one year in 2000 decreased the proportion of mothers who quit their job and increased the proportion of mothers returning to the previous employer, while having increased significantly the time spent at home (Baker and Milligan, 2008). Similarly, Olivier et al. (2013) analyse the introduction of a shorter and better paid full-time leave in France in 2004. They conclude that the short leave has no negative effect on further employment and wages – as opposed to a negative impact on wages of the longer leave – and reduces the probability of becoming inactive for low-educated mothers.

Indeed, the results are quite different if we consider the literature which relates to relatively long schemes, like the ones we observe in the CEE region. In France, Piketty (2005) analyses the impact of a 2-year PL eligibility extension on mothers' fertility and employment rates, while Moschion (2010) analyses the impact on the interaction between fertility and labour supply. They both conclude that longer leaves negatively impact eligible mothers' post PL labour market outcomes. A very useful distinction between the incentives provided by job protection and cash transfer parts of PL schemes has been introduced in the literature on relatively long leaves. Drawing on their previous work on Austrian PL reforms (Lalive and

³A *Labour Economics* issue (2015) has even dedicated a special section to family policy evaluation, and comprises the cases of France (Givord and Marbot), Germany (Geyer et al.), Spain (Nollenberg and Rodriguez-Planas), the Netherlands (Bettendorf et al.), Canada (Haeck et al.) and Japan (Asai).

⁴ Followed by New Jersey and Rhode Island, and in New York a PL policy will come into effect in 2018.

Zweimüller, 2009), Lalive et al. (2014) assess the respective impact of each component of the PL scheme, i.e. cash transfers and job protection, thanks to a non-stationary search model and an empirical analysis on the Austrian Social Security Dataset. They demonstrate that the best way to increase maternal time at home with low costs in terms of further employment is to provide the same duration of both job protection and benefits. Schönberg and Ludsteck (2014) apply a similar analysis to a series of 5 reforms in Germany, and conclude that long leaves fail to further increase maternal employment, and are costly for mothers in terms of subsequent wages. That is due to the length of the leave itself, a human capital depreciation and a lower quality of match of the job the mothers are assigned when they return to the previous employer after long leaves. The attention to long leaves and different incentives of cash transfers and job protection is important in this thesis, as Czech reforms have caused parental benefits to outlast job protection by one year, while I build on the finding that long durations, combined with this discrepancy, have a negative effect on labour market outcomes.

An extensive literature also deals with the “family” side of the work-family tension, i.e. the effects of family policy on fertility. The motivation for this focus is the empirical observation of fertility rates falling below replacement level across many OECD countries, as well as the theoretical inverse relationship between fertility and female participation established by Becker and Lewis (1973). Indeed, the research question is whether childbearing is elastic with respect to the cost of children, the latter being modified by parental benefits and job-protected leave. The predicted effect of parental leave policies is positive, as cash transfers and the guarantee of post-birth return to the same employer lower the cost of children. Gauthier and Hatzius (1997) analyse the effect of parental benefits on fertility across 22 countries in the 1980s and 1990s, and conclude that long run effects are low if any, and only reach 0.07 children per woman for a one-fourth increase in benefits. Thévenon and Gauthier (2011) argue that the effect of policies promoting work-family balance by other means than direct cash transfers (such as job-protected leave and childcare supply) are most likely under-estimated as complementary policies are not considered and long-term impacts are particularly difficult to isolate. Indeed, most national studies focus on short-run effects on fertility. Lalive and Zweimüller (2009) show that the extension of parental leave in Austria by one year had a positive impact on the probability of a mother’s transition to a second child. Malkova (2014) applies a similar difference-in-differences design to an extension of maternity leave in Soviet Russia and finds both a short-run and a long-run positive effect on the completed fertility. In this dissertation, however, and despite the complementarity of analyses of fertility and labour

market participation outcomes of family policies, fertility will only be considered as a contextual variable and will not be endogenised. Several reasons have led to this circumscription. First, the main interest of my impact analysis is an instantaneous effect of sharp legislative changes on maternal employment, and the time horizon of the sample selection excludes *de facto* direct fertility responses. Moreover, the first reform evaluated in the first chapter took place in 1995, in the middle of a decade which recorded the most drastic fertility decline in the country's recent history. Indeed, the period fertility rate was in free fall between 1989 (1.9) and 1999 (1.13), so I therefore preferred to orient my research to labour market outcomes and avoid speculating over many confounding factors in family formation during this particularly troubled decade.

1.2 Gender norms and Welfare regimes

Complementary to the micro-economic analysis of labour market outcomes of policy changes, another body of literature offers a unique perspective on PL schemes by focusing on social norms relative to women and work. It combines economic incentives for parental leaves with cultural determinants, on both individual and policy levels. First, it has been established that these attitudes affect economic outcomes (Alesina and Giuliano, 2010), whether we include them among individual preferences under the title of culture (Fernandez, 2007), norms (Bertrand et al. 2016), values (Alesina et al. 2015), mentality (Senik, 2014) or identity (Akerlof and Kranton, 2000). All these studies, among many others, confirm the relevance of one's beliefs over their adequate role within the family to their behaviour both inside and outside the household. Individuals seek to conform their actions to their ideas of those actions, in order to avoid suffering from the negative consequences of cognitive dissonance (Akerlof and Dickens, 1982). In much simpler terms, gender attitudes matter for households' work-family reconciliation strategies, and under the assumption of different attitudes in different populations/countries, similar policies are very likely to produce different outcomes. Fortin (2005) compares the prominence of "egalitarian views" across OECD countries and shows that conservative attitudes on gendered division of labour, i.e. men as breadwinners and women as homemakers and caregivers, correlate significantly and negatively with levels of female employment – although, as we will see, CEE countries are striking outliers with both

conservative views and high female employment, the explanation of which will be highlighted in the next section.

Research in comparative social policy has clustered countries along the lines of these gender attitudes in policies and on the labour market, following the seminal work on welfare state regimes by Esping-Andersen (1999). Lewis (1992), Gauthier (1996) and Sainsbury (1999) adopt a similar optic but deliberately add the gender dimension which is missing in Esping-Andersen's work. These authors review the welfare state regimes (liberal, corporatist and social democratic) by naming their implicit gendered assumptions on the provision of paid and unpaid work, and conclude that there are mainly two poles: women considered as mainly caregivers and implicitly dependent on their earning partner (male-breadwinner model) versus the provision of childcare and other measures pulling women into the labour market (dual-breadwinner or dual-earner model).

What lessons can we draw *vis-à-vis* Czech work-family reconciliation and maternal employment? The answer is none directly, as these founding typologies do not feature CEE countries. They remain the territory of scholars coming from and/or specialised in the CEE region, who extend these typologies and apply the analysis to post-communist countries, as we will see in the last sub-section on the regional literature.

1.3 Literature on Central and Eastern Europe

Considering the layout of the literature review so far (the economic literature on policy evaluation followed by broader sociology and social policy contributions), we note the first to be quite scarce, while the second is relatively abundant. In terms of family policy⁵ impact evaluation, the closest related studies are a Hungarian childcare policy evaluation (Lovasz and Szabo-Morvai, 2015) and a PL evaluation (Balint and Kollo, 2008). Lovasz and Szabo-Morvai use the Hungarian Labour Force Survey and regional data on childcare availability to estimate the effect of the latter on maternal post-birth activity, in a RDD-like setting. They do find a significant effect, but its low magnitude brings them to underline alternative explanatory factors of maternal activity, such as the importance of cultural norms on the child's age of transition from maternal to collective childcare, called "separation preferences". Balint and

⁵ Kaliskova (2014) conducts a fiscal policy reform impact evaluation on Czech maternal participation.

Kollo (2008), in an older study, also use the LFS to estimate the probability of exit to employment before and after parental leave reforms, and conclude that the long leaves implemented in Hungary hinder mothers' further prospects on the labour market, particularly if they have low labour market attachment; the cost of re-entering employment is high, and public childcare provision largely insufficient. The authors also underline the lack of evaluations of family policies in the CEE region despite their scales and costs, and the comment still holds today.

From a comparative perspective, Matysiak (2011) discusses work-family tensions in the CEE region under the region's economic and political transitions, and relates fertility outcomes to levels of work-family tensions. She argues that the substantial increase in work-family conflict after the 1989 transition is an explanatory factor of the dramatic decline in fertility, and it follows that the diverse reconciliation policies then account for the different fertility trends we observed across the CEE countries – she also insists that more national case studies are necessary to highlight the interactions between policies, employment and fertility in these countries. As to gender roles, Fortin (2005), in her comparative studies across OECD countries, classifies transition countries as countries which “combine the former communist ideology of gender equality with traditional orthodox family values” (p.422). Gauthier, Emery and Bartova (2016) study stay-at-home mothers and perceived behavioural controls, and conclude that traditional attitudes are an obstacle to employment uptake. Scharle (2015) focuses on Central Europe (Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland) and compares the gender attitudes in media and political discourse, and concludes that conservative attitudes are dominant, and that only very recent changes towards more paternal involvement in care have emerged in the Czech Republic and Poland. Finally, from a more conceptual perspective, Saxonberg (2013) addresses the limits of the widely-used typology of post-transitional family policies, which are characterised in terms of familising (i.e. increasing reliance on family as main provider of solutions to social needs) and defamilising (i.e. promoting welfare state-based provision of services and higher labour market participation of family carers). Indeed, many scholars have used this typology with respect to the Czech post-transitional family policy and described it as “refamilising” (Haskova and Uhde 2009, Saxonberg and Sirovatka 2009, Sobotka 2016, Stastna et al. 2016), as it highlights the trend of shifting childcare responsibilities from the State to the household by, among other things, extending already long universal parental leaves, closing nurseries (en masse) and kindergartens (gradually over time). However, as Saxonberg (2013) points out, this typology lacks explanatory depth as it ignores

the division of roles between men and women. Is a policy which introduces a non-sharable leave for fathers familialistic? The answer is yes, in the sense that it promotes parental care as opposed to institutional care. But on the other hand, it also follows the defamilising orientation of gender-equal policies by encouraging substitutes to full-time maternal care and promoting female employment. Therefore, the common interpretation as familialistic-conservative and defamilising-progressive does not hold. Saxonberg offers an alternative dichotomy with genderising policies promoting different roles for men and women and degenderising policies which seek to moderate the role specialisation. He therefore pins down more clearly the gender division or convergence at stake. Relevant for world-wide comparisons, it is particularly insightful for the Czech Republic where the gender roles have undergone significant changes, as we will see in the 3rd chapter.

As to the literature specifically focused on the Czech Republic, the main focus in social sciences is on the following research topics. The gender wage gap has been studied by Czech economists in particular (Filipova and Pytlikova 2016, Mysikova 2012, Jurajda 2003, Vecernik 1986). Already before the fall of the “Iron Curtain”, high female participation and overall low earning inequalities coexisted with an unadjusted gender wage gap of approximately 31% (in 1988), due to horizontal and vertical segregation of women into occupations and sectors with lower wages (Cermakova, 1997). Since 1989, the gender wage gap has held to a similar magnitude and is today one of the highest gaps in CEE countries, with an increase in sectorial segregation compared to the previous regime and in spite of a marked increase in female tertiary education attainment (Filipova and Pytlikova, 2016). Sociologists have mainly studied childcare provision and female career trajectories (Haskova 2007 and 2011, Kucharova 2006 and 2009, Krizkova et al. 2011), and have highlighted the drastic decline in public childcare supply in the 19990s. In demography, the new patterns of fertility have been analysed (Sobotka et al. 2008, Sobotka 2015), consisting of a rapid and substantial postponement of family formation, postponement or forgoing of marriage, and a fall in period fertility rates in the first transitional decade. Although Mysikova (2012) points out that CEE countries have a much newer tradition of research on gender, there has been an ongoing gender mainstreaming in all these three social sciences. With respect to family policy, Haskova and Uhde (2009) make a thorough historical analysis over the previous century, and Stastna et al. (2016) have analysed Czech and Slovak fertility patterns and their relations to family policy reforms. Given that they consider the two reforms which are the object of this dissertation and assess their effect on second-birth rates, their analysis is highly relevant here and complementary to my own study

of the impact of these reforms on maternal employment. They conclude that the extension of parental benefits in 1995 led to an increase in birth intervals, and since the introduction of shorter leaves in 2008 we have observed a durable stabilisation of the second-child birth interval. Given that these reforms have not yet been presented in this introduction, the following section's object is to familiarise the reader with the Czech family policy and the broader social, economic and political context in which it has been carried out.

2. Institutional context

After the review of literature focused on CEE and the Czech Republic, the next step is to outline the local institutional background as a *sine qua non* for understanding households' work-family reconciliation arrangements. The current form of family policy with joint universalist, conservative and liberal features appears unintelligible without highlighting the successive political layering, embedded in the drastically different economic structures before and after the transition. I will present the socio-economic context as well as social and family policy in three periods: before 1989, after 1989, and during the European social integration. A summary table of Czech family policies throughout the second half of the 20th century is presented in Table B in Appendix.

2.1 Centrally-planned economy and its legacy

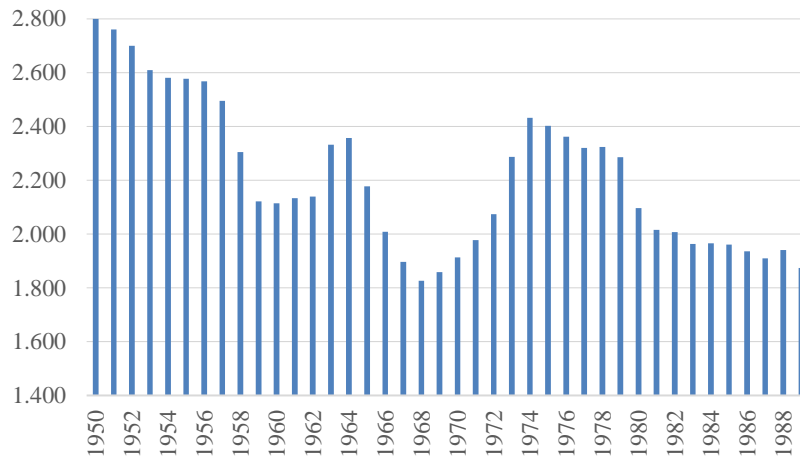
The period of centrally planned economy and centralised political power began shortly after World War II. Productive forces were organised upon the USSR's model and instructions, and so were the social policies. At that time, conciliation in the Czechoslovak Republic had similarities with other CEE countries, such as Poland and Hungary⁶. In the Eastern Bloc, the centrally planned economy led to a specific management of the labour force, marked by strong state intervention.

⁶ After the revolution, the former Czechoslovakia composed of Czech Republic and Slovak Republic formed with Poland and Hungary what is now called the "Visegrad Four". Their common past makes them a coherent group for all kinds of studies in social sciences, for studies directly focused on work-family reconciliation see Scharle (2007).

Compulsory employment did not apply to married women, but the social and family benefits were conditioned on employment, and the model of double income was preponderant among Czech households. Full female employment was also due to an extensive economic development in the 1950's, drawn by the heavy industry. This production was very costly in terms of labour force and the economic growth was based on an increasing use of the labour force (Kornai, 1992). The result of this cumbersome and ineffective productive system was a permanent labour force shortage and hence high female employment rates. Employment and especially female employment was surrounded by political rhetoric of emancipation, which made part of the communist ideology. However, emancipation only concerned the promotion of employment, as the discourse did not apply to intra-household division of tasks between men and women. Home production was regarded as female task, which the State was helping to relieve by designing common kitchens, laundries, nurseries – even around-the-clock week nurseries in the 1950's (Haskova, 2010). To that respect, emancipation was led by a paternalist interventionist State in the sense of exerting control over individuals inside the household (Gal and Kligman, 2000), and it would be a misinterpretation to associate it with a lower prevalence of traditional attitudes on women as main home production providers and caregivers. Gender equality in a feminist framework was disregarded as “bourgeois” pseudo-science and the term feminism was even forbidden from being used in the public space (Siklova, 1997, p.266.).

It should also be noted that on the labour market women often occupied second-tier jobs, and female-male wage ratio was quite high and stable throughout the period: 65.8% in 1960, 68.4% in 1979 (Vecernik, 1987). That being said, the political focus on female participation to the production efforts led to an unequivocal increase in female employment. The female full time employment spread among Czechoslovak women throughout the active age: in 1955 women counted for 42% of the labour force (Haskova, 2007). Massive female employment, as well as widely spread and affordable birth control means, came along with a fertility decline, which became alarming in the 1960's and marked the beginning of a comprehensive pro-natalist family policy. The total fertility rate records a significant drop between 1950 and 1970 (from 2.8 to 1.9). It has come near the replacement level since 1959, and fell below the replacement level in 1966.

Figure 1 Total fertility rate 1950-1989



Source: CZSO, 2016

Concerned by this decline, public authorities began to set up a thorough and progressively more and more generous family and social policy. Although this evolution concerned a large range of social policy instruments, here the focus will aim at measures which most directly concerned the work-family balance, i.e. the ones relative to pre-school children. During maternity leave, mothers benefited from job protection and in-cash support, specifically maternity benefits and additional maternity benefits (equivalent of today's parental benefits), distributed during several weeks for the former and several months for the latter. The financial support for families with young children also includes childbirth bonus, child benefit and tax deductions. The issue of childcare concerned mainly an in-kind state support through public childcare provision for children aged from 0 to 2 years (nurseries) and from 3 to 5 years (kindergartens).

In more details, the duration of maternity leave was extended to 18 weeks in 1948, then to 22 weeks in 1964 and 26 weeks in 1968. The “additional maternity leave” was created in 1964, and maternity benefits were extended in 1969 so that mothers could stay at home during one year and receive benefits, if there was more than one young child in the household. This pro-birth social policy supported families by several new forms of direct and indirect support: credits for newlyweds, marital credits with graduated interest rates depending on the number of children, similarly graduated tax rates, free school equipment, and reduction of other costs such as rental or transports (Haskova and Uhde, 2009). A so-called negative turnover tax was applied to staple foods and other goods and services considered as essential – in practice, they

were state-subsidised. These negative taxes further reduced the cost of children for households, in a clearly pro-natalist way. The already mentioned maternity benefits also followed a pro-natalist objective, as they were only paid to parents with more than one dependent child. Thus, concerns about fertility led the family policy towards a pro-natalist and interventionist turn (Kocourkova, 2002), focused mainly on two aspects: lengthen the leave for mothers of more than one preschool aged child, and widen the system of public day care facilities.

This second orientation is an important feature of the communist management of the work-family conflicts, aiming at the creation of a wide and financially affordable institutional child care network for potentially all the Czechoslovak children, so that mothers could fully participate to the state production effort. During the 1960's, the part of children attending kindergartens reached 56% (compared to 26% in 1950), and the form of institutional childcare moved from part-time care to all-day service for most children (Haskova and Uhde, 2009). As to nurseries, their number also increased substantially, with the same target of defamilialisation of care and liberation of female labour force, but to a lesser extent than kindergartens. Globally, between the 1950' and the 1980', the part of children attending nurseries increased from 3% to 18% and the part of children attending kindergartens increased from 26% to 81% (Haskova, 2007). After this acceleration of family policy measures in the 1960's, the fertility rate drop was indeed suspended, even reversed for a decade, but the objective of transfer of care from households to state was only partly completed. A major limit stemmed from the differentiation between the status of kindergartens and nurseries, marked by a positive attitude by the public opinion towards the former and general mistrust for the latter (Haskova and Uhde, 2009). Although kindergartens had been included, since 1948, to the Czechoslovak educational system managed by the Ministry of Education, nurseries remained under the responsibility of the Ministry of Health. Therefore, they were not admitted as having an educational purpose, and their management, close to medical facilities, was abundantly publicly criticised. This attitude of mistrust remained unchanged during all the communist era, and beyond. Therefore, the objective of institutional childcare for all was not fulfilled by the population: parents gave priority to home child care provided by mothers or grand-mothers for children under 3. For this reason, among others, additional maternity leave was extended in the next decades, at first to 2 years in 1970 then to 3 years in 1987 (still under the conditions of two young children in the household). As we will see, this trend accelerated in the post-transitional conciliation policies.

The pre-transitional conciliation behaviours were ruled by a strong central political authority, which took a pro-natalist turn in the 1960's, established a large network of nurseries

and kindergartens and extended the family policy expenditures through the paid maternity leave and additional maternity leave⁷. In fall 1989, the transition to market economy modified the institutional background of conciliation: new family policy orientations advocated more market-based solutions to the work-family conflict, while former conciliation practices and policies remained strongly rooted among Czech households and policy-makers.

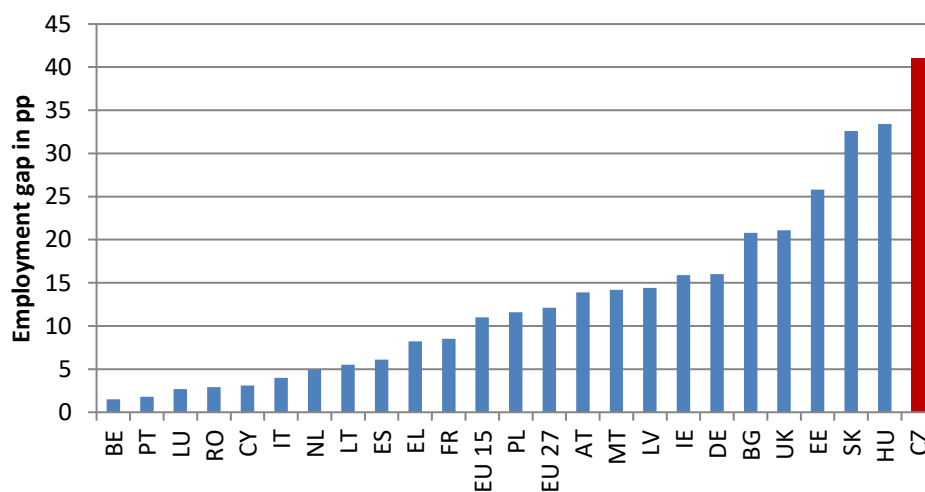
2.2 Economy and society after the 1989 transition

The emerging labour market, marked by privatisations and restructuring of public firms, foreign capitals entry and new concerns about competitiveness, progressively changed the structure of the labour force and introduced tensions and a new phenomenon – unemployment. Both female and male participation rates somewhat decreased, and female participation went from 52,3% in 1993, to 50,6% in 2005 and below 50% from 2007 onwards (CZSO, 2011). The increasing share of individuals involved in tertiary education, mainly among young women, is one of the factors to be considered, as male and female educational levels converged after the transition and are today almost equal (Filipova and Pytlikova, 2016). In the first years of the transition, the Czechoslovak Republic recorded a relatively limited rise of unemployment, compared to other countries in the CEE region: it did not exceed 5% before 1997. But in the second part of the 1990s the trend accelerated and in 1999 unemployment rate reached 8,7%: 10,3% for women and 7,3% for men (CZSO 2011). The female unemployment rate was higher than male unemployment, indeed the labour market pressures were dealt with by withdrawing certain categories of workers from the labour market, such as older workers and especially mothers with young children. Mothers' return-to-work patterns were also shaped by a massive decline in the standards of living right after the transition. The prices of the majority of goods and services were from now on set free, but the progression of nominal wages remains under severe control in order to avoid inflationary spiral: along with the general reduction of family social benefits, this led to a temporary but steep decline in real income (Atkinson and Micklewright, 1992). As a result, households faced strong incentive to maintain a double income. Therefore, the combination of a high female employment throughout the active age and a strong tendency to lengthen the period of inactivity through parental leave

⁷ For a detailed list of family policy measures, see Table A in Appendix.

produced a contrasted evolution of participation rates by age. Female labour supply by age formed an asymmetric “M”, with low employment levels for women between 25 and 30, and significantly high levels, compared to other European countries, for women between 40 and 55. For the accuracy of the international comparison, another employment feature inherited from the previous productive force organisation should be noted, which is a significant predominance of full time contracts. Therefore, employed women worked almost exclusively full time, before and after the maternity, with a very long discontinuity in the middle of the life cycle. The following chart of employment impact of parenthood in different European countries represents graphically this specific work-life arrangement of Czech households since the transition. This chart plots data from 2010⁸, but given that the EU era put stress on increasing maternal employment after the post-transitional decline, it is reasonable to think that this Czech specificity was formed in the 1990s

Figure 2 Maternal employment gap among OECD countries



Note: The maternal employment gap is defined as the difference in employment rates between women with and without children under the age of 6. *Source:* EU Labour Force Survey, in European Commission Indicators for monitoring the Employment Guidelines (2010)

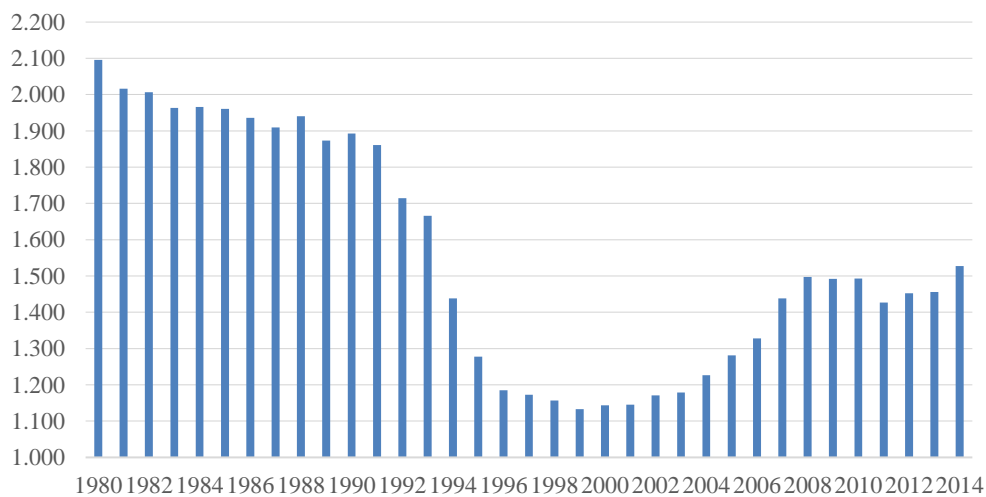
In the majority of European countries, employment rate of women with children is lower than employment rate of women without children or with children older than 6. In the Czech Republic, however, this negative effect of motherhood on employment became noticeably more pronounced than in all the other countries, reflecting the disparity between

⁸ Similar data for previous years are unavailable.

relatively high employment rate of women outside the reproductive age group and markedly low employment and participation rates of Czech mothers. This employment gap highlights the shift from joint parenthood and labour, towards growing work-family tensions. These were then solved by successive stages of activity and inactivity, or even by a decision between either a career, or a family. And in the context of increased economic uncertainty and financial constraints laying on households, the priority goes to employment over fertility.

In the 1990s, Czech women massively chose to postpone or even reject childbearing, and the period total fertility rate recorded an unprecedented drop, as shown in the following chart.

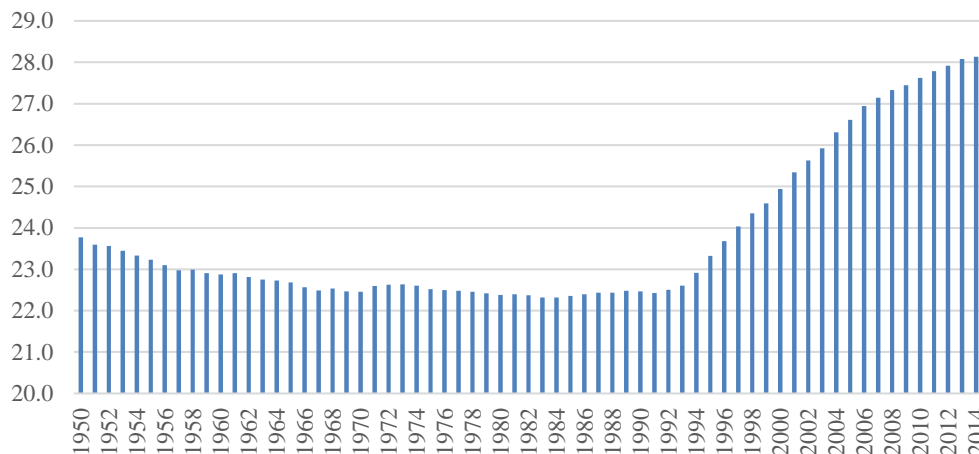
Figure 3 Total fertility rate 1980-2014



Source: CZSO 2016

This drop in the 1990s was the result of both a quantum and a tempo effect. Demographic studies suggest that the phenomenon of postponed or unrealised childbearing intentions was symptomatic of the transformation (Stastna, 2009). Indeed, over the first transitional decade we have observed a rapid increase in the mean age of women at birth (postponed childbearing). The Czech Republic, as the rest of the Central Europe, has one of the largest changes in the timing of family formation among OECD countries, mostly because the mean age at family formation and first birth was particularly low before the transition.

Figure 4 Mothers' mean age at first birth, 1950-2014



Source: CZSO, 2016

Since 1975, mean age at first birth has not exceeded 22.5⁹. It has then consistently risen throughout the transition, with as much as 0.4 year (5 months) per year. Among the reasons for this change in family formation timing and fertility rate, we should mention changing norms and recently gained opportunities to study and travel abroad, but also the cost of living and mainly the cost of children. Compared to the pre-transition period, the cost of children increased substantially after the transition, as subsidies on essential goods and services, advantageous loans, and other former direct and indirect family supports disappeared. There was more uncertainty to start a family and the danger of unemployment and higher costs of living for households with children led to a more careful planning of the family formation (Sobotka T. et al., 2008). This growing incompatibility of parental tasks and labour market attachment for Czech women yielded more particularly in the issue of the lack of available child care services. The supply of child care services followed the fertility trends in the first years of the transition, and therefore the Czech Republic recorded a steep drop in the number of nurseries, the steepest among all the surrounding countries. This evolution is abundantly exploited by local researchers as the major institutional obstacle for reconciling family and work (Haskova, 2007 ; Kocourkova, 2002 ; Kucharova et al, 2009, Scharle, 2007). Since the transition, the management of public child care facilities has been ruled, besides fertility trends, by new orientations of the post-transitional social policy, marked by expenditure cuts and more residual – although still explicitly gender-conservative – family policy approach.

⁹In 1989, the mean age of women and men getting married for the first time was respectively 21,8 and 24,6 years (OECD, 2012)

The first transitional years featured a radical political shift from the communist policy and practices towards a pro-reform climate of public policy and social policy in particular. The changes to come after 1989 conveyed an “ideologically induced animosity towards the institutions and policies of the welfare state” (Potucek, 2001, p.102). In the field of family policy, this shift took form of a rejection of former pro-natalist objectives, replaced by political rhetoric of free choice. Fertility was regarded as a matter of individual preferences to be held out of public authority’s reach. The individual responsibility was promoted as counterpart to the former state paternalism (Vecernik, 1993), and the institution of public childcare lost to a large extent the public attention and financing. The division between nurseries and kindergartens remained topical, as the evolution of these two types of facilities followed different patterns. The supply of kindergartens decreased somewhat in accordance¹⁰ to the fertility trend (as we saw in the figure 3, it decreased substantially every year in the 1990s and reached the “lowest-low” 1.13 in 1999 (Sobotka, 2001)). As to the nurseries, however, the decline was unprecedented, and got far ahead the declining demand: from 1 700 nurseries before the transition, we pass to 1 043 in 1990, then 486 in 1991. In mid-1990’s, the number did not exceed 200, and there were only 60 nurseries left in 2003 (Kucharova et al, 2009). A large part of the closed nurseries were former corporate nurseries of the state companies: their restructuring in the competitive market framework put emphasis on the productive function at the expense of formerly predominant social and political functions. The issue of unavailable childcare was also reinforced by the old age pension reform in 1996. While childcare was commonly provided by grandmothers, their retirement age was postponed by 3 years on average¹¹.

As to the parental leave scheme, its evolution matched the decline of nurseries. In accordance to the shift from the pro-natalist perspective, the additional maternity leave (newly called parental leave) was extended to 3 years for all children in 1990 and the benefits ceased to be conditioned by the presence of 2 dependent children. The maternity leave and benefit, preceding the parental leave and benefit, were maintained as part of the social insurance system. Mothers who were not entitled to maternity leave and benefits (inactive or unemployed) enter parental leave directly and received parental benefit until the age of 3 of the child. Therefore, in the 1990s, mothers’ withdrawal from employment during 3 years became

¹⁰ Although a certain excess in demand did appear: in 1995, there was a shortage of 10 000 places, for the 14 700 kindergartens on the territory.

¹¹ The female retirement age was extended in 1996 from 53-57 years to 57-61 years (the exact age is a function of the number of children) (Potucek, 2001).

a norm (Haskova, 2007), as the children are supposed to attain kindergarten only once they turn 3. This generous evolution of parental leave schemes might appear paradoxical in the context of transition towards less interventionist and universalist approach of the social policy, but here the underlying continuity of family policy institutions exerted a greater pressure than the declared liberal attitude; not to mention the opportunity to appease labour market pressures and promote social peace. Similarly, childbirth bonus and child benefit are maintained and remain universalist until 1995. Indeed, in the second half of the 1990s, the labour market misbalances were growing substantially and unemployment became a major economic and social concern. In this context of growing costs of the transition, several reforms aimed to reduce labour market tensions by encouraging certain groups of workers to withdraw from labour market. Therefore, when the social support system was restructured in 1995¹², the parental leave scheme was revised and the payment of parental benefits was extended to 4 years instead of 3. However, this extension was not accompanied by an extension of the job protected parental leave (i.e. the period during which the employer is bound to accept the worker on the previous or equivalent position, at most 3 years). That is why this reform was particularly intriguing from the return-to-work perspective, and it will be dealt with in detail in the first chapter of this dissertation. Representatives of Western international institutions such as the World Bank, who were present beside the local decision makers during the transition, recommended this measure as a way to ensure social peace and minimise the costs of the transition by relieving the labour market pressures (Visek, 2006). The project of longer parental leave, carried by the Christian Democrat Union, was also a conservative pro-family response to the communist conciliation policies, which promoted childcare defamilisation.

It should be noted that fathers were from now on also allowed to apply for parental benefits, at first without the job security aspect of the leave, then, from 2001, in the exact same conditions as mothers. However, the impact of these legal changes seems to be negligible, as the rate of fathers on parental leave does not exceed 0,8% in the 1990s, and reached only 1,1% in the 2000s. The conciliation policy measures were therefore rather conservative to this regard, as they aimed to ensure traditional family responsibilities rather than to promote quick return-to-work patterns and gender equality.

The predictable effect (be it intended or indirect) of the post-transitional policies on female labour market participation is negative. In the 2000s however, the EU accession and the

¹² 117/1995 Coll.

influence of Western market economies brought about pressures towards a very different family policy orientation, putting emphasis on female participation.

2.3 The European Union accession era

During the EU integration process in the 2000s, gender equality and equal opportunities in the labour market emerged on the political agenda, as the European Commission addressed the limits of Czech work-family reconciliation policies by stating that “a key challenge concerns the severe difficulties that women with children face when re-integrating into the labour market after maternity leave” (EC 2012, p.4). As we saw in the previous sub-section, post-transitional legislation has given priority to the exact opposite: facilitating the transitions to inactivity with emphasis on maternal childcare as opposed to public childcare. This discrepancy between the Czech family policy orientation and the EU trend and recommendation has been expressed the most clearly through the announcement of the Barcelona targets, and Czech reaction to these. Indeed, the Barcelona targets, aiming to provide by 2010 public childcare supply for 90% of children between 3 and 6 and for 33% for children between 0 and 3, met a radical opposition by the Czech politicians, who have asserted that if the CEE countries had been EU members in 2002, these objectives would never have been adopted¹³. Compared to already mentioned 1700 nurseries at the end of the 1980's and 200 in the mid-1990's, there were 49 day-care centres for children under 3 in 2007 (Kucharova, 2009). The decline pursued until 2012, when the Ministry of Health officially removed public nurseries from their competence. As no other department has claimed the charge of this sector, the legal status of public nurseries has been abandoned and the remainder of the nurseries either closed down or became private facilities. Therefore, since 2013, a liberal childcare policy put emphasis on private initiatives and promoted market-based childcare supply instead of public provision. This reform was part of the on-going liberalisation of social welfare (Potucek, 2001). Instead of the former direct way of structuring and financing the child day care system, the government designed an indirect legal frame via by facilitating the creation of corporate kindergartens and so-called “child groups”. The Act on Child Group (247/2014 Coll.) was

¹³ Said by Petr Necas, the minister of Labour and Social Affairs in 2009, at the occasion of Czech EU presidency. See the speech at <http://www.vlada.cz/cz/media-centrum/aktualne/barcelonske-cile---projev-ministra-p--necase-53292/>

implemented in 2014. It supports the creation of alternative structures with considerably lower costs for public finances than state nurseries and kindergartens, and encourages the creation of corporate kindergartens as further substitutes to public facilities. These structures have been authorised to receive children under the legal age applicable for public kindergartens (i.e. 2 years old), and have therefore also been contributing to replace the discontinued public nurseries and to support maternal employment. Simultaneously, the European Social Fund (ESF) has been offering tenders for firms and associations willing to create private day care facilities. The funds distributed by the EFS cover the initial costs of such project, yet after a limited period the subvention ends and only the public support via tax allowance remains.

As to the financial support during parental leave, in the 2000's a series of amendments has loosened the conditions of access to parental benefits, towards a higher labour market participation of the recipients. In 2007 however, a significant increase in parental benefits was implemented, mostly interpreted as a strategic move before elections since costly and inconsistent with the high female employment objective. The following year, in 2008, this reform was overruled by the Bill on the Stabilisation of Public Budget (261/2007 Coll.). This public finance reform led to major changes in the social support to families with preschool children. First, it reinforced the residual social policy approach by lowering again the income ceiling for child benefit recipients, and by setting a fix amount of the benefit, i.e. independent from the evolution of the cost of living. But mostly, it brought a key change to PL by establishing a "multispeed" parental benefit system. Still in place today, it leaves to mothers the choice of receiving benefits during 2, 3 or 4 years with the same total amount¹⁴ of benefits is distributed independently of the duration of the payment. The choice is free, with one exception: women who were not employed before the leave (unemployed and inactive, hence not entitled to maternity leave and benefit) are excluded from the choice of duration and can only receive parental benefits over the longest period, 4 years. As to mothers who were receiving a wage before maternity, the eligibility to the shortest track (2 years) is calculated as a function of their salary (or of the salary of their partner)¹⁵: if they do not reach the sum corresponding to the shorter payment of benefits, they are not allowed to take the 2-year version and must also opt for the 3-year track. Thus, in fact, the choice to receive high benefits over a

¹⁴ Between 2008 and 2012, the total amount was roughly the same, while since 2012 it has been established and maintained exactly 220 000 Czech Crowns by recipient.

¹⁵ The duration is chosen by the parent, but submitted to the condition that the monthly amount cannot exceed 70% of the former salary of one of the parents. Thus, parents for whom the monthly benefit for a 2-year payment is superior to 70% of their monthly wage) must chose a longer form of payment.

short period and return quickly to employment is offered to women living in households with a certain level of income, while others remain in the former pattern. This reform has potentially far-reaching implications, and I will study them in detail in Chapter 2.

3. Research plan

In general, the 2000s and particularly the 2008 reform represented a notable change in the Czech Republic's family policy orientation, as compared to the refamilising effect of the previous policies. I will begin by tackling these two epitomised policy orientations, i.e. the two major PL reforms with opposite predictable effects on maternal employment. I will then complete the analysis by shifting from the policy perspective to households and their normative preferences.

3.1 Evaluation of the 1995 parental benefit extension

In the first chapter, I focus on the 1995 Czech Parental Benefit reform, which extended the payment of universal parental benefits to four years instead of three without an equivalent extension of the job protected parental leave, leaving to mothers the choice of either a guaranteed return to employment or an additional 12 months of benefits. The study relies on a difference-in-differences strategy to assess the net effect of this large-scale reform on maternal employment (using the Labour Force Survey data). I find a strong negative impact on mothers' probability of return to work at the end of the parental leave, with a heterogeneous effect regarding their educational attainment. I also find evidence of the persistence of the detrimental effect on mothers' employment beyond the short-term horizon targeted by the legislators.

This chapter is based on the paper "Family Policy and Maternal Employment in the Czech Transition: A Natural Experiment"¹⁶, published as an EconomiX working paper in 2014 and currently under review&resubmit at a peer-reviewed journal. I developed this study when

¹⁶ Under its previous title "Female Labour Supply in the Czech Transition: Effects of the Work-Life Conciliation Policies". It benefited from feedback at several seminars and conferences, such as EPC 2014, SASE 2015, 18th IZA European Summer School in Labor Economics, PSE applied economics seminar and EALE/SOLE 2015.

EconomiX purchased the LFS dataset in 2013, and I benefited from comments from researchers at the UCL CReAM research centre where I stayed for 3 months in 2014 as a visiting research student.

3.2 Evaluation of the 2008 “Multi-speed” parental leave reform

The second chapter is an evaluation of a more recent family policy reform, which sought to hasten mothers’ returns to employment. The 2004 Czech accession to the EU shed light on the scope of the employment gap between women with and without children of pre-school age, highest among all the OECD countries (41 pp). In order to address this gap and to conform to the EU trends, a major reform was designed in 2008, and this chapter investigates its effects on mothers’ participation and employment. I use the Labour Force Survey to assess the effect of this reform on maternal employment and activity levels, thanks to a difference-in-differences identification strategy. The reform provided an extensive change in financial incentives in favour of shorter leaves, and I show that effects on return-to-work timing are large and significant. However, if mothers do respond to the incentive by advancing the timing of the return to work by one year, the eligibility restrictions as well as the public childcare shortage narrow - de facto - the scope of the effect, which merely compensates for the massively opposite trend induced in the 1990s.

This chapter is based on the paper “Mind the employment gap: an impact evaluation of the Czech “multi-speed” parental benefit reform”¹⁷, published as an EconomiX working paper in 2016 and currently under review at a peer-reviewed journal. The paper has been awarded the prize “ResearchForValeria 2016” by the University of Venice, Italy.

3.3 Gendered labour division norms in transition

The third chapter brings a complementary perspective in which I investigate households’ preferences in terms of work-family reconciliation, and I use different data and

¹⁷ This chapter benefited from feedback during my visiting research stay at the Leibniz University of Hannover, as well as at SASE 2016, EPC 2016 and EALE 2016 annual conferences.

methods. After studying the two major family policy reforms, I observed that the responses by the targeted population, i.e. take-up rates and duration of work interruptions, did not fully mimic predictable effects drawn by financial incentives. Why is this so? Using the European Values Study and the Generations and Gender Programme panel data, I show that, quite counter-intuitively, in the context of post-socialist public policy adjustments, preference for long leaves does not stem from lower preference for welfare state institutions, but from a purely intra-household value change in favour of higher task specialisation between men and women. Indeed, unlike most European countries and even other post-communist countries, we observe a significant turn towards specialised couple preferences - among both women and men, both parents and non-parents, and both the higher and lower educated.

This chapter is still a work in progress and will be finalised in 2017. It has been released as an EconomiX Working Paper and will be presented at SASE 2017, GGP User Conference and EALE 2017.

Chapter 1

Family Policy and Maternal Employment in the Czech Transition: A Natural Experiment

1. Introduction

In 1989, the centrally-planned Czech economy collapsed and the transition towards a market economy led to substantial changes in the welfare state and within the labour market. More relevant to this study, the participation rate of mothers with young children declined steeply. In this chapter, I examine the effect of a major family policy reform on maternal employment.

From an international perspective, the issue of female labour supply has received greater attention from international institutions (European Commission, 2013; Todd, 2012). In the economic literature, the theoretical and empirical links between family policy and work-life conciliation have been largely discussed in Western European countries. In France, Piketty (2005) analyses the impact of a parental leave reform on mothers' fertility and employment rates, while Moschion (2010) analyses the impact on the interaction between fertility and labour supply. They both conclude that longer leaves negatively impact eligible mothers' post PL labour market outcomes. Lalive and Zweimüller (2009) and Lalive et al. (2014) estimate the impact of successive Austrian PL reforms on fertility and both short-run and long-run labour market outcomes and demonstrate that the best results are obtained by similar durations of job protection and cash transfer. Schönberg and Ludsteck (2014) analyse a series of German PL reforms, and argue that negative effects of PL on labour market outcomes stem from an excessive duration of PL schemes, and from cash transfers outlasting the job protection. These case studies are based on exploiting legal changes as quasi-experiences. They are framed by comparative studies (Ruhm, 1998, Solaz and Thévenon 2013; Rossin-Slater, forthcoming), which indicate that PL schemes are rather positively correlated to mothers' labour market attachment if they do not exceed the duration of one to two years, while appropriate PL duration and childcare policies can contribute to supporting both fertility and employment rates (Thévenon, 2013). Therefore, statistical evidence tends to show that PL increases job continuity by providing a guaranteed return-to-work after the end of the PL in case of relatively short leaves, while long leaves increase the time mothers spend with their children but come with a significant cost for further employment.

As for family policies in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) though, the economic literature is surprisingly scarce. Local policies were typically very comprehensive, as a legacy of interventionist social and family policy schemes under the state socialist regime. As I illustrate in this chapter, the recent legislative changes in CEE are large in scale and therefore

more lessons can be drawn concerning the incentives provided by parental leaves. In this way, this work can add to the existing literature and contribute to our understanding of the effects of parental leave policies on labour market outcomes for mothers. Yet as far as I know, only one parental leave policy evaluation has been conducted in the post-transitional CEE (Balint and Kollo, 2008), with other impact evaluations focused on the effect of childcare availability (Lovasz and Szabo-Morvai, 2015; Lockshin, 1999), or the effect of parental benefits on fertility (Malkova, 2014). Balint and Kollo (2008) use the Hungarian Labour Force Survey, and argue that long leaves have a negative impact on maternal employment. This chapter will provide similar evidence based on the Czech 1995 reform, and confirm the argument by Lalive et al. (2014) that such negative effects stem more particularly from the disjunction of cash benefits and job protection duration in favour of the former.

In this chapter, I analyse the effects of a 1995 Czech PL scheme reform, which was large-scale in terms of both the impacted population and the duration of the benefit extension. It consisted in remodelling, sharply and unexpectedly, the long universal paid PL scheme (36 months), by increasing the benefit duration by 12 months while leaving the job protection period unaffected. The predicted effects of this extension on mothers' labour supply are equivocal, since they are pulled by the cash transfer effect, and not by the job protection effect. The extension of parental benefits increases the replacement rate and decreases incentives to return to work: the explicit goal of the reform was to maintain mothers in their role as out-of-market caregivers for a longer period. I assess whether and to what extent the goal was reached in terms of employment probability at the end of the job-protection period and beyond. This reform was announced and implemented on October 1st, 1995 as a last-minute amendment to the State Social Support Act. Therefore this legal change came as a surprise, and represents an interesting case of a natural experiment. All current and future recipients of parental benefits (i.e. mothers of children less than 3 years old at the date of the reform) became eligible for the extension. As a consequence, mothers were given the choice either to return to their previous employment at the end of the job-protected 36 months, or to give up the job protection and receive 12 extra months of benefits on the condition of taking full-time care of their young children. This reform was part of a re-familising policy trend, but also an attempt to ease the pressures on the emerging labour market. As such, the objective of this chapter is to assess the impact of this reform on mothers' labour supply and to disentangle the economic context of the reform from its real effects, using a difference-in-differences design applied to the Labour Force Survey.

The testable hypothesis is that the extension of the benefits operates as a disincentive to return to work, by increasing the value of staying at home. The predicted effect of the reform is to lower the proportion of mothers who are employed once parental leave is finished. The benefits being paid at a very low flat rate unaffected by earnings, their outlasting the job-protected period likely yields different incentives for mothers with different labour market attachment and labour income. The analysis therefore pays special attention to the possibly heterogeneous effects along educational attainment. In the medium run, the extension of labour market withdrawal might weaken labour market attachment and reinforce career discontinuities, especially knowing that it leads to the loss of job protection, and I therefore also investigate the persistency of the effect. The results show that a large causal effect exists: the reform significantly lowered mothers' probability of employment at the end of PL, with the estimated effect ranging from 15pp to 25pp depending on the choice of the control group. The impact is heterogeneous with respect to mothers' educational levels, although the presence of a strong negative impact on mothers with tertiary education calls for additional interpretations. Beyond the significant short-run effect, I show that mothers' employment probability was persistently negatively affected even 2 years after the end of benefits entitlement.

The chapter is organised as follows. Section 2 is dedicated to the institutional background of work-family reconciliation policies during the communist era and after the transition to a market economy (2.1.), with a focus on the 1995 parental benefit reform (2.2.). Section 3 presents the evaluation method, while Section 4 discusses the data. I report the results in Section 5, and Section 6 concludes.

2. Background

2.1 Work-family reconciliation policies and practices before and after 1989

The Czechoslovak centrally-planned economy was characterised by strongly interventionist management of the labour force and virtually no unemployment. Obligatory employment did not apply to married women, but social and family benefits were conditioned by employment and female employment rates were particularly high compared with Western Europe (Bicakova et al., 2001). As early as 1955, women accounted for 42% of the Czechoslovak labour force (Haskova, 2007). Massive full-time female employment was

accompanied by a decline in fertility:¹⁸ between 1950 and 1970, the total fertility rate dropped from 2.8 to 1.9, falling below the replacement level in 1966 (CZSO, 2012). Prompted by this decline, a comprehensive pro-natalist family policy was implemented. Maternity leave was extended to 26 weeks in 1968, then 28 weeks in 1987. One-year PL was established in 1964, and then extended to 2 years in 1970 and 3 years in 1989, on the condition of 2 dependent children in the household. Pre-transition family policy used two major tools: lengthening the leave for mothers with more than one pre-school aged child, and expanding the system of public day-care facilities. During the 1960s, the proportion of children attending kindergartens rose to 56% (compared with 26% in 1950), and part-time care was replaced by an all-day service for the majority of children, fulfilling the objective of taking childcare out of the family and liberating the female labour force (Haskova and Uhde, 2011). Between the 1950s and the 1980s, the proportion of children attending nurseries rose from 3% to 18% and that of children attending kindergartens rose from 26% to 81% (Haskova, 2007).

The fall of the “Iron Curtain” and the subsequent transition fundamentally changed the institutional context of work-family reconciliation. The previously state-controlled labour market was restructured and unemployment emerged (Svejnar, 1999). At the same time, the management of public expenditure called for less interventionist family policy and more market-based solutions to the childcare issue. There were extensive cuts to and a loss of interest in public childcare; while the supply of kindergartens decreased in line with the fertility trend, the decline in nurseries was sharper. In contrast with more than 1,000 nurseries (consisting of 40,000 spots) in 1990, only 60 nurseries (1,800 spots) remained ten years later (Kucharova et al., 2009). The evolution of public childcare illustrates what Potucek (2001, p.201) calls “ideologically induced animosity towards the institutions and policies of the welfare state”. Post-transition family policy evolved in a pro-reform climate where individual responsibility was promoted as an alternative to the former state paternalism (Vecernik, 1993). Compared with the pre-transition era, family policy formulated no explicit interest in either female labour supply or fertility (Sobotka et al., 2008). As a result, new work-family balance arrangements emerged. In this context of economic uncertainty, Czech women postponed or rejected motherhood, which is reflected in an unprecedented drop in the fertility rate in the 1990s (1.13 in 1999 (CZSO, 2012)). In parallel, mothers gradually withdrew from the labour market, increasing the motherhood-related employment gap. In 1990, paid PL was extended to 3 years for all children, with no other condition than the children’s age. Given the rather non-

¹⁸ The fertility trend of the 1960s also reflects the wide availability and affordability of birth control.

interventionist political climate, this generous change in the PL scheme might appear paradoxical, but it can be seen as an attempt to relieve labour market pressures and promote social peace. Therefore, in spite of the liberal discourse and contrary to international female employment trends, the PL scheme pursues a conservative target in terms of the gender division of labour, rather than aiming to increase female labour market participation.

2.2 Parental leave legislation in 1995

Between 1990 and 1995, parental leave lasted until the child's third birthday. It was a continuous leave, from the child's birth until their 3rd birthday, that is to say over 36 months¹⁹. Parental leave, which was synonymous with the period of protected employment, was combined with parental benefits for the same amount of time. The maximum duration of leave and benefits was the same for all children, an extension to 7 years for handicapped children being the only exception. Some mothers were entitled to insurance-conditioned maternity benefits and entered parental leave at the end of maternity leave, while others were directly allocated parental benefits, but this distinction had no effect on the limit of entitlement to leave and benefits, which remained the child's third birthday. In 1995, only mothers (or widowers) were entitled to maternity leave. Fathers were entitled to parental benefits but without the job security provided by PL: the proportion of fathers receiving benefits was negligible (0,1%). Parental benefits were paid at a flat rate: 1740Kc for each household in 1995, representing 22% of the average monthly gross wage²⁰ and 79% of the monthly full-time minimum wage. Eligibility was universal, and the only condition was the provision of personal childcare, meaning that the children were not allowed to attend a childcare facility and the parents caring for them were not allowed to work more than 2 hours per day or earn more than 1800Kc per month.

In 1995, the Act no. 117/1995 Coll. entirely remodelled the social security system, creating three pillars: Social Insurance (including maternity benefits), Social Support (covering both universal and means-tested benefits for families with children), and Social Assistance for material needs. Within the Social Support branch, the payment of parental benefits was

¹⁹ Without counting pre-birth absence from employment, covered by the insurance-based maternity leave. Mothers who are ineligible for maternity leave fall directly under the universal parental leave and benefit status.

²⁰ 7,907Kc, average monthly gross wage of employees in the civil sector of the national economy in 1995, provided by the Czech Statistical Office.

extended from 3 to 4 years. The amount was kept at a roughly similar level, 1848Kc per month, i.e. 19.7% of the average monthly gross wage and 74% of the monthly minimum wage. The benefit was fixed at 1.1 times the minimal subsistence income, hence meant to be reviewed periodically. The additional year of benefits was subjected to the same eligibility criteria, namely full-time personal childcare, prohibitive limitations on income (less than the benefit itself) as well as working hours (less than 2 hours per day). Job-seeking was not incompatible with the benefits, as their payment simply ceased upon the month in which the recipient entered employment and violated the previous conditions. The specific feature of this reform was that the benefit extension was not accompanied by any extension of the job-protected PL. Job protection, under the jurisdiction of the labour code and independent of the social legislation, was maintained at 36 months (i.e. until the child's 3rd birthday), yet the benefit duration was increased to 48 months (until the child's 4th birthday). Consequently, after the reform, parents nearing the end of the three years had to choose either to return to employment or to receive 12 more months of benefits, no longer accompanied by job protection. For mothers who did not have a job to return to, their alternative to the 12-month benefit extension was the 6-month unemployment benefit, conditioned on previous employment and cut by half after the first 3 months. Therefore, this option was available for mothers who had been employed pre-PL, and had their contract terminated by themselves or by the employer²¹. Mothers who did not have a job to return to as a result of being previously unemployed or inactive (e.g. students or homemakers) did not have such outside option and would receive only minimal social support. The parental benefit option is therefore more generous in terms of accessibility and length, and encourages mothers to postpone their return-to-work at the risk of worse labour market prospects at the end of the extension.

This reform, as part of the Act on State Social Support, came into effect on October 1st 1995. It should be noted that the paragraph stipulating the duration of parental benefit (§30) was not initially intended as part of the Act and was not discussed by the legislature. It was added later by the executive, at the initiative of the Christian Democrat Union. Thus, on top of reducing unemployment and promoting social peace, the postponement of mothers' return to

²¹ The most common reasons for not returning to previous employment being the lack of suitable childcare, disagreements over return conditions such as unavailability of part-time contracts (Kucharova et al., 2006); firm restructuring and redundancy dismissals, with a certain social acceptance of these practices by the returnee mothers (Haskova, 2011). Related laws and practices somewhat improved in the recent decades under pressures by the EU (Haskova & Uhde, 2011).

employment is also a conservative “familialist” response to the pre-1989 policy of taking childcare out of the family.

On October 1st 1995, the parental benefit reform was implemented in the following way. Upon that date, payment was extended until the child’s fourth birthday for all current and future recipients. Eligibility was based on the date of the child’s 3rd birthday (in other words, their birth date, 3 years earlier). For children whose 3rd birthday occurred before October 1st 1995, the mothers exhausted their benefits and leave rights before the reform and did not qualify for the benefit extension. For 3rd birthdays occurring after October 1st 1995, the mothers were still receiving the benefit at the moment the reform was implemented, and they were covered by the extension. The population of mothers who were eligible but close to the limit is the most interesting to analyse. For them, the extension came as a surprise,²² and they could not be suspected of adapting their fertility strategies (number of children, date of birth, etc.) to the eligibility criterion. I am therefore particularly interested in the return-to-work patterns of those mothers who experienced the end of their PL shortly after the implementation of the reform.

3. Data and summary statistics

3.1 Data

I use the Czech Labour Force Survey (LFS), collected by the Czech Statistical Office on a quarterly basis starting from December 1992. Each quarter records approximately 70,000 individuals, and collects in-depth information about the socio-economic profile of each member of a household. The survey is representative of the Czech population via an individual weighting system. The LFS is a rotating panel, where each household remains in the sample for 5 consecutive quarters. The data are collected on a declarative basis, and provide a large battery of variables relative to each person’s status in the labour market in the current quarter. For the estimations, I use 6 quarters around the reform (1995-1996), and I exploit the panel structure for the construction of the sample: I shortlist mothers who were present in the survey around the time when their youngest child reached 36 months, i.e. before and after the child’s 3rd birthday. The surveys are not conducted with the aim of analysing work-family reconciliation, as they are focused primarily on employment, but they are rich enough to be

²² As explained above, this reform was added to the Act later on, hence unanticipated.

exploited from this angle, and no other data of comparable extent exist for the post-transition context of the 1990s. Among the major drawbacks of the data, the panel rotation does not allow us to trace individuals' economic status history or to have proper knowledge of its evolution in the years before and after PL. Another limitation is that the LFS does not record information about income. It would have been useful to take into account wages and benefits, and it would have been interesting to assess the effects on mothers' earnings of incentives to postpone the return to employment. The main outcome variable is the employment status, namely whether the surveyed individuals transitioned back to *employment* or not. It should be noted that the reform's impact could also be evaluated on transitions to activity instead of employment, with a slightly different and complementary interpretation given that this outcome would also comprise mothers who transitioned from parental leave to unemployment. However, this analysis will mainly focus on employment because of the data structure. Indeed, the value "employed" of the self-reported economic status variable is much less ambiguous and noisy than the aggregate "active" status. The latter is comprised of employed and unemployed mothers, and descriptive analysis of the multiple employment status questions reveals that mothers who are not in employment while caring for a young child can sometimes declare in self-contradicting ways whether they are on parental leave, unemployed or inactive homemakers. For this reason, the answer to the straightforward question "Are you currently in employment" has been given priority in this analysis.

As for construction of the sample, mothers are identified in an indirect way in the LFS. I focus on women aged 15 to 39. The upper bound is sufficiently high, as I am only interested in mothers whose youngest child is no more than 3 years old, and it allows us to minimise the risk of confusion between mothers and grandmothers in the household. The age of the child is given, unlike the date of birth. I therefore identify mothers at the end of their PL duration (36 months) via the child's transition from the age of 2 to the age of 3 between one quarter and the next. I identify the quarter where the child is 3 years old, compared with the previous record where he was aged 2, and I only keep mothers for whom these two successive records are available in the data. That is how I construct a "transition" variable, which signals that the youngest child in the household has turned from 2 to 3 years of age²³ - indicating that the mother has just left the PL scheme. This sample construction is restrictive and I lose many individuals. Inside the considered period, I lose mothers who enter the survey after the age

²³ In addition to the transition to the age of 3, we identify in the same way mothers whose youngest child recently turned 4, 5 and 6, for complementary analysis and robustness checks.

transition and those who quit the survey before the age transition; at both bounds of the considered period I lose the mothers whose child's birthday occurs before or after the quarters used for the estimation. Despite the restrictions, the large size of the dataset allows us to constitute a sample of 1464 mothers, representative of 141,000 individuals on a national scale.

As for the choice of quarters, the analysis focuses on 3 quarters before and 3 quarters after the reform, with a symmetrical sample around a date when no reform occurred. This choice is driven by my identification strategy. I focus on the first treated mothers rather shortly after the reform implementation, and similarly on the last non treated mothers in the year preceding the reform's implementation, and together this reform cohort accounts for the first difference. I then compare their evolution in employment rates to the one of a control cohort, defined in two ways. The first approach relies on mothers with same characteristics around a date when no reform occurred (hence the 3 quarters before and after a non-reform date), and the second approach focuses on 1995/1996 and appoints mothers with slightly older children as the non-eligible control group. The sample's detailed description is provided in the following Empirical strategy section. The choice of quarters is also adapted to the fact the data don't feature the exact date of birth, and I therefore rely on the transition variable instead. For the very first quarter after the reform (last quarter 1995), if the variable indicates that the child has reached the age of 3 since the previous record (3rd quarter 1995), I cannot identify the date of birth precisely enough to determine whether the transition occurred before or after October 1st 1995. Depending on the interview week of a given household, the transition in age from 2 to 3 may have occurred before October 1st 1995 (non-eligible) or after October 1st 1995 (eligible). I cannot stipulate clearly that all the mothers in this wave of the survey are eligible for the extra 12 months of benefit, which is why the 4th quarter of 1995 is excluded from the estimation. I will therefore compare mothers who experienced the transition between January 1st 1995 and September 30th 1995 (non-eligible) with those who experienced the transition between January 1st 1996 and September 30th 1996 (eligible). In other words, the baseline sample comprises the quarters 1, 2 and 3 in 1995 and the quarters 1, 2 and 3 in 1996.

3.2 Summary statistics

Before focusing on mothers, I compare basic summary statistics for the overall female population within the same age group (15-39). In 1995, the overall female population aged 15 to 39 in the data comprised 11,725 individuals. They were on average 26.2 years old and half

of them were married. As for their educational level, one third were high school graduates and 6.3% had pursued higher education. Of these women, 63.7% had children. According to the self-reported economic activity, which is my dependent variable, 54.6% were employed, while 16% were on ML or PL and 19.3% were students. 4.3% declared that they were unemployed.

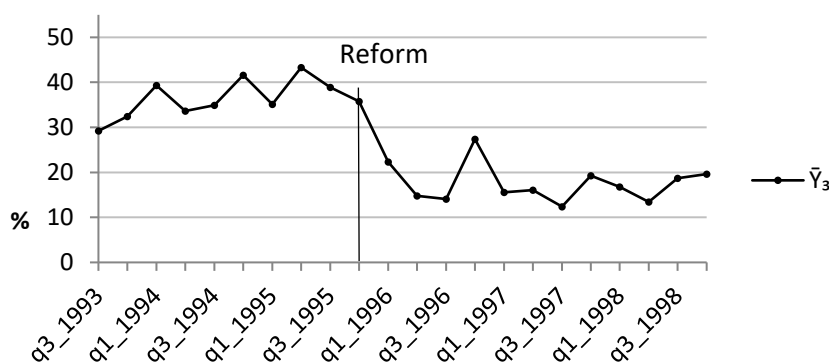
Comparatively, the average age of mothers is higher than that of the overall population (29.6), and the proportion of married women among mothers is also higher, at 82.5%. As for the number of children, 46.4% have 1 child, 44.4% have 2 children, and 9 % have 3 children or more. They are slightly more educated than the overall population (by 3 percentage points for high school graduation and by 2 points for higher education), which may be partly linked to their higher average age. As for labour market activity, the proportion of employed is similar to the overall population for 1995, while the share of students falls to 4% and the share of ML and PL increases to 26%. These are the characteristics of all mothers, independently of the children's ages.

I then extract the sample of eligible and control individuals, as in mothers whose youngest child turned 3 within 3 quarters before (non-eligible) or after (eligible) October 1st 1995. As a second step, I broaden the sample by comparing with cohorts around two dates when no reform occurred (1997-1998 and 1993-1994), and with a different control cohort around the same date (1995-1996), of mothers whose youngest child turned 4 rather than 3. The eligible and control samples feature similar characteristics; the statistics are provided in Table C.1 in Appendix. The alternative control cohorts are also similar with respect to the dependent and independent variables; the statistics are provided in Table C.2 and Table C.3 in Appendix.

Regarding the employment rate of the sample, the share of employed mothers displays a substantial decrease over the period of interest. Mothers became less likely to be employed at the end of their PL, and I will examine the causal relation between the 1995 reform implementation and this observed decline in the remainder of the chapter. It should be noted that the period of interest is not subject to other legislative shocks (among other things, the fiscal system was stable; a major reform introducing joint taxation was only implemented in 2005). The supply of public childcare was also relatively stable over the period 1995-1996, after a steep decline in 1990-1991.²⁴

²⁴ The number of nurseries fell from 1043 to 486 in 1990-1991, and has slowly declined since then (Kucharova et al., 2009).

Figure 1.1 Share of employed mothers once child reaches age 3



Note: At each quarter, mean outcome for mothers whose youngest child recently reached age 3. Source: LFS 1993-1998.

4. Empirical Strategy

After the preliminary before/after comparison, I apply the conclusive difference-in-differences estimation using two alternative choices of control group. I want to account for mothers' return-to-work patterns after the 36 months of parental leave, upon the hypothesis that the reform induced a disincentive to transitioning back to employment.

Previous evidence shows that parental leave schemes mostly increase post-maternity employment in the medium run (Ruhm, 1998) or at least do not decrease it (Lalive and Zweimüller, 2009), depending on the way job protection and cash transfers are combined. The specific feature of this reform is that it creates a disparity between the duration of job protection and the duration of benefits, in favour of the latter. Schönberg and Ludsteck (2014) and Lalive and Zweimüller (2009) analyse a series of PL scheme reforms in Germany and Austria, and demonstrate that when benefits are longer than job protection, this is likely to lower mothers' post-maternity labour market attachment.

I use a similar method to theirs in the evaluation of the impact of the reform: a difference-in-differences design applied to the short-run return-to-work probability. What are the mechanisms of the reform's impact on mothers' return to work? The extension of the flat rate benefit (a little under 20% of the average wage) takes place at the expense of the guaranteed return to work: I can therefore expect a heterogeneous effect on mothers according to their labour market attachment and labour income. Also, at the moment of the reform implementation, the economic situation was deteriorating and unemployment was rising. The

extension of the benefit could then be used as a tool to delay return to activity for mothers with low labour market perspectives. Yet the unemployment threat may also encourage mothers to value the job protection more and opt for a return to guaranteed employment instead of 12 extra months of benefits. In order to test these predictions, I estimate the causal effect of the reform on mothers' employment probability right after the end of their job protected PL. In other words, I identify the impact of the extension of benefit payments from 36 to 48 months on mothers' employment probability after the 36th month. Our outcome of interest is the employment status at the end of parental leave, i.e., as soon as the child turns 3. For this purpose, I consider mothers' economic activity status directly at the quarter following the transition of the child's age from 2 to 3. At this 3rd birthday threshold, parental leave entitlements had recently expired and the potential difference in labour supply between treated and non-treated mothers can be observed. This employment status variable is self-reported, and the choice of answers comprises ML, PL, unemployment or staying at home for childcare purposes. As explained in the data section, "being active" is a much more noisy outcome than "being employed". For this reason, employment is the main outcome, and equivalent results for activity are reported in appendix. The difference between the two outcomes lies mostly in the size of the impact (the impact on activity levels being much larger than on employment), apart from the cohort effect analysis and the heterogeneity analysis, for which the period of interest (namely the low business cycle at the end of the 1990s) seems to be yielding the dissimilarities. The following table 1.1 sums up the mechanism of the 1995 reform for a clear understanding of the evaluation to come.

Table 1.1 Design of the 1995 reform

	<i>Targeted by the reform</i>	<i>Job protection (=PL)</i>	<i>Parental benefit</i>	<i>Child's age on October 1 1995</i>	<i>Situation after Oct 1 1995</i>
<i>Child born before Oct 1 1992</i>	No	36 months	36 months	More than 36 months (already aged 3)	PL over, benefit payment over
<i>Child born after Oct 1 1992</i>	Yes	36 months	48 months	Less than 36 months (not yet aged 3)	PL over, 12 extra months of benefit

As a preliminary step, a simple before/after comparison is designed, where mothers from the 1st row of the table above serve as the control group (they quit the parental benefit

system between January and September 1995; they are non-eligible but close to the limit), and mothers from the 2nd row of the table serve as the treated group (the transition from 2 to 3 years is recorded between January and September 1996, they are entitled to 12 extra months of benefits but close to the limit). In other words, I compare the employment probability of mothers whose child reached 36 months shortly before October 1st 1995 to that of mothers whose child reached 36 months shortly after October 1st 1995. I estimate a linear probability model, corrected for heteroskedasticity. However, this approach is insufficient to reveal causal relationship between the reform and the outcome of interest, because the observed difference may be affected by maturation bias: I do not control for the fact that Czech mothers may simply lower their labour supply from one year to the next due to the business cycle or other economic and social factors. Moreover, seasonality may affect the outcome. As I cannot assume the temporal stability of mothers' employment rates over the considered period, I continue with a different method, applying a double comparison.

I use the difference-in-differences design, comparing the evolution of the employment rate within the eligible cohort around the intervention date with that of a different, non-eligible cohort. It is assumed that mothers have fairly similar individual characteristics in these 2 cohorts.²⁵ I consider such covariates as marital status, age, education and number of children. This double comparison captures possible seasonality and, most importantly, possible trends in the outcome. I adopt two complementary approaches in the choice of the control cohort. The first strategy is similar to Schönberg and Ludsteck (2014) and Lalive et al. (2014): I compare the evolution of eligible mothers' employment probability around the reform date with the same evolution around a date when no reform occurred. Here, I select October 1st 1997 as the non-reform date: I compare the change occurring after the reform implementation with the same date 2 years later. As I use 3 quarters before and after the reform in the regression, this 2-year distance between the reform date and the non-reform date is needed in order for the two cohorts not to overlap. This is a first attempt to isolate the causal impact of the reform on mothers' return-to-work patterns, motivated by very similar characteristics of the eligible and control groups. They are identical with respect to the age of the youngest child (who recently turned 3), and differ only with respect to eligibility for the benefit extension, imposed by the date of implementation of the reform.

However, in the context of the first decade of the transition, marked by increasing imbalances on the Czech labour market, it might appear problematical to assume the common

²⁵ See Tables B.2 and B.3 with summary statistics of the sample, in Appendix.

trend of the outcomes of the treated and control cohort 2 years apart. This is a plausible pitfall of the causal analysis, as the reform aims to withdraw mothers from employment in a context of rising unemployment, and therefore raises the issue of the endogeneity of its purpose with respect to the economic situation. In order to avoid capturing the deterioration of the labour market situation from one year to another instead of the genuine impact of the reform, I conduct a complementary analysis with an alternative choice of control group. In this second approach, the analysis is centred on the 3 quarters immediately preceding and following the implementation of the reform (1995-1996), and I compare the eligible mothers to a group of non-eligible mothers who differ slightly in terms of the age of the youngest child. I compare the eligible group, i.e. mothers whose child turned 3 just before or after the reform, with the control group, i.e. mothers whose child turned 4 just before or after the reform. This approach offers advantages and shortcomings compared with the previous one. As a clear advantage, this strategy captures the possible general trend in falling employment rates among mothers over the period of interest, leading to a more precise estimate of the genuine effect of the reform. On the other hand, this choice of control group is more equivocal with respect to the similarity of the sample's labour supply behaviour, as the end of PL entitlements is more distant for the control group than for the treated group. For these reasons, I use both approaches in the difference-in-differences estimations, and obtain a range of estimated values from which we can then draw conclusions.

5. Results

Due to its length, generosity and universal access, the parental leave and benefit system is a major criterion in Czech mothers' labour market participation decisions. The 1995 reform substantially changes the benefit payment setup and we can expect this to have an impact on mothers' return to work between the end of job-protected PL and the end of benefit payments. Estimation results confirm this prediction and indicate a significant negative causal relation between the extension of the benefit and the probability of employment in the months following the end of PL.

5.1 Before/after comparison

A simple before/after comparison using a linear probability model indicates that the probability of employment fell by 22pp for mothers who were targeted by the reform and who became eligible for the 12 extra months of benefit (without job-protected PL) between January 1st 1996 and September 30th 1996, as compared with mothers who were non-eligible and who ended their PL between January 1st 1995 and September 30th 1995. In Table 2, I show that neither the significance nor the size of the effect varies notably while controlling for individual characteristics. Only the significant covariates are reported here.

Table 1.2 Impact of the 1995 reform on post-PL employment

Linear Probability Model		
Dep. variable: To be employed		
	(1)	(2)
Treatment	-0.220*** (0.032)	-0.216*** (0.032)
Superior Educ		0.165** (0.066)
Controls		X
Observations	744	744

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Robust standard errors in parentheses

Notes: This table reports the employment probability at the end of the PL, comparing eligible (1996) and non-eligible (1995) mothers, using age, education, matrimonial status and number of children as covariates. Source: LFS 1995-1996

This simple before/after comparison over 3 quarters before and 3 quarters after the reform reveals a significant fall in mothers' employment probability, with a differentiation by educational level which I will exploit in the following subsection. The stability and the scale of the result suggest that the reform has indeed changed mothers' return-to-work patterns; however it is not sufficient to assert causality.

5.2 Difference-in-differences: comparison over time

In order to get closer to a possible causal interpretation of the fall in mothers' post-PL employment probability, I compare the observed change around October 1995 to a change around a date when no reform occurred (October 1997). The results obtained with this difference-in-differences method corroborate the intuition from the preliminary results; the effect of the reform now appears to be even slightly higher (by 2 percentage points). In Table 1.3, the first column reports the results from the difference-in-differences strategy comparing 6 quarters in 1995/1996 (3 before and 3 after the implementation of the reform) with 6 quarters in 1997/1998. In the second column, I control for individual characteristics, and in the two remaining columns I restrict my sample closer to the reform date: only 2 quarters before and after the reform, and then 1 quarter before and after.

Table 1.3 Impact of the 1995 reform on post-PL employment

Difference-in-Differences 1st Approach				
	Dep. variable: To be employed			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Treatment	-0.236*** (0.042)	-0.231*** (0.042)	-0.226*** (0.051)	-0.184** (0.071)
Seasonality	0,0159 (0.027)	0,0149 (0.027)	0,0101 (0.032)	0,0335 (0.043)
Trend	0.244*** (0.032)	0.236*** (0.031)	0.252*** (0.039)	0.253*** (0.053)
Education				
Graduated HS			<i>Reference value</i>	
None or Elementary		-0.138*** (0.033)	-0.117*** (0.042)	-0.136** (0.058)
Did not graduate HS		-0.0593** (0.023)	-0.0712** (0.029)	-0.0962** (0.040)
Superior Educ		0.155*** (0.049)	0.112* (0.061)	0.147* (0.080)
Controls		X	X	X
Restricted sample 1			X	
Restricted sample 2				X
Observations	1464	1464	998	529

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1
Robust standard errors in parentheses

Notes: This table reports the estimates for the employment probability at the end of the PL, comparing treated cohort (95/96) and non-treated cohort (97/98); using age, education, matrimonial status and number of children as covariates. Restricted samples 1 and 2 are smaller samples (2q and 1q) closer to the reform date.

Source: LFS 1995-1998

The size of the effect, while still significant at the 1% level, remains at around 23pp when I restrict the number of quarters to 2 instead of 3 on each side of the intervention date. The restriction to only 1 quarter before and after provides similar but less clear-cut result, as the significance comes down to the 5% level and the size of the effect to 18.4pp. It should be noted that the sample size becomes very low with this restriction: only 285 treated and 244 control individuals. Compared with the before/after comparison, the difference-in-differences estimation features 2 additional variables, which capture seasonality and the underlying trend. The seasonality parameter appears to be non-significant, which is consistent with the sample structure: we compare large fractions of a year (9 months before and 9 months after the treatment), with a 2-year interval. As to the trend, the coefficient is sizeable²⁶ and significant, which is to be expected, given the evolution of the business cycle over the period. Indeed, the probability of mothers' employment was 25pp higher in the first cohort (1995-1996) than in the second one (1997-1998), most likely also due to the worsening situation on the labour market. With the rising threat of unemployment, workers' prospects in the labour market deteriorated and the overall employment rates in the Czech labour force decreased. The scale of the effect might also be attributed to the fact that although no reform had occurred for mothers in the control group, they were in fact all affected by the reform of 2 years earlier, instead of all being unaffected. Therefore, the 1997-1998 cohort might not be the clearest comparison group, and selecting the control cohort 2 years before the reform (1993-1994), instead of 2 years after the reform, would be a good alternative. However, the poor quality of the very first quarters of the Labour Force Survey at the beginning of the 1990s does not allow us to study such a cohort. I can only build such estimation around October 1st 1993 if it is restricted to 1 quarter on each side of the date, instead of 3.²⁷ These results are reported in Table 1.4.

²⁶ The positive sign might be misleading, but the interpretation of the coefficient is the probability of employment in the first cohort (1995-1996), taking the second cohort as reference (1997-1998). The employment rates were higher in the first period, and for this reason the coefficient is positive.

²⁷ The summary statistics for this cohort are reported along with the other cohorts in Table C.1 in Appendix.

Table 1.4 Impact of the 1995 reform on post-PL employment

Difference-in-Differences 1st Approach				
Dep. variable: To be employed				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Treatment	-0.236*** (0.042)	-0.231*** (0.042)	-0.268*** (0.080)	-0.251*** (0.080)
Education				
Graduated HS		<i>Reference value</i>		
None or Elementary		-0.138*** (0.033)		-0.174** (0.069)
Did not graduate HS		-0.0593** (0.023)		-0.0737* (0.044)
Superior Educ		0.155*** (0.049)		0.203*** (0.077)
Controls		X		X
Control cohort 97-98	X	X		
Control cohort 93-94			X	X
Observations	1464	1464	563	563

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Robust standard errors in parentheses

Notes: This table reports the estimates for the employment probability at the end of the PL, comparing treated cohort (95/96) and non-treated cohort (97/98 and 93/94); using age, education, matrimonial status and number of children as covariates.

Source: LFS 1993-1998

As already mentioned in the preliminary before/after comparison, one variable among the individual characteristics appears particularly relevant for further interpretation of the reform effect: the educational level. The difference-in-differences estimation, reported above, confirms that the response to the reform is strongly stratified across mothers' educational attainment. The sign of the parameter is consistent with general knowledge about the labour market attachment of women with different educational levels. Taking the group "graduated from high school" as reference, mothers with no education or elementary education have 13.8% lower probability of employment at the end of PL, while mothers with a higher level than elementary school but who are not high school graduates have 5.9% lower probability. By contrast, mothers who completed higher education have a significantly higher probability of employment at the end of PL, by 15.5% in the baseline specification and as much as 20.3% in the alternative cohort estimation. Therefore, mothers with lower education seem to be significantly more sensitive to labour market withdrawal incentives. The educational level can

be used as a proxy for qualification and hence for labour income: the interpretation here is that less-educated mothers are more enticed by the extension of the flat-rate parental benefit at the expense of employment, as the replacement rate is higher for them than for high-paid female workers. When we estimate the impact of the reform on subsamples of mothers according to their educational attainment, the highly significant results of two groups stand out: mothers who completed elementary school but did not graduate from high school (mostly from the apprenticeship track which does not award a high-school degree) and mothers who graduated from high school but did not pursue higher education. Around that high-school graduation pivot, we observe indeed a strong heterogeneity of the impact of the reform. However, as soon as we consider the tails of the distribution on both sides (no education or elementary education on one side and tertiary education on the other), the results become more ambiguous. Therefore, as we can see in the following Table 5, the educational level does not seem to be inversely correlated with the scale of the reform's negative impact on employment in a clear and linear way.

Table 1.5 Heterogeneous impact of the 1995 reform by education

Difference-in-Differences 1 st approach				
Dep. variable: To be employed				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	None or Elem.	Did not graduate HS	Graduated HS	Superior Educ.
Treatment	0.015 NS (0.104)	-0.309*** (0.060)	-0.191*** (0.071)	-0.319* (0.183)
Observations	141	626	583	114

*** p<0.01, * p<0.1

Robust standard errors in parentheses

Notes: This table reports the estimate for the employment probability at the end of the PL, following the baseline specification (1st approach), for 2 subsamples of mothers, using age, matrimonial status and number of children as covariates. Source: LFS 1995-1998

My analysis is limited by very small sample sizes towards each end of the educational level distribution, but the results do suggest that we should be cautious in interpreting the impact of the reform on very high- and very low-skilled female workers. While the impact on very low-skilled mothers appears to be non-significant (their employment rate was already very low before the reform, on average 10.7% in our period of interest), I detect a significant and surprisingly strong impact on very high-skilled mothers. This result suggests that highly-

educated mothers do respond to the reform, despite the low financial incentive offered by the flat-rate benefit. One of the reasons might be that their decision is not driven solely by economic rationality, but also by dominant social norms which explicitly promote the mother's role as main caregiver during the first years of a child's life.²⁸ Another complementary factor might be informal arrangements with employers that reduce the cost of the delayed return-to-work, or simply a lower risk of unemployment due to better prospects on the labour market compared with lower-skilled female workers. Fathers' educational level (still as a proxy for income) might partly explain mothers' labour market behaviour, yet this control variable systematically appears as non-significant, be it for highly-educated mothers or the overall sample.

5.3 Difference-in-differences: comparison over groups

Until now, the estimation method has been built on a comparison of mothers before and after the reform with a similar group of women at a different point of time, when no reform occurred. In this subsection, a different control group will be considered in order to test the previous results and to capture unequivocally the possible business cycle effects. Given that other factors might have influenced mothers' employment rate in 1995-1996, such as the expected and broadly advertised costs of the transition in terms of unemployment or the decreasing availability of public childcare, I centre the estimation on these two specific years. The legislative change applies to mothers whose child recently turned 3, therefore the labour market participation of mothers whose child recently turned 4 should remain unchanged before and after the reform.²⁹ Or, more precisely, their employment probability may differ before and after the reform if there is a trend of decreasing employment rates, but this would be independent of the PL reform. If we assume that the employment rate of the eligible mothers (with children who turned 3 after October 1st 1995) would have followed the same evolution as that of mothers with children who turned 4 over the same period (non-eligible),³⁰ the

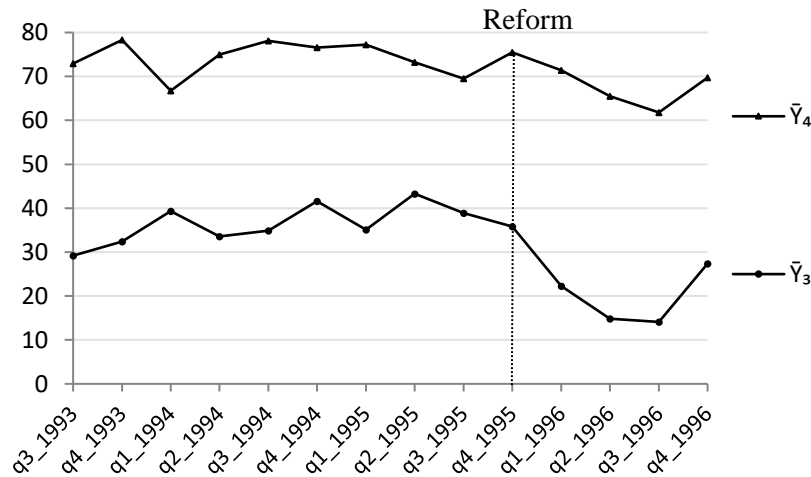
²⁸ See the work and the numerous public appearances of the influential Czech psychologist Zdenek Matejcek, dedicated to establish the negative effect of institutional childcare on child's development and well-being, and to promote the role of family as care-giver.

²⁹ I could also consider mothers of children aged 2, but their employment rate is very low, on average 6.4% for the period of interest, and fairly constant over the decade. As such, this control would be relatively meaningless.

³⁰ As noted in the previous section, this assumption is open to criticism: the non-eligible group had exhausted all PL entitlements one year prior to the observed period and may react differently to the business cycle than mothers whose PL has expired very recently.

difference-in-differences genuinely controls for the business cycle and provides us with a relatively precise estimate of the causal effect of the reform. The following chart plots the employment rates of the eligible and non-eligible mothers around the reform date.

Figure 1.2 Share of employed mothers once child reaches age 3 and age 4



Note: Mean outcome for mothers when youngest child reaches age 3 (Y₃) and age 4 (Y₄). \bar{Y}_3 : mothers eligible to the reform in October 1995. \bar{Y}_4 : mothers non-eligible to the reform in October 1995. Source: LFS 1993-1996.

We observe a declining trend in employment rates for the non-eligible, and a markedly steeper decline for the eligible. Assuming that the trend would have been similar if no reform had occurred, the difference in slope represents the causal impact of the reform. This complementary approach lowers the size of the estimated effect of the reform by 8 points, bringing it down to 15.3pp; however, it validates the high significance of the result.

Table 1.6 Impact of the 1995 reform on post-PL employment

Difference-in-Differences 2nd Approach		
Dep. variable: To be employed		
	(1)	(2)
Treatment	-0.155*** (0.049)	-0.153*** (0.049)
Controls		X
Observations	1367	1367

*** p<0.01

Robust standard errors in parentheses

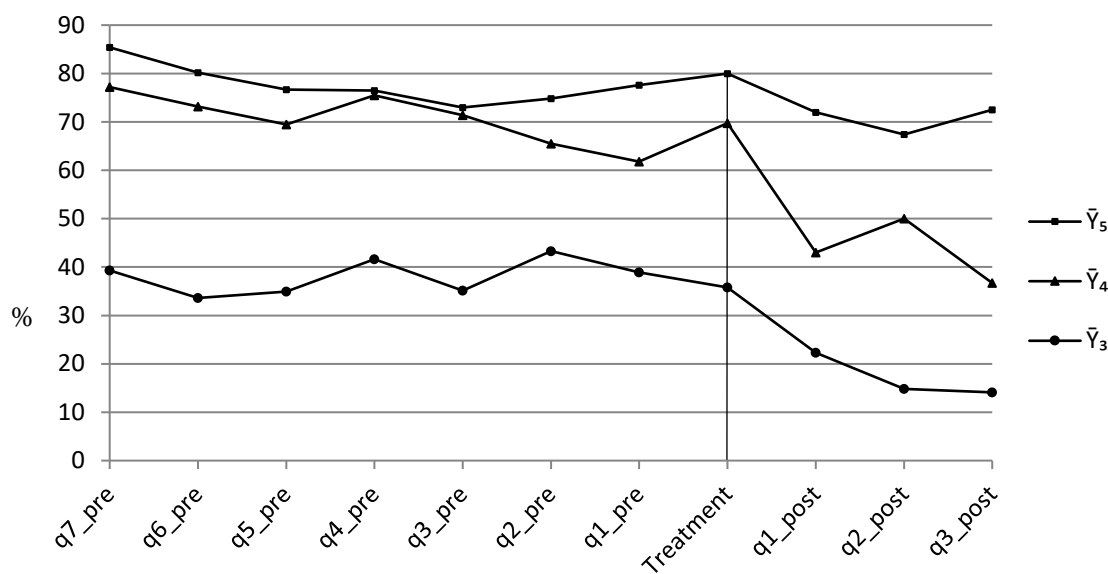
Notes: This table reports the estimates for the employment probability at the end of the PL, comparing eligible mothers (child aged 3) and non-eligible mothers (child aged 4) from the same cohort (95/96) ; using age, education, matrimonial status and number of children as covariates.

Source: LFS 1995-1996

5.4 Persistency of the impact

Finally, apart from being an alternative control group, the population of mothers with children who recently turned 4 also allows us to investigate possible medium-term effects of the reform. If we consider the sample of eligible mothers from a cohort perspective, we note that children who turned 3 in 1996 will turn 4 in 1997, then 5 in 1998 and so on. They are part of the first cohort exposed to the treatment in 1996, and will be identifiable in the data in the following years thanks to this mechanism of increasing age. As the LFS data have an overlapping structure, these are not the same individuals as in the treated sample in 1996, but they are assumed to be a random sample of the same population. As a consequence, this provides us with an insight into the return-to-work patterns of the first eligible cohort one year after the reform implementation, i.e., at the end of the benefit extension and one year after the end of their job-protected PL. What we observe is an acceleration of their withdrawal from employment – less than 30% of mothers were employed at the end of 1997 – which coincides with the entry into the sample of mothers previously exposed to the benefit extension. While the overall decline in employment rates may be business-cycle related, the change in rhythm suggests that a substantial negative effect on female employment persists beyond the 12 months intended by the legislator. The same intuition can be applied to mothers with a youngest child aged 5, supposing that I lag for one extra year. Mothers whose children turned 5 in 1998 are part of the same population whose children turned 4 in 1997 and 3 in 1996 (and therefore the first to be eligible for the benefit extension). If the reform had a persistent impact beyond the 12 months covered by the benefit extension, then we should observe a fall in the employment rate as soon as the eligible mothers appear in the respective groups: after October 1995 for mothers of children aged 3, after October 1996 for mothers of children aged 4, and after October 1997 for mothers of children aged 5. The Figure 1.3 reports the share of employed mothers with respect to the age of the youngest child (who “just turned” 3, 4 and 5, respectively, before and after the first quarter of eligibility), and I do indeed detect a persistent effect in the medium-run.

Figure 1.3 Medium term effects. Share of employed mothers by age of the youngest child



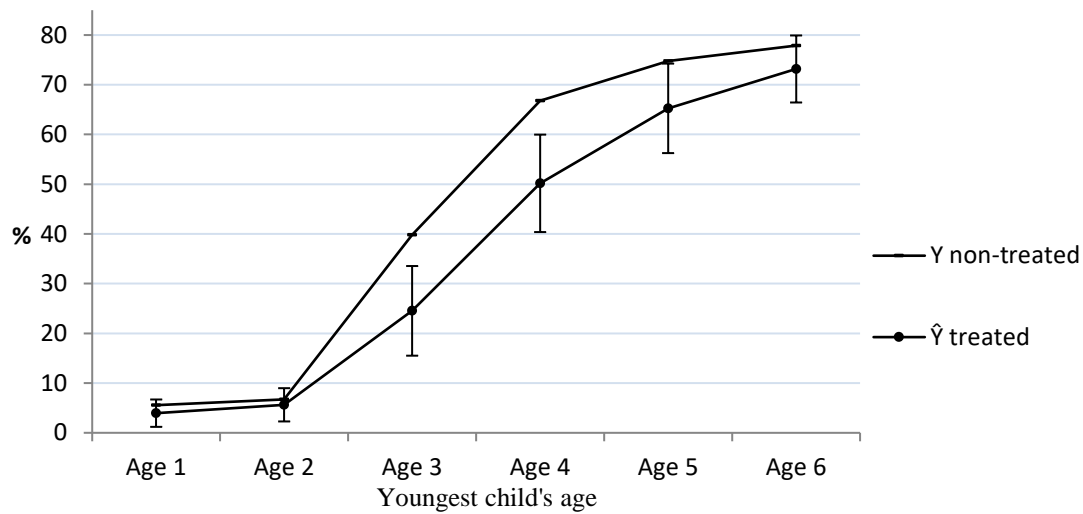
Note: Mean outcome for the first treated cohort of mothers (treated Jan-Sept 1996), when the youngest child turned 3 (\bar{Y}_3), then 4 (\bar{Y}_4) and 5 (\bar{Y}_5).

\bar{Y}_3 : immediate effect, observed in 1996. \bar{Y}_4 : observed in 1997. \bar{Y}_5 : observed in 1998.

Source: LFS 1993-1998.

For the sake of clarity, I have reported the evolution of employment probability of these 3 groups of mothers from a cohort perspective, in the following Figure 1.4. It plots the employment rates of the last non-treated mothers before the reform, along with the estimated employment rates of the first treated mothers, over several years after being exposed to treatment at the child's age 3. The scope and significance of the difference are estimated with the previous difference-in-differences strategy. The return-to-work profile of this first treated group is compared with that of the last non-treated group (first difference), which is then compared to the simultaneous evolution in employment rates of mothers with slightly older children. As the youngest child gets older, we observe a significant delay in return-to-work for treated mothers, which loses significance once the youngest child turns 6.

Figure 1.4 Medium term effects. Return-to-employment profiles of treated and non-treated



Note: This chart reports the estimated delay in return-to-work of the first cohort of treated mothers (\hat{Y}) compared to the last cohort of non-treated (Y), using older children as controls in D-in-D design. The difference in employment probability is significant for age 3, 4 and 5. Source: LFS, 1993-1999

For the interpretation of the charts, let us recall that each point plots the proportion of employed mothers in the population of mothers whose children turned 3, 4, 5 and then 6 between the last and the current quarter of the survey. For the age of 3, for instance, these are mothers whose parental leave has expired very recently. For the age of 4, they are mothers whose parental benefit extension has expired very recently. Therefore, possible delays and rigidities in the labour market might account for a part of the observed evolution: we are looking at a very immediate effect, and it is likely that certain mothers will return to the labour market within the following months. However, we observe an unambiguous change in the rhythm of return-to-work of mothers of children aged 3, and a decreasing but persistent effect for mothers of children aged 4 and 5. The difference-in-differences estimation for each group of mothers provides evidence of a highly significant change for eligible mothers (16.6pp for children aged 4 and 9.5pp for children aged 5).

These results extend the short-term validity of the negative impact on mothers' employment rate beyond the 12 months induced directly by the benefit extension. Mothers still remain out of employment in larger proportions 2 years after the end of the benefit entitlement. Beyond that period, however, I find no statistically significant difference between the treated and the control groups. This finding is coherent with the work-family reconciliation

background, as at age six children entry elementary school and therefore facilitate labour market participation of the main carer. The remaining question is whether the impact on employment probability until age six reflects a decrease in activity rate or an increasing unemployment rate. However, this analysis does not allow us to assert whether one of these two channels is significantly predominant: the labour supply channel is sizeable and significant for mothers with children aged 4, yet only the unemployment channel appears significant one year later. We can question the incentive provided by the Czech social security system with respect to these transitions. Guzi (2014) tests empirically for the link between social benefits and exits from unemployment, and concludes that there is indeed a welfare trap, and that individuals who are low educated and have not worked prior to entering unemployment are less likely to transition back to employment. However, Guzi points out that as far as mothers of young children are concerned, the effect of the replacement rate on their transitioning to employment is not significant and that therefore maternal returns to work seem to respond to other factors than social benefits. In a subsequent analysis which extended the results of this study by using larger samples, Bicakova and Kaliskova (2016) also show that higher post-PL exits to unemployment are mostly observed among lower-educated mothers.

6. Concluding remarks

Czech post-transition family policy moved away from the previous emphasis on female labour market participation and strong intervention in pre-school childcare supply. The new trend was towards family-conservative policy, and the evolution of the parental leave scheme was its epitome. The 1995 Act on State Social Support introduced an unexpected 12-month extension in parental benefit payments for all current and future recipients of this universal benefit. This extension led to a disconnection between the duration of job-protected parental leave and the duration of parental benefits, leaving mothers to choose between 12 extra months of benefits or a secure post-PL return to work. I find a substantial impact of this reform on mothers' probability of employment within the first post-PL quarter. The probability of employment of the eligible mothers was 23 percentage points lower than that of the non-eligible pre-reform cohort. Interestingly but unsurprisingly, the decrease in employment probability is heterogeneous with respect to educational attainment. The impact is stronger for women who have not graduated from high school (30.9pp), compared with those who have (19.1pp). However, results for educational levels at each end of the distribution are less clear-

cut. The second approach, where I consider an alternative control group, provides a lower estimate of the overall effect of the reform on eligible mothers (15.6pp), while confirming its high significance.

This reform had an explicit objective of withdrawing mothers from the labour market as a short-term response to the threat of growing unemployment, and I argue that the reform achieved its intended effect. However, the reform still appears to have had a negative impact on the employment rates of the first eligible cohort of mothers 2 years after the end of the extended benefit payment, i.e. until their youngest child was 5 years old. By increasing the duration of career discontinuities, this medium-term effect is likely to weigh on mothers' subsequent wages and pensions. The lack of good quality data for this period is the major obstacle for analysing this turbulent post-transition legislation and its effects on labour market outcomes. This could be a possible explanation for the scarcity of family and social policy evaluations in the Czech Republic, along with other Central Eastern European countries. Yet the persistence of the phenomenon until the present day, a decade after accession to the European Union, suggests rather a certain lack of interest.

The European Union social integration process has played a major role in modelling family policy with respect to female employment, as the European Commission emphasises the importance of female labour market attachment and public childcare services as tools for increasing mothers' labour supply. While childcare supply is still considered a secondary issue, the parental leave scheme has been remodelled since 2008, in a way that to some extent follows the European trend and encourages a faster return to employment. The effects of this policy shift remain to be assessed.

Chapter 2

Mind the employment gap: an impact evaluation of the Czech “multi-speed” parental benefit reform

1. Introduction

Parental leave (PL) is a key policy for addressing work-life conciliation issues inherent to parenthood, including maternal employment and its continuity. Over the last decades, female labour supply has garnered explicit political interest at the European Union level, and the 2004 Czech accession to the EU shed light on the scope of the employment gap between women with and without children at pre-school age, highest among all the OECD countries (41 pp). This is explained by very long universal paid parental leave: 4 years per child. In order to tackle this gap and to conform to the EU trend, a major reform was designed in 2008, and this chapter investigates its effects on mothers' participation and employment rates. The reform's objective was to shorten the duration of paid leave by introducing better paid shorter tracks, and I show that the share of mothers in employment shortly after three years of PL increased significantly in both instantaneous and medium terms.

The previous chapter gave an overview of the related literature³¹. Parental leave evaluations are abundant in recent economic research, both for countries with relatively limited PL schemes and short durations (Baum and Ruhm (2014) for the USA, Baker and Milligan (2008) for Canada) and for countries with long and comprehensive PL schemes. Rossin-Slater, in the economics handbook chapter on family leave policy (forthcoming), sums up the heterogeneous effects of different leave provisions across OECD countries and evaluates the limit at one year. In other words, the maximum duration for a leave to have positive effects on maternal employment continuity is one year; beyond that, the career interruption is costly and impacts further careers and wages. In this dissertation, we are dealing with a leave that fluctuates between 3 and 4 years. Therefore, the literature on long leaves is the most closely related (Piketty, 2005; Lalive and Zweimüller, 2009; Schönberg and Ludsteck, 2014), and I build on the results and methods presented in Mullerova (2014). In that study, I showed that the extension of parental benefits beyond the standard job-protected leave in 1995 led to a significant and durable fall in post-PL maternal employment rates in the Czech Republic. This finding is in line with the German and Austrian studies; it confirms that the scope of the paid leave (weeks, months, and years in this case), as well as the respective lengths of job protection and cash transfer, yield heterogeneous incentives. This chapter is focused on a reform which, in 2008, aimed at reversing the effects of the 1995 extension.

³¹ See page 32.

In the Czech Republic, during most of the transitional period, the payment of universal flat-rate parental benefits covered four years per mother (48 months), i.e. one more year than the three-year job-protected leave (36 months). In 2008, a major reform restructured the benefit, offering financially incentivised shorter tracks. Aimed at shortening the long paid parental leave established in 1995 and at reducing the incumbent public expenditures, the 2008 reform of PL set up three possible durations of the cash transfer, with roughly the same total amount distributed over the entire leave. In this chapter, I evaluate the effects of this multi-speed reform on maternal employment and activity levels. The reform provided an extensive change in financial incentives in favour of shorter leaves, and I show that the effects on return-to-work timing are large and significant. To this purpose, I employ the difference-in-differences identification strategy, using two approaches: a cohort effect analysis over both the period of interest and a control period, and a standard difference-in-differences setting with the counterfactual group composed of mothers with older children. Alongside the contemporaneous effect of the reform on the first treated cohorts, I consider medium run effects and show that the reform significantly hastened the transition to employment and maintained the higher employment rates over years following the treatment.

This chapter is organised as follows. Section 2 is dedicated to the institutional background of conciliation policies during the transition from planned towards market economy (2.1.), with a focus on the 2008 multi-speed reform (2.2.). Section 3 presents the data and the empirical strategy. Results are reported in Section 4, and Section 5 offers a discussion of the results.

2. Institutional background

2.1. Work-life conciliation in the transition and EU accession

In the first transitional decade, the labour market restructuring engendered unemployment (Svejnar, 1999) and increased inequalities, including gender inequalities (Filipova and Pytlikova, 2016). “Familialist” policy extended universal PL while closing nurseries and kindergartens (Kucharova et al., 2009), with priorities shifting away from labour supply and fertility (Sobotka et al., 2008). Given the transition from a centrally planned economy and interventionist policy, dismantling the network of public nurseries can be easily

understood in this framework. As to the PL extension, however, this explicitly conservative and costly measure needs further explanation. It lies in a combination of a gender-conservative family policy legacy inherited from the socialist era (Haskova and Saxonberg, 2016) and broader apprehension of the social costs of transition, which led policy makers to draw parts of the labour force towards inactivity as well as maintain a social security net (Visek, 2006).

Consequently, female labour supply by age acquired a strongly M-shaped pattern, as female participation is high on average but increasingly low during the reproductive age. The maternity-related employment gap, i.e. the difference in employment levels between women with and without pre-school children, has become the highest among all the OECD countries (41 pp, see figure 1 in introduction). Following the 1995 parental benefit extension from 3 to 4 years to all mothers unconditionally, mothers postponed *en masse* their transitions back to employment (Mullerova, 2014), and four-year inactivity became the norm, with over 70% of mothers staying at home over the 3rd or the 4th year (Haskova, 2011). This remained in place until the 2008 reform, the effects of which I will discuss in this chapter.

During the EU integration process, the public discourse on conciliation policies - heretofore practically absent - took on a new perspective, which was gender equality and equal opportunities in the labour market, in line with the EU non-discrimination law and the Council directive 2000 (Filipova and Pytlikova, 2016). Czech decision-makers have received recommendations from the European Commission which asserts that “a key challenge concerns the severe difficulties that women with children face when re-integrating into the labour market after maternity leave” (EC 2012, p.4). This recommendation concerns an insufficient supply of institutional day care services, as well as the mismatch between their opening hours and most of the parents’ full-time working hours. Yet post-transitional legislation has given priority to more generous conditions of PL and thus a longer withdrawal from labour, with less emphasis on providing child care services for children under 3. While the EU announced in 2002 the Barcelona targets, aiming to provide by 2010 public childcare supply for 90% of children between 3 and 6 and for 33% for children between 0 and 3, the Czech representatives have been opposed to these objectives and assert that had the Central European region been part of the EU in 2002, these objectives would not have been targeted. Indeed family related values remain conservative: although state socialism strongly promoted full time employment and it was widely implemented, Czech households did not abandon the traditional gender division of tasks and the predominant view that women’s responsibilities hold primarily inside the household and in child-rearing. The 2002 ISSP survey shows that half of the adult population,

for both males (53,9%) and females (47,8%), agree with the statement that a child under school age is likely to suffer if their mother works (Chaloupkova and Salamounova, 2004). It is an expression of a “strong normative support to parenthood” and to long maternal care (Sobotka, 2015).

As to cash transfer eligibility, in the 2000s several amendments³² had loosened the conditions of access to parental benefits, towards a higher labour market participation of the recipients, as part of the EU accession process. The multi-speed parental benefit reform is the epitome of this new family policy orientation.

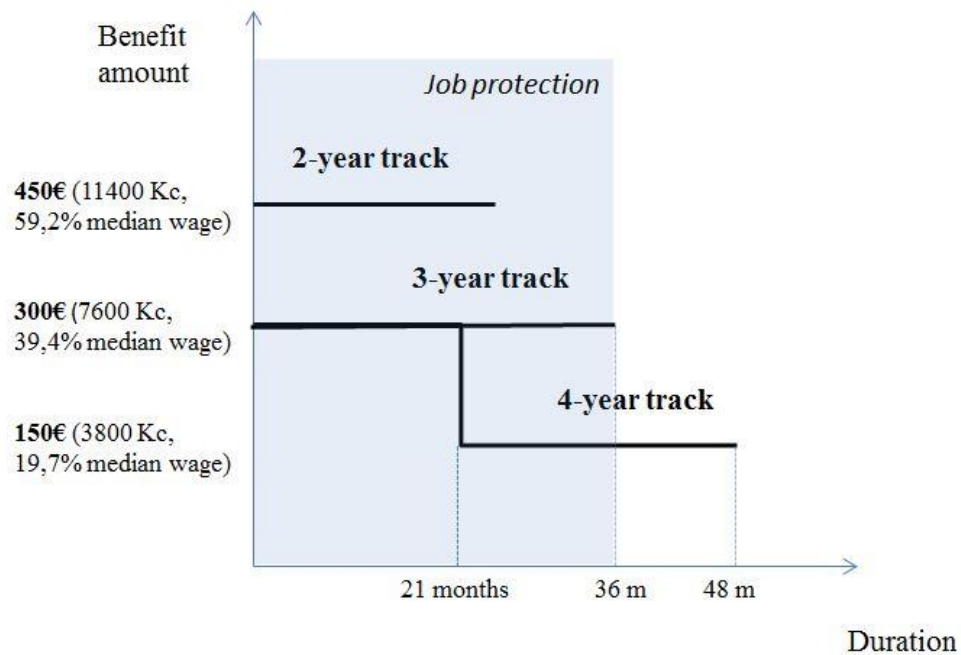
2.2 The multi-speed parental benefit: rationale and mechanism

The 2008 reform brought a key change by establishing a “multi-speed” parental benefit system, which leaves to mothers the choice of receiving benefits during 2, 3 or 4 years. This reform was part of a broader reform implemented by the new right-wing conservative government: the bill on stabilisation of public finances, aiming at reducing public expenditures. The argument used is that the Czech PL scheme is too long and generous in international comparison, and must be modernised in order to fit the European Union standards and to become financially sustainable for the public budget (*Prace a socialni politika*, 2007). The financial incentive in favour of shorter leave lies in the fact that, from now on, roughly the same total amount of benefits is being distributed independently of the duration of the payment; shorter duration goes with higher monthly amounts, while longer duration goes with lower monthly amounts.

More specifically, the reform introduces, in its regular setting, three different tracks with eligibility conditions based on mothers’ employment histories and previous wages. Each track (2-year, 3-year and 4-year) is associated with a monthly cash transfer so that, over the whole period, roughly the same total amount is distributed to all recipients.

³² In 2001, 2004, 2006 and 2012, loosening the authorised maximum worked hours and income for the recipient and the maximum number of hours spent in childcare for the recipient’s child. See Table B in Appendix for details.

Figure 2.1 The “multi-speed” parental benefit reform design



The choice of tracks is conditioned on previous employment: only women who had been employed before the leave (thus excluding students, the unemployed, the inactive, or those on leave with a previous child) can opt for one of the two shorter tracks. For mothers with previous employment, universal parental benefits are preceded by a 28-weeks insurance-based maternity leave. Therefore, mothers eligible for maternity leave are then eligible for shorter PL tracks; on the other hand, mothers who are ineligible for maternity leave and who enter parental leave directly after giving birth are automatically assigned the longest track. After the maternity leave eligibility criteria (i.e. pre-birth employment criteria), which identifies mothers who can/cannot choose one of the shorter tracks, an income criterion distinguishes between mothers who can shorten the leave by one year (i.e. eligible for the 3-year track) and who can shorten the leave by one *or* two years (i.e. eligible for both the 3-year and the 2-year track). Only mothers who had a pre-birth employment with sufficiently high wages³³ are entitled to the 2-year track. This restriction is presented as tool that allows a fast transition to employment for mothers with strong labour market attachment, while preventing low-income beneficiaries from shortening their leave as a transition to other types of welfare support. The 3-year track is less restrictive, as the eligibility relies on pre-birth employment but not on the level of income. This track has the specific feature of re-uniting the duration of

³³ Their monthly wage, or the wage of their partner, must be higher than 11 400 Kc.

cash transfer with the job protection (let us recall that from 1995 to 2007, the benefits were paid over four years while the job protection covered only three years). This track keeps the monthly amount similar to the previous regime, while shortening the duration by one year. Finally, the 4-year track resembles most closely the previous regime in terms of benefit duration and that it outlasts the job-protected period. However, maintaining the benefit duration comes with the price of a significantly lower monthly amount: it is cut in half at month 21 and all the way through until month 46. As mentioned before, this track is accessible to all mothers; it is also the default track to which a mother is assigned if she does not request otherwise.

Table 2.1 The 2008 Reform design

Reform design: standard setting			
	Track eligibility		
	4-year	3-year	2-year
Pre-birth LM situation			
Inactive (student, previous PL)	✓		
Employed	✓	✓	
Employed, wage > 16400 Kc/month	✓	✓	✓

We can perceive here the incentive structure, most importantly between the 3-year and the 4-year tracks³⁴. Eligible mothers face the following trade-off: either the former duration is maintained, with a perceptibly lower monthly transfer, or the same amount is maintained, over a shortened period of time, which happens to coincide with the job protection and with the widely accepted and promoted social norm in favour of a three-year personal maternal care (Krizkova et al., 2011, Haskova and Uhde, 2009). Compared to the pre-reform setting, the new design penalises the long track and incentivises the medium track, as the same total amount is distributed and the loss of job protection is no longer financially compensated.

The complexity of the reform goes further: the setting described above only applies to future recipients, i.e. to mothers whose youngest child is yet to be born at the reform implementation date, on January 1st 2008. But the reform impacts also all the current recipients,

³⁴ As to the 2-year track, its predictable importance in the short run is marginal, given the low incentive (the job protection runs for 12 extra months), the extremely low supply of public childcare for 2 year olds (kindergartens typically accept children from age 3, and even for them there is a notable shortage of available places) and least but not last the previously mentioned social norms.

in an incremental way based on age thresholds. This transitional regime is designed as a way to accelerate the public expenditure cut by generalising the new stricter rules (shorter duration if the same monthly amount as pre-reform; lower monthly amount if the same leave duration as pre-reform) as quickly as possible to all current recipients. This differential treatment essentially mimics the standard treatment and eligibility criteria, while adding age thresholds for slightly modified track options: if a child is older than 3, for instance, then the mother is in the final (4th) year of benefits and no options are available. In this case, the benefit was simply cut in half immediately upon the reform implementation, in January 2008. If a child is younger than 3 but older than 21 months (i.e. moment of cut of benefits in half in the standard setting, see the Chart 2 above), there is logically still no option available for shorter tracks, as the 21-month crossroad is passed. All the mothers are assigned the 4-year track, with the cut in half in benefits being postponed until the child's 3rd birthday: therefore, this cohort still enjoys a slightly more generous 4-year track than in the standard treatment. Mothers of children from yet a younger cohort, aged 5 to 21 months at the reform date, are the first to face the standard option between the 4-year and the 3-year track. According to their choice, they will either receive a lower rate starting from age 21 months (4-year track) or keep the previous amount and exit the leave at the child's 3rd birthday (3-year track). This cohort is notable for it is the first to be treated in the general spirit of the reform, i.e. with an actual option. Only the 2-year track is absent for this cohort: it is available only to mothers with children who are younger than 5 months on January 2008. Indeed, this option must be selected before the end of the 28-week maternity leave, as the mother will then receive a higher monthly amount, from the end of maternity (approx. 5 months) until the child's 2nd birthday. This youngest cohort is therefore eligible for all the three tracks designed in the general setting (if, simultaneously, pre-birth employment and income conditions are met, of course). This transitional regime is summed up in the following table.

Table 2.2 The 2008 Reform design, transitional

Reform design: transitional setting			
Child's age at 1/1/2008	Track eligibility		
	4-year	3-year	2-year
Older than 36 months	✓ Treatment: monthly benefit cut in half immediately		
21 to 36 months	✓ Treatment: monthly benefit cut in half at month 36 instead of month 21 (postponement)		
5 to 21 months	✓	✓	
Younger than 5 months	✓	✓	✓

The standard design of the reform, applied to women whose youngest child is born after January 2008, produces labour market outcomes which are only observable from 2010 onwards for the shortest track, from 2011 onwards for the medium track, and from 2012 onwards for the longest track. The progressive application to all current recipients at the same time hinders simple identification strategies (no clear control cohort precedes mothers who give birth under the new regime), but also offers opportunities to observe more immediate effects of the reform on mothers who are treated under the transitional regime, as we will see in the following section.

3. Data

Here, we use the same dataset as in the previous chapter: the Czech Labour Force Survey (LFS). It is gathered quarterly by the Czech Statistical Office, each quarter containing approximately 70,000 individuals, and it compiles in-depth information about the socio-economic profile of each member of a household. The dataset is representative of the Czech population, and as a rotating panel, it surveys each household for 5 consecutive quarters. As mentioned previously, the data provide a large spectrum of information on one's status in the labour market in the current quarter. The data is generated for employment analysis, not social security or work-family balance. With this focus on employment, I have precise information on the timing of return-to-work, and therefore employment status is my main outcome variable.

However, this focus also yields some limitations. I do not observe whether an individual receives benefits, or which kind of benefits. In the same way, the coding between maternity leave, parental leave and homemaking is unreliable. Along with benefits, wages are also missing in the data, therefore I have no information on one's income and rely instead, as the closest proxy, on parental educational levels.

In the baseline sample, I use 4 quarters (one year) before the reform and 4 quarters after the reform to capture the effects on the first eligible cohort. In order to isolate the eligible population, I proceed here in a way similar to the approach in the first chapter. First, I identify mothers in households with young children, and I keep a sample aged between 20 and 39 (compared to the previous reform's evaluation, the mean age at first birth increased by 4 years, which is why I raise the lower bound). Then I isolate mothers on both sides of the reform eligibility cut-off, by considering the age of their youngest child. To do so, I need precise information on the moment when the child turned 3. This age is a crucial threshold in parental benefits entitlement, as it marks the end of the job-protected leave as well as the end of cash transfers for mothers who chose the three-year track. According to the child's date of birth, I can identify whether this 3rd birthday threshold occurred in the former PL regime (hence only 4 years of benefits available, with the option of returning to employment and giving up on the 4th year of cash transfer), or in the new PL regime (with the possibility of shorter better paid tracks, allowing return to employment at no cost).

However, the date of birth is not given in the data, and I therefore must exploit its panel structure. The closest time interval around a child's birthday is given when a child transitions from age 2 to age 3 between two consecutive quarters. I identify the quarter in which the child becomes aged 3 compared to the previous record where he is aged 2, and keep only mothers for whom we observe these two successive records in the data. This sample construction is quite restrictive and drops many individuals, yet allows me to unambiguously identify the eligible from the non-eligible, as well as to pin down their exact advancement in the PL scheme and bring to light their work-family choices after these thresholds. Despite the restrictions, the large size of the dataset allows me to constitute a sample of approximately 1200 mothers, representative of 150 000 individuals on a national scale. Tables D1 to D3 in Appendix represent the summary statistics of the sample as well as broader contextual statistics of Czech women around the reform dates.

4. Empirical strategy

I focus on employment levels as indicators of having or not exited the parental benefit scheme. Indeed, receiving the benefits is conditioned on the mother's personal care of the child: kindergarten is only allowed to a very limited extent (five days per month). If, from 2004 onwards, there is *de jure* no limit on income and worked hours while on benefits, employment is *de facto* incompatible with benefits through the fact that employment is almost exclusively full-time. Full time working hours are incompatible with the limited authorised public childcare hours, and childcare facilities systematically give priority to full time children for organizational reasons, in the context of shortage of available places. Therefore, the employment rate is used as a primary outcome variable for estimating the length of PL and its change after the 2008 treatment. The method used is the difference-in-differences estimation, comparing the evolution of the employment rate within the eligible cohort before and after the intervention date with that of a different, non-eligible cohort. This identification strategy relies on a comparison of two cohorts in the same population of mothers with the exception that one cohort was exposed to the reform while the other was not³⁵. This approach is inspired by studies on Germany and Austria (Schönberg and Ludsteck, 2014; Lalive and Zweimüller, 2009). I estimate a linear probability model, corrected for heteroscedasticity, and the estimated equation can be written as:

$$y_i = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 Treat_i + \alpha_2 After_i + \alpha_3 Treat_i * After_i + \alpha_4 X' + u_i$$

Where y_i is the outcome variable of the individual i , i.e. to be employed or not (alternatively, to be active or not), $Treat$ is the dummy for the cohort before and after the reform date (eligible cohort). It is equal to 1 if mother i belongs to the treated cohort and it accounts for average permanent differences between treated and control. $After$ is the before/after time dummy, it is equal to 1 if mother i is observed "after" the programme, and it accounts for the time trend common to control and treatment groups. Finally, α_3 , preceding the interaction term

³⁵ The control cohort was not exposed to the reform, or to any other exogenous shock that might have affected the outcome variable, such as another legislative change, a sudden change in childcare supply, or other politico-economic factors.

*Treat*After*, is our parameter of interest. The covariates include individual characteristics such as age, education, marital status and number of children.

The choice of the main treated group (and, as importantly, of the main control group) stems from the peculiar incremental design of the treatment. As described above in the section 2.2, the reform introduced a set of PL tracks for future recipients, as well as an adapted differentiated treatment for all current recipients. The very first cohort to be exposed to the critical choice between 3 and 4 years is to be found among the latter, i.e. among mothers who are already on PL by January 1st 2008. Namely, it concerns the cohort of mothers whose youngest child is younger than 21 months at that date (otherwise no option would be available, only an ensuing reduction of the monthly benefit), and older than 5 months. Focusing on this specific cohort guarantees unambiguous eligibility to the programme. Let us recall that the child's age on 01/01/2008 is the decisive criteria for their identification in the data, yet it is *not* on 01/01/2008 that the outcome is observed. Indeed, the choice between 3 and 4 years of PL becomes effective and observable in the data after the "crossroad", i.e. once the child turns 3. At this precise moment, the job-protected PL is over, and the mother either just exhausted the 3-year benefits, or will remain inactive while on the last year of the 4-year benefits. The child's 3rd birthday is therefore the moment where we effectively observe the employment status of the treated group. Given the cohort's characteristics (months 5 to 21 on 1/1/2008), the 3rd birthday occurs in 2009/2010, more specifically in the two last quarters of 2009 and the two first quarters of 2010. Choosing the first genuinely treated cohort also guarantees that the identifying assumptions of a quasi-experiment be respected: neither fertility nor pre-birth behaviours can be adapted in anticipation of the eligibility criteria, as the youngest child was born before the reform was implemented.

As to the control group, the reform's design is such that the outcome of this treated cohort cannot be directly compared to the adjacent observations in discontinuity approaches, since slightly younger and older cohorts only receive a different kind of treatment instead of not being treated. Consequently, for this cohort effect analysis, a proper control group (i.e. which has not been subject to any treatment relative to the 2008 reform) is to be found among mothers with a similar advancement in PL entitlement (youngest child's 3rd birthday), but at a different point in time. Therefore, I consider mothers who exited both parental leave and parental benefits in 2007 (i.e. before the reform implementation, meaning that they are strictly unaffected by the reform), which means that their youngest child turned 3 in 2006. It is worth noting that as this cohort's children turned 3 in 2006: their labour market outcomes at that time

not only avoid the 2008 reform effect, but also a possible effect of the 2007 reform which temporarily raised the benefit amount.

However, this comparison can only be a first step towards the impact evaluation. Indeed, if it does compare the treated to the non-treated, it might also comprise other factors such as a general trend, business cycle effect or other maturation bias. That is why I proceed to a second approach, where the focus lies entirely on the reform date. I consider the last cohort of non-treated and the first cohort of treated among the eligible population, and compare the evolution to a non-eligible population over the same period of time. This makes the approach a more standard difference-in-differences setting. I consider, on the one side, the same population in terms of entitlement advancement, shortly before and after the reform implementation. Then, I similarly point out a population that was not subjected to any treatment, and compare their respective evolution in employment rates over the same period 2008-2010. Therefore, if there is a trend induced by the low business cycle, the control group will capture it. To this respect, two control groups are relevant. The first group comprises mothers of slightly older children, which allows us to remain focused on maternal labour market outcomes and to control for idiosyncrasies imputable to mothers of pre-school children (similar concerns, inadequate childcare supply, etc.). The second group extends the analysis to all women without pre-school children, under a looser hypothesis that women in general are likely to face comparable situations in the labour market. The following table 2.3 presents the summary of all the identification strategies used in this study.

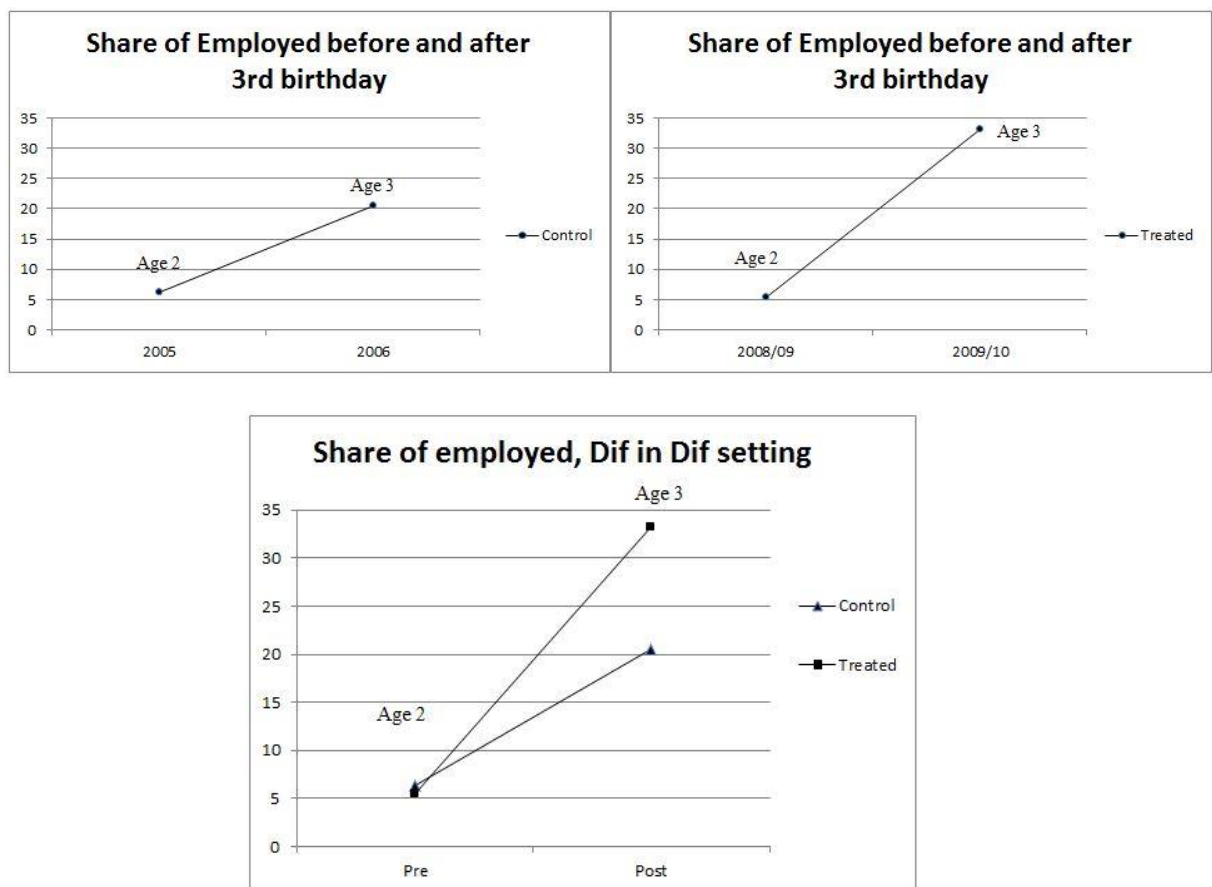
Table 2.3 Summary table of identification strategies

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Before/After comparison				Age 3	Age 3		
Before/After, one year after treatment					Age 4	Age 4	
Dif-in-Dif, Cohort effect	Age 2	Age 3		Age 2	Age 3		
PLACEBO: Dif-in-Dif, Cohort effect	Age 2	Age 3	Age 2	Age 3			
Dif-in-Dif, Around the reform date. Control: Youngest child aged 5				Age 3 Age 5	Age 3 Age 5		
PLACEBO: Dif-in-Dif, Around the reform date. Control: Youngest child aged 5				Age 3 Age 5	Age 3 Age 5		
Dif-in-Dif, Follow-up effect. Control: Youngest child aged 5					Age 4 Age 5	Age 4 Age 5	
Dif-in-Dif, Around the reform date. Control: No pre-school child				Age 3 No child 0-5	Age 3 No child 0-5		
PLACEBO: Dif-in-Dif, Around the reform date. Control: No pre-school child				Age 3 No child 0-5	Age 3 No child 0-5		
Dif-in-Dif, Follow-up effect. Control: No pre-school child					Age 4 No child 0-5	Age 4 No child 0-5	
Treatment							

5. Results

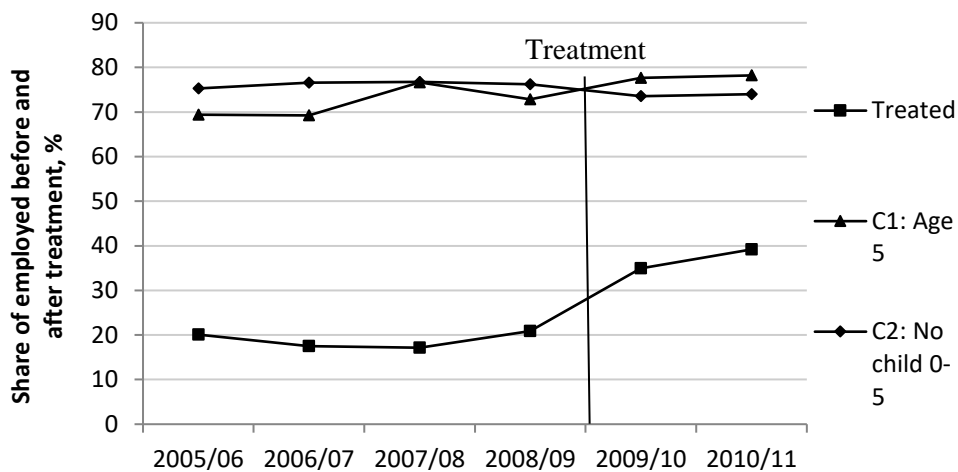
In the first approach, the baseline treated group is composed of mothers who ended their three-year PL entitlement shortly after the reform implementation. The outcome variable (employment level) is observed before and after the child's 3rd birthday, knowing that the birthday occurs in the new PL regime and is therefore the outcome "after treatment". We compare the evolution in the employment rate before and after the end of PL to that of a control group. The control group is composed of mothers with the same individual characteristics, but around a date where no reform occurred. Therefore, the return-to-work rate of the control cohort is used as a counterfactual: it is assumed to be the return-to-work pattern that we would have observed for the treated population had no reform occurred. The strategy can be summed up graphically in the following way:

Figures 2.2 The cohort effect approach



In this cohort effect analysis, the common trend assumption is verified almost mechanically, as mothers with a 2-year old are not employed in more than 6% of the cases, and the employment rate quickly converges to zero for children younger than 2 - whether it be before or shortly after the reform. As to the 2nd approach, i.e. the more traditional difference-in-differences setting, the following figure 2.3 represents descriptively the employment rates of the treated and the control, before and after the reform. In the years preceding the reform, mothers right after the end of the 3-year PL entitlement work in quite constant proportions, 17 to 20 percent. Employment rates of the control groups are considerably higher, but do not record any marked pre-reform trade either.

Figure 2.3 The standard dif-in-dif approach



After these descriptive representations, the results of the actual estimations are reported in the following tables 2.3 to 2.7. The table 2.3 represents the results of the 1st approach, on employment and activity levels for the entire sample, then on two sub-samples of higher and lower educated mothers.

Table 2.4 Impact of the 2008 reform on post-PL employment and participation

	(1) To be employed	(2) To be active	(3) To be active High Educated	(4) To be active Low Educated
After	0.129*** (0.0272)	0.155*** (0.0321)	0.212*** (0.0478)	0.0740* (0.0395)
Treat (cohort)	-0.0311 (0.0206)	-0.0474* (0.0257)	-0.0630* (0.0372)	0.00143 (0.0332)
Treat*After	0.144*** (0.0404)	0.223*** (0.0456)	0.206*** (0.0633)	0.209*** (0.0655)
Education				
Graduated HS		<i>Reference value</i>		
None or Element.	-0.0662* (0.0341)	-0.111*** (0.0388)		
Didn't graduate HS	-0.0728*** (0.0226)	-0.0984*** (0.0259)		
Superior Educ	0.0793** (0.0335)	0.0735** (0.0359)		
Constant	0.0556* (0.0328)	0.120*** (0.0378)	0.121** (0.0530)	0.0545 (0.0399)
Observations	1,217	1,217	741	476

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

“After” is the before/after time dummy, and it is equal to 1 if a mother is observed “after” the child turns three. It accounts for the time trend common to control and treatment groups. It is large and significant, given that mothers are more frequently active when the child is older compared to when he’s younger. “Treat” it is the treatment dummy, and it is equal to 1 if a mother belongs to the treated cohort. It is predictably mostly close to zero and non-significant, as we compare mothers with extremely similar individual characteristics. Our parameter of interest is the interaction between the time dummy and the treatment dummy: it gives us the increase, in percentage points, in the share of active mothers that is to be attributed to the reform. The positive effect is large and significant: the treatment increased the probability of being employed/active by the child’s third birthday by 14.4/22.3 pp. Therefore, a large proportion of mothers respond to the incentive to shorten the inactivity duration. This result is expected, as the reform is designed as a financial sanction for mothers who take the 4th year of benefits (by cutting the benefit amount by half), given that already before this reform, the 4th year option comes at the cost of losing the three-year job protection.

However, the relatively large time difference between the control and the treated makes the *ceteris paribus* clause more difficult to argue. Before addressing the issue of maturation bias (a possible increase in maternal employment rates independently of the reform) and moving on to the 2nd approach, one variable stands out in this estimation and is important to interpret: educational attainment. As a covariate, it indicates unambiguously that levels of activity at the end of PL are heterogeneous across different groups of mothers. However, if I split the sample in two sub-samples and estimate the reform impact, the results show that both low-skilled and high-skilled respond strongly to the reform and increase their participation after treatment. The effect is even slightly higher for the less educated, although we would expect it to be the opposite, be it only via the eligibility channel of previous employment. Mothers who are entitled to the insurance-based part of the scheme among the less educated are seemingly driving the effect. On the other hand, the higher educated half of the sample is not particularly more sensitive to the reform than the others, and it is also confirmed for mothers with superior education. These mothers could have been expected to value faster return-to-work more, yet a part of them still opts for the longest four-year track (the activity rate right after the end of PL entitlements does increase, but still does not exceed 40%). This confirms the tendency of Czech mothers to value time at home and childcare across educational levels regardless of human capital and financial incentives (Mullerova, 2014), an important finding which will be further explored in the 3rd chapter. When maternal education is replaced by the spouse's education, the results are fairly similar, probably due to the high positive correlation between the spouses' educational levels (a coefficient of 0.54). Although spouse's education does not come out significant as a covariate, the sub-sample analysis confirms that mothers in couple with higher and lower-educated partners experience a comparable effect of the reform on their activity levels: an increase of 28,8 and 26.6 percentage points respectively, both significant at a 1% level (for detailed results, see table E in Appendix).

It should also be noted that the number of children, included as covariate in the regressions, is not significant³⁶ and does not change the scope of the effect. In a sub-sample analysis, the effect seems to be lower as the number of children goes up, suggesting that the presence of other children might increase preference for home production and/or increase the difficulty to reconcile childrearing and employment, given that the labour market still provides in a large majority full-time contracts. However, these results might be affected by a strong restriction which consists in focusing only on mothers whose *youngest* child is at stake.

³⁶ Which is why they are not included in the regression tables presented here.

Therefore, when this child is 3 years old, I exclude mothers who exited their previous PL and entered PL for another child. This selection is necessary, as another birth would be a confounding factor behind maternal inactivity. However, relaxing this restriction would add 18.5% to the baseline sample of treated, and as much as 44.8% of mothers to the sample of the persistent effect analysis, which is likely to affect the sample's characteristics. To address this issue, I describe the differences in the descriptive statistics in Appendix (Table F). The main difference is that mothers sorted out by the restriction are slightly younger, and obviously their employment probability is significantly lower: they have an extra child aged 0 to 3 that our treated groups do not have. Given that I seek to estimate the effect of the reform on returns to work, allowing for mothers with younger children in the sample would most likely, depending on their respective proportion among the treated and the control, lower the scope of the effect. For a pure demographical fertility analysis of this reform, see Stastna et al. (2016), who show that the introduction of shorter leaves led to a durable stabilisation of the second-child birth interval, while it had been in a constant increase up until then.

Finally, in order to control for a possible maturation bias and to get as close as possible to the assessment of a genuine impact of the reform on maternal employment, I combine this first cohort analysis approach with a complementary approach, which re-centers fully on the period of interest (2008-2010). In this second approach, the baseline eligible sample is composed of mothers who ended their three-year PL entitlement shortly before and shortly after the reform implementation. The former do not receive treatment, while the latter do. We observe the outcome variable "share of employed" at the moment when the treatment/absence of treatment become effective, i.e. once the youngest child turned 3 years old. At that moment precisely, the non-treated mothers exhaust job-protected parental leave and can stay one extra year on benefits. The treated mothers, on the other hand, have two new alternatives. Either they are now out of benefits if they had previously chosen to keep the former benefit monthly amount, or they stay on benefits for the extra year but the amount is cut in half. We observe the difference in employment rate between these two consecutive cohorts, and compare it to the one of a control group. Two relevant control groups were identified (cf. section empirical strategy): mothers with older children and women without children.

Table 2.5 Impact of the 2008 reform on post-PL participation, 2nd approach

VARIABLES	C : Child aged 5		C : No child 0-5	
	(1) To be employed	(2) To be active	(3) To be employed	(4) To be active
After	-0.0292 (0.0388)	-0.0149 (0.0371)	-0.0256*** (0.00321)	-0.00520* (0.00277)
Treat	-0.342*** (0.0355)	-0.396*** (0.0361)	-0.639*** (0.0229)	-0.630*** (0.0256)
After*Treat	0.157*** (0.0523)	0.206*** (0.0535)	0.148*** (0.0357)	0.191*** (0.0390)
Education				
Graduated HS		<i>Reference value</i>		
None or Elem	-0.0893* (0.0498)	0.0278 (0.0522)	-0.260*** (0.00867)	-0.104*** (0.00771)
Didn't graduate HS	-0.0158 (0.0303)	-0.0219 (0.0312)	0.0224*** (0.00381)	0.0606*** (0.00299)
Superior Educ	0.0572 (0.0408)	0.0188 (0.0406)	0.0439*** (0.00439)	0.0373*** (0.00386)
Constant	0.524*** (0.0480)	0.675*** (0.0482)	0.817*** (0.00394)	0.875*** (0.00328)
Observations	1,238	1,238	55,339	55,339
R-squared	0.121	0.130	0.259	0.281

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

When we compare the evolution in employment rates of treated mothers to the one of mothers whose youngest child is 5 years old (and therefore out of the PL and unconcerned by the reform), the increase imputable to the reform is 15.7 pp. The second control group, i.e. mothers with no pre-school children, gives a similar result: 14.8 pp. As in the first approach, the effect on activity rates is higher than on employment rates, given that activity also comprises unemployment. However, when it comes to the results interpretation, I rely more heavily on employment. Compared to the vague definition of activity (the data show signs of confusion between the status of homemaker, unemployed and inactive), being employed or not is a strictly unambiguous question.

Last but not least, the impact persistency is examined. We observed the return to work patterns between the end of the job-protected leave and the end of the benefit entitlement, yet it would be interesting to see, for the same cohort of mothers, what their labour market situation would be one year later. Once the child turns four, the job protection has been exhausted for

one year, and even the four-year track of benefits has been exhausted shortly. The reform's objective being higher maternal employment rates, it is important to study their labour market attachment beyond the PL scheme. Does the earlier return to work allow mothers to remain durably in the labour market? It appears to be the case.

Table 2.6 Impact of the 2008 reform on post-PL participation, one year after treatment

VARIABLES	C : Child aged 5		C : No child 0-5	
	(1) To be employed	(2) To be active	(3) To be employed	(4) To be active
After	0.0129 (0.0408)	0.00608 (0.0251)	0.00659** (0.00328)	-0.00196 (0.00282)
Treat	-0.266*** (0.0427)	-0.207*** (0.0337)	-0.317*** (0.0305)	-0.185*** (0.0286)
After*Treat	0.130** (0.0592)	0.144*** (0.0441)	0.147*** (0.0430)	0.154*** (0.0364)
Education				
Graduated HS		<i>Reference value</i>		
None or Elem	-0.309*** (0.0608)	-0.100* (0.0542)	-0.268*** (0.00903)	-0.103*** (0.00813)
Didn't graduate HS	-0.0895** (0.0365)	-0.0132 (0.0271)	0.00886** (0.00400)	0.0617*** (0.00308)
Superior Educ	0.170*** (0.0376)	0.0855*** (0.0272)	0.0370*** (0.00431)	0.0343*** (0.00378)
Constant	0.743*** (0.0579)	0.926*** (0.0394)	0.802*** (0.00407)	0.876*** (0.00332)
Observations	853	853	53,577	53,577
R-squared	0.171	0.098	0.260	0.283

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

The positive effect of the reform on the maternal employment rate appears as strong one year after treatment as prior, i.e. after the end of PL entitlement. This result suggests that the first treated cohort not only exits into employment in larger proportion than previous cohorts, but then also stays in employment in larger proportion, and the non-treated do not catch up this trend in the medium term. This could be explained by the business cycle: mothers who stayed out of employment beyond the job protection might experience difficulties returning to the labour market in the context of crisis and higher unemployment rates. Further

estimations show that the gap in employment rates between treated and control loses statistical significance by the age of 5 and 6. Childcare availabilities and primary school entry most likely stand behind this result.

Finally, in order to make sure that the results described above are not biased by any kind of general trend in maternal employments over the years 2000, independent of the reform and uncaptured by the control groups, I perform a robustness check. It consists in applying the same regressions to the same populations, but shifted to a period when no shock occurred: namely one year before the reform. These placebo regressions' results are close to zero and non-significant, and are reported in the following tables 2.6 and 2.7.

Table 2.7 Placebo regression, 1st approach

VARIABLES	(1) To be employed	(2) To be active	(3) To be active High educ	(4) To be active Low educ
After	0.133*** (0.0273)	0.157*** (0.0321)	0.219*** (0.0476)	0.0806** (0.0392)
Treat	-0.0187 (0.0194)	-0.0204 (0.0252)	-0.0400 (0.0367)	0.0246 (0.0329)
After*Treat	0.00763 NS (0.0369)	0.0131 NS (0.0431)	-0.0549 NS (0.0609)	0.0934 NS (0.0582)
Education				
Graduated HS		<i>Reference value</i>		
None or Element	-0.0452 (0.0302)	-0.0800** (0.0367)		
Didn't graduate HS	-0.0365* (0.0201)	-0.0486** (0.0239)		
Superior Educ	0.100*** (0.0342)	0.0950** (0.0378)		
Constant	0.0340 (0.0314)	0.0905** (0.0368)	0.135** (0.0528)	-0.00455 (0.0365)
Observations	1,309	1,309	756	553
R-squared	0.073	0.070	0.070	0.067

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 2.8 Placebo regression, 2nd approach

VARIABLES	C : Child aged 5		C : No child 0-5	
	(1) To be employed	(2) To be active	(3) To be employed	(4) To be active
After	-0.0407 (0.0405)	-0.00203 (0.0305)	-0.00415 (0.00310)	0.00159 (0.00270)
Treat	-0.593*** (0.0336)	-0.651*** (0.0309)	-0.661*** (0.0216)	-0.669*** (0.0237)
After*Treat	0.0622 NS (0.0503)	0.0409 NS (0.0453)	0.0379 NS (0.0314)	0.0480 NS (0.0348)
Education				
Graduated HS		<i>Reference value</i>		
None or Elem	-0.169*** (0.0470)	-0.0865* (0.0460)	-0.255*** (0.00813)	-0.115*** (0.00722)
Didn't graduate HS	-0.0781*** (0.0269)	-0.0609** (0.0259)	0.0242*** (0.00360)	0.0557*** (0.00290)
Superior Educ	0.113*** (0.0425)	0.0836** (0.0417)	0.0428*** (0.00436)	0.0387*** (0.00387)
Constant	0.759*** (0.0440)	0.886*** (0.0397)	0.827*** (0.00370)	0.875*** (0.00313)
Observations	1,118	1,118	58,356	58,356
R-squared	0.345	0.394	0.243	0.271

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

6. Concluding remarks

In the post-transitional Czech Republic, two major reforms of parental leave have been implemented, both in a low phase of the business cycle. The first, in 1995, substantially increased the universal parental benefits duration by one year. The priority was then to appease pressures on the emerging labour market, coupled with a significant “re-familising” policy trend. In 2008, the context is completely different on both the political and societal level. The multi-speed reform introduced three tracks with different payment durations, yet with the same total amount distributed per mother. In order to incentivise shorter leave with higher monthly cash transfer, the three-year track allowed mothers to keep the same monthly amount as in the pre-reform period, and mothers willing to keep the four-year duration had to accept the benefit being cut in half in the process. It aimed at reversing the trend induced by the previous reform and encouraging faster post-PL returns to work. Therefore, it re-prioritised the issue of maternal

labour supply for Czech policy-makers and conformed to the European Commission recommendations. Its positive impact on maternal employment is strong and significant, and ranges between 14 and 22 pp.

However, given the reform setting as a clear sanction for previously predominant four-year leaves, the question turns to the reasons for which the scope of the effect had not been even larger, especially for mothers with high opportunity costs of child caring. First, we can argue that the extent of the changes in mothers' work-family balance strategies is likely to be limited by the persistent lack of available childcare for children under the compulsory school age. Thévenon (2013) puts forward the conclusion that on the international level, the childcare supply plays a decisive role among institutional factors of mothers' employment. In the logic of institutional complementarity, we could therefore expect that shorter leave would prove to be an insufficient measure to increase maternal employment if carried out while unaccompanied by a larger network of child care facilities, especially for children under three. Public childcare supply has recently re-entered the Czech social policy agenda - with large support of the European Social Funds - and the new contours of the work-life balance institutional framework remain to be described and assessed. Beyond childcare provisions, however, we can also interrogate the cultural setting of gender-based division of tasks. As demonstrated in Mullerova (2014), the previous major parental benefit reform from 1995 also evidences a strong re-familising effect and a low stratification by education. This relative homogeneity of responses across Czech mothers suggests that further research should examine and seek to explain Czechs' preferences for long leaves throughout the systemic transition and EU accession.

Chapter 3

Workers or mothers? Czech welfare and gender role preferences in transition

1. Introduction

Difficulties in balancing work and family in European households have received increasing political and academic attention over the past decades. The European Commission recommends increasing support to pre-school childcare as a tool to increase female participation rates. Maternal employment in the Czech Republic has been decreasing in such proportions (contrasting with relatively high full-time employment rates of women outside reproductive age), that the employment gap between women with and without pre-school children ranges as the highest among all the OECD countries³⁷ (OECD, 2011). This is due to one of the longest paid parental leaves in the world: four years per child, accessible universally to all Czech parents. Despite the parental benefits outlasting the job-protected leave and being paid a low flat rate equivalent of 20% of the average wage, 34.7%³⁸ of mothers were still inactive after 3 years of leave in 2007.

This family policy setting and its outcomes ask for further investigation. What explains this preference for very long leaves? A lot has been going on in the background of Czech households. Among the most prominent contextual changes which accompanied the redefinition of work-family balance, we can cite the transition to democratic policy and market economy initiated in 1989, a competitive labour market, changes in standards of living, exposure to Western Europe resulting in the 2004 European accession. How have Czech households and policy makers reacted to these changes? Beyond economic motives, family-related decisions seem particularly prone to being influenced by alternative arguments, due to their inherent embeddedness in social structures. Forming a couple, forming a family, childbearing, caring, working, breadwinning; these are social identities as much as they are activities with immediate economic implications. If we assume that these normative features are likely to influence households' behaviours and economic outcomes, they need to be included in our understanding of the recent evolutions in family policies and practices. Previous research suggests that Czech households' response to parental leave reforms deviated from sole financial incentives (Mullerova, 2014; Mullerova, 2016) and additional explanations point towards the underlying family and gender attitudes. The purpose of this paper is therefore to

³⁷ See the comparative chart in Introduction (Figure 2)

³⁸ Own calculations using the Labour Force Survey 2007, last year before the PL was restructured.

propose a descriptive essay on these attitudes and their evolution in the post-transitional society, and to discuss their explanatory power.

Drawing on sociological traditions, economists have long recognised the importance of social identities (Akerlof and Kranton, 2000), transmitted from generation to generation within given cultures, in explaining micro- and macro-level economic behaviours. Guiso, Sapienza and Zingales (2006) define culture as “those customary beliefs and values that ethnic, religious, and social groups transmit fairly unchanged from generation to generation” (p. 23). Alesina and Giuliano (2015) note in their survey that although beliefs (priors) and values (preferences) are distinct concepts, economic literature mostly deals with them together under the generic term of culture. This cultural identity, or mentality (Senik, 2014) enriches economic models and usually relies on the assumption that it is a “given” throughout one’s lifetime (Becker, 1996). However, authors argue that beliefs and values can be progressively updated through experience and/or moved from one equilibrium to another following temporary shocks, and that is also the starting point of many studies applied to communist and post-communist countries.

Given the kind of cultural norms related to maternal choices between employment and childcare leave, I will focus here on the literature which deals more specifically with gender issues and attitudes. Fernandez (2007), in her cross-country analysis of attitudes towards women and work in the second half of the 20th century, excludes Czechoslovakia and other communist countries precisely because of their “profound transformations in the economies, institutions and cultures” (p. 8). The transformations occasioned by the 1989 transition to democracy and market economies in the former eastern bloc are mostly studied with respect to the case of reunited Germany, due to its quasi-experimental setting³⁹. Neckert and Voskort (2014) study family values among other, and conclude that not only are they differentiated between West and East, but they are also transmitted as significantly different to the first post-transitional generation. To that respect, they confirm Olivetti’s et al. (2013) finding that a woman’s work decisions are positively affected by her mother’s work decisions, and that the intergenerational channel is very strong. Bauernschusters and Rainer (2012), as well as Campa and Serafinelli (2015), show that women in Eastern Germany have more positive attitudes towards work than in Western Germany. Lippmann et al. (2016) also use the German divide to study gendered attitudes, in particular with respect to the intra-household division of tasks as

³⁹ For a more general approach to culture, see Alesina and Fuchs-Schündeln (2007) for their work on welfare preference differences between East and West Germany.

related to the differences in contribution to household income. They use the sociological concept of “doing gender”, i.e. displaying socially accepted female and male roles in order to avoid deviations from conformity, which are costly in terms of social identity. The authors reverse the inequality inertia embedded in this concept, and focus instead on a case of “undoing gender”, and show that East Germany developed a culture in which still today, women are less inclined to neutralise their higher share of household income by increased home production. Beyond the borders of Germany, Campa and Serafinelli conclude that in general Eastern European countries developed as less traditional in terms of gender equality. While this paper challenges this result - with respect to intra-household and family tasks - and its persistence in the post-transitional Czech Republic, this brings us to the last body of literature on family policy regimes and their conceptions of the gender-based division of market and home production.

Inspired by the seminal work by Esping-Andersen (1990), further typologies have included gendered social roles (Lewis 1992). Post-communist Czechoslovakia joined the typologies as a conundrum of high full-time female participation, strongly “refamilising” policies with respect to childrearing resulting in a drastic decline in public childcare for children aged 0 to 3 and very long maternal inactivity spans (Haskova and Uhde, 2009; Saxonberg and Sirovatka, 2009; Sobotka 2015). This paper draws on this literature on refamilising trend in Czech work-family reconciliation policies and practices. It uses declared individual attitudes in order to account for this observed trend and to highlight gendered attitudes on the micro level, thanks to the European Values Study and the Generations and Gender Programme data.

I show that rather than welfare state preferences, the Czech preference for long leaves and active mothering correlates with attitudes with respect to female/male tasks division. Quite counter-intuitively, in the context of post-socialist public policy adjustments, household preferences for refamilisation do not stem from lower preference for welfare state institutions, but from a purely intra-household change in favour of higher task specialisation between men and women.

The paper is organised as follows: After presenting the Czech institutional context (Section 2) as well as the data and the empirical methods (Section 3), I present the results and their interpretation (Section 4), before concluding (Section 5).

2. Context

Before focusing on attitudes, it is necessary to consider the broader institutional framework. Haskova (2011) underlines the limits of a preference-based interpretation of work-family arrangements, and it is reasonable to assume that although individual preferences do account for differentiated work-family strategies, they do so within a framework of what is made possible by various institutions, such as the duration of paid job-protected parental leave and the availability of affordable and quality childcare. These institutions, unlike values and beliefs, are directly observable through documentation on family policy.

As mentioned previously, Czech family policy evolution is described as “refamilising” (Haskova and Uhde, 2009; Saxonberg and Sirovatka, 2009; Sobotka 2016), i.e. that which aims at shifting to lower public intervention and higher involvement of families in dealing with social needs. This is particularly visible in public childcare provision: After 1989, the number of nurseries decline by 95% during the first few years (Kucharova, 2009). Nurseries already suffered from a very bad reputation in the communist era (Matejcek, 1974), and the transition to market economy is an occasion to remove the remaining public support and financing. Political support to EU’s Barcelona targets on developing pre-school childcare remains to this day so weak, that the Minister of Labour and social affairs addressed them in a speech during Czech’s EU presidency⁴⁰ and stated that CEE countries would have opposed their formulation had they been EU members at the time. As early as 1989, the disappearance of childcare for children under the age of 3 was accompanied by an extension of paid job-protected parental leave until this 3-year threshold. In 1995, the parental benefit was even extended to 4 years per child – without extending the 3-year job protection – and it remained universal and conditioned only by mothers’ inactivity on the labour market and full-time personal care (no kindergarten allowed). In the 2000s, i.e. in the context of the surveys considered here, the PL scheme remained the one implemented by the 1995 reform: 4 years of parental benefits paid a flat rate 20% of the average wage, which outlast the 3 years of job-protected leave. In 2008, the multi-speed reform introduced shorter tracks (2 and 3 years), with outcomes visible from 2009 onwards. As to childcare, major changes had been accomplished by the end of the 1990s: nurseries for children under the age of 3 had virtually disappeared, and kindergartens for children aged 3 to 5 were, due to shortages, focused mainly on full-time care for 4-year olds

⁴⁰ In February 2009, Petr Necas.

and 5-year olds. In terms of the work-family arrangements model (Borck 2014), this situation fits the equilibrium with zero childcare, low fertility and low participation (i.e. low maternal participation, overall female participation being close to the European average over the period). It is only in the late 2000s, at the occasion of EU accession, that this refamilising trend is reversed and progressive adjustments in favour of maternal employment are made⁴¹. At the same time, fertility was largely considered an individual matter into which policy should not intervene, an attitude buttressed by the broader context of “ideologically induced animosity towards the institutions and policies of the welfare state” linked to the acute memory of communism (Potucek, 2001, p.102).

In practice, what is described as “refamilising” is synonymous with “regenderising”, given that with no ambiguity family tasks are attributed to women in this family policy setting: job-protected parental leave is not accessible to fathers until 2001, and take-up has not exceeded 1% since. There was no paternal leave in the Czech system in the 1990s and the 2000s, yet a bill discussing 7-day paternity leave is being considered for 2017. Therefore, the post-transitional refamilising turn promoted a specialised couple type of household, in which work-family reconciliation is reached through successive periods of activity (outside childbearing) and inactivity (from age 0 to 3 or 4 for each child). Saxonberg (2013) touches upon the explanatory limits of the familising/defamilising dichotomy, and the Czech case is particularly noteworthy in this respect. Saxonberg defines genderising policies as “policies that promote different gender roles for men and women”, while degenderising policies “promote the elimination of gender roles” (p. 8). Indeed, although the two concepts overlap, the distinction is important especially in a post-communist country, where refamilisation resonates as a shift in values with respect to the welfare state, from collective to individual solutions to social needs. However, Saxonberg’s typology suggests - and this paper will demonstrate it - that welfare is not the crucial element of the work-family values change in the post-transitional Czech Republic: Gender is. The table 3.1 sums up policy trends before and after the systemic transition as well as after the EU accession in 2004.

⁴¹ For a detailed list of family policy measures in the second part of the 20th century, see Table B in Appendix. For more information, see Haskova and Uhde (2009).

Table 3.1 Family policy trends with respect to gender roles

Family policy tools	Pre 1989	Post 1989	Post 2004
<u>Support to childcare</u>	Degendered: large network of nurseries	Gendered: Nurseries (0-2) close, only kindergartens remain	Degendered: EC recommendations, higher coverage
<u>Parental leave</u>	Gendered : Additional maternity only	Gendered: Parental leave but no incentive for fathers	Degendered: EC recommendations, paternal leave

We note that Czech family policy has until 2004 been oriented towards conservative gender-based tasks division, with the exception of the development of nurseries in the previous regime which aimed at increasing maternal employment accordingly to the communist ideology and its labour force needs. The orientation changed with the EU accession, when the Czech policy makers half-heartedly embraced the EC recommendations and started applying marginal change to parental leave and childcare policies. However, the change in political discourse and family policy measures, although it indicates a shift in the political elite's attitudes (Scharle, 2015), does not exhaust the question of gender attitudes and specialised/undifferentiated couple preferences, given that responses to parental leave reforms seem to indicate persistently and increasingly a preference for long maternal leaves. In order to highlight these preferences and in line with the important and over-looked aspect of gender conservatism in Czech family policies, I will for the remainder of this paper turn to qualitative micro-data and establish that there has indeed been a clear conservative turn in gender attitudes.

3. Data and Empirical strategy

3.1 Data

The data used are the European Values Study (EVS) 1999 and 2008 for the comparative analysis, and the Generations and Gender Programme (GGP) 2005 and 2008 for the detailed panel analysis of the Czech family values. They both contain opinions with respect to family and gender issues, although GGP also provides additional opinion questions on interactions between parents, partners and children, as well as opinions on the responsibility of the Welfare State in these matters. Combining the two datasets allows us to retrieve values from the first

transitional decade (1999) and to extend the time horizon of the observed trends, although the datasets are only comparable to a limited extent. The EVS also allows us to compare the Czech family culture to the rest of Europe and more specifically to its nearest neighbours with the most similar institutions and socio-economic situations (Slovakia, Poland and Hungary, together with the Czech Republic, are commonly called the “Visegrad four”), as GGP only covers Hungary and Poland in the first wave and none in the second wave.

The European Values Study is a large-scale longitudinal survey on social values, with four waves between 1981 and 2008 on more than 40 countries. The dataset is comparable with the widely known World Values Surveys and the integrated dataset covers 113 countries. The Czech Republic was surveyed in 1991, 2000 and 2008, but I only use 2000 and 2008 as many variables are missing in the first wave and the purpose of this dataset here is to frame and benchmark with the findings of the GGP, which only covers the late 2000s. Each wave of the EVS is composed of approximately 2000 individuals, whose characteristics are described in table G in Appendix. The variables used are opinions on market/home production specialisation in the couple, and they include the following statements: “In case jobs are scarce they should go to men”, and “Fathers are as well suited to look for children as mothers”. Surprisingly, the answers rank from *Strongly agree*, *Agree*, to *Disagree* and *Strongly Disagree*, with no neutral response option. The answers to the second question were inverted before analysis, in such a way as to respect the order from a traditional, specialised couple with genderised opinions (Yes, jobs should be left to men, and No, fathers are not as well suited for care as mothers) to an undifferentiated, liberal couple with de-genderised opinions (No, jobs should not be left to men, and Yes, fathers are as well suited for care as mothers). The inverted item is therefore equivalent to the statement “Fathers are *less suited* to look for children than mothers”. For the clarity of the interpretation, the four values are all standardised to a 0-1 range, where 0 is very genderised and 1 is very degenderised.

The GGP is a longitudinal study of 19 European countries, initiated by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe. It comprises a contextual database and 3 waves of individual data, based on a rich questionnaire on relations between men and women and across generations which is harmonised and comparable across countries (Vikat et al., 2007). Currently, two waves are available: 19 countries for the first wave, 10 countries for the second. There is no third wave in the Czech Republic⁴². In the first wave in 2005, 10 006 individuals

⁴² Only Austria, France, Hungary, the Netherlands and the Russian Federation are concerned (UNECE, 2014).

were interviewed in the Czech Republic. Due to attrition, 3151 were interviewed in 2008 and therefore the balanced panel is composed of 6302 observations. Characteristics of the sample selected by attrition do not differ significantly from the rest. They are reported in the descriptive statistics in Appendix⁴³. The age range of the panel goes from 17 (21 in the second wave) to 79 years old. 71% (73%) of the sample are parents, and 43% (44%) are mothers. As dependent variable, I build an indicator which serves to assess the evolution of attitudes about gender-based division of tasks in the household. It combines four statements: “It is bad for the couple if a woman earns more”, “Daughters should take care of their parents more than sons”, “In case of a divorce children should stay with the mother”, “In case jobs are scarce they should go to men” (the last item is also present in EVS). These are 5-level Likert items, and answers are ranked from *Strongly agree*, *Agree*, *Neither*, to *Disagree* and *Strongly disagree*. Agreement with these statements is interpreted as preference for a strong gender division, specialised couple, and conservative/traditional attitudes. Disagreement with the statements can then be described as preference for a weak gender division, undifferentiated couple, and liberal attitudes. There are other questions with a gender context in GGP, but there are left aside for several reasons. First, some of them are not present in both waves. Such is the case of the very interesting item “A pre-school child is likely to suffer if his/her mother works”. Secondly, some do not have a straightforward interpretation in terms of market versus home production specialisation. For instance, studies point on the ambiguity of the statement “Children often suffer because their father concentrates too much on work” (Buber-Ennsner and Panova, 2014). “Men make better political leaders than women” and “In a couple men should be older than women” seem to go beyond the carer-breadwinner distinction. However, when they are included in an extended indicator, the results do not change. Similarly, I build a larger indicator which zooms out of couple specialisation and includes more generally the family-oriented items that individuals express in relation to their partner and children, which comprises the GGP questions which relate to “family values strength” (Meurs and Lucifora, 2012). It includes not only the couple specialisation variables, but also more general family values such as “A marriage is a lifetime relationship and should never be ended”, or “A children needs both a mother and a father to grow up happily”.

Finally, a third indicator is built, which synthetises people’s preference for family versus society in addressing their social needs. It is called the family/welfare indicator and it includes questions on care and cash provisions for the following social needs: “Care for pre-

⁴³ See Table G for EVS and Table H for GGP.

school children”, “After-school care”, “care for elderly”, then “financial support for young living below subsistence level” and “financial support for old people living below subsistence level”. The answers are ranked from *Mainly family* to *More family than society*, *Both equally*, to *More society than family*, and *Mainly society*. The scale has also been standardised 0-1, with 0 being defined as very familised (comparable to very genderised in the gender indicator) and 1 as very defamilised (very degenderised in the gender indicator). Last but not least, I use a subjective assessment of the household’s economic situation, defined as the 6-level Likert item “The household is able to make ends meet” *With great difficulty*, *With difficulty*, *With some difficulty*, *Fairly easily*, *Easily* and *Very easily*. The scale has also been standardised to 0-1. Compared to the EVS, the panel dataset GGS presents the advantage of reporting not only family values, but also welfare preferences. With respect to the economic literature on cultural values and transitional countries, it appears helpful to investigate these preferences and their distribution. We can benchmark the results with a case study applied to France (Lucifora and Meurs, 2014), which relates welfare preferences to the strength of family ties. The data on welfare/family preferences, presented in the previous section on data, include questions on care for pre-school, after-school care, care for elderly, financial support for youth in need and financial support for elderly in need. The responses rank from *mostly family* to *mostly society* and are standardised 0 to 1. Surprisingly enough, the mean value for care provision for the three questions are almost identical between the Czech Republic and France, while for cash transfers the Czech mean value is strikingly higher, i.e. closer to preference for welfare at the expense of family.

Table 3.2 Family/Welfare preferences in 2005

	Czech Republic	France
Care for pre-school	0.25	0.27
After-school care	0.31	0.3
Care for elderly	0.41	0.39
Financial help for youth	0.74	0.62
Financial help for elderly	0.71	0.64
Obs.	10.006	9.977

Source: GGP 2005

Note: Country-level average of answers to the question “Who should provide car/cash for...”. Answers are ranked from *Mostly family* (coded 0) to *Mostly society* (coded 1).

With this battery of qualitative variables on family/welfare preferences, family ties and gender attitudes, completed with individual demographic and socio-economic characteristics, I investigate the distribution of these preferences across countries and within the Czech population, as well as their evolution over time, in order to provide possible insights on the phenomenon of persistent and very long maternal leave preference. I take into consideration the entire population and their views, as I am interested in the overall cultural atmosphere in which households take their work-family reconciliation decisions. Social control and majority attitudes are an important part of social identity, and I therefore explore gender attitudes of the overall adult sample, with further subsampling along the road. This choice also allows me to hint on heterogeneities with a higher number of observations.

3.2 Empirical strategy

In order to pin down the evolution in values with respect to work/family balance, I focus on gender attitudes and complement with family/welfare preferences and family ties in general. As said above, the concepts of genderising/degenderising attitudes (or familising/defamilising), conservative/liberal and specialised/undifferentiated couple will be used as synonyms. By doing so, I provide evidence on the specific re-genderising evolution of Czech attitudes, which is extremely rare over that period on the European continent. In order to overcome limitations inherent to comparing repeated cross-sections and to explore in more detail the underlying mechanism, I then turn to panel data. Indeed, due to the cross-sectional structure of the EVS, any evolution observed in the mean might be attributable to unobserved changes in the population. Although descriptive statistics show no significant evolution in the structure of the population that would differ from their neighbours and therefore account for the difference in patterns, there might be other unobservable variables affecting the sample's composition and therefore attitudes.

Recentering on the Czech Republic, I first use the GGP 2005 to focus on the family/welfare indicator and to show the specificity of childbearing norms, compared to other social needs, as being more family oriented and less heterogeneous along individual socio-economic characteristics. Indeed, I compare the correlation between family/welfare preferences and household wealth for different social needs, and I highlight the specificity of childcare, as an argument to claim that the gendered role of childcarer is at least as laden with

social normativity as it is with economic considerations. OLS and ordered probit estimations are used. The panel data then allow me to confirm the relevance of gender attitudes observed in cross-sectional data by using fixed-effect regressions and therefore better accounting for the evolution of gender attitudes and its determinants. I estimate the following equation:

$$\begin{aligned} GenderIndic_{it} = & \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 TimeDummy_{it} + \alpha_2 Age_{it} + \alpha_3 Wealth_{it} + \alpha_4 Educ_{it} \\ & + \alpha_5 NumberChildren_{it} + \alpha_6 MaritalStatus_{it} + \varepsilon_{it} \end{aligned}$$

The main dependent variable is the gender attitudes indicator, for which lower values indicate more genderised (traditional, conservative, specialised couple) preferences. I use the within estimator to regress the indicator's value for each individual on the time variable – the 2008 value as compared to 2005 – while controlling for time variant individual characteristics age, wealth, education, number of children and marital status. The coefficient of interest is then α_1 , associated with the year of interview. It captures the trend in gender attitudes between 2005 and 2008, purged of fixed effects and controlling for aforementioned observables. These were selected as possible structural explanations of the evolution: as the individuals in the sample get older (by 3 years), complete their education, maybe get richer, possibly get married and have children, this might drive the result. The persistence of the evolution despite these controls is then interpreted as a significant normative change across the Czech population and independent of structural effects.

After the main analysis, the sample's ageing as a possible factor of the conservative turn is addressed. As a last point in arguing that gender attitudes are the vector of post-transitional changes in work-family strategies, I show that none of previous results hold if the gender attitudes outcome is replaced by a generic family values indicator: no significant changes would have been observed had we failed to isolate the gender perspective.

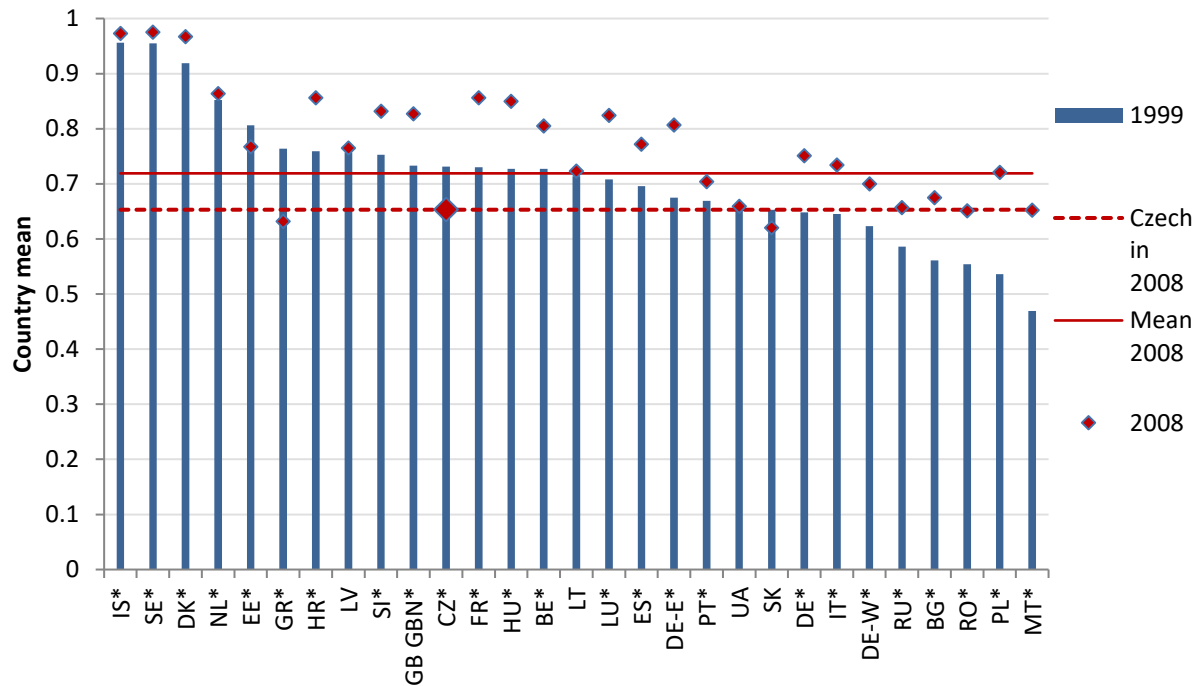
4. Results

4.1 International Comparison

The first step in understanding the pattern of Czech family values is to compare them with other countries which had and had not experienced the communist regime. With respect to gender-based specialisation, I selected two variables in EVS with a straightforward interpretation: one on the male's role, the other on the female's role. They concern the statements "When jobs are scarce, they should be left to men" and "Fathers are less suited to look for children than mothers", and as presented in the Data section, they are coded from 0 (*Agree*, i.e. traditional) to 1 (*Disagree*, i.e. liberal).

The following charts 3.1 and 3.2 compare the 29 countries which I observe in both waves of the survey, 1999 and 2008. They indicate the respective position of a country in 1999 and the evolution between 1999 and 2008, as well as the sample's mean in 2008 and the Czech mean in 2008. What we observe, first of all, is a general trend towards more liberal gender attitudes for both questions and in the absolute majority of countries. To the item "When jobs are scarce, they should be left to men", the answers rank from a traditional view (*agree*, coded 0) to a liberal view (*disagree*, coded 1). The change for the overall sample is positive and significant, +4.39 percentage points. The countries with a significant change (always positive, Greece and Czech Republic being the only exceptions with a significant negative change), are marked with an asterisk.

Figure 3.1 When jobs are scarce, they should be left to men (EVS)



Source: EVS 1999 and 2008

Note: The values rank from *Agree* (0, traditional) to *Neither* (0.5) and *Disagree* (1, liberal). Recorded on individual level, they are averaged at a country-level with app. 1500 individuals per country. For a given country, an asterisk represents the significance of the difference between 2005 and 2008, estimated by controlling for a set of basic individual characteristics (sex, age, number of children).

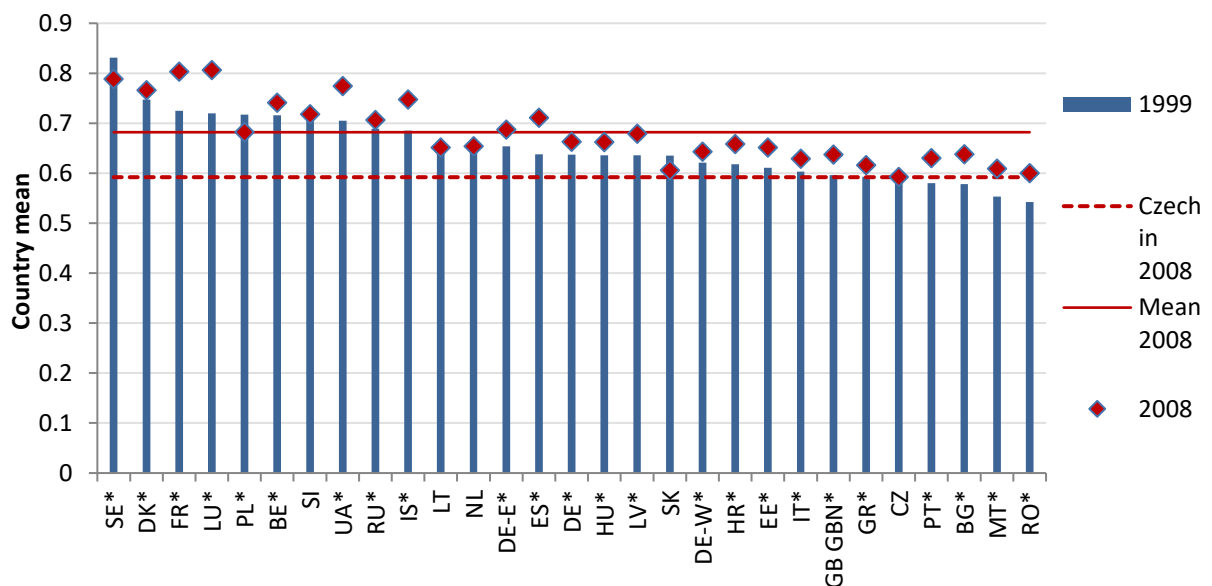
Although it ranges between Great Britain and France in 1999, Czech evolution differs drastically after that: other countries with a similar composition of gender attitudes experience a liberalising turn, while for the Czech Republic there is a notable move towards a more conservative view. Only Greece records a steeper decline, and Czech Republic and Greece are only joined by Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia and Ukraine as countries who did not become significantly more liberal over the period.

Even among the Visegrad-four countries, the Czech gender attitudes have become by far the most conservative. In Poland and Hungary, the trend is similar to the general European one - although the former is among the most traditional to begin with, while the latter is above the European average in both periods. Slovakia has the most similar pattern, yet it is to be noted that the change is substantially milder and non significant. The similarities with Slovakia are expected, as the two countries shared unified political and economic contexts until the dissolution of Czechoslovakia in 1993 and had followed similar family policy orientation after

that (in the years 2000s, same 28-week duration of maternity leave, 3 years of parental benefits in Slovakia and 4 years in the Czech Republic, and same steep decline in childcare for 0-3 year olds).

As to paternal and maternal care, the observation is similar, as shown in the figure 3.2. The overall change is positive and significant. Most of the countries get more liberal in the second period - even those with high initial values - yet the Czech Republic does not. Even more significantly, the Czech Republic ranks the lowest of all the countries in 2008.

Figure 3.2 Fathers are less suited than mothers to take care of children (EVS)



Source: EVS 1999 and 2008

Note: The values rank from *Agree* (0, traditional) to *Neither* (0.5) and *Disagree* (1, liberal). Recorded on individual level, they are averaged at a country-level with app. 1500 individuals per country. For a given country, an asterisk represents the significance of the difference between 2005 and 2008, estimated by controlling for a set of basic individual characteristics (sex, age, number of children).

While the European trend goes towards more active paternal roles, with extensions of paternity leave entitlements across the continent⁴⁴, the Czechs consider that a father is not substitutable with a mother in childrearing. This finding is fully in line with the local family

⁴⁴ See Ekberg et al. (2013) on the Swedish paternity leave, although Scandinavian countries are not the only European region endowed with paternity leave schemes.

policy orientation: When the Social Democrats' association on gender equality suggested a debate in 2013 on paternity leave, the project was castigated by the media and by the Social Democratic party itself (a Social Democrat MP calling it a “social engineering”⁴⁵ attempt); the project was abandoned until 2015.

In order to assess whether this evolution is or is not a broader post-socialist feature, let us consider the Visegrad four (Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland and Hungary). Here too, the Czech Republic stands out as the most re-gendering country. Hungary observes a liberalising turn between 1999 and 2008, and Slovakia and Poland, although they also progress towards more traditional couple attitudes, still rank higher than Czech Republic in both 1999 and 2008. Among other post-communist countries, such as the Baltic countries, Slovenia, Russia, Romania, Croatia, Bulgaria or Eastern Germany, none re-gender their child rearing attitudes.

Therefore, the gender attitudes appear to have undergone a peculiar development in the Czech Republic, and invite further investigation. In the following section, I turn to the GGS panel data, which allow me to confirm whether the conservative turn is observable even while controlling for individual fixed effects, and therefore to offer more interpretation as to its underlying mechanisms.

4.2 Czech Republic

In this analysis, I use the two GGP waves from 2005 and 2008 and I argue that they took place outside of any significant shock, most importantly before the outburst of the world economic crisis. Its impacts on the Czech economy only became perceptible in 2009: from 2.7% in 2008 the GDP growth went down to -4.8% in 2009, and the unemployment rate went from 4.4% in 2008 (actually lower than in previous years) to 6.7% in 2009 (CZSO, 2016). Therefore, the evolutions that we will observe can be, for lack of exogenous shock, interpreted as part of a larger trend in the Czech society.

Before getting into panel analysis, the descriptive comparison with France showed that the post-socialist Czech Republic does not exhibit a particularly higher preference for welfare

⁴⁵ http://zpravy.idnes.cz/navrhy-cssd-k-rodinnemu-zivotu-dm8-/domaci.aspx?c=A130511_115409_domaci_hv
<http://thinkgender.eu/blog/2013/05/29/delena-rodicovska-dovolena-a-kvoty-ruku-v-ruce-proti- Duchu-ceskych-tradic/>

in terms of care provision, while it does rely more heavily on society for the provision of financial support. This finding is to be related to the literature comparing respective preferences for welfare in the post-transitional reunited Germany (Alesina and Fuchs-Schündeln, 2007; Campa and Serafinelli, 2015). They note that the legacy of preference for welfare in Eastern Germany, plausibly due to exposure to communist ideology and an interventionist social state, remains significant and strong after the end of the regime. In the same way, we can interpret the Czech's higher expectation for public expenditure as a legacy of the former exposure to comprehensive social policy and safety nets. In their study on Russian welfare preferences after the transition, Ravallion and Lokshin (2000) highlight the relation between preference for welfare and income: Poorer individuals tend to rely more on welfare provisions, while being better off is more associated with reliance on family. Furthermore, welfare/family preference can be predicted by the expected economic situation in the future. For the provision of services, while individuals on an upward trajectory express preference for family, individuals on a downward trajectory prefer society. Our analysis confirms the significant correlation between wealth⁴⁶ and preference for family/welfare, but most interestingly, introduces a differentiation with respect to the targeted population. If the welfare provision aims at young adults or elderly, the preference for welfare is stratified by wealth. Yet if it aims at childcare, we observe no correlation whatsoever with household's economic situation. In the following table 3.3, OLS estimates are reported. Covariates on age, gender, education, number of children and marital status do not change the result (Table I in Appendix, and the scope and the significance of the different results are confirmed by ordered probit estimations (Table J in Appendix).

⁴⁶ Measured as self-assessment of "the difficulty to make ends meet".

Table 3.3 Correlation between family/welfare preference and wealth

	(1) Pre-school care	(2) After school care	(3) Elderly care	(4) Cash support youth	(5) Cash support elderly
Wealth	0.00468 NS (0.0234)	0.0115 NS (0.0220)	-0.0723*** (0.0225)	-0.0985*** (0.0208)	-0.0670*** (0.0201)
Constant	0.311*** (0.0112)	0.242*** (0.0106)	0.428*** (0.0109)	0.760*** (0.00985)	0.790*** (0.00965)
Observations	3,031	3,041	3,039	3,043	3,043
R-squared	0.000	0.000	0.004	0.008	0.004

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Source: GGS 2005

Note: Family/welfare preferences are ranked from *mainly family* (coded 0) to *mainly society* (coded 1). Wealth is a 6-level Likert item on subjective perception of financial situation, values also standardised from 0-1.

And indeed, this confirms that the study of welfare preferences is mostly relevant here in its link with childcare. A significant absence of correlation with income suggests that childcare preferences go beyond the dichotomy between preferences for state and family and their economic determinants, and tend to be distributed more homogeneously across a population and more independently of socio-economic individual characteristics. Also, it is interesting to note that these welfare preferences do not correlate with gender preferences in any significant way⁴⁷, and, mostly, that these family/welfare preferences do not evolve over the period, be it with or without additional explanatory variables. The table 3.4 reports the results of fixed effect regressions, where the dependent variable is the family/welfare preference indicator, regressed on the time change (value in 2008 compared to the one in 2005), while controlling for time variant individual characteristics:

⁴⁷ See Table K in Appendix.

Table 3.4 Evolution of family/welfare preferences over time

VARIABLES	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Family/Welfare preference			
			Men	Women
2008 vs 2005	0.00419 NS (0.00394)	0.00313 NS (0.00416)	-0.00312 NS (0.00629)	0.00763 NS (0.00561)
Constant	0.489*** (0.00279)	0.486*** (0.0182)	0.425*** (0.0248)	0.550*** (0.0272)
Covariates	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	6,197	6,197	2,898	3,299
R-squared	0.000	0.007	0.018	0.014
Number of id	3,151	3,151	1,480	1,684

Standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

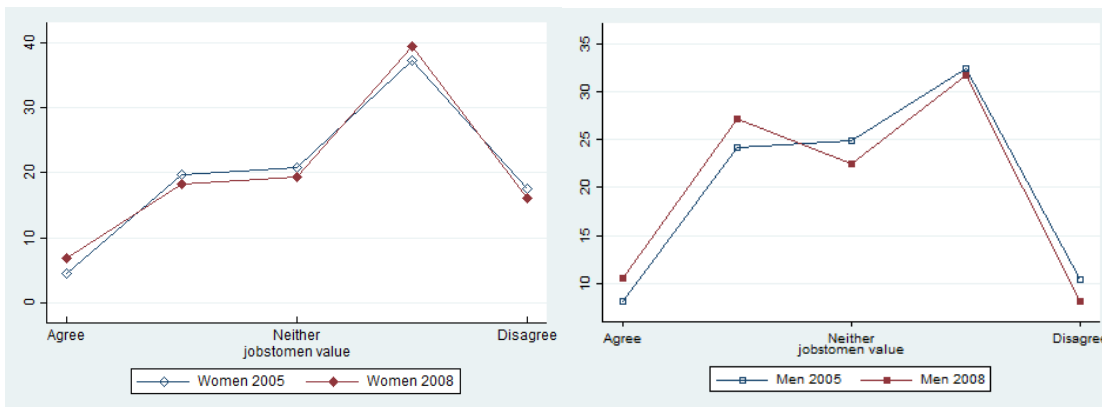
Source: GGP 2005

Note: Family/welfare preferences are ranked from *mainly family* (coded 0) to *mainly society* (coded 1). Results obtained with a within estimator, controlled for time variant individual characteristics age, wealth, education, marital status and number of children.

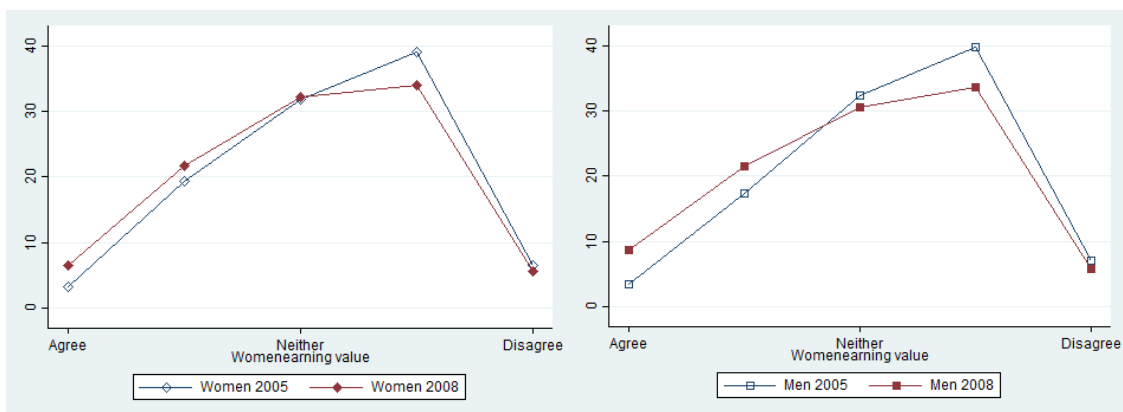
The results of the regressions reported in tables 3.3 and 3.4 are relevant for our analysis by pointing towards the specificity of the social needs related to childbearing in the sense that they do not respond predictably to economic arguments the way other social needs do (3.3), and by showing that family/welfare preferences in general are stable over our period of interest and therefore don't yield explanations on the observed changes in work-family reconciliation policies and practices. This invites us to further focus the analysis on maternal care and market/home production specialisation, through the gender attitudes indicator. The charts 3.3 below show the distribution of gender attitudes in the four items of the indicator, and their evolution between 2005 and 2008. The position of the red line (2008, full marker) above the blue line (2005, hollow marker) on the left side of the chart (conservative responses), and symmetrically under the blue line on the right side of the chart (liberal responses), represents the shift towards more gender-conservative attitudes.

Figures 3.3 The distribution of gender attitudes for men and women, in 2005 and 2008

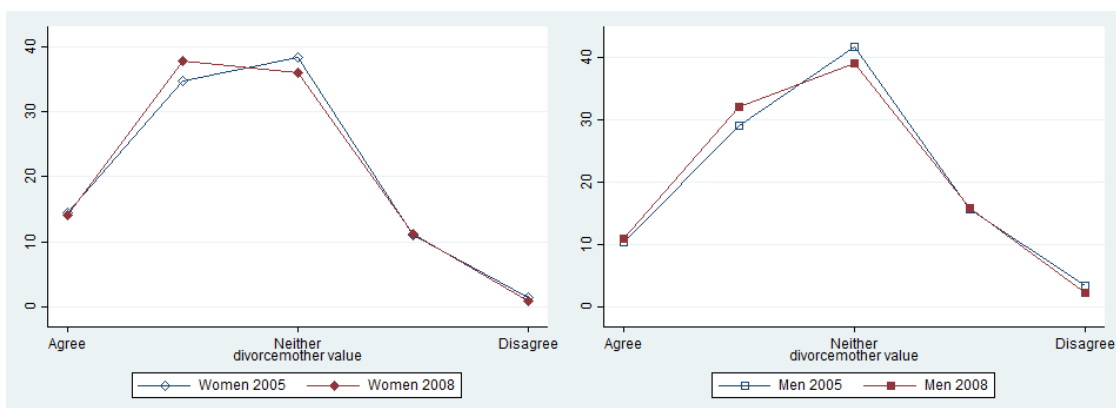
Variable 1 “When jobs are scarce, they should be left to men”



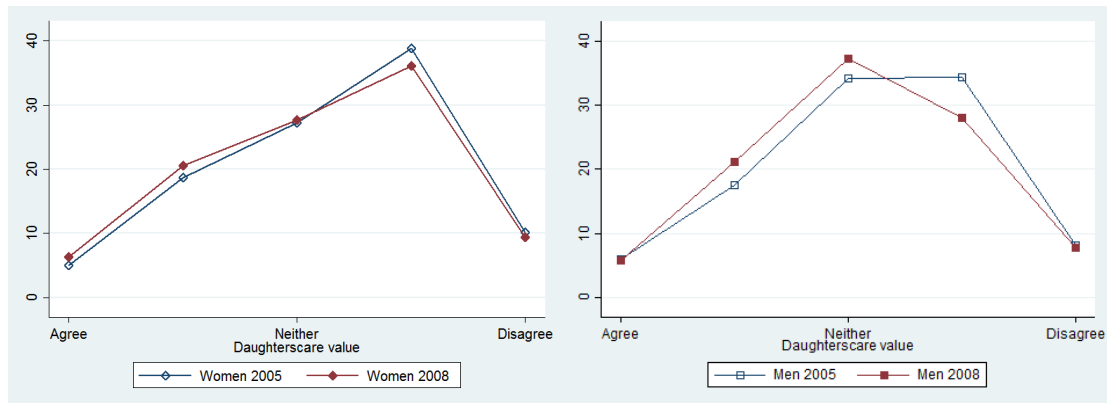
Variable 2 “It is not good if a woman earns more than the man in the couple”



Variable 3 “A child should stay with his mother in case of divorce”



Variable 4 “A daughter should take care of her parents more than a son”



Note: Lower values are associated with a preference for a traditional, specialised couple; higher values are associated with a preference for a modern, undifferentiated couple.
 Source: GGP 2005-2008

This descriptive representation hints that gender preferences, unlike welfare preferences, have evolved between 2005 and 2008. Indeed, the fixed effect regression results in the table 3.5 show that this evolution towards a more specialised (traditional) couple is significant for both women and men. The gender attitudes indicator is regressed on the time change, while controlling for time variant individual characteristics.

Table 3.5 Changing gender attitudes between 2005 and 2008, fixed effect regression

VARIABLES	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	All	Dependent variable: Gender attitude indicator		Women	Men	
2008 vs 2005	-0.0262*** (0.00357)	-0.0270*** (0.00372)	-0.0209*** (0.00479)	-0.0203*** (0.00492)	-0.0325*** (0.00534)	-0.0359*** (0.00567)
Well-off		-0.0307*** (0.00857)		-0.0440*** (0.0118)		-0.0166 (0.0125)
Married		0.0527** (0.0238)		0.0793** (0.0316)		0.00560 (0.0364)
Primary Educ			<i>Reference Value</i>			
Second. Educ		0.00160 (0.0108)		-0.0180 (0.0153)		0.0255* (0.0155)
Tertiary Educ		0.0362* (0.0201)		0.00920 (0.0296)		0.0660** (0.0275)
No children			<i>Reference Value</i>			
1 child		0.0250** (0.0120)		-0.0113 (0.0163)		0.0693*** (0.0180)
2 children		0.0704*** (0.0129)		0.0516*** (0.0178)		0.0877*** (0.0189)
3 children		0.0792*** (0.0166)		0.0381* (0.0223)		0.120*** (0.0250)
Age: 21-30			<i>Reference Value</i>			
Age: 31-40		-0.00101 (0.0116)		-0.00130 (0.0149)		0.00699 (0.0182)
Age: 41-50		0.0171 (0.0137)		0.0158 (0.0177)		0.0210 (0.0214)
Age: 51-60		-0.00939 (0.0118)		-0.0141 (0.0150)		0.000879 (0.0188)
Constant	0.528*** (0.00252)	0.454*** (0.0170)	0.532*** (0.00338)	0.480*** (0.0251)	0.522*** (0.00377)	0.437*** (0.0233)
Observations	6,257	6,257	3,335	3,335	2,922	2,922
R-squared	0.017	0.039	0.011	0.041	0.025	0.053
Number of id	3,151	3,151	1,685	1,685	1,480	1,480

Standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Source: GGP 2005-2008

Note: Results obtained with a within estimator, controlled for time variant individual characteristics age, wealth, education, marital status and number of children.

The significant negative effect of “time” on the gender attitudes indicator shows that there is a trend towards more conservative gender-attitude, with a change by 2.7 percentage points between 2005 and 2008. But before going any further, there may be a legitimate concern about the evolution in beliefs in the panel being caused mechanically by the sample’s growing

age (given the three-year interval between the interviews). Indeed, the cross-sectional perspective shows a positive correlation between age and specialised couple preferences⁴⁸. However, as we can see in Table 5 above, ageing does not account for the entire change in beliefs, given that adding age as a covariate in the panel regressions does not decrease the significance nor the scope of the observed regenderising evolution. Also, the EVS comparison between 1999 and 2008, showing a striking increase in specialised couple preference in both related variables, compares two samples with similar mean ages (47,6 and 48,3).

Therefore, the conservative turn is established, but the questions remain: Who carries the evolution and why? Firstly, we observe that both men and women respond more conservatively in 2008. Education does not seem to play a role as a covariate: However, the fixed effect regression only captures the effect of changing categories between the two periods and not the effect of *being* in a category on the reported opinions. Therefore, I turn to a subsample analysis, where the population is divided in two halves, lower and higher educated. The result in the table 3.6 confirms the surprising relative homogeneity of gender attitudes evolution in this post-transitional period. Although the lower educated represent the largest part of the regenderising trend, the higher educated are also getting significantly more conservative.

Table 3.6 Gender attitudes between 2005 and 2008 by education, FE regression

VARIABLES	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Dependent variable: Gender attitude indicator			
	Lower educated		Higher educated	
2008 vs 2005	-0.0305*** (0.00411)	-0.0294*** (0.00413)	-0.0160* (0.00868)	-0.0165* (0.00887)
Well-off		-0.0301*** (0.0105)		-0.0418** (0.0176)
Constant	0.520*** (0.00287)	0.453*** (0.0179)	0.568*** (0.00609)	0.522*** (0.0371)
Observations	5,087	5,087	1,132	1,132
R-squared	0.022	0.047	0.007	0.025
Number of id	2,673	2,673	668	668

Standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Source: GGP 2005-2008. Note: Results obtained with a within estimator, controlled for time variant individual characteristics age, wealth, education, marital status and number of children. Only the significant ones are displayed here.

⁴⁸ See Table L in Appendix.

Therefore, if lower educated (and especially men) are the most in favour of specialised couples, the rest of the population also embraces this trend. This finding interrogates the role of education and its predictable effects on gender equality attitudes: If we approximate education with labour market attachment, then higher education is expected to increase women's opportunity costs of long parental leave and therefore promote liberal attitudes with respect to gender-based task division (i.e. a more undifferentiated couple). If we relate education to income and wealth, then, under the plausible assumption that educated women tend to live in households with partners with similar characteristics, higher education means higher income households and therefore less pressure towards the dual-earner setting. This results in an opposite prediction: Higher education then "allows" for more specialised couple attitudes by alleviating the budget constraints. These two competing predictions are based on different cultural representations. The latter prediction assuming that very long leaves (for mothers who can afford them) constitute revealed preferences as opposed to the financially constrained (or even legally obliged during communism) labour market participation. Judging the validity of these two hypotheses is outside the scope of this paper. However, the examples of family policy reforms in 1995 and 2008, where higher educated women also massively respond to the benefit extension beyond job-protected leave (1995) and do not return via shorter tracks in higher proportion than lower educated mothers (2008), suggest that the educational channel likely conveys both mechanisms.

It is interesting to note that when the sample is split along the median age (48 years) and the change in values estimated separately for the younger and older cohorts of both higher and lower educated, the effect remains present and significant for the younger half of both higher and lower educated and is even slightly higher for the higher educated (-2.7pp*** versus -2.4pp***). This is to be linked to the fact that younger cohorts, in general, seem to be driving the effect at least as much as older cohorts, as is shown in the Table 3.7.

Table 3.7 Gender attitudes between 2005 and 2008 by cohorts, FE regression

VARIABLES	(1)	(2)	(3)
	Dep. Variable: Gender attitude indicator		
	40 and less	41 to 60	60 and more
2008 vs 2005	-0.0230*** (0.00815)	-0.0215*** (0.00738)	-0.0231*** (0.00780)
Well-off	-0.0370*** (0.0140)	-0.0249 (0.0161)	-0.0174 (0.0197)
Married	0.0471 (0.0365)	0.0682* (0.0403)	0.0916 (0.0829)
Constant	0.528*** (0.0249)	0.462*** (0.0360)	0.377*** (0.0515)
Observations	2,362	2,278	1,617
R-squared	0.027	0.069	0.045
Number of id	1,286	1,346	921

Standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Source: GGP 2005-2008

Note: Results obtained with a within estimator, controlled for time variant individual characteristics age, wealth, education, marital status and number of children. Only the significant ones are displayed here.

Indeed, contrary to what we could have assumed on the gender attitudes of the younger generation in reproductive age, they are also getting more traditional. When we take into account their fertility, interesting patterns emerge. First of all, heterogeneity analysis by number of children is insignificant, but it is very clear that individuals under 40 years old with no children are particularly subject to the conservative trend: they record a 3.85pp decrease significant on a 1% level. On the other hand, when I assemble individuals who had a child between the two waves in order to assess the effect of parenthood on their values, we observe no evolution towards conservative values. There is a considerable amount of self-selection to be addressed, but it is worth noticing that from all family settings (no children or a given number of children throughout the observed period, first child or another extra child between 2005 and 2008), individuals with two children, i.e. either from the beginning or transiting to a second child between the two waves, maintain the highest level of liberal views from one wave to another. The data lacks sufficient information on childbearing intentions and the ideal family size (the questions are heavily filtered and only apply to a small sample), but when I combine the item “Intention to have another child in 3 years” in 2005 and effective transitions to another child by 2008, the population with an unrealised childbearing intention gets strikingly more

conservative than the average: the change reaches $-5.4pp^{***}$. It calls for further investigation, but nonetheless it appears that in the youngest cohort of adults, the evolution towards conservative gender attitudes is established and is to be associated with low fertility and unrealised intentions. This supports Matysiak's analysis (2011) of low fertility in Central and Eastern Europe as response to intensified tensions between female labour market attachment (both a cultural legacy of the previous regime and dual-earner financial constraint on households paying the social costs of transition) and unsupportive family policy promoting poorly paid long leaves and long exclusively maternal care which increased the cost of children. In the Czech Republic, the total fertility rate has not exceeded 1.5 over the last 20 years (CZSO, 2016), and Saxonberg and Szelewa (2007) analyse the Czech family policy with the straightforward concern that one can only support the family if there are families to support. In the context of economic uncertainty and increasingly competitive labour market, it is indeed likely that individuals postpone childbearing as a constrained decision and express the gap between their work-family intentions and realisations through leaning towards a declarative traditional preference as a social identity beacon – given that they have more control over their “beliefs about the state of the world” than over the actual state of the world (p.307, Akerlof and Dickens, 1987).

Last but not least, in order to support my assumption that that there is an identifiable evolution of gender attitudes within the work-family culture which explains the refamilising trend in policies and practices, I consider an alternative family values indicator. If in search for explanation of preferences for increasingly long leaves we were to look into family values defined in this general way, this is what we would have observed:

Table 3.8 Family values over time, fixed effects

VARIABLES	(1)	(2)
	Family ties: Weak (0) to Strong (1)	
2008 vs 2005	-0.00459 NS (0.00253)	-0.00515 NS (0.00268)
Covariates	No	Yes
Observations	6,197	6,197
R-squared	0.001	0.012
Number of id	3,150	3,150

Standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Source: GGP 2005-2008

Note: Results obtained with a within estimator, controlled for time variant individual characteristics age, wealth, education, marital status and number of children.

Indeed, when the gender perspective is diluted among more general family values, the results disappear⁴⁹. This robustness check confirms that gender attitudes, i.e. the undifferentiated/specialised couple preferences, seem to be the main driving forces of social changes related to family and childbearing.

5. Concluding remarks

Through the insight into cultural values data in 1999, 2005 and 2008, we have witnessed Czechs' gender attitudes evolving unambiguously towards a more specialised couple preferences. Indeed, unlike most European countries and even other post-communist countries, we observe a significant conservative turn - among both women and men, both parents and non-parents, and both the higher and lower educated. This finding sheds light on the broader context of work/family conflict and maternal employment determinants.

In the context of transition from communism and with respect to the existing literature, the evolution of gender attitudes along with the relative stability of welfare preferences is an interesting precision on the mechanisms at stake. Are Czech women workers or carers? A discrepancy appears between childbearing years and the rest of the life cycle. In contrast to

⁴⁹ Detailed results of these regressions are in Table M in Appendix.

traditionally high full-time female participation outside the reproductive age, mothers of children until the age of 4 have been increasingly reluctant to return to the labour market and have specialised as carers, leaving the breadwinner priority to their male counterpart. Previous research establishes the preference for very long maternal leaves across the Czech population (Mullerova 2014, Mullerova 2016), and the conservative turn in intra-household task division stands out as its likely underlying mechanism. If this paper answers a question, it undoubtedly raises another. The scope of the analysis cannot go beyond speculations as to the reasons *why* this trend appeared; the available data can only be used to show that controlling for various individual characteristics in fixed effects estimations does not exhaust the significance of the result and therefore does not explain the phenomenon. The timing of the two GGP waves (2005 and 2008) is such that no explanatory shock occurred, and we are left to interpret this change as part of a broader, long-term trend. We can discuss the role of the EU accession in May 2004 – it might be considered as having diffuse effects perceptible in 2008, but not yet in 2005. Yet if anything, that would lead us to underestimate the results, given that the cultural norms promoted at the European Union level are de-familising and de-genderising. An alternative interpretation would be that the EU accession induced an opposite, conservative reaction, as a backlash linked to a broader disagreement with the European Union directives.

Regardless of the channel, the result is a dissonance with the EU orientations and recommendations, which is laden with policy implications. This Czech idiosyncrasy in childrearing preferences signals that explicitly de-genderising proposals are likely to meet public opinion resistance, as we already witnessed with the promotion of nurseries for children under the age of 3 in 2009, and with the paternal leave debate in 2013.

Conclusion

This dissertation presents an analysis of female employment in a specific geopolitical context – transition to market economy and European Union accession –, in relation to a specific social problem – work-family reconciliation –, and from the perspective of family policy and cultural norms. It is motivated by an observation made by social scientists across Central and Eastern Europe: New patterns in family and social policy within the new socio-economic context of competitive labour markets yield somewhat unsatisfactory outcomes on both sides of the work-family balance, in both maternal employment and fertility. For instance, Kaliskova and Munich title Czech women “the untapped potential of the country” (2012), and statistics reveal that the Czech motherhood-related employment gap is the largest of the OECD (EC, 2013). Therefore, this research joins the literature which investigates the possible determinants of this evolution.

With the remarkable convergence of men’s and women’s human capital investments, the development of anti-discrimination policies and practices and the overall shift from women’s “jobs” to “careers” (Goldin, 2006), the research on gender inequality determinants has largely focused on the role of family, through family-friendly policies (Blau and Kahn, 2013) as well as gender norms (Fortin, 2005). The importance of work-family reconciliation policies for post-communist countries is underlined by Saxonberg and Szelewa (2007). It is important to note that reconciliation policies are not synonymous with family policies. A policy which resolves work-family tensions by incentivising mothers to become inactive homemakers for an extended period of time is not a “work-family balance” policy in the sense that it does not help to “balance” labour market participation with childbearing. These familialistic policies are particularly present in the CEE region, and although they might appear relatively generous towards families by the duration of cash transfers, they fail to support fertility (Saxonberg and Szelewa, 2007). Indeed, in a context where women aspire to a career and/or consider it a necessity to maintain an income from a full-time employment, work-family balance rhymes with defamilising, degenderising policies (Saxonberg, 2013), which support working mothers and provide alternatives to full-time maternal care. Matysiak (2011) notes that Central and Eastern Europe also displays a positive correlation between female employment and fertility rates (Ahn and Mira, 2002), suggesting that providing an institutional setting favourable to higher levels of maternal employment is also the one solution likely to increase the alarmingly low fertility levels.

However, this research did not cover fertility outcomes and restricted the analysis to the relation of family policies to employment. I focused my study on transitions to employment after birth, and considered transitions to childbearing as starting points instead of endogenous decisions. There are several reasons for this choice, including the complexity of endogenous fertility, the longer time horizon necessary to assess responses to policy changes, and last but not least, the dramatic decline in period fertility rates over the transitional years which would be difficult to relate to specific family policies. However, these changes undeniably make the issue of fertility even more of a focal point for family policy analyses, and I will consider it in future research.

Returning to the literature on maternal employment, my contribution is twofold. I followed two approaches, an evaluation of family policies (chapter 1 and 2) and an analysis of gender norms (chapter 3). In the first chapter, I assessed the effects of the 1995 PL reform on maternal employment. This reform was the epitome of the public policy orientation shortly after the fall of the “Iron Curtain”, which consisted in limiting the short-run social costs of rising unemployment by incentivising inactivity instead, and by implementing a more conservative (“refamilising”) model of family policy with increased emphasis on maternal responsibilities and lower provision of public childcare services. The 1995 reform therefore extended the already long and universal parental benefit from 3 to 4 years, without extending the job-protected period. I used the Labour Force Survey dataset to assess the effect of this reform on instantaneous and medium-term effects on maternal employment, thanks to the quasi-experimental setting of the reform. It was passed and implemented unexpectedly, in a way which excluded self-selection into treatment. Its administration by central authorities also excluded manipulation of one’s eligibility, which was strictly a function of the youngest child’s date of birth. I evidenced a very strong immediate negative effect (up to 23 percentage points), which remained significant and sizeable still two years after the end of the job-protected leave. This result suggests that the reform not only reached its effect of transferring a larger portion of active population to inactivity, but it outperformed these intentions by hindering returns to employment further along the mothers’ trajectory, with likely effects on subsequent wages and pensions. The heterogeneity analysis along educational attainment highlighted an intriguingly strong effect on higher educated mothers, despite the low financial incentive offered by the flat-rate benefit.

The second chapter focuses on another parental leave reform. The previous setting with 4 years of benefits and 3 years of job protection remained in effect for 13 years, during which the Czech Republic had joined the European Union and had faced increasing pressures to

conform to directives in terms of gender equality on the labour market. As part of a public finances stabilisation bill in 2008, parental benefits were remodelled as to decrease the related public expenditure, and to incentivise faster returns to work. The new system offered 3 tracks: a 2-year, a 3-year or a 4-year duration, with a similar total amount received. I used the same data and difference-in-differences method as in the first chapter, and restricted the sample to mothers already on leave at the reform implementation in order to maintain the natural experiment setting and exclude fertility or pre-birth behaviours in anticipation of the treatment. The short-term impact reached a 15 pp increase in employment probability after the end of the job protection, for both the cohort effect analysis and a standard difference-in-differences approach with control groups composed of mothers with slightly older children and women without children. This second approach was a particularly important identification strategy here, as the results were observed in the middle of the global crisis. It was therefore essential to consider a counterfactual which faced an identical business cycle and was expected to respond in the closest possible way to the treated. After the results of the previous evaluation in terms of educational attainment, I was curious to see whether higher educated mothers would respond this time accordingly to the structure of the incentive, i.e. collect the total amount faster and opt out of the 4th year of inactivity (costly since outlasting job protection) in larger proportions. But yet again, the sub-sample analysis did not reveal such a linear relation. With this result, I moved on to the last chapter, hoping to shed light on the context in which Czech mothers define their work-family reconciliation strategies and lean quite homogeneously towards very long leaves.

The third chapter presents a different perspective on maternal employment and work-family reconciliation, by focusing on attitudes with respect to couple specialisation. With the use of subjective data (EVS 1999 and 2008 and GGP 2005 and 2008), I investigated the post-transitional cultural setting as compared to other European countries as well as within the country over time, in order to accompany descriptively the observed preference for long leaves. In an era when the European political agenda promotes a rather opposite direction of high female employment and gender equality, we observe a persistence of long leaves legislation and high uptakes across the Czech population. The data reveal that there is indeed a Czech idiosyncrasy in not embracing the gender-equal trend and evolving instead towards a more traditional model of market and home production division. Czech households declare, more often than any other of 29 surveyed European countries, that fathers cannot substitute mothers in their roles of caregiver. The panel data analysis confirms, by controlling for individual fixed

effects, that the Czechs record a significant change in their overall attitude on gender-based division of tasks towards a more conservative view – across genders, ages, educations and family structures. Surprisingly enough, the traditional turn is not led by family-oriented individuals with children, but is rather associated with low fertility and unrealised intentions. This chapter tackles some questions left unanswered by the policy evaluations, by considering the normative dimension of family-related decisions. To that respect, it gives some background evidence on how “gender trumps money” (Bittman et al., 2003) when it comes to childrearing policies and practices.

However, it is clear that the answers provided are outnumbered by questions raised, which brings us to the necessity of further research. Indeed, this descriptive work evidenced a trend in gender attitudes by controlling for structural effects of the sample’s changes in wealth, age, education, number of children or marital status, hence demonstrating what did *not* explain the conservative turn without proposing an actual explanation. An explanation is outside the scope of the study, and we can at this stage only speculate about the mechanisms at stake. Matysiak (2011) hints at the increased work-family conflict in CEE countries, due to the legacy of a “dual earner-female burden model” (p.13), met with incompatible capitalist regime institutions (Frejka, 2008). Therefore, links need to be made between the individuals’ attitudes and their actual behaviours, in terms of both labour supply and household task divisions. Another direction to follow concerns a neglected actor until now: the fathers. Given that the traditional shift is driven in higher proportions by men (of all ages and education), the determinants of their gender attitudes matter. They can be for instance interpreted as a way to “do gender” (West and Zimmerman, 1987), i.e. to assert compliance with their social identity as breadwinner, in contexts where in fact family formation is postponed and both partners act as breadwinners. The question then becomes how this can be articulated with the existing literature on a relatively gender-equal socialist legacy (Lippmann et al., 2016; Alesina and Fuchs-Schündeln, 2007). Both studies suggest that cultural inertia is strong but not indefinite, and the post-communist patterns are slowly “withering” (Lippmann et al., 2016, p.5). Is the Czech post-transitional familialistic turn in both policies and practices an expression of a cultural change towards gender inequality or, conversely, a revealed trend of long-term attitudes, previously restrained by the socialist regime’s ideology? This could be explored through the study of more exogenous shocks and diverging patterns in a cross-country perspective. For instance, in their study based on the GGP data, Pailhe and Sinyavskaya (2010) compare France and Russia and highlight that among Russian women, both behaviours and

gender attitudes are more homogeneous than among French. Comparing more countries with a common past and more or less diverging current developments seems to be a fruitful lead to further mapping post-socialist attitudes to women and work. Such knowledge is policy-relevant, as it allows economists to model more closely households' responses to current and future reforms in *ex post* and *ex ante* evaluations, and hopefully to contribute to better outcomes on both sides of the work-family balance.

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Appendix

Table A. Interviews

Name	Date	Position	Affiliation
Marie Cermakova	Nov-12	Director	Institute of Sociology, Academy of sciences
Hana Haskova	Dec-12	Researcher	Institute of Sociology, Academy of sciences
Alena Krizkova	Dec-12	Head of the Gender and Sociology department	Institute of Sociology, Academy of sciences
Vera Kucharova	Nov-02	Researcher	Research Institute for Labour and Social Affairs
Magdalena Kotynkova	Dec-12	Docent	University of Economics
Vojtech Krebs	Dec-12	Professor	University of Economics
Jirina Siklova	Aug-16	Founder	Gender studies CSO
Jitka Kolarova	Nov-12	Associate	Gender studies CSO
Petr Visek	May-13	Former ODS secretary for international affairs	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs

Table B. Czech family policy between 1948 and 2016

FAMILY POLICY INSTRUMENT	EFFECTS ON FERTILITY AND PARTICIPATION (expected)	
	Fertility	Participation
Maternity Leave and Benefits		
1948 Duration moves from 12 to 18 weeks	+	- SR + MR *
1964 22 weeks	+	- SR + MR
1968 26 weeks	+	- SR + MR
1987 28 weeks and 37 weeks if 2 dependent children or single mother	++	- SR + MR
Additional Maternity / Parental Leave		
1964 Creation of 1 year Additional Maternity	+	- SR + MR
1970 2 years	+	-
1989 3 years	+	-
2001 Additional Maternity leave becomes Parental Leave, accessible to fathers in the same conditions	+	+
Additional Maternity / Parental Benefit		
1970 Creation of the AM benefit, 1 year if 2 dependent children or single mother	++	
1971 2 years (same conditions)	++	
1987 3 years if child born after December 1987 (same conditions)	++	
1990 AM benefit becomes Parental benefit, 3 years for all children (7 for handicapped)		-
1995 Extension of the parental benefit: 4 years	+	--
1998 No more limitation of worked hours for recipients	+	+
2001 The limitation of income for recipients moves from vital minimum to 50% above it		+
2004 No more limitation of income for recipients		+
2006 Less strict limitation of hours spent in childcare facility for recipients' child		+
2007 Significant increase of the parental benefit	++	-
2008 Creation of a Multi-Speed Parental benefit: 2, 3 or 4 years	++	+
2012 No more limitation of hours spent in childcare facility for recipients' child	+	+
2012 2008 Benefit setting modification: more flexible monthly amount	+	+
Child benefit		
1959 Means-tested Family benefit becomes Child benefit	+	
1968 Universal Child benefit	++	
1995 Again Means-tested Child benefit		
2008 No more vital minimum indexation		
Other family policy instruments		
1957 Abortion legalization (abortion committees)	-	++
1970's Various measures: Lower retirement age for mothers, Housing allocations, advantageous loans, tax deductions, subsidization of childcare and related expenses (meals, textbooks)	++	
1995 Modification of the legal status of nurseries, steep decline	-	-
2012 Revocation of the public nursery status by the Ministry of Health	-	-
2013 Children Group Act: tax benefits for alternative childcare facilities	+	+
2016 7-day paid paternal leave bill voted	+	+

* In the **short run**, the extension of the leaves automatically decreases mothers' participation, but in the medium run the aspect of job security rather increases participation after the leave.

Key

Post-transitional policies: from 1989 onwards
 EU harmonization (preparations and EU accession): from 2000 onwards

Appendix Chapter 1

Table C. Summary statistics of the sample

	C1 SUMMARY STATISTICS (1)		C2 1st APPROACH			C3 2nd APPROACH	
	Non treated (Jan - Sept 1995)	Treated (Jan - Sept 1996)	Reform cohort (1995-1996)	Control cohort 1 (1997-1998)	Control cohort 2 (1993-1994)	Eligible (Age 3)	Non eligible (Age 4)
Individual Controls							
Mean age	27.5	27.7	27.6	27.7	28.3	27.6	28.4
Age groups, %							
15-24	29.6	25.3	27.4	27.2	21.9	27.4	21.2
25-29	36.2	40.4	38.3	41.7	45	38.3	42.7
30-39	34.2	34.3	34.3	31.1	33.1	34.3	36.1
Mean number of children	1.75	1.74	1.7	1.7	1.8	1.7	1.7
Number of children, %							
1	39.7	44.3	42	42.8	33.8	42	40
2	46.6	40.6	43.6	45.1	52.3	43.6	48.3
3 and more	13.7	12.6	14.4	12.1	13.9	14.4	11.7
Married, %	91.2	89.5	90.3	85.8	92.3	90.3	88
Educational level, %							
None or Elementary	9.6	8.5	9	10.3	10.9	9	6.7
High school, no graduation	39.5	44.6	42.1	43.5	41.4	42.1	42.7
High school graduated	41.2	38.5	40.2	39.4	37.4	40.2	42.5
Superior	9	8.4	8.7	6.8	10.2	8.7	8
Dependent variable							
Economic activity, %							
ML or PL	30.4	52	41.4	50.8	49	41.4	4.2
Study	0.8	0.3	0.5	1	0.3	0.5	1
Work	39.2	17.2	28	15.6	33.1	28	69.8
Unemployed	10.1	2.4	6.2	1.1	9.6	6.2	9.8
Homemaker	19.2	27.5	23.4	31	6	23.4	14.6
N	365	379	744	720	302	744	623

Source: LFS, 1993-1999

Appendix Chapter 2

Table D1. Summary Statistics. Treated vs. Control

	Treated	Control 1st app. (2006)	Controls 2nd app. (2009/10)	
			Child aged 5	No child 0-5
Individual controls				
Mean age	31,8	30,2	33,2	29,4
Married, %	72,1	78,2	80,1	33,8
Educational level				
No or elementary	5,8	10,7	11	5,7
High school, no grad	28,2	31,2	35,3	26,6
Graduated high school	49,4	45,1	40,3	51,1
Superior	16,7	12,9	13,4	16,6
Dependent variable				
Employed, %	32,4	20,5	78,6	68,9
N	312	317	201	20 080

Source: LFS 2006-2011

Table D2. Summary Statistics. Contextual, women aged 20-39

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Educational levels, %						
No or elementary	6,9	6,9	6,7	6,7	6,4	6,1
High school, no grad	32,4	31,4	29,5	28	27	25,8
Graduated high school	49	49,3	49,8	49,3	48,9	48,1
Superior	11,8	12,4	14	15,9	17,7	20
Married, %	49,7	49,1	47,7	46,7	45,8	45,6
Unemployment, %	7,8	5,6	4,4	6,3	7,1	6,3
Activity, %	68,2	66,6	65	65	65	65,3
Activity no 20-24, %	73,6	72,6	71	71,4	71,8	72,6
Activity no child 0-5, %	81,5	80,2	79,15	78,4	77,8	77,2

Source: LFS 2006-2011

Table D3. Summary Statistics. Contextual, general

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
GDP growth	6.9	5,5	2.7	-4.8	2,3	2
Unemployment rate	7.1	5,3	4,4	6,7	7,3	6,7
Fertility rate	1.328	1,438	1,497	1,492	1,493	1,427

Source: CZSO and Eurostat

Table E. Impact of the 2008 reform on post-PL participation by spouse's education

VARIABLES	(1)	(2)
	To be active	
	Spouse Higher education	Spouse Lower education
After	0.120*** (0.0456)	0.141*** (0.0532)
Treat (cohort)	-0.0535 (0.0390)	-0.0639 (0.0404)
Treat*After	0.266*** (0.0679)	0.288*** (0.0717)
Education	<i>Reference value</i>	
Graduated HS	<i>Reference value</i>	
None or Element.	-0.152*** (0.0522)	0.0828 (0.113)
Didn't graduate HS	-0.129*** (0.0380)	-0.0758 (0.0464)
Superior educ	0.0437 (0.0982)	0.0828** (0.0418)
Married	0.0762** (0.0383)	-0.00345 (0.0578)
Age: 25-29	<i>Reference value</i>	
Age: 15-24	-0.0801* (0.0459)	0.0171 (0.0726)
Age: 30-39	0.0105 (0.0393)	0.0774* (0.0401)
1 child	<i>Reference value</i>	
2 children	-0.0193 (0.0377)	0.0270 (0.0381)
3 children	0.0332 (0.0630)	0.0581 (0.0752)
Constant	0.144** (0.0598)	0.0604 (0.0684)
Observations	522	513
R-squared	0.182	0.187

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table F. Summary statistics. Treated pop. without and with "youngest child" restriction

	Approach 1 and 2		Medium term effect	
	Youngest child aged 3	No restriction	Youngest child aged 4	No restriction
Individual controls				
Mean age	31.8 *	31.5	32.3 *	31.9
Married, %	73	74.4	77.4	79.2
Educational level				
No or elementary	5.5	6.4	9.2 *	8.2
High school, no grad	28.1 *	26.1	25.8	24.8
Graduated high school	49.7	49.4	49.8	46.8
Superior	16.8	18.1	15.2 *	20.2
Mean n. of children	1.65 *	1.8	1.69	1.88
Dependent variable				
Employed, %	33.2 *	28.1	66.4 *	45
N	292	360	217	331

Source: LFS 2009-2011

Note: the asterisk represents the statistical significance of the difference between the sample used for estimations and the larger non restricted population.

Appendix Chapter 3

Table G. European values study, descriptive statistics

	Czech Republic		Visegrad (SK, PL, HU)	
	1999	2008	1999	2008
Gender (ref. female)	0.52	0.55	0.53	0.56
Age	47.6	48.3	45.9	47.6
Family structure				
Married	0.61	0.47	0.63	0.55
1 child	0.17	0.18	0.18	0.17
2 children	0.44	0.4	0.37	0.35
3 children and more	0.19	0.16	0.25	0.22
Education				
Primary	0.19	0.14	0.24	0.2
Secondary	0.68	0.74	0.65	0.79
Tertiary	0.14	0.12	0.11	0.15
Labour market				
Active	0.54	0.53	0.52	0.5
Unemployed	0.04	0.04	0.09	0.07
Students	0.05	0.08	0.04	0.06
Obs	1908	1821	3426	4532

Source: EVS 1999 and 2008

Table H. Generations and Gender programme, descriptive statistics Czech Rep.

	2005 panel Mean/Proportion	2008	2005 entire	2005 lost in attrition (*sign. diff.)
Gender (ref. female)	0.53	0.53	0.52	0.51
Age	45.74	49.32	44.8	44.31*
Family structure				
Couple	65.5	62.93	63.2	62.16
Married	51.41	53.41	47.7	46.00
1 child	0.19	0.21	0.2	0.2
2 children	0.38	0.39	0.33	0.31*
3 children and more	0.13	0.13	0.12	0.11
Education				
Primary	0.2	0.12	0.23	0.24*
Secondary	0.65	0.72	0.63	0.62*
Tertiary	0.14	0.16	0.13	0.12*
Labour market				
Active	0.56	0.59	0.56	0.57
Unemployed	0.06	0.03	0.06	0.06
Students	0.07	0.04	0.09	0.1
Report financial difficulties	0.26	0.21	0.26	0.25
Family (0)/ Welfare (1) preferences				
Childcare	0.25	0.29	0.25	0.26
Afterschool care	0.32	0.35	0.31	0.31
Elderly care	0.4	0.46	0.41	0.42
Cash for Elderly in need	0.72	0.67	0.71	0.7*
Cash for Young in need	0.76	0.7	0.74	0.73*
Couple Values (0=specialized, 1=undifferentiated)				
Daughters should care more	0.57	0.54	0.56	0.55
Women shouldn't earn more	0.57	0.52	0.55	0.54*
After divorce, child w/ mother	0.4	0.39	0.4	0.4
If scarce, jobs to men	0.57	0.55	0.56	0.56
Obs	3151	3151	10006	6855

Source: GGP 2005-2008

Table I. Family/welfare preferences and income in 2005, OLS estimates

VARIABLES	(1) Childcare1	(2) Childcare2	(3) Elderly care	(4) Elderly cash	(5) Youth cash
Wealth	0.000132 NS (0.00451)	-0.00173 NS (0.00482)	-0.0165*** (0.00469)	-0.0199*** (0.00430)	-0.0106** (0.00415)
No children	<i>Reference Value</i>				
1 child	-0.0520*** (0.0166)	-0.0604*** (0.0167)	-0.0236 (0.0161)	-0.00911 (0.0151)	0.00382 (0.0150)
2 children	-0.0873*** (0.0158)	-0.0892*** (0.0159)	-0.0527*** (0.0153)	-0.00521 (0.0141)	0.0122 (0.0134)
3 and more	-0.0803*** (0.0200)	-0.0688*** (0.0201)	-0.0407** (0.0196)	0.00957 (0.0174)	0.0322* (0.0165)
Male	0.00504 (0.0102)	-0.00696 (0.0104)	0.0189* (0.0102)	0.0121 (0.00954)	-0.000911 (0.00912)
Primary Educ	<i>Reference value</i>				
Secondary Educ	-0.00691 (0.0132)	0.0175 (0.0134)	0.0201 (0.0135)	-0.00169 (0.0124)	-0.0167 (0.0115)
Tertiary Educ	-0.0118 (0.0165)	0.0244 (0.0173)	0.0123 (0.0167)	-0.00848 (0.0163)	-0.0431*** (0.0158)
Married	0.0445*** (0.0113)	0.0198* (0.0117)	0.0225** (0.0114)	0.00156 (0.0110)	-0.00331 (0.0103)
Age: 41-50	<i>Reference value</i>				
Age: 21-30	-0.0344** (0.0163)	-0.00929 (0.0165)	-0.0544*** (0.0160)	0.0157 (0.0149)	0.0104 (0.0142)
Age: 31-40	0.00498 (0.0150)	0.00765 (0.0151)	-0.0292* (0.0149)	-0.0112 (0.0145)	-0.0116 (0.0133)
Age: 51-60	-4.77e-05 (0.0146)	0.0207 (0.0145)	-0.0260* (0.0146)	-0.0115 (0.0140)	-0.0304** (0.0133)
Age: 61-70	-0.0183 (0.0153)	-0.0147 (0.0156)	-0.0168 (0.0157)	0.00553 (0.0146)	-0.0140 (0.0140)
Constant	0.290*** (0.0217)	0.350*** (0.0217)	0.466*** (0.0208)	0.780*** (0.0188)	0.813*** (0.0181)
Observations	3,041	3,031	3,039	3,043	3,043
R-squared	0.016	0.015	0.013	0.010	0.010

Standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Source: GGP 2005

Note: The outcome variables are preferences for family/welfare for different social needs, ranged from *mainly family* (coded 0) to *mainly society* (coded 1).

Table J. Family/welfare preferences and income in 2005, Ordered probit estimates

VARIABLES	(1) Childcare1	(2) Childcare2	(3) Elderly care	(4) Elderly cash	(5) Youth cash
Wealth	-0.000827 (0.0183)	-0.00425 (0.0178)	-0.0641*** (0.0176)	-0.0851*** (0.0179)	-0.0537*** (0.0182)
No children	<i>Reference value</i>				
1 child	-0.194*** (0.0646)	-0.227*** (0.0632)	-0.0886 (0.0624)	-0.0331 (0.0634)	0.0345 (0.0647)
2 children	-0.342*** (0.0609)	-0.340*** (0.0591)	-0.204*** (0.0584)	-0.0172 (0.0595)	0.0588 (0.0603)
3 children	-0.321*** (0.0758)	-0.264*** (0.0737)	-0.161** (0.0727)	0.0504 (0.0742)	0.159** (0.0756)
Male	0.0137 (0.0413)	-0.0424 (0.0403)	0.0716* (0.0398)	0.0524 (0.0405)	-0.00451 (0.0411)
Primary Educ	<i>Reference value</i>				
Secondary educ	-0.0326 (0.0522)	0.0763 (0.0510)	0.0840* (0.0503)	-0.00759 (0.0513)	-0.0757 (0.0524)
Tertiary Educ	-0.0146 (0.0711)	0.124* (0.0695)	0.0640 (0.0689)	-0.0462 (0.0699)	-0.199*** (0.0709)
Married	0.177*** (0.0466)	0.0713 (0.0452)	0.0921** (0.0445)	0.00563 (0.0453)	-0.0187 (0.0461)
Age: 41-50	<i>Reference value</i>				
Age: 21-30	-0.116* (0.0651)	-0.0329 (0.0634)	-0.211*** (0.0629)	0.0646 (0.0643)	0.0519 (0.0653)
Age: 31-40	0.0298 (0.0594)	0.0269 (0.0582)	-0.117** (0.0575)	-0.0444 (0.0586)	-0.0483 (0.0596)
Age: 51--60	0.00257 (0.0589)	0.0833 (0.0572)	-0.103* (0.0567)	-0.0474 (0.0576)	-0.130** (0.0586)
Age: 6170	-0.0793 (0.0636)	-0.0664 (0.0619)	-0.0668 (0.0608)	0.0155 (0.0617)	-0.0604 (0.0628)
Constant cut1	-0.333*** (0.0829)	-0.664*** (0.0811)	-1.159*** (0.0813)	-2.167*** (0.0913)	-2.317*** (0.0961)
Constant cut2	0.377*** (0.0831)	0.154* (0.0808)	-0.398*** (0.0800)	-1.632*** (0.0851)	-1.785*** (0.0876)
Constant cut3	1.169*** (0.0855)	1.063*** (0.0826)	0.753*** (0.0805)	-0.671*** (0.0814)	-0.851*** (0.0833)
Constant cut4	1.668*** (0.0899)	1.555*** (0.0861)	1.280*** (0.0831)	0.180** (0.0809)	0.00775 (0.0823)
Observations	3,041	3,031	3,039	3,043	3,043

Standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Source: GGP 2005

Note: The outcome variables are preferences for family/welfare for different social needs, ranged from *mainly family* (coded 0) to *mainly society* (coded 1).

Table K. Family/welfare preferences and gender values, OLS estimates

VARIABLES	(1)	(2)
	Family vs. Welfare preference Women	Men
Gender liberal	-0.0258 NS (0.0284)	-0.0900*** (0.0304)
Primary Educ	<i>Reference value</i>	
Secondary Educ	-0.00317 (0.0110)	0.00180 (0.0123)
Tertiary Educ	-0.0235* (0.0141)	-0.000210 (0.0151)
Married	0.0151* (0.00868)	0.0114 (0.0118)
No children	<i>Reference value</i>	
1 child	-0.0364*** (0.0139)	-0.0158 (0.0153)
2 children	-0.0480*** (0.0132)	-0.0428*** (0.0142)
3 and more	-0.0379** (0.0155)	-0.0141 (0.0188)
Age: 41-50	<i>Reference value</i>	
Age: 21-30	0.000753 (0.0133)	-0.0233 (0.0144)
Age: 31-40	-0.0169 (0.0121)	0.000353 (0.0151)
Age: 51-60	-0.0206* (0.0118)	-0.00642 (0.0133)
Age: 61-70	-0.00514 (0.0126)	-0.0259* (0.0145)
Constant	0.534*** (0.0214)	0.556*** (0.0198)
Observations	1,611	1,415
R-squared	0.016	0.019

Standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Source: GGP 2005

Note: The Family/welfare indicator ranges from *mainly family* (coded 0) to *mainly society* (coded 1). The gender attitude indicator ranges from 0 (conservative) to 1 (liberal). A negative correlation is therefore interpreted as: gender liberal individuals have higher preference for family than conservative individuals.

Table L. Gender values determinants, OLS

VARIABLES	(1)	(2)
	Gender values indicator	
Male	-0.0108*	-0.0108*
	(0.00590)	(0.00608)
Age: 41-50	<i>Reference value</i>	
Age: 21-30	0.0494***	0.0499***
	(0.00946)	(0.00985)
Age: 31-40	0.0171*	0.0167*
	(0.00873)	(0.00883)
Age: 51-60	-0.00294	-0.00402
	(0.00834)	(0.00848)
Age:61-70	-0.0307***	-0.0317***
	(0.00906)	(0.00918)
Well-off		0.0271***
		(0.0100)
Married		0.00282
		(0.00669)
No children		<i>Ref. value</i>
1 child		-0.00318
		(0.00931)
2 children		0.00801
		(0.00906)
3 children		-0.00389
		(0.0111)
Constant	0.527***	0.521***
	(0.00620)	(0.00852)
Observations	3,114	3,114
R-squared	0.021	0.025

Standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Source: GGP 2005

Note: The gender values indicator ranks from 0 (traditional, specialized) to 1 (liberal, undifferentiated). Compared to the age group 41-50, younger groups are more liberal, older are more traditional.

Table M. Family values over time, fixed effects

VARIABLES	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
		Family ties: weak (0) to strong (1)		
			Men	Women
2008 vs 2005	-0.00459 NS (0.00253)	-0.00515 NS (0.00268)	-0.00919** (0.00403)	-0.00163 NS (0.00360)
Well-off		-0.0170*** (0.00617)	-0.00276 (0.00888)	-0.0322*** (0.00860)
Primary Educ			<i>Ref. value</i>	
Secondary Educ		0.00539 (0.00826)	0.0110 (0.0120)	0.00280 (0.0114)
Tertiary Educ		0.0256* (0.0148)	0.0355* (0.0201)	0.0153 (0.0220)
Married		0.00866 (0.0171)	-0.0335 (0.0260)	0.0376* (0.0228)
No children			<i>Ref. value</i>	
1 child		0.0130 (0.00853)	0.0428*** (0.0127)	-0.00802 (0.0117)
2 children		0.0277*** (0.00921)	0.0337** (0.0133)	0.0226* (0.0129)
3 children		0.0362*** (0.0119)	0.0545*** (0.0177)	0.0195 (0.0160)
Age: 41-50			<i>Ref. value</i>	
Age: 21-30		-0.0117 (0.00899)	-0.0175 (0.0123)	-0.000855 (0.0136)
Age: 31-40		-0.0185** (0.00843)	-0.0143 (0.0127)	-0.0146 (0.0115)
Age: 51-60		-0.0148** (0.00691)	-0.0142 (0.0109)	-0.0142 (0.00886)
Constant	0.459*** (0.00180)	0.439*** (0.0117)	0.443*** (0.0159)	0.438*** (0.0177)
Observations	6,197	6,197	2,892	3,305
R-squared	0.001	0.012	0.018	0.020
Number of id	3,150	3,150	1,479	1,684

Standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Source: GGP 2005 – 2008

Note: Results obtained with a within estimator, controlled for time variant individual characteristics age, wealth, education, marital status and number of children.

Summary in French

Du point de vue économique, l'âge de procréer représente l'étape de décisions cruciales pour le ménage, avec des effets immédiats ainsi que de moyen et de long terme, et avec des conséquences d'échelles micro- et macro-économiques. C'est pourquoi les économistes examinent les choix de l'emploi et de la fécondité et leurs déterminants, et c'est aussi la raison d'être de cette thèse. Située dans le contexte politique et socio-économique de la République tchèque lors de sa transformation systémique post-1989, cette étude pose la question Comment, quand et pourquoi les mères combinent les responsabilités parentales avec la participation au marché du travail. J'évalue l'impact des réformes de politique familiale sur leur niveau d'emploi, et j'interroge les normes culturelles associées. L'ancrage géographique permet une analyse précise dans un cadre institutionnel bien connu, mais bien sûr, sa pertinence augmente si les leçons apprises peuvent se révéler utiles au-delà des frontières du pays. Grâce à leur histoire commune et à une certaine proximité culturelle, politique et économique, mon étude peut avoir une certaine pertinence pour les autres pays du groupe de Visegrad (Slovaquie, Pologne et Hongrie). Au-delà de la région d'Europe centrale et orientale, les études économiques comme celle-ci et les évaluations de politiques publiques sont utiles en ce qu'elles comblent des lacunes dans les connaissances sur l'Union européenne élargie.

En effet, l'emploi des femmes en général et l'emploi maternel en particulier sont des problématiques fort présentes sur les scènes politique et académique européennes, mais beaucoup moins en République tchèque. Ma recherche doctorale a commencé par un travail de terrain effectué au cours de l'hiver 2012, que j'ai consacré à un examen approfondi des documents de politique locale et à des entrevues avec des chercheurs et des acteurs politiques de l'Université de l'économie, de l'Institut de sociologie de l'Académie des Sciences, de l'association Gender studies, de l'Institut de recherche du travail et des affaires sociales et du ministère du travail et des affaires sociales. Cela m'a donné un aperçu du contexte local et de la réalité institutionnelle de la question de l'emploi maternel et de la conciliation travail-famille, et m'a permis de cadrer mes recherches, de les fonder sur des perspectives nouvelles et pertinentes par rapport à la littérature existante. Ce que je pouvais établir directement, était la rareté de la littérature économique sur l'emploi des mères, et la non-existence de l'évaluation de l'impact des politiques familiales - en dépit de programmes longs et onéreux de congés et d'allocations, et de deux réformes de grande envergure avec un caractère quasi-expérimental.

En parallèle, ce qui m'a frappé, était l'atmosphère normative entourant le relatif silence du discours scientifique⁵⁰. Voilà comment mon projet de recherche a acquis sa structure : deux expériences naturelles à exploiter sur les données de l'Enquête Emploi, et une étude des normes culturelles à effectuer grâce aux données d'enquêtes européennes sur les valeurs sociales. Les sections suivantes vont présenter brièvement mon plan de recherche et les principaux résultats, puis la littérature existante, et le contexte économique et politique de la République tchèque en transition. Enfin, je conclus sur une ouverture sur les recherches à venir.

1. Plan de recherche

1.1 Évaluation de l'extension de l'allocation parentale en 1995

Dans le premier chapitre, je me concentre sur la réforme de congé parental de 1995, qui a prolongé le versement de l'allocation parentale universelle à quatre ans au lieu de trois, sans aucune extension parallèle de la protection de l'emploi. Cette disjonction laisse ainsi aux mères le choix de retourner à l'emploi protégé au bout de trois ans, ou alors de prolonger l'inactivité et bénéficier des allocations pour 12 mois supplémentaires. L'étude repose sur une stratégie de différence-de-différences pour évaluer l'effet net de cette réforme de grande envergure sur l'emploi maternel, en utilisant les données de l'Enquête Emploi. Je trouve un fort impact négatif sur la probabilité de retour en emploi des mères à la fin de la période de protection de l'emploi, avec un effet hétérogène en fonction de leur niveau d'éducation. Je montre aussi une persistance de l'effet négatif sur l'emploi des mères au-delà de l'horizon de court-terme prévu par le législateur.

Ce chapitre est basé sur l'article « Family Policy and Maternal Employment in the Czech Transition: A Natural Experiment »⁵¹, sorti comme document de travail EconomiX en 2014 et actuellement en cours de révision (R&R) au *Journal of Population Economics*. J'ai

⁵⁰ Ce silence est surtout présent dans la littérature économique : la sociologie et la démographie étudient activement la politique familiale, surtout en rapport avec les services publics de garde d'enfants.

⁵¹ Sous son titre initial "Female Labour Supply in the Czech Transition: Effects of the Work-Life Conciliation Policies". Il a bénéficié de remarques lors de nombreuses conférences internationales comme EPC 2014, IZA Summer School in Labour Economics 2015, SASE 2015 et EALE/SOLE 2015.

développé cette étude grâce à l'achat par EconomiX des données d'Enquête Emploi tchèque en 2013, et j'ai bénéficié des commentaires des chercheurs du centre de recherche CReAM à l'University College London où j'ai séjourné pendant 3 mois en 2014 comme doctorante invitée.

1.2 Evaluation de la réforme « multi-speed » du congé parental

Le deuxième chapitre est une évaluation d'une réforme de politique familiale plus récente (2008), qui visait à accélérer le retour des mères en emploi. En 2004, l'adhésion tchèque à l'Union Européenne a mis en lumière l'étendue de l'écart d'emploi entre les femmes avec et sans enfants d'âge préscolaire : c'est devenu l'écart le plus grand parmi tous les pays de l'OCDE (41 pp). Afin de remédier à cette disproportion entre l'emploi des femmes et l'emploi des mères et de se conformer à la tendance promue par l'UE, une réforme majeure a été conçue en 2008, et ce chapitre étudie ses effets sur la participation et l'emploi maternels. J'utilise l'Enquête Emploi pour évaluer l'effet de cette réforme sur les niveaux d'emploi et d'activité des mères, grâce à une stratégie d'identification de différence-de-différences. La réforme a radicalement changé les incitations financières en faveur de congés plus courts, et je montre que les effets sur le timing de retour en emploi sont significatifs et importants. Toutefois, si les mères répondent à l'incitation en faisant avancer le moment du retour en emploi d'une année, les restrictions d'éligibilité, ainsi que la pénurie de services publics de garde d'enfants, limitent *de facto* la portée de cette réforme, qui ne fait que compenser les résultats opposés induits par les réformes des années 1990.

Ce chapitre est basé sur l'article « Mind the employment gap: an impact evaluation of the Czech 'multi-speed' parental benefit reform »⁵², sorti comme document de travail EconomiX en 2016.

1.3 Normes de la division genrée du travail en transition

⁵² Ce chapitre a également été discuté en conférences et colloques, comme SASE2016, EPC2016, EALE2016, et séminaires d'économie appliquée de PSE et INED.

Le troisième chapitre apporte une perspective complémentaire aux chapitres précédents. J'y étudie les préférences normatives des ménages en termes de conciliation travail-famille, et j'utilise des données qualitatives et des méthodes empiriques nouvelles par rapport aux précédentes études d'impact. Dans l'étude des deux grandes réformes de politique familiale, je remarquais que les réponses de la population ciblée, c'est-à-dire leurs taux d'emploi et la durée des interruptions de travail, ne se résumaient pas aux effets prévisibles par les incitations financières. Notamment l'absence de stratification par éducation et l'homogénéité des stratégies de conciliation malgré les incitations financières hétérogènes ressortaient des résultats des deux études. Pourquoi cela ? En utilisant les données de European Values Study et le panel Generations and Gender Programme, je montre que dans le contexte des ajustements post-socialistes, tout à fait contre-intuitivement, la préférence pour de longs congés ne provient pas de préférences déclinantes pour les institutions de l'État Social, mais d'un changement de valeur purement intra-ménage en faveur d'une plus grande spécialisation des tâches entre hommes et femmes. En effet, contrairement à la plupart des pays européens et même d'autres pays post-communistes, on observe un virage marqué vers les valeurs d'un couple spécialisé – et ceci parmi les femmes et les hommes, les parents et les non-parents, et les populations fortement et faiblement éduquées.

Ce chapitre est un travail en cours, sorti comme document de travail EconomiX en 2017. Il sera présenté en colloques EALE2017, GGP User Conference et SASE2017.

2. Conciliation travail/famille : Etat de l'art

La littérature économique et interdisciplinaire qui a encadré et alimenté ma recherche (politique sociale, sociologie, démographie), peut être classée en trois catégories : premièrement, la littérature économique sur les décisions des ménages en termes d'emploi et de fécondité et, plus précisément, la littérature axée sur les changements législatifs de congé parental et l'évaluation de leur impact sur la fécondité et l'offre de travail des parents. Cette littérature étudie pour la plupart les pays d'Europe occidentale, ou plus largement les vieux pays de l'OCDE. Le deuxième ensemble de littérature emprunte à d'autres sciences sociales, et interroge les normes de genre (nous pouvons les appeler préférences, identités, croyances, valeurs, cultures ...) et leurs effets sur les comportements économiques. Ces différentes

représentations des rôles sociaux féminins et masculins sous-tendent non seulement les comportements individuels, mais aussi les orientations des politiques familiales - ce qui conduit les sciences sociales comparatives à établir des typologies d'État Social par rapport à la (implicite ou explicite) convergence ou divergence des rôles promue par les politiques familiales. Enfin, je m'appuie sur la littérature portant spécifiquement sur la région d'Europe centrale et orientale. Compte tenu du passé socialiste, à savoir 40 ans d'économie planifiée sans chômage et avec une politique sociale interventionniste et paternaliste, je m'appuie sur les notions et approches développées dans cette littérature, pour assurer la cohérence et la pertinence à mes interprétations.

2.1 Littérature économique de la conciliation travail/famille

Il est aujourd'hui établi que la participation des femmes au marché du travail doit être modélisée en tenant compte de la division intra-ménage des tâches (Becker, 1985). En effet, dans toutes les sociétés, la production domestique repose plus lourdement sur les femmes, et celles-ci font donc face à plus de conflits dans la répartition du temps et de l'effort et en subissent les conséquences sur leurs carrières, salaires et retraites (Browning, 1992). Le soin aux enfants est la principale source d'augmentation de la pression sur la production domestique, et les études empiriques montrent que même dans les couples les plus indifférenciés, les femmes adoptent en priorité ce rôle avec l'arrivée d'un enfant (Dribe et Stanfors, 2009). En conséquence, la fécondité est lourde de conséquences sur l'offre de travail des mères au niveau individuel (Angrist et Evans, 1998). Ainsi, les pays développés ont vu émerger des politiques familiales visant à réduire le coût des enfants et à accompagner les transitions entre la maternité et l'emploi. Au niveau macro, la fertilité et l'emploi ne sont plus en concurrence (Ahn et Mira, 2002) et des régimes adaptés de politique familiale sont reconnus comme des outils efficaces dans la promotion conjointe de la fécondité et de l'emploi des femmes. Dans cette section, je vais passer en revue quelques travaux qui portent sur ces sujets, via des comparaisons internationales et études de cas.

Dans une étude portant sur 16 pays européens au cours des années 1970 et 1980, Ruhm (1998) a exploité les changements de législation pour estimer l'effet des congés parentaux sur la participation au marché du travail, avec une méthode de différence-de-différences et de triple différence. Il montre que les régimes de congé parental affectent positivement l'emploi des femmes, car la protection de l'emploi, même de courte durée (moins de 3 mois), augmente la

continuité de l'emploi des femmes. Il convient de noter que l'échantillon est composé de pays occidentaux avec en 1998 une durée moyenne de congés payés de 22,6 semaines (6 mois), très loin des 2 ans - plus tard même 3 et 4 ans - en République tchèque. Les résultats indiquent que, bien que les congés aient un effet positif sur l'emploi, des durées de plus de 6 mois pourraient entraver la progression des salaires et diminuer le salaire relatif par rapport aux hommes. A ces commentaires fondateurs, de nombreuses études ultérieures ont rajouté plus de précisions. Thévenon et Solaz (2013) précisent que la relation positive entre le congé parental et l'emploi des femmes est valable pour les pays ayant une durée de congé jusqu'à 2 ans. Après ce seuil, les taux d'emploi et les heures travaillées sont affectées négativement. Thévenon (2013) souligne également l'importance des interactions entre les politiques familiales. Des complémentarités institutionnelles affectent le résultat d'une manière qui ne se réduit pas à « la somme des effets marginaux des changements pris isolément » (p.31). Il note que l'efficacité des services de garde d'enfants à l'égard de l'emploi des femmes est plus forte dans les pays où le régime de congé parental est généreux et la protection de l'emploi est élevée.

Des études de cas parmi les pays de l'OCDE ont confirmé le rôle central joué par les dispositifs de congés et de garde des parents, ces deux étant l'objet principal de la littérature d'évaluation des réformes de politique familiale. Dans la continuité de l'approche de Ruhm, les recherches ont mis l'accent sur les changements de législation et se sont tournées vers des designs quasi-expérimentaux, considérés être la simulation la plus crédible des distributions aléatoires. Ceci leur a permis d'appliquer les techniques rigoureuses d'évaluation d'impact (variables instrumentales, différence-de-différences, régression sur discontinuité, matching et propensity score). Ces approches d'inférence causale sont devenues prolifiques dans la recherche microéconomique dans les années 1990, après la célèbre stratégie d'identification par variable instrumentale d'Angrist dans son étude de l'effet de la guerre de Vietnam sur les revenus (1990), l'étude de Card et Krueger sur la qualité des écoles (1992), l'utilisation de la régression sur discontinuité par Angrist et Lavy pour estimer l'effet de la taille des classes sur la réussite des élèves (1997), ou encore l'application par Duflo à la construction d'écoles et leurs effets sur le marché du travail dans un pays en développement (2000). En ce qui concerne la politique familiales et les comportements d'emploi et de fertilité, les études sont abondantes. Cependant, dû à l'extrême variété dans les dispositifs de congés et dans les réformes, il est impossible de tirer une leçon générale sur leurs effets. Considérons ici les études qui se rapportent à des régimes relativement longs, comme ceux que nous observons dans les PECO. En France, Piketty (2005) analyse l'impact d'une extension d'éligibilité au congé parental d'une

durée de 2 ans sur la fécondité et l'emploi des mères, tandis que Moschion (2010) analyse son impact sur l'interaction entre la fécondité et l'offre de travail. Tous deux concluent que l'extension du congé a un impact négatif sur la participation/l'emploi des mères éligibles. Une distinction très utile entre les incitations fournies par la protection de l'emploi et l'allocation monétaire est introduite par Lalive et Zweimuller (2009) et Schonberg et Ludsteck (2014). En effet, dans le système tchèque, les réformes ont prolongé le paiement de l'allocation au-delà de la protection de l'emploi, et je confirme en effet la conclusion selon laquelle cet écart a un effet négatif sur l'emploi.

2.2 Les normes de genre et les régimes d'Etat Social

Un autre type de littérature exploité dans cette thèse porte sur les attitudes à l'égard des femmes et du travail, aux niveaux individuel et étatique. Tout d'abord, il a été établi que ces attitudes influent sur les résultats économiques (Alesina et Giuliano, 2010), que nous les incluons parmi les préférences individuelles sous le terme de culture (Fernandez, 2007), normes (Bertrand et al. 2016), valeurs (Alesina et al. 2015), mentalité (Senik, 2014) ou identité (Akerlof et Kranton, 2000). Ces études, parmi beaucoup d'autres, confirment l'importance des croyances que nous avons sur notre rôle au sein de la famille vis-à-vis de nos comportements à l'intérieur et à l'extérieur du ménage. Cela semble très intuitif, car les individus cherchent à conformer leurs actions à l'idée qu'ils se font de ces actions, afin de ne pas subir de conséquences négatives de la dissonance cognitive (Akerlof et Dickens, 1982). En termes plus simples, les attitudes de genre sont importantes pour les stratégies de conciliation travail-famille des ménages, et sous l'hypothèse que les attitudes diffèrent entre populations / pays, des politiques similaires sont susceptibles de produire des résultats différents. Fortin (2005) compare la prévalence des « opinions égalitaires » dans les pays de l'OCDE et montre que les attitudes conservatrices vis-à-vis de la division sexuelle du travail (c'est-à-dire les hommes en emploi et les femmes au foyer) corréleront de manière significative et négative avec les niveaux d'emploi des femmes. Ceci étant dit, Fortin admet que, comme nous le verrons, les PECO représentent des valeurs aberrantes et combinent les attitudes conservatrices et des taux élevés d'emploi des femmes. L'explication de ce phénomène sera mise en évidence dans la section suivante.

La recherche en politique sociale comparative a groupé les pays en fonction de ces attitudes genrées dans les politiques et sur le marché du travail, dans la continuité du travail

fondateur sur les régimes État-Providence d'Esping-Andersen (1999). Lewis (1992), Gauthier (1996) et Sainsbury (1999) adoptent une optique similaire, mais ajoutent explicitement la dimension de genre, absente des travaux d'Esping-Andersen. Ces auteurs passent en revue les régimes de l'État providence (libéral, corporatiste et social-démocrate) sous le prisme des hypothèses sous-jacentes sur la production rémunérée et non rémunérée, et concluent qu'il existe principalement deux pôles: les femmes considérées comme producteurs domestiques et implicitement dépendants du revenu du partenaire (modèle de monsieur gagne-pain) ou la provision collective de services de garde et d'autres dispositifs permettant aux femmes de s'insérer sur le marché du travail (modèle à double revenu). Quelles leçons pouvons-nous en tirer vis-à-vis de la conciliation travail-famille et de l'emploi maternel en République tchèque ? Aucune directement, vu que ces typologies fondatrices n'incluent pas les PECO. Ces pays restent le terrain d'étude de chercheurs locaux et/ou spécialisés dans cette région, qui étendent ces typologies et appliquent ces analyses aux pays post-communistes, comme nous le verrons dans la dernière sous-section sur la littérature régionale.

2.3 Littérature sur l'Europe centrale et orientale

Si nous continuons à suivre la structure de cette revue de littérature (i.e. littérature économique sur l'évaluation des politiques, puis contributions plus larges en sociologie et politique sociale), nous noterons que la première est très rare, et la seconde relativement abondante. En termes d'évaluation de l'impact de la politique familiale, les études les plus proches sont des évaluations hongroises de politique de garde d'enfants (Lovasz et Szabo-Morvai, 2015) et de congé parental (Balint et Kollo, 2008). Lovasz et Szabo-Morvai estiment l'effet de la disponibilité des services de garde sur l'activité de la mère, dans un cadre proche de régression sur discontinuité, et soulignent l'importance des normes culturelles de l'âge de la transition de l'enfant du soin maternel à la garde collective : les « préférences de séparation ». Balint et Kollo (2008) soulignent le manque d'évaluations des politiques familiales en dépit de leurs échelles et de leurs coûts, et le commentaire reste pertinent encore aujourd'hui. Dans une étude appliquée à la Russie soviétique, Malkova (2014) estime l'effet du congé parental sur la fertilité, et montre un effet positif à long terme - alors que la littérature n'est généralement conclusive que sur les résultats à court terme.

Dans une perspective comparative, Matysiak (2011) étudie les tensions travail-famille dans les PECO en transition économique et politique, et rapproche les niveaux de fécondité

avec les niveaux de conflit travail-famille. Elle présente l'augmentation substantielle des conflits travail-famille après la transition de 1989 comme un facteur explicatif de la baisse spectaculaire de la fécondité, et la diversité des politiques de conciliation explique alors les différentes tendances de fécondité depuis 1989. Elle insiste également que plus d'études de cas sont nécessaires pour mettre en évidence les interactions entre les politiques, l'emploi et la fécondité dans ces pays. Quant aux rôles sociaux de genre, Fortin (2005), dans son étude comparative entre les pays de l'OCDE, classe les PECO en transition comme les pays qui « combinent l'ancienne idéologie communiste de l'égalité de genre avec les valeurs traditionnelles et orthodoxes de la famille » (p.422). Gauthier, Emery et Bartova (2016) étudient les mères au foyer et le contrôle social perçu, et concluent que les attitudes traditionnelles sont un obstacle au retour à l'emploi. Scharle (2015) analyse trois pays d'Europe centrale (République tchèque, Hongrie et Pologne), compare les attitudes genrées dans les médias et dans le discours politique, et conclut que les attitudes conservatrices sont dominantes, avec seulement quelques changements très récents vers une plus grande participation des pères aux soins aux enfants en République tchèque et en Pologne. Enfin, d'un point de vue plus conceptuel, Saxonberg (2013) met en évidence les limites de la typologie, largement utilisée pour les politiques familiales post-transition, en termes de familisation / défamilisation. En effet, de nombreux chercheurs ont utilisé cette typologie et ont décrit la politique familiale post-transitionnelle comme « refamilisante » (Haskova Uhde 2009, Saxonberg Sirovatka 2009, Sobotka 2016, Stastna et al. 2016). Cela permet de mettre en évidence la tendance au déplacement de la responsabilité de garde d'enfants depuis la collectivité vers les ménages par, entre autres, le prolongement de congés parentaux universels et la fermeture de crèches et d'écoles maternelle. Cependant, comme Saxonberg souligne, cette typologie manque de profondeur explicative car elle ignore la répartition des rôles entre les hommes et les femmes. Une politique qui introduit un congé exclusivement ciblé sur les pères, est-elle familialiste ? Oui, dans le sens où elle favorise la prise en charge parentale, par opposition à une garde collective. Mais elle suit aussi une orientation défamilisante sous le prisme de l'égalité des genres, en favorisant l'emploi maternel et en encourageant des substituts au soin maternel. Par conséquent, l'interprétation communément admise comme familialiste synonyme de conservateur et défamilisant synonyme de progressif, ne tient pas. Saxonberg offre une dichotomie alternative, avec les politiques qui promeuvent la division genrée des tâches, en opposition aux politiques de « défont » la division genrée en cherchant à modérer la spécialisation des rôles. Ainsi, Saxonberg isole mieux l'enjeu de division/convergence des rôles sociaux de genre. Si cette typologie est pertinente pour des comparaisons à l'échelle

mondiale, elle est surtout particulièrement utile pour l'étude de la République tchèque, où les rôles de genre ont subi des changements importants, comme nous le voyons dans le troisième chapitre.

Quant à la littérature spécifiquement axée sur la République tchèque, l'accent y est mis sur l'écart salarial en économie (Mysikova 2012, Jurajda 2003, Vecernik, 1986), sur la garde des enfants et les trajectoires professionnelles en sociologie (Haskova 2007 et 2011, Kucharova 2006 et 2009, Krizkova et al., 2011) et sur la fécondité en démographie (Sobotka et al. 2008, Sobotka 2015). Bien que Mysikova (2011) souligne que les PECO ont une tradition beaucoup plus courte en termes de recherche sur le marché du travail et le genre, il y a aujourd'hui clairement un *gender mainstreaming* - une intégration des questions de genre dans l'analyse de ces trois sciences sociales. En ce qui concerne la politique familiale, Haskova et Uhde (2009) mènent une analyse historique approfondie sur le siècle précédent, et Stastna et al. (2016) analysent les modèles de fécondité tchèque et slovaque et leurs relations avec les réformes de politique familiale. Étant donné qu'ils étudient les mêmes réformes qui font l'objet de cette thèse et qu'ils évaluent leur effet sur les taux de secondes naissances, leur analyse est complémentaire à ma propre étude de l'impact de ces réformes sur l'emploi maternel. Ils concluent que l'extension des allocations parentales en 1995 a conduit à une augmentation des intervalles entre les naissances, et que l'introduction de congés plus courts en 2008 a mené, elle, à une stabilisation durable de l'intervalle de naissance du deuxième enfant. Étant donné que ces réformes n'ont pas encore été présentées en détail dans ce résumé, l'objet de la section suivante est de familiariser le lecteur avec les politiques familiales tchèques ainsi que le contexte social, économique et politique dans lequel elles ont été mises en vigueur.

3. Contexte institutionnel

Après l'examen de la littérature axée sur les PECO et la République tchèque, la prochaine étape est de décrire le contexte institutionnel local comme une condition *sine qua non* de toute analyse de comportements de conciliation travail/famille des ménages. La forme actuelle de la politique familiale avec ses traits à la fois universalistes, conservateurs et libéraux semble inintelligible si nous ne mettons pas en évidence la superposition successive des réformes, émanant de structures économiques et politiques radicalement différentes avant et après la transition. Je vais présenter le contexte socio-économique, ainsi que la politique sociale

et familiale, en trois périodes : avant 1989, après 1989, et au temps de l'intégration à l'Union Européenne.

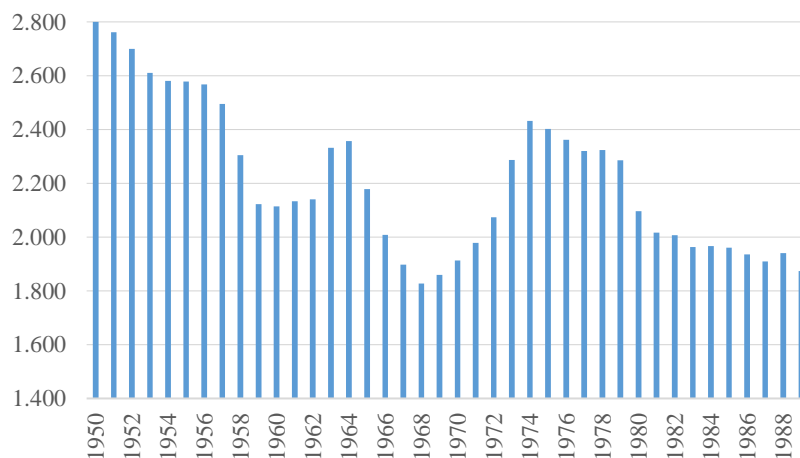
3.1 Economie centralement planifiée et son héritage

La période de l'économie planifiée et du pouvoir politique centralisé a commencé peu après la 2nde guerre mondiale. Les forces productives ont été organisées sur le modèle et les instructions de l'URSS, de même pour les politiques sociales. A cette époque, la Tchécoslovaquie présentait des similitudes avec d'autres pays d'Europe centrale, comme la Pologne et la Hongrie⁵³. Dans le bloc de l'Est, l'économie planifiée a conduit à une gestion spécifique de la population active, marquée par un fort dirigisme. Si l'emploi obligatoire ne concernait pas les femmes mariées, les prestations sociales et familiales étaient conditionnées par l'emploi, et le modèle du double revenu était prépondérant parmi les ménages tchèques. L'emploi féminin à temps plein est également dû à un développement économique extensif dans les années 1950, tiré par l'industrie lourde. Cette production était très coûteuse en termes de main-d'œuvre et la croissance économique était fondée sur une utilisation croissante de la population active (Kornai, 1992). Le résultat de ce système productif lourd et inefficace était une pénurie permanente de main-d'œuvre, et donc des taux d'emploi des femmes élevés. L'emploi des femmes était couvert par une rhétorique politique d'émancipation, qui faisait partie de l'idéologie communiste. Cependant, l'émancipation ne concernait que la promotion de l'emploi, et le discours n'était pas appliqué à la division des tâches entre femmes et hommes au sein du ménage. La production domestique était considérée comme une tâche féminine, que l'État aidait à soulager en concevant des cuisines communes, des laveries, des crèches - même des crèches où l'on accueillait les enfants sur la semaine de travail entière dans les années 1950 (Haskova, 2010). À cet égard, l'émancipation a été menée par un État interventionniste paternaliste, dans le sens où il cherchait à exercer un contrôle sur les individus à l'intérieur du ménage (Gal et Kligman, 2000). Ce serait une interprétation erronée que de l'associer à une prévalence plus faible des attitudes traditionnelles vis-à-vis du rôle domestique des femmes. L'égalité des genres dans son acception féministe était considérée comme une pseudo-science

⁵³ Après la révolution, l'ex-Tchécoslovaquie composée de la République tchèque et de la République slovaque a formé avec la Pologne et la Hongrie ce qui est maintenant appelé le « Quatre de Visegrad ». Leur passé commun en fait un groupe cohérent pour toutes sortes d'études en sciences sociales. Pour les études directement axées sur la conciliation travail-famille, voir Scharle (2007).

« bourgeoise » et le terme féminisme a même été exclu d'usage dans l'espace public (Siklova, 1997, p.266.). Il convient également de noter que les femmes occupaient souvent des emplois de second rang, et le ratio des salaires femmes-hommes était assez élevé et stable tout au long de la période : 65,8% en 1960, 68,4% en 1979 (Vecernik, 1987). Cela étant dit, l'accent politique sur la participation des femmes aux efforts de production a conduit à une augmentation sans équivoque de l'emploi féminin. L'emploi à temps plein des femmes s'est répandu parmi les femmes tchécoslovaques à travers l'âge actif : en 1955 déjà, les femmes comptaient pour 42% de la population active (Haskova, 2007). L'emploi des femmes à grande échelle, ainsi que l'accès aux contraceptifs et à l'avortement, ont induit une baisse de la fécondité, qui est devenue alarmante dans les années 1960 et a marqué le début d'une politique familiale nataliste. Le taux de fécondité a enregistré une baisse significative entre 1950 et 1970 (2,8 à 1,9). Il est descendu aux alentours du seuil de renouvellement des générations à 1959, et en dessous de ce niveau en 1966.

Figure 1 Total Fertility Rate 1950-1989



Source : CZSO, 2016

Préoccupés par ce déclin, les pouvoirs publics ont commencé à mettre en place une politique sociale et familiale progressivement de plus en plus généreuse. Bien que cette évolution concernait une large gamme d'instruments de politique sociale, ici l'accent sera mis sur les mesures les plus directement liées à l'équilibre travail-famille, c'est-à-dire sur celles visant les enfants d'âge préscolaire. Pendant le congé de maternité, les mères bénéficiaient de

la protection de l'emploi et des allocations de maternité puis des allocations de maternité « supplémentaires », équivalentes des allocations parentales actuelles. Le soutien financier pour les familles avec jeunes enfants comprenait également une prime à l'accouchement, des allocations familiales et des déductions fiscales. La garde d'enfants prenait principalement la forme de la création d'établissements publics pour les 0 à 2 ans (crèches) et de 3 à 5 ans (maternelles).

Concrètement, le congé de maternité a été prolongé à 18 semaines en 1948, puis à 22 semaines en 1964 et 26 semaines en 1968. Le « congé de maternité supplémentaire » a été créé en 1964, et les allocations de maternité ont été étendues en 1969 de sorte à couvrir les mères pendant un an s'il y avait plus d'un jeune enfant dans le ménage. Cette politique nataliste soutenait les familles de plusieurs manières directes et indirectes : des crédits pour les jeunes mariés, des crédits conjugaux avec des taux d'intérêt progressifs en fonction du nombre d'enfants, des taux d'imposition progressifs, du matériel scolaire gratuit et une réduction d'autres coûts tels que le logement ou les transports (Haskova et Uhde, 2009). Une taxe négative était appliquée à des aliments de base et à d'autres biens et services considérés comme essentiels - dans la pratique, ils étaient subventionnés par l'Etat. Ainsi, les préoccupations concernant la fertilité ont conduit la politique de la famille vers un virage pro-nataliste et interventionniste (Kocourková, 2002), axé principalement sur deux aspects : allonger le congé pour les mères de plus d'un enfant d'âge préscolaire, et élargir le système de garde publique.

Cette seconde orientation est une caractéristique importante de la gestion communiste du conflit travail-famille, visant à la création d'un réseau institutionnel de garde d'enfants large et financièrement abordable pour tous les enfants tchécoslovaques, afin que les mères puissent pleinement participer à l'effort de production. Pendant les années 1960, la part des enfants en maternelles a atteint 56% (contre 26% en 1950), et la garde est passée de temps partiel au temps plein pour la plupart des enfants (Haskova et Uhde, 2009). Quant aux crèches, leur nombre a également augmenté sensiblement, avec le même objectif de défamilialisation des soins et de libération de la main-d'œuvre féminine, mais dans une moindre mesure que les maternelles. Entre les années 1950 et les années 1980, la part d'enfants en crèches a augmenté de 3% à 18% et la part d'enfants en maternelles est passé de 26% à 81% (Haskova, 2007). Après cette accélération des mesures de politique familiale dans les années 1960, la baisse du taux de fécondité a en effet été suspendue, même inversée pendant une décennie, mais l'objectif de transfert des soins des ménages vers l'Etat n'a été que partiellement atteint. Une limite importante provient de la différenciation entre le statut des écoles maternelles et des crèches, marquée par une attitude positive de l'opinion publique envers les unes et une méfiance

générale envers les autres. Bien que les maternelles aient été incluses, depuis 1948, dans le système éducatif tchécoslovaque géré par le Ministère de l'éducation, les crèches sont restées sous la responsabilité du ministère de la Santé. Par conséquent, ces dernières ne sont pas considérées comme ayant un but éducatif, et leur gestion, similaire aux établissements de santé, a été abondamment critiquée. Cette attitude de méfiance est restée inchangée pendant toute l'ère communiste, et au-delà. Par conséquent, les parents donnaient la priorité à la garde à domicile fournie par les mères ou grand-mères pour les enfants de moins 3 ans. Pour cette raison, entre autres, le congé de maternité a été étendu à nouveau, d'abord à 2 ans en 1970, puis à 3 ans en 1987 (toujours sous condition de deux jeunes enfants dans le ménage). Comme nous le verrons, cette tendance s'est encore accélérée après la révolution.

Les comportements de conciliation pré-1989 ont été gouvernés par une forte autorité politique centrale, qui a pris un virage pro-nataliste dans les années 1960, mis en place un vaste réseau de crèches et de maternelles et a étendu le congé de maternité ainsi que le congé de maternité supplémentaire. À l'automne 1989, la transition vers l'économie de marché a modifié le contexte institutionnel de la conciliation : une nouvelle orientation politique préconisait désormais de faire davantage appel au marché, tandis que les pratiques et les politiques de conciliation sont restées fortement ancrées dans les habitudes de l'ère précédente.

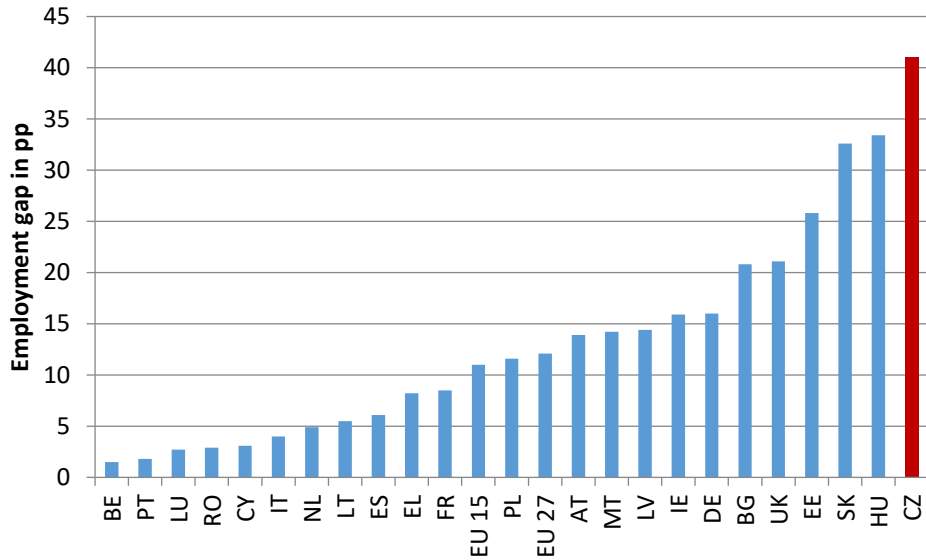
3.2 Économie et société après la transition

Le marché du travail émergent, marqué par les privatisations et restructurations des entreprises publiques, l'entrée des capitaux étrangers et le souci de compétitivité, a progressivement changé la structure de la population active et a introduit des tensions et un phénomène nouveau – le chômage. Le taux de participation des femmes et des hommes a quelque peu diminué, et la participation des femmes est passée de 52,3% en 1993 à 50,6% en 2005 et au-dessous de 50% à partir de 2007 (CZSO, 2011). Ceci est en partie dû à une hausse de l'éducation tertiaire notamment pour les femmes (Filipova et Pytlikova, 2016). Dans les premières années de la transition, la Tchécoslovaquie a enregistré une hausse relativement limitée du chômage, par rapport à d'autres pays de la région CEE : on n'y dépasse pas 5% avant 1997. Mais dans la deuxième partie des années 1990, la tendance s'est accélérée et le taux de chômage a atteint 8,7% 1999 : 10,3% pour les femmes et 7,3% pour les hommes (CZSO 2011). Le taux de chômage féminin était plus élevé que le chômage masculin, et les politiques ont

opté pour l'incitation à l'inactivité de certaines catégories de travailleurs, comme les travailleurs âgés et les mères des jeunes enfants. Le niveau de vie a aussi joué un rôle important dans l'offre de travail après la transition. Les prix de la majorité des biens et services n'étaient plus fixés centralement, alors que la progression des salaires nominaux est restée étroitement surveillée afin d'éviter une spirale inflationniste : associé avec une réduction générale des avantages familiaux, ceci a conduit à une baisse du revenu réel temporaire mais forte (Atkinson et Micklewright, 1992). Ceci a confronté les ménages à une forte incitation à maintenir un double revenu. L'offre de travail des femmes par âge a formé un « M » asymétrique, avec de faibles niveaux d'emploi pour les femmes entre 25 et 30 ans, et des niveaux élevés, par rapport à d'autres pays européens, pour les femmes entre 40 et 55 ans. Pour la précision de la comparaison internationale, une autre caractéristique héritée de l'organisation communiste de la production est à noter, qui est une prédominance importante de contrats à temps plein. Par conséquent, les femmes occupant un emploi travaillaient presque exclusivement à temps plein, avant et après la maternité, avec une très longue discontinuité au milieu du cycle de vie. Le tableau suivant représente graphiquement ces écarts entre l'emploi des mères et l'emploi des femmes sans enfants en bas âge. Ce graphique présente les données de 2010⁵⁴, mais étant donné que l'ère de l'UE met au contraire l'accent sur l'augmentation de l'emploi maternel après le déclin post-transition, il est raisonnable de penser que cette spécificité tchèque s'est développée dans les années 1990.

Figure 2 Employment gap, women with and without children under the age of 6

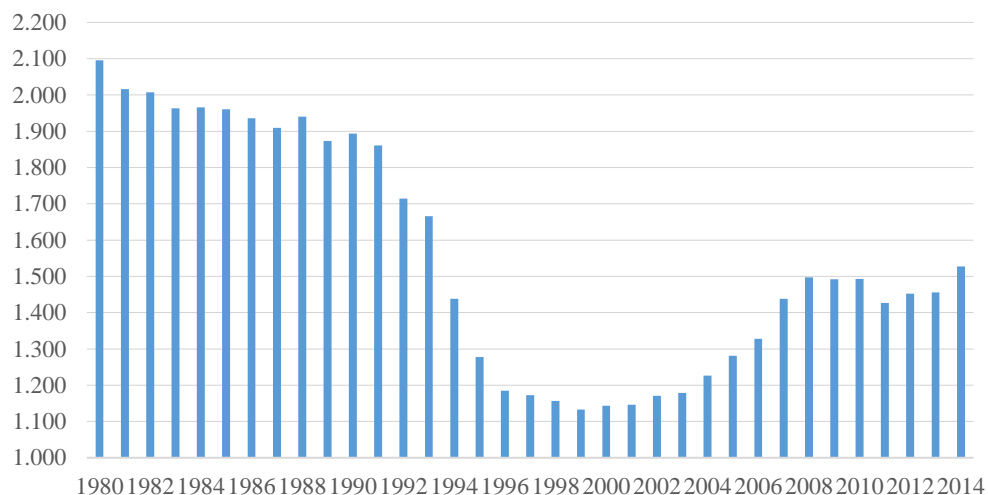
⁵⁴ Données similaires non disponibles pour les années précédentes.



Source: EU Labour Force Survey, in European Commission Indicators for monitoring the Employment Guidelines (2010)

Dans la majorité des pays européens, le taux d'emploi des femmes ayant des enfants est plus faible que le taux d'emploi des femmes sans enfants ou avec des enfants âgés de plus de 6 ans. En République tchèque, cependant, cet effet négatif de la maternité sur l'emploi est devenu nettement plus prononcé que dans les autres pays, ce qui s'explique par la disparité entre le taux d'emploi relativement élevé des femmes en dehors de l'âge de procréer, et un très faible taux d'emploi des mères. Cet écart met en évidence le passage d'un modèle de parentalité et emploi simultanés, vers une augmentation des tensions travail-famille. Ce conflit prend alors la forme d'une succession de transitions entre activité et inactivité, ou même d'un choix entre une carrière d'un côté, ou une famille de l'autre. Et dans le contexte de l'augmentation des incertitudes économiques et des contraintes financières pesant sur les ménages, la priorité va à l'emploi aux dépens de la fécondité. Dans les années 1990, les femmes tchèques ont massivement choisi de reporter ou même de rejeter la maternité, et le taux de fécondité a enregistré une chute sans précédent, comme indiqué dans le graphique suivant.

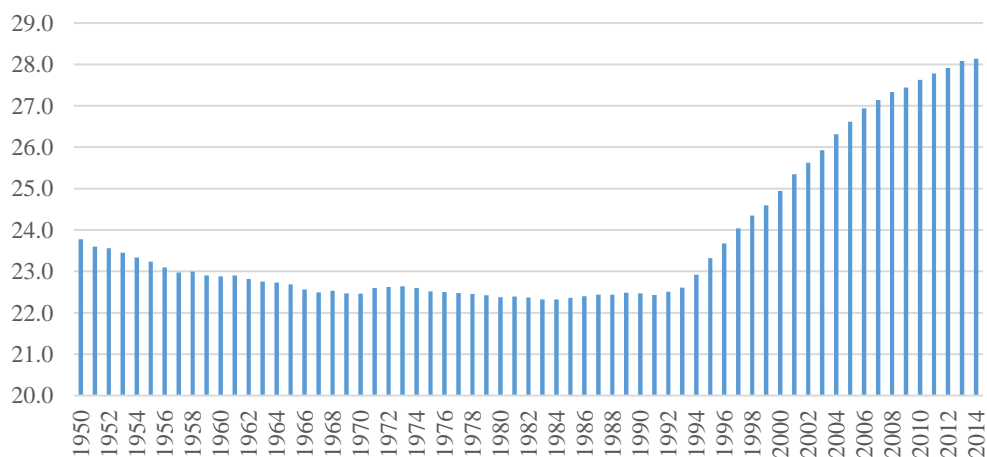
Figure 3 Total fertility rate 1980-2014



Source : CZSO 2016

Cette baisse le long des années 1990 fut le résultat à la fois des effets de quantum et de tempo. Les études démographiques montrent que le phénomène des intentions non réalisées était symptomatique de la transformation (Stastna, 2009). En effet, au cours de la première décennie de la transition, nous avons observé une augmentation rapide de l'âge moyen des femmes à la naissance de leur 1^{er} enfant. La République tchèque, comme le reste de l'Europe centrale, a connu l'un des plus grands changements dans le timing de la formation de la famille parmi les pays de l'OCDE. Ceci est dû entre autres au fait que l'âge moyen à la formation de la famille et à la première naissance était particulièrement faible avant la transition, comme en témoigne le graphique 4.

Figure 4 Mothers' mean age at first birth, 1950-2014



Source : CZSO, 2016

Entre 1975 et 1989, l'âge moyen à la première naissance ne dépasse pas 22,5. Il a ensuite fortement augmenté tout au long de la transition, avec 0,4 an (5 mois) par an. Parmi les raisons de ce changement, il convient de mentionner l'évolution des normes et l'acquisition de nouvelles opportunités pour étudier et voyager à l'étranger, mais aussi le coût de la vie et surtout le coût des enfants. Par rapport à la période pré-transition, le coût des enfants a considérablement augmenté avec la disparition des subventions aux biens et services essentiels, des prêts avantageux et d'autres supports directs et indirects. Il y avait plus d'incertitude pour fonder une famille et le danger du chômage et des coûts plus élevés de la vie ont conduit à plus de précautions dans la planification de la formation de la famille (Sobotka T. et al., 2008). Cette incompatibilité croissante des tâches parentales et de l'attachement au marché du travail pour les femmes tchèques doit aussi être replacée dans le contexte du manque de services de garde d'enfants. La République tchèque a enregistré une forte baisse du nombre de crèches, la plus forte parmi tous les pays environnants. Cette évolution est abondamment exploitée par des chercheurs locaux, comme le principal obstacle institutionnel pour concilier famille et travail (Haskova, 2007; Kocourková, 2002; Kucharova et al, 2009, Scharle, 2007).

Depuis la transition, la fermeture des crèches s'explique aussi, outre les tendances de la fécondité, par la nouvelle orientation de politique sociale, plus résiduelle et marquée par des réductions de dépenses, bien que toujours explicitement conservatrice vis-à-vis du genre. Les premières années de transition constituaient un climat pro-réforme pour les politiques publiques et les politiques sociales en particulier. Les réformes véhiculaient une « animosité idéologique envers les institutions et les politiques de l'État-providence » (Potucek 2001, p.102). Dans le domaine de la politique familiale, ce changement a pris la forme d'un rejet des anciens objectifs pro-natalistes, remplacés par la rhétorique du libre choix. La fertilité est devenue une question de préférences individuelles, à laisser hors de la portée de l'autorité publique. La responsabilité individuelle fut promue comme contrepartie de l'ancien paternalisme de l'État (Vecernik, 1993), et la garde publique a perdu dans une large mesure le financement et l'attention du public. La division entre les crèches et les maternelles est restée d'actualité, et ces deux types d'établissements ont suivi des évolutions différentes. L'offre de maternelles a diminué avec la fécondité (comme nous l'avons vu dans la figure 3, celle-ci a diminué sensiblement chaque année dans les années 1990 et a atteint le « fond du fond » de 1.13 enfants par femme en 1999 (Sobotka, 2001)). Quant aux crèches, cependant, le déclin est

sans précédent, et dépasse de loin la baisse de la demande : de 1 700 crèches avant la transition, nous passons à 1 043 en 1990, puis 486 en 2003 (Kucharova et al., 2009). Une grande partie des crèches fermées était composée d'anciennes crèches d'entreprise des sociétés d'Etat : leur restructuration dans le cadre du marché concurrentiel a mis l'accent sur leur fonction de production au détriment des fonctions sociales et politiques autrefois prédominantes.

En ce qui concerne le régime de congé parental, son évolution suivait de près la disparition des crèches. Le congé de maternité supplémentaire (nouvellement appelé congé parental) a été étendu à 3 ans pour tous les enfants en 1990 et l'allocation a cessé d'être conditionnée par la présence de 2 enfants à charge. Par conséquent, dans les années 1990, le retrait des mères du marché du travail pendant 3 ans est devenu une norme (Haskova, 2007), et les enfants n'entraient en maternelle que lorsqu'ils avaient 3 ans. Cette évolution généreuse du congé parental pourrait sembler paradoxale dans le contexte de transition vers moins d'interventionnisme, mais ici la continuité sous-jacente des institutions de politique familiale a exercé une forte pression ; sans parler de l'opportunité d'apaiser les tensions sur le marché du travail et de renforcer la paix sociale en ces temps incertains. De même, la prime de naissance et les allocations familiales ont été maintenues et sont restées universalistes jusqu'en 1995. Dans la seconde moitié des années 1990, les déséquilibres du marché du travail ont été de plus en plus importants et le chômage est devenu une préoccupation économique et sociale majeure. Dans ce contexte de coûts croissants de la transition, plusieurs réformes ont visé à réduire les tensions sur le marché du travail en encourageant certains groupes de travailleurs à se retirer du marché du travail. Par conséquent, lorsque le système de protection sociale a été restructuré en 1995, le régime de congé parental a été réformé et le paiement des allocations parentales a été étendu à 4 ans au lieu de 3. Toutefois, cette extension n'a pas été accompagnée d'une extension de la protection de l'emploi (c'est-à-dire la période pendant laquelle l'employeur est tenu de reprendre le travailleur à la position précédente ou équivalente au plus 3 ans). C'est pour cela que cette réforme a été particulièrement intéressante du point de vue de retour au travail, et elle est traitée en détail dans le premier chapitre de cette thèse. Les représentants des institutions internationales occidentales telles que la Banque mondiale, qui étaient présents aux côtés des décideurs locaux pendant la transition, ont recommandé cette mesure comme un moyen d'assurer la paix sociale et de minimiser les coûts de la transition en soulageant les pressions sur le marché du travail (Visek, 2006). Ce projet de congé parental plus long, porté par l'Union chrétienne-démocrate, fut également une opposition conservatrice à la politique

communiste, qui favorisait la garde publique, défamilialisée. Il convient de noter que les pères étaient désormais également autorisés à demander l'allocation parentale, d'abord sans l'aspect de la sécurité d'emploi, puis, à partir de 2001, dans les mêmes conditions que les mères. Cependant, l'impact de ces changements juridiques semble négligeable, étant donné que le taux de pères en congé parental ne dépasse pas 0,8% dans les années 1990, et atteint seulement 1,1% dans les années 2000. Les mesures de politiques de conciliation étaient donc plutôt conservatrices à cet égard, car elles visaient la division traditionnelle des responsabilités plutôt que de promouvoir des modes rapides de retour au travail et l'égalité des genres. L'effet prévisible (qu'il soit intentionnel ou indirect) de ces politiques sur la participation des femmes au marché du travail est négatif. Dans les années 2000 cependant, l'adhésion à l'UE a créé des pressions pour changer cette orientation et mettre l'accent sur la participation des femmes.

3.3 L'adhésion à l'Union européenne

Pendant le processus d'intégration à l'UE dans les années 2000, l'égalité des genres et de l'égalité des chances sur le marché du travail ont émergé sur l'agenda politique, et la Commission européenne a pointé les limites des politiques tchèques de conciliation travail-famille en déclarant qu' « un défi majeur concerne les graves difficultés auxquelles les femmes ayant des enfants sont confrontées lorsqu'elles réintègrent le marché du travail après un congé de maternité » (CE 2012, p.4). Comme nous l'avons vu dans la sous-section précédente, la législation post-transitionnelle a donné la priorité à l'exact opposé : faciliter les transitions à l'inactivité en mettant l'accent sur le soin maternel et non plus public. Cet écart entre l'orientation de la politique familiale tchèque et la tendance de l'UE a été exprimé le plus clairement à travers l'annonce des objectifs de Barcelone, et la réaction tchèque à ces derniers. En effet, les objectifs de Barcelone, dans le but de fournir d'ici à 2010 les services de garde à 90% des enfants entre 3 et 6 ans et à 33% d'enfants entre 0 et 3 ans, ont rencontré une opposition radicale par les politiciens tchèques, qui ont affirmé que si les PECO avaient été membres de l'UE en 2002, ces objectifs n'auraient jamais été adoptés⁵⁵. Il n'y avait plus que 49 crèches en 2007 (Kucharova, 2009), et la baisse s'est poursuivie jusqu'en 2012, quand le ministère de la Santé a officiellement retiré les crèches publiques de sa juridiction. Comme aucun autre

⁵⁵ Prononcé par Petr Necas, le ministre du Travail et des Affaires sociales en 2009, à l'occasion de la présidence tchèque de l'UE. Voir le discours à <http://www.vlada.cz/cz/media-centrum/aktualne/barcelonske-cile---projev-ministra-p--necase-53292/>

ministère n'a pris en charge ce secteur, le statut juridique des crèches publiques a été abandonné et les crèches ont fermé ou sont devenues des établissements privés. Par conséquent, depuis 2013, une politique libérale a mis l'accent sur des initiatives privées et a promu une garde d'enfants basée sur le marché au lieu du service public. Cette réforme faisait partie de la libéralisation en cours de l'Etat social (Potucek, 2001). Au lieu de l'ancienne prise en charge directe, le gouvernement a conçu un cadre juridique indirect en facilitant la création de maternelles d'entreprise et de « groupes d'enfants ». La loi sur les groupes d'enfants (247/2014 Coll.) a été adoptée en 2014. Elle promeut la création de micro-structures alternatives avec des coûts considérablement plus faibles pour les finances publiques, et encourage la création de maternelles d'entreprise. Ces structures ont été autorisées à recevoir les enfants plus jeunes que l'âge légal applicable aux maternelles publiques (à savoir 2 ans), et ont donc également contribué à remplacer les crèches publiques abandonnées. En même temps, le Fonds social européen (ESF) s'est adressé aux entreprises et associations désireuses de créer des établissements de garde. Les fonds distribués par l'ESF couvrent les coûts initiaux des projets, mais après cela la seule subvention qui reste est de l'ordre de déduction fiscale.

En ce qui concerne l'allocation pendant le congé parental, dans les années 2000 une série d'amendements⁵⁶ a assoupli les conditions d'accès, pour augmenter la participation des bénéficiaires au marché du travail. En revanche en 2007, l'allocation a connu une augmentation temporaire mais significative, interprétée comme un mouvement stratégique avant les élections (car coûteuse et incompatible avec l'objectif d'emploi féminin élevé). L'année suivante, en 2008, cette hausse a été annulée par le projet de loi sur la stabilisation du budget public (261/2007 Coll.). Cette réforme des finances publiques a conduit notamment à un changement majeur au système de congé en établissant un système « multi-speed ». Toujours en place aujourd'hui, il laisse aux mères le choix de la durée de l'allocation entre 2, 3 ou 4 ans avec le même montant total⁵⁷ distribué à chaque bénéficiaire. Le choix est libre, à une exception près : les femmes qui ne travaillaient pas avant le congé (chômeuses et inactives) sont exclues du choix de la durée et ne peuvent recevoir l'allocation que sur la période la plus longue, 4 années. Quant aux mères qui recevaient un salaire avant la maternité, l'éligibilité à la piste la plus courte (2 ans) est calculée en fonction de leur salaire (ou du salaire de leur partenaire)⁵⁸. Ainsi,

⁵⁶ En 2001, 2004, 2006 et 2012, augmentant le maximum autorisé des heures travaillées et du revenu, ainsi que, pour l'enfant, le nombre maximum d'heures passées en maternelle.

⁵⁷ Entre 2008 et 2012, le montant total est à peu près le même, alors que depuis 2012, il a été maintenu à exactement 220 000 couronnes tchèques par personne.

⁵⁸ La durée est choisie par le parent, mais soumise à la condition que le montant mensuel ne dépasse pas 70% de l'ancien salaire de l'un des parents (pas nécessairement celui qui prend le congé parental).

en fait, le choix de recevoir l'allocation élevée sur une courte période et revenir rapidement à l'emploi est offert aux femmes vivant dans des ménages à revenus moyens et haurs, tandis que les autres restent par défaut dans l'ancien modèle. Cette réforme a des implications importantes sur les incitations en termes d'offre de travail, et elles sont étudiées en détail dans le deuxième chapitre. En général, les années 2000, et en particulier la réforme de 2008, incarnent un changement notable dans l'orientation de la politique familiale, en opposition avec l'effet refamilisant des politiques antérieures. J'ai étudié la quintessence de chacune des deux orientations de la politique familiale, à savoir deux grandes réformes de congé parental avec des effets prévisibles opposés sur l'emploi maternel, avant de compléter l'analyse en quittant la perspective politique au profit des préférences normatives des ménages. La dernière section de ce résumé va rappeler les principaux résultats et esquisser les pistes de recherche qui restent à explorer.

4. Conclusion et Pistes de Recherche

Cette thèse exploite l'emploi féminin dans un contexte géopolitique spécifique - la transition vers l'économie de marché et l'adhésion à l'Union européenne - en relation avec un problème social spécifique - conciliation travail-famille - et depuis la perspective de la politique familiale et des normes culturelles. Elle est motivée par un constat fait par les chercheurs en sciences sociales en Europe centrale et orientale: Les nouveaux modèles de la politique familiale et sociale dans le nouveau contexte socio-économique des marchés du travail concurrentiels donnent des résultats quelque peu insatisfaisants des deux côtés de l'équilibre entre le travail et la famille. Par exemple, Kaliskova et Munich qualifient les femmes tchèques de « potentiel inexploité du pays » (2012), et les statistiques révèlent que l'écart de l'emploi entre les mères et les non-mères y est le plus important de l'OCDE (CE, 2013). Par conséquent, cette recherche s'inscrit dans la littérature qui étudie les déterminants possibles de cette évolution.

Avec la convergence remarquable des investissements en capital humain des hommes et des femmes, l'élaboration de politiques et de pratiques antidiscriminatoires et le passage général des « emplois » aux « carrières » (Goldin, 2006), la recherche sur les déterminants de

Ainsi, les parents pour qui l'allocation mensuelle pour un paiement de 2 ans est supérieure à 70% de leur salaire doivent choisir une forme plus longue.

l'inégalité entre les genres s'est principalement concentrée sur le rôle de la famille, à travers des politiques favorables à la famille (Blau et Kahn, 2013), ainsi que sur des normes de genre (Fortin, 2005). Saxonberg et Szelewa (2007) soulignent l'importance des politiques de conciliation travail-famille dans les pays post-communistes. Il est important de noter que les politiques de conciliation ne sont pas synonymes de politiques familiales. Une politique qui élimine les tensions entre le travail et la famille en incitant les mères à devenir des femmes au foyer pendant une période prolongée n'est pas une politique de « conciliation travail-famille » dans la mesure où elle ne contribue pas à « concilier » la participation au marché du travail avec la maternité. Ces politiques familialistes sont particulièrement présentes dans la région de l'Europe centrale et orientale et, bien qu'elles semblent relativement généreuses envers les familles par la durée des transferts monétaires, elles ne favorisent pas la fécondité (Saxonberg et Szelewa, 2007). En effet, dans un contexte où les femmes aspirent à une carrière et/ou considèrent qu'il est nécessaire de maintenir un revenu issu du travail à temps plein, l'équilibre travail-famille rime avec des politiques de « dégenrison » (Saxonberg, 2013) qui proposent des alternatives à la garde d'enfants par les mères. Matysiak (2011) note que l'Europe centrale et orientale affiche elle aussi une corrélation positive entre l'emploi féminin et les taux de fécondité (Ahn et Mira, 2002), et elle suggère alors que la création d'un cadre institutionnel favorable à des niveaux plus élevés d'emploi maternel est également la seule solution susceptible d'augmenter les taux de fécondité.

Cependant, cette thèse ne couvre pas la question de la fécondité et limite l'analyse à la relation entre les politiques familiales et l'emploi. J'ai concentré mon étude sur les transitions à l'emploi après la naissance, et j'ai considéré les transitions à la maternité comme des points de départ et non pas comme des décisions endogènes. Il y a plusieurs raisons à ce choix, y compris la complexité de la fécondité endogénéisée, le délai plus long nécessaire pour évaluer les réponses aux changements de politique, et enfin l'évolution sans concession des taux de fécondité au cours des années de transition, dont les raisons sont multiples et difficiles à relier à des politiques familiales spécifiques. Cependant, ces évolutions font de la question de la fécondité un point de convergence encore plus important pour les analyses des politiques familiales, et je la considérerai dans mes recherches à venir.

Pour revenir à la littérature sur l'emploi des mères, ma contribution est double. J'ai suivi deux approches, une évaluation des politiques familiales (chapitre 1 et 2) et une analyse des normes de genre (chapitre 3). Dans le premier chapitre, j'ai évalué les effets de la réforme de 1995 sur l'emploi des mères. Cette réforme a été l'apogée de l'orientation post-transitionnelle

de la politique publique peu de temps après la chute du « rideau de fer », qui a consisté à limiter les coûts sociaux à court terme de la hausse du chômage en incitant les mères à l'inactivité et en mettant en œuvre une politique conservatrice (« refamilising ») qui met l'accent sur les responsabilités maternelles et fournit moins de services publics de garde d'enfants. La réforme de 1995 a donc prolongé la durée des allocations de 3 à 4 ans sans prolonger la période de la protection de l'emploi. J'ai utilisé les données de l'Enquête Emploi pour évaluer l'effet de cette réforme sur les effets instantanés et à moyen terme sur l'emploi des femmes, grâce au caractère quasi-expérimental de la réforme. Elle a été adoptée et mise en œuvre inopinément, d'une manière qui exclut l'auto-sélection des mères pour le traitement. Son administration par les autorités centrales exclut également la manipulation du critère d'admissibilité, qui était strictement une fonction de la date de naissance du plus jeune enfant. J'ai constaté un très fort effet négatif immédiat (jusqu'à 23 points de pourcentage), qui reste significatif et important encore deux ans après la fin de la protection de l'emploi. Ce résultat suggère que la réforme a non seulement eu pour effet de transférer une plus grande partie de la population active vers l'inactivité, mais elle a surpassé ces intentions en entravant les retours à l'emploi en moyen terme, avec des effets probables sur les salaires et les pensions ultérieurs. L'analyse de l'hétérogénéité en fonction du niveau d'éducation a mis en évidence un effet étonnamment fort sur les mères très éduquées, en dépit de la faible incitation financière offerte par le montant fixe et unique de l'allocation.

Le deuxième chapitre porte sur une autre réforme du congé parental. Le cadre institutionnel précédent, avec 4 ans de prestations et 3 ans de protection de l'emploi, est resté en vigueur pendant 13 ans, au cours desquels la République tchèque a rejoint l'Union européenne et a fait face à des pressions croissantes pour se conformer aux directives en matière d'égalité entre les sexes sur le marché du travail. Dans le cadre d'un projet de loi de stabilisation des finances publiques en 2008, les prestations parentales ont été remodelées afin de réduire les dépenses publiques et d'inciter à accélérer le retour au travail. Le nouveau système offrait trois voies : une durée de 2 ans, de 3 ans ou de 4 ans, avec un montant total similaire à la fin du congé. J'ai utilisé la même méthode de différences-de-différences que dans le premier chapitre, et j'ai limité l'échantillon aux mères déjà en congé au moment de la mise en œuvre de la réforme afin de maintenir l'expérience naturelle et exclure les comportements de fertilité ou de participation au marché du travail en anticipation du traitement. L'impact à court terme a atteint une augmentation de 15 points de pourcentage de la probabilité d'emploi après la fin de la protection de l'emploi, autant pour l'analyse de l'effet de cohorte que pour l'approche dif-in-dif standard avec les groupes de contrôle composés de mères d'enfants légèrement plus âgés et

de femmes sans enfants. Cette deuxième approche était une stratégie d'identification particulièrement importante ici, car les retours en emploi ont été observés au milieu de la crise globale. Il était donc essentiel de considérer un contrefactuel qui faisait face à un cycle économique identique et devait répondre de la manière la plus proche possible au traitement. Après les résultats de l'évaluation précédente en termes de résultats scolaires, j'ai été curieuse de voir si les mères plus instruites répondraient cette fois-ci à l'incitation financière, c'est-à-dire collecter le montant total plus rapidement et se retirer de la 4e année d'inactivité dans de plus grandes proportions. Mais une fois de plus, l'analyse des sous-échantillons n'a pas révélé une telle relation linéaire. Avec ce résultat, je suis passée au dernier chapitre, dans l'espoir d'éclairer ce contexte dans lequel les mères tchèques définissent leurs stratégies de conciliation travail-famille et se penchent collectivement vers des congés très longs.

Le troisième chapitre présente alors une perspective différente sur l'emploi maternel et la conciliation travail-famille, en mettant l'accent sur les attitudes à l'égard de la spécialisation des tâches. Avec l'utilisation de données subjectives (EVS 1999 et 2008 et GGP 2005 et 2008), j'ai étudié le contexte culturel post-transitionnel, d'abord par rapport à d'autres pays européens, puis les évolutions dans le temps au sein du pays lui-même, afin d'accompagner de manière descriptive la préférence observée pour les longs congés. À une époque où l'agenda politique européen favorise une orientation plutôt progressive vis-à-vis de l'emploi féminin et de l'égalité entre les sexes, nous observons une persistance de la législation sur les longs congés, et une grande proportion de la population tchèque qui optent pour ceux-ci. Les données révèlent qu'il existe effectivement une idiosyncrasie tchèque, en n'adoptant pas la tendance à l'égalité entre les sexes et en évoluant plutôt vers un modèle plus traditionnel de division de la production domestique et de marché. Les ménages tchèques déclarent, plus souvent que n'importe quel autre des 29 pays européens sondés, que les pères ne peuvent pas remplacer les mères dans leur rôle de parent. L'analyse des données de panel confirme, en contrôlant pour les effets fixes individuels, que les Tchèques opèrent un changement significatif dans leur attitude vis-à-vis de la répartition genrée des tâches vers un point de vue plus conservateur – et ce pour toute la population à travers les genres, les âges, les niveaux d'éducation et les structures familiales. Étonnamment, le virage traditionnel n'est pas opéré par des personnes menant une vie familiale avec enfants, mais est plutôt associé à une faible fertilité et les intentions non réalisées. Ce chapitre aborde certaines questions laissées sans réponse par les évaluations de politique, en considérant la dimension normative des décisions relatives à la famille. À cet égard, il présente

quelques éléments d'explication sur la façon dont « gender trumps money » (Bittman et coll., 2003) dans les politiques et les pratiques d'éducation des enfants.

Cependant, il est clair que cette étude soulève plus de questions qu'elle n'amène de réponse, ce qui m'amène à la nécessité de poursuivre ces pistes de recherche. En effet, ce travail descriptif a mis en évidence une évolution des attitudes de genre, en contrôlant pour les effets structurels des changements de richesse, d'âge, d'éducation, de nombre d'enfants ou d'état matrimonial de l'échantillon étudié, démontrant ainsi ce qui *n'explique pas* le virage conservateur, mais sans proposer d'autres explications. Ceci est malheureusement en dehors de la portée de l'étude, et nous ne pouvons à ce stade que spéculer sur les mécanismes en jeu. Matysiak (2011) fait appel au conflit accru entre le travail et la famille dans les pays d'Europe centrale et orientale, en raison de l'héritage d'un modèle de « dual earner-female burden model » (p. 13), qui rencontre aujourd'hui les institutions du régime capitaliste incompatibles avec sa persistance (Frejka, 2008). Il faut donc établir des liens entre les opinions des individus et leurs comportements réels, tant en ce qui concerne la participation au marché du travail que la division des tâches ménagères. Une autre direction à suivre concerne un acteur négligé jusqu'à présent : les pères. Étant donné que le changement d'attitudes est entraîné dans des proportions plus élevées par les hommes (de tous les âges et de tous les niveaux d'éducation), les déterminants de leurs attitudes de genre sont importants. Ils peuvent être interprétés par exemple comme un moyen de « do gender » (West et Zimmerman, 1987), c'est-à-dire d'affirmer le respect de leur identité sociale en tant que gagne-pain principal, dans des contextes où la formation de la famille est reportée et les deux partenaires sont en réalité les gagne-pains du ménage. La question est alors de savoir comment cela peut être articulé avec la littérature existante sur un héritage socialiste relativement égalitaire en termes de genre (Lippmann et al., 2016, Alesina et Fuchs-Schündeln, 2007). Les deux études suggèrent que l'inertie culturelle est forte, mais non indéfinie, et que les modèles post-communistes se vident de leur substance progressivement (Lippmann et al., 2016, p.5). Le virage conservateur, tant dans les politiques que dans les pratiques, est-il l'expression d'un changement culturel vers l'inégalité entre les sexes ou, à l'inverse, une tendance révélée d'attitudes de long terme, préalablement contenues par l'idéologie du régime socialiste? Ceci pourrait être exploré par l'étude de chocs exogènes sur des pays ayant des modèles sociaux différents, dans une perspective internationale comparative. Par exemple, Pailhe et Sinyavskaya (2010) ont comparé la France et la Russie dans leur étude basée sur les données du GGP, et soulignent que chez les femmes russes, les comportements et les attitudes de genre sont plus homogènes

que chez les Français. Comparer davantage de pays avec un passé commun et des développements actuels plus ou moins divergents semble opportun pour mener une cartographie plus poussée des attitudes post-socialistes envers les femmes et le travail. Ces connaissances seraient pertinentes sur le plan politique, car elles permettraient aux économistes de modéliser mieux dans leurs évaluations *ex post* et *ex ante* les réponses des ménages aux réformes actuelles et à venir, ainsi que, espérons-le, de contribuer aux meilleurs résultats des deux côtés de la conciliation travail-famille.