

**ARE FAMILY FRIENDLY POLICIES DETRIMENTAL TO WOMEN'S
CAREERS?**

A COMPARISON BETWEEN GERMANY, SWEDEN AND THE US.

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Introduction

This paper builds upon the somewhat paradoxical finding that family friendly policies in a country – normally aimed to reduce gender inequality – to some extent seem to increase gender inequality (Mandel and Semyonov 2005; Mandel and Semyonov 2006; Ruhm 1998). Results from these earlier studies show a twofold effect; more women are in the labor market in countries that give parents the right to long parental leaves, however, women seem to have more difficulties reaching powerful positions in the labor market in these countries. Although we feel that this research is intriguing and informative in itself, findings from large scale multi-national data sets (where countries that are different in a lot of respects are put together and placed on a continuum), gives the reader little sense of what goes on in a particular country with a particular policy context. Also, most research on this topic so far is based on cross-sectional data. In order to put this into a life-course perspective and closer to the actual lives and living conditions of women, we use a life-course (i.e. event history) approach and focus on women who had a child. First, we compare women's career breaks after the birth of a child. How long do women stay out of the labor force when they have a child? Second, we ask what are their prospects upon return, do they return to a similar job as they had before or are they more likely to experience an upward or downward occupational move? And finally, we ask if the time women spend out of the labor force after child birth affects their labor market opportunities in terms of subsequent upward or downward occupational moves. In a later version of the paper, we also plan to include all women and study the extent to which career breaks in connection to child birth affects women's career in a different way from other career breaks.

In this paper, we focus on the U.S., Germany and Sweden, three rather different countries with respect to family friendly policies. Sweden is often characterized as the archetype of a women-friendly welfare state, with generous parental leave insurance and high quality, subsidized public day care. As a result, employment among mothers is high. Germany, on the other hand, is often referred to as a ‘male-breadwinner, female-homemaker’ state. The combination of Germany’s tax and educational system, together with the lack of affordable all-day child-care provides an incentive structure rewarding family decisions in favor of the traditional family model. Hence, employment rates for mothers are lower in Germany and career interruptions upon childbirth often turn into a career deadlock. At the other extreme, the U.S. is sometimes accused of lacking a family policy altogether. In this ‘universal breadwinner’ state, parental leave coverage is low. At the same time the U.S. has, in comparison, the highest rates of children under three in some kind of care away from parents. By using data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (NLSY), the German Life History Study (GLHS), and the Swedish Level of Living Survey (LNU), we are analyzing how different types of welfare states institutionalize different patterns of reentry into the labor force after parental leave and how these structures shape the subsequent career trajectories of women.

Theoretical background

Internationally comparative studies

Earlier studies have shown that the right to maternity leave leads to a higher proportion of mothers reentering the labor market after child birth but it also leads to a longer duration of the time out of the labor market (compared to if no maternity leave is provided)

(Gustafsson et al. 1996; Ronsen and Sundstrom 1996; Ruhm 1998). Ruhm (1998) finds that maternity leave coverage of nine months or more is related to higher female employment in a country¹ (see also Albrecht et al. 1999; Ronsen and Sundstrom 2002). He also finds that women's hourly wages in the same countries are reduced by about 3 percent. Ruhm argues that long maternity leave periods are costly for the employer (partly in terms of the hiring and training of new employees) and that this cost partly affects and reduces women's wages. A second important factor is human capital depreciation (Mincer and Polachek 1974). The longer women stay out of the labor market, the higher the depreciation of their human capital and consequently the lower the wage upon return to the labor market.

Mandel & Semyonov (2005; Mandel and Semyonov 2006) show that it is the more egalitarian wage structure in countries with generous family policies that explains the lower gender wage gap rather than the family friendly policies per se (cf. also Rosenfeld and Kalleberg 1991). Mandel & Semyonov's analysis indicates that generous parental leave insurance – in contrast to public sector employment and publicly funded day care – significantly increases gender earnings inequality in a country. Part of this increase is caused by the fact that the female labor force is less selected in these countries. I.e. in these countries, almost all women work, even those who might prefer not to if the context was different and implicitly, these women are assumed to be less productive than other women. Women's access to managerial positions also tends to be lower in countries with extended maternity leave coverage (Ibid.). An important factor here is statistical discrimination. Employers will refrain from hiring women to important

¹ Cf. e.g. Berger & Waldfogel 2004 (for the US); Jonsson & Mills 2001 (for Sweden) and Rønsen och Sundström 1996 (for Sweden and Norway) who finds that the right to maternity leave with jobsecurity speeds up women's return to work after child birth.

positions, such as managerial positions, if they stand the risk of losing them for a year or more due to long maternity leave taking. In this respect, a study of occupational prestige changes would add to and enrich the picture.

Earlier research on women's career mobility

As mentioned above, one potential reason for women's lower earnings in countries with generous parental leave policies, could be that women's human capital depreciates during times out of the labor market and that this is a reason for their lower wage upon return to the labor market. Albrecht et al. (1999), pick up on this and compare wage related consequences of different times out for women and men in Sweden. If capital depreciation is the sole explaining mechanism for women's and men's lower wages upon return to the labor market, the kind of time out should not matter for subsequent wages. However, Albrecht et al. finds that different types of time out have different effects on wages and that these effects vary by gender. Most importantly, the negative relationship between time out in parental leave and subsequent wages is higher for men than for women. Albrecht et al. interpret this as a signaling effect; by taking parental leave, Swedish men signals less career commitment to the employer and as a consequence, they are penalized for this.² On the other hand, women have traditionally been the one to take parental leave and as most women in Sweden take substantial time off in conjunction with child birth, their leave taking behavior doesn't signal anything to the employer and consequently, their wage suffers less.

² By using a fixed effect approach, the authors control for stable factors that are different between different men and women (for instance between fathers and non-fathers) and consequently, selection effects into fatherhood/ motherhood can not be the explanation for their findings.

In comparison to Germany and Sweden, the United States is the country closest to having 'no parental leave policies' and consequently, many women basically don't leave the labor market when they have a child. Lundberg and Rose 2000 found that women who are continuously employed face no penalty in wages at all in the US, compared to a 5 percent wage penalty for mothers who do leave the labor force (Lundberg and Rose 2000). Others find that the wage gap between mothers and non-mothers can be entirely explained by the time out of labor force for some groups; time out of the labor force explains all of the wage difference for white mothers with a college degree (Anderson, Binder and Krause 2002).

The earlier mentioned finding that Swedish women suffer little from parental leave breaks is also supported by Jonsson and Mills (2001b), and Granqvist and Persson (2004). Jonsson and Mills study women's return to work after time out for parental leave. Using data from the Swedish Level of Living Survey (LNU) of 1991, they did not find any effect of the length of the career break for women's chances to get a higher prestige job upon return to the labor market. Using the same data, Granqvist and Persson (2004) find women to have about half the chance of men to make an upward career move in Sweden. However, time out in parental leave did not affect women's career chances to a significant extent. Korpi and Stern (2004), using more recent data (i.e. LNU 2000), find that women have less career mobility (in terms of upward and downward job moves) than men and that mothers with small children have the least career mobility of all. Results from earlier studies also indicate that women in high prestige occupations and highly educated women actually may suffer in their career from long parental leave breaks (Albrecht et al. 1999; Granqvist and Persson 2004).

Grunow, Hofmeister and Buchholz (2006) compare changes in West German and American women's job exits and re-entries for cohorts born in the 1940s and 50s. They find that home-making is in decline and that career interruptions in both countries come with greater negative consequences for women over time (see also Grunow 2006 for more evidence on this for Germany). Job interruptions are often associated with downward mobility (despite legal job status protection for mothers on leave) and reentering employment after unpaid care giving is more difficult for mothers of very young children in Germany. On the other hand, having to provide for an increasing number of children seems to create a greater financial need for the woman's wage in Germany, whereas in the U.S., women with more children tend to stay out longer either voluntarily or due to difficulties of finding suitable jobs that allow them to combine paid work with care giving. Still, most American women maintain their ties to the labor market throughout their children's upbringing, whereas in Germany, many women leave the labor force altogether for several years.

In order to try to disentangle and understand the differences in labor market outcomes outlined above, and the empirical analyses later on in this paper, we now turn to a more thorough description of the different policy contexts of our three countries in focus; the United States, Germany and Sweden, starting with the latter.

The Swedish context

Sweden is known as somewhat of the archetype of a woman friendly welfare state (Orloff 2006). The fact that Sweden today, together with the other Nordic countries, is leading

with regard to overall gender equality is due to several factors, some of which will be discussed below.

In the early 1960s, women and men's traditional roles were debated in Sweden and in the mid 1960s, both the political establishment and the women's movement saw married women's employment as crucial for gender equality (Baude 1992). A labor shortage led to a demand for political reforms that would facilitate female employment and, gradually, the incentives for women to work increased. In 1965, special (i.e., especially low) 'women's wages' were formally abandoned after an agreement between the employers' organization SAF (*Svenska arbetsgivareföreningen*) and the trade union federation LO (*Landsorganisationen*, organizing manual workers). In 1971, individual taxation was introduced. Although many married women already benefited from split taxation due to a deduction for working married women that was introduced in 1952 (Elvander 1974), the reform in 1971 signaled the commitment of the government and the social democratic party to support women's employment. In 1974 the parental leave insurance replaced the maternity leave system.³ All in all, the effects of these reforms and changes were reinforced by a strong expansion of public sector employment in service occupations, primarily care and education. Together, this led to a rapid increase in the number of gainfully employed women. In 1968, about half of all married women were employed. In 1981, this share had increased to 82 percent (Axelsson 1992).

With the introduction of the 1974 parental leave insurance, fathers and mothers were given equal rights to take parental leave for six months with the right to return to the

³ Paid maternity leave was introduced in 1955. To start with, women were granted three months of paid leave. In 1963, the entitlement was extended to six months.

same employer after the leave. The income replacement level was set to 90 percent of the individual's gross income (up to a ceiling). Parents who did not work at the time of the child's birth received only a much lower flat-rate benefit. Since the introduction, the parental leave insurance has been extended several times, notably to 12 months in 1980 and 15 months in 1989. In 1995 the so called 'daddy's month' was introduced. This meant that it was no longer possible for one parent to take all of the leave. Instead, one month that was reserved for the mother/father and it could not be transferred to the other parent.⁴ The replacement level in the parental leave insurance has varied somewhat over the period and since 1998 the insurance covers 80 percent of the parent's gross income.

The parental leave insurance gives young women strong incentives to work for some time before the birth of the first child (due to the larger compensation for the employed). The right to paid leave with job security has meant that almost all mothers stay at home for a majority of the currently permitted parental leave period, at the same time as it has accelerated the rate at which the group with earlier 'home-maker' characteristics returns to work after childbirth (Jonsson and Mills 2001a; Ronsen and Sundstrom 1996). One of the aims of the parental leave insurance has thus been realized: Women's possibilities to combine work and children have increased. The extent to which it has promoted gender inequality in the home and in the labor market is, however, questionable as women still use the majority of all leave. All in all, this means that employers' statistical discrimination against women in the labor market is rational as the probability that a woman will take leave of a year or more is far higher than the same probability for a man. Consequently, employers may prefer men for the more important,

⁴ Since 2002 the parents together have the right to take 480 days of leave (of which 90 days are replaced at the lower basic level) and parents can give up all but 60 days to the partner. The latter changes will, however, not be captured in the empirical analyzes in this paper as the last year studied is 2000.

high prestige positions. Perhaps as an indication of this, the number of female administrators and managers is low in Sweden compared to some other countries. Only 30 percent of the latter category are women in Sweden compared to 36 percent in Germany and 46 percent in the U.S (UNDP 2005).

The German context

For several decades the dominant West German strategy to facilitate for families with children has been to support a stay-at-home parent (O'Hara 2004). Consequently, many policies of the German welfare state favor the one breadwinner-model. Some of these policies explicitly support a traditional family model, others, with rather different intentions still have side effects that keep one parent – in most cases women – at home. The following section focuses on the different strategies and their intentions in West German family policies since the 1970s.

In 1977 a change in the marriage and family law marked a milestone in the process of the state withdrawing from determining women's role in the family (Schaefers 1995). Prior to this reform, married women's right to work was restricted and married women were ascribed the main responsibility for the household by law (Berghahn 2003; Lehmann 2000; Peuckert 1996). After the reform married women no longer needed their husband's permission to take up paid employment and with this step, the state ended a period of purposely keeping the women out of the labor market and in the family home. However, there are still many ways in which the German social welfare state reproduces the male breadwinner and female homemaker family.

The major transfers supporting the upbringing of children are child benefits (*Kindergeld*) and childrearing benefits (*Erziehungsgeld*). Child benefits, first introduced in 1955, are independent of income and employment status, they have been raised several times since 1955 up to 185 Euros for the first child in 2000. Since 2000, parents can choose between child benefits and tax-rebate for up to 3500 Euros per child (Kreyenfeld 2001).

Childrearing benefits (*Erziehungsgeld*) was introduced in 1979 for the first six months after birth. The initial payment was income and employment related adjusted to the 'sick pay'. The change in childrearing benefits implies a change in leave regulations, decreasing the propensity and postponing the timing of the return to the labor force (Bender, Kohlmann and Lang 2003).

Marriage tax splitting is another major state incentive that is involved in shaping families life courses. German tax splitting brings the biggest savings for a married couple (even without children) when the two incomes are most unequal. Therefore indirectly subsidizing families who decide that one partner reduces work hours or quits paid work altogether (Aisenbrey 2005; Kreyenfeld 2001).

German parental leave policies consist of two major instruments, the maternity leave (*Mutterschutz*) and the parental leave (named *Mutterschaftsurlaub*, changed to *Erziehungsurlaub* in 1986 and to *Elternzeit* in 2001).⁵ Maternity leave was first introduced in 1952 and changed to the form it has today in 1965. It assures women a leave of six weeks before and eight weeks after childbirth with sick pay. In 1979 a four months leave for working mothers (*Mutterschaftsurlaub*) was introduced, resulting in a

⁵ Parental leave includes dismissal protection during the leave, as well as a right to return to the same or an equivalent position with the pre-birth contract conditions.

leave period of six months, together with the maternity leave. The *Mutterschafturlaub* was replaced by the introduction of a 10 months parental leave (*Erziehungsurlaub*) in 1986, with fathers now being eligible, too. Parents on leave are entitled to a moderate compensation payment of usually 300 Euros. This leave was extended a couple of times up to three years in 1992. After decades of increasing the legal durations of employed mother's time out, the present parental leave reform, which came into effect for babies born from January 1st 2007 onwards, marks a normative turn in the history of (West) German family policy making (Grunow 2006). The new regulation severely limits the period for financial compensation during the leave to a maximum of 14 months, whereas the last two months are conditional on both parents sharing the leave phases.⁶

In the 1970s with the German Educational Reform the public Kindergarten was established (Kreyenfeld 2001). Kindertagesstätten in Germany have mainly part-time slots and are usually designed for children aged 3-6. School starts at the age of 6 and is only part-time. Complementary public full-time daycare is seldom available, although attempts have been made in recent years to increase both number of child care places and daily hours covered.

The American context

Despite a similar increase in female labor force participation in Sweden and the U.S. during the period from the 1970s and on, the U.S. has chosen quite different strategies to deal with the resulting work/family conflict for women. The American system heavily favors private solutions to the work–family conflict; child care is

⁶ This period will however not be visible in our results below.

expensive and apart from some tax subsidies that cushions parents from the full cost of it, public funds to defray child care costs are available only to the very poorest (Morgan 2006).

In the U.S., welfare policies hardly changed since the 1970. The exception is the welfare reform in the mid 1990s. The welfare reform reached it's apex in the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWOR). One of many results of the PRWOR has been that it got harder for single mothers to receive welfare. Partly due to this change in the second half of the 1990s mother's labor force participation rose drastically, especially single mother participation rose by 10 percent points between 1994 and 1999 (Blank 2002).

Especially with single mother's employment rising, a further focus in describing welfare policies has to be on the childcare system. The childcare system for pre-school children in the U.S. is mainly not public, but private. Nevertheless, the state assists with childcare costs for low-income families. As of 2005 13 percent of all children nation wide between two and five received some assistance from the Childcare and Development Fund (Administration for Children and Family 2006). Nevertheless, families living below the poverty level still spend on the average 25 percent of their family income on child care (National Association of Child Care Resources and Referral & Agency 2006).

Before 1993, the U.S. did not have a national maternity leave policy. Prior to that, the few maternity leave policies in place were generally the result of state laws, collective bargaining agreements and employer policies (Berger and Waldfogel 2004). The 1993 Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) represents the first national protected maternity

leave policy. The FMLA requires that employers with 50 or more employees provide 12 weeks of unpaid leave to employees who have worked at least 1,250 hours in the previous 12 months. Even though this policy seemed to be a break through in the U.S. context of family policies, the numbers speak differently: of all parents who work in the private sector only 45 percent have guaranteed unpaid leave through the Family and Medical Leave Act (Smolensky and Gootman 2003). Most likely as a consequence of this, the 1993 maternity leave legislation appears to have had little impact on women's overall employment and wages (Baum 2003). However, it did raise the number of previously employed women returning to the labor market after the birth of a child; Berger and Waldfogel (2004), find that women who have leave coverage return to the labor market faster than those without coverage. On the other hand, the former tend to stay out the full 12 weeks provided by the FMLA whereas at least some in the latter group return to work faster.

Summary of country differences

Table 1 summarizes some of the outcomes of policy decisions made in each of our three countries regarding how to deal with the work family conflict for women (even though this obviously is not the only reason for the differences we see). Women's economic activity rate (and their share of the adult labor force) is highest in Sweden with its generous parental leave insurance. It is lowest in Germany where the tax and transfer system, but also the lack of an all-day child care system, encourages a male-breadwinner model. Part-time employment is also most common among women in Germany where child care is scarce and schools closes early in the afternoon.

[Table 1 about here]

The gender wage gap is often used as an indicator of gender equality. In Table 1, we see that the gender wage gap is lowest in Sweden and highest in the U.S. However, earlier research has shown that Sweden's advantage in this respect is more due to labor's and unions ability to bargaining collectively rather than family friendly policies per se (Rosenfeld and Kalleberg 1991). Another indicator of gender equality is the number of women who are legislators or managers. Here, the U.S. has the highest share of female legislators and managers and Sweden the lowest. Part of the explanation for the low percentage for Sweden can be due to statistical discrimination against all women based on the generous parental leave insurance in conjunction with overall high fertility (at least compared to Germany).

The information we present on number of children 0-3 in child care is not completely comparable between the countries, but it can serve as an indicator for the availability of child care. For the U.S., we have the percentage of children in any care away from their parents whereas in Germany and Sweden, the information we have reflects the number of children in public daycare. For Sweden, public daycare dominates the picture and even though the percentage would increase somewhat if we include private child care, it is notable that it is the highest among all three countries. The U.S. follows closely behind and both countries have about 50% of their children three years or younger in child care.⁷ On the other part of the extreme, Germany only has 7% of its children below 3 in child care. From the above summary, it is clear that we are dealing with three very different countries in terms of family policies, overall demographics and

⁷ It is worth noting that this reflects completely different patterns in child care among children less than one, one, and two years old. In Sweden, almost no children are in day-care before they turn one. In the U.S., a considerable amount of children start day care long before this.

labor market characteristics. With this in mind, a study of the effects of time out for child care becomes intriguing. What are the effects of career breaks for mothers' subsequent labor market careers and does it differ between the countries? Before we try to answer this question, we turn to a description of our data and methods.

Data and methods

For the U.S. we use the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (NLSY). The NLSY (and the earlier NLS) is sponsored and directed by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and conducted by the Center for Human Resource Research at The Ohio State University. Interviews are conducted by the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago (for a detailed description of the NLSY and the NLS data see Bureau of Labor Statistics 1992, 1999, 2004 and 2004b). The NLSY is a nationally representative sample of 12,686 young men and women born between 1957 and 1964. The sample is re-interviewed every two years. For our analysis we include over 3500 women with at least one child.

The data used for Germany come from the West German component of the German Life History Study (GLHS)⁸. This research program collected detailed retrospective life course information for seven cohorts of Germans born between 1919 and 1971 in the period between 1981 and 2005. For all cohorts, the survey instruments contained detailed questions about family of origin, residential history, education, work life, work interruptions, and family formation, including the formation and dissolution of

⁸ Documentation for these surveys is found in Mayer and Brückner (1989), Brückner (1993), Brückner and Mayer (1995), and Hillmert & Mayer (2004). Wagner (1996) gives an overview over the entire study. For information about the methodology in English language, see Brückner and Mayer (1998). A public-use version of these data and English-language codebooks for most cohorts are available through the Center for Research on Inequalities and the Life Course at Yale University (www.yale.edu/ciqle).

marital and (for younger cohorts) non-marital unions, as well as children (where applicable). All interviews were carefully checked for errors and chronological consistency. In our analysis we included cohorts born in 1954-56, 1964 and 1971. In the GLHS the observation window varies for each cohort, for those born in 1955 and 1964 we have life course data up to the age of 35, for those born in 1971 up to 34. For the three cohorts in our analysis we could include 826 women that fit our sampling criteria.⁹

For Sweden we use the Swedish Level of Living Survey (LNU) of 1991 and 2000. LNU was first conducted in 1968. Thereafter, it has been replicated in 1974, 1981, 1991, and 2000. The basis for LNU is a random sample of 1/1000 of the Swedish population between 18 and 75 years of age. LNU is a panel survey and in each survey, the part of the panel that was older than the sample frame was replaced with new young individuals and immigrants so that it would represent the Swedish population in a given survey year. In 1991, retrospective employment biographies were collected for individuals born in 1925 to 1965. Detailed retrospective information was also collected regarding their education history, cohabitation history and any children living in the household. These biographies were updated in the 2000 survey so that the period between 1991 and 2000 also was covered. In the analysis for this paper, we include information on the 718 women born in the period from 1950 to 1975 who had at least one child.

Our analysis is threefold. We start with a descriptive survival analysis of the time it takes women to reenter the labor market after their first child is born. Since our focus is on labor market activity, we exclude women who didn't work at least one out of seven months before birth of the first child; we also exclude women who are self-employed. In

⁹ For the Cox regression models only cohorts 1954-56 and 1964 have been included so far, since the data for cohort 1971 will need further adjustments accounting for panel attrition. This leaves us with a subsample of 665 women.

this first step, individuals are censored if they have another child. We show the survival rates overall, for three educational groups and for three time periods. The survival rates are shown for the first 100 months after the first child is born. Some women, especially in the U.S. context, don't interrupt their employment due to childbirth. We ascribed these women an artificial timeout of two weeks, in order to include them in our analysis.

In a second step we focus on the first transition into the labor market after a child is born. The driving question behind the second model is: does the timing of the reentering process have implications for women's subsequent occupational prestige? We look at a competing risk model, with the competing risks being 'reentering with higher prestige' (upward move), 'reentering with lower prestige' (downward move) and 'reentering with same prestige' (lateral move). For this part of the analysis and for the following analysis, we include not only spells following first births, but also second and higher order births.¹⁰ We exclude women who are not at risk of making a particular transition (due to very high or very low Treiman scores in the origin state) from the analysis for the respective transition. Since the focus of the paper is on labor market processes in the aftermath of having children, episodes for those who returned to the labor market later than 100 months after child birth are excluded. Our last model takes a closer look at labor market movements after the initial reentering process, asking how the first reentering and the time out affects the following career step. The events we focus on in this model are up- and downward changes in prestige. Since we can't assume that the hazard rates are continuous over time, we estimate a Cox proportional hazard models, because the Cox model makes no assumptions about the shape of the hazard over time

¹⁰ For the U.S., we excluded women with more than 4 children, as this was a small group with very different labor force mobility.

(Cleves, Gould and G. 2002).

Dependent Variables:

Upward and downward occupational moves are measured as changes in the Treiman prestige scale (Treiman 1977) where a change of ten percent or more is defined as an upward/downward move. We also estimate lateral moves, defined as any change less than ten percent.

Independent Variables:

Education. Education is measured by three dummy variables indicating three educational levels. For the U.S. the lowest level captures individuals with no high school degree, the middle category indicates a maximum of a high school degree and the highest category includes everybody with at least some college. For Germany, we distinguish between those with low ('Hauptschule') medium ('Realschule') and high ('Abitur') levels of general schooling. For Sweden, the lowest level represents elementary school (9 years), the middle level represents gymnasium of two or three years, corresponding to high school for the U.S., and the highest level represents individuals with at least some university (corresponding to some college for the U.S.).¹¹

Labor Force Participation and Time out of the Labor Force. The cumulative time spent in the labor force is used as an indicator for labor force experience in all three countries.

Time out of the labor force is differently measured in the three countries. In the U.S. this is an accumulation of time out of the labor force, captured once before childbirth and

¹¹ This could be changed to reflect the U.S. and include some university although this is a mixed category where some have several semesters of university studies (without getting a degree) and some not even a whole semester.

once after. In Germany and Sweden, time out represents time out on parental leave or in housewifery (no matter if it is before or after the birth of a child). In later analysis, we also plan to include time out in unemployment (however, for most of our women, this time out is zero or very low).

Family Structure. In the models we include three dummy variables to measure the effects of having children on career moves: a variable coded 1 for having one child, a variable coded 1 for having two children and an indicator for having three or more children.¹²

The indicator for ‘partner’ follows an interest in the effects of household formation and break-up and it is measured for all three countries with respect to cohabitation, not legally defined marriage. The variable is coded 1 if a partner is present and 0 otherwise.¹³

Background Characteristics: For all countries, the woman’s age at child birth is included as a continuous variable. For the U.S., the woman’s birth year is also included as it showed significant results. We also include three dummy variables for the time period in which the child is born. The different time periods are chosen to match major political changes in parental leave policy in the three countries and/or time periods that were significantly different in terms of labor market changes and characteristics. For Germany and the U.S. we were able to use the same time periods: before 1987, between 1988 and 1992, and after 1993. For Sweden, the period up until 1980 denotes the first period, the second is the period from 1980 until 1989 and the third is the period from 1989 until 2000. For the U.S. context we also control for the effects of race.

¹² In those cases where there was no difference found between ‘having 2 children’ and ‘having 3 or more children’, these categories were collapsed into one dummy ‘having 2 children or more’. This was done in order to keep the number of independent variables small against the low case numbers, i.e. in the case of Germany.

¹³ For the U.S., and Germany, this is a time-varying covariate.

Results

Return to the labor market after first birth, descriptive results

In the first part, we analyze survivor rates for the reentry process into the labor market after the birth of the first child. The analysis starts at t_0 - the birth of the first child. The event is defined as the 'return to the labor market'; the time out period can include births of further children.¹⁴ Hence, the survivor curves we show here give us a more accurate picture of women's actual 'time out' than a curve that is censored by the birth of a second (or higher order) child.

Figure 1 demonstrates the huge difference in time to reentry into the labor market for working mothers between the three countries. In the United States 40 Percent of mothers don't show any employment interruptions after childbirth, after 3 months 65 percent are back in the labor force and 80 Percent of all mothers leave the labor market for less than a year. Among West German mothers 17 percent re-enter right after the compulsory maternity leave period. The vast majority of mothers use extended phases of parental leave, though. After 12 months only 30 percent are back in the labor force and after three years just under 50 percent have returned. Even eight years past entry into motherhood 30 percent has not returned to the labor market. Many of these women likely had a second or third child, thereby extending their initial parental leave period. In Sweden, only 72 percent of the women are back after two years and about 50 percent after three years. Worth mentioning in this context is a policy that has been popularly referred to as a 'speed premium' in Sweden. If women have their second child within two and a half years after the first, they avoid a reduction in the parental leave allowance

¹⁴ The time period out also continues (and the spell is not censored) if the mother goes into unemployment, a scenario that is not extremely uncommon in Sweden in the 1990s.

caused by reduced income between the births (due to, for instance, part-time work).¹⁵ This policy significantly affected the spacing of children in Sweden and shortened the average period from the first to the second child (Hoem 1990). Consequently, many women who stay out for 24 months or more have a second child within the same time out period. Overall most women in Sweden interrupt for one or two years but after that, most women return to the labor market again.

[Figure 1 about here]

Since we know from various sources (e.g. Albrecht et al. 1999; Grunow, Hofmeister and Buchholz 2006) that the time out from the labor market after the birth of a child is highly dependent on different status indicators, we present differences in the length of time out by educational group.¹⁶ Nearly half of all mothers in the US with some college education don't leave the labor market at all, compared to only a 25 percent of all mothers with no high school degree (Figure 2). After three months, less than half of the women with no high school degree are back in the labor market, compared to over 70 percent of women with some college education. Slightly more than 70 percent of all women with no high school degree are still out of the labor force after a year. At this point in time, close to 90 percent of women with some college education are back in the labor market.

[Figure 2 about here]

If we only look at the reentry process for those women who don't return to being employed in the first 3 months, the analysis shows that the reentry process for is very

¹⁵ This policy was first introduced in 1980 and the time period within which the woman had to have her second child was 24 months. In 1986, the time period was extended to thirty months.

¹⁶ We could use other status indicators like income groups, the results would probably not be very different.

similar for all three educational groups. In other words, the main difference between the educational groups is the percentage of women who hardly interrupt their employment at all after childbirth. Women with higher education are more likely to be in this ‘no interruption’ group: 65 percent of all women with some college education interrupt less than 4 months, compared to only 24 percent of the women with no high school degree.¹⁷ These drastic differences in the US can’t be seen without the structural context of the mainly private child care system in place, which makes it easier for women with economic resources to find adequate childcare for infants and go on with their career. At the same time childcare is hardly affordable for women with fewer resources.

In Sweden, on the other hand, almost all women stay out for a year or more after the birth of the first child and there are no big differences between women in different education groups during this period. However, when this first period has passed, higher educated women return faster to the labor market than medium or low educated women do.

For Germany we find that the group of women returning to their job shortly after childbirth is quite heterogeneous. Those with high and low secondary schooling reenter faster compared to women with medium secondary schooling, but these differences level out after 18 months. In the long run, medium and high-qualified mothers have a higher likelihood to return to paid employment, especially after the legal parental leave period is over. This probably reflects that qualification becomes more discriminating among those with extended childcare interruptions. It might also to some extent mirror a quality of job issue where highly educated women have more interesting and fulfilling jobs and therefore are less reluctant to return.

¹⁷ Half of women with maximum a high school degree don’t interrupt more than 3 months.

From our results, it is obvious that this first period out of work is mainly driven by the different parental leave policies in the three countries, and consequently, it is safe to say that the ‘reentry process minus the parental leave policy’ looks pretty similar in all three countries.

In the context of the ‘opt out’ discussion in the US, and due to changes in parental leave length in the other two countries, we also looked at different reentry rates for different historical periods (‘child birth cohorts’).

[Figure 3 about here]

For the United States the first period summarizes children born between 1983 and 1987, the second period ranges from births between 1988 and 1993, and the most recent period captures births up to 1999. When we compare the percentage of women who don’t leave the labor market, we find a clear trend towards fewer women taking time off in later periods. In the period before 1987, about 70 percent took any time out in connection to childbirth. However, in the period between 1988 and 1993, this number had decreased to a little more than half of all women. In the latest period, i.e. from 1993 and on, less than 40 percent took time off in connection with childbirth. This is a clear trend and shows that more and more women choose to stay in and not ‘opt out’ in the US. We find the same trend when we look at the number of women still out after a year.

Also for Sweden, the trend towards shorter labor market interruptions over time is clear even if the rate of return is much slower than in the U.S. To some extent, this result conflicts with earlier findings that shows that women tend to take more or less the full parental leave period they are entitled to and this period has been extended over time. In our analysis here though – and due to the way the model and the graph is set up –

differences that occur in the period up until the child is two years old is almost invisible. The fact that women return to the labor market faster in later periods (once this first two year time period is over) reflects the decreasing time spent in full-time home making for women. Also, during the 1990s recession, the fertility rate in Sweden went down. This is probably also contributing to the finding that women tended to stay out for a shorter period in the 1990s than in the 1980s and -70s.

In contrast to the other two countries, and in line with the extended leaves policies introduced in (West) Germany since the mid 1980s, mothers of children born between 1987 and 1992 took longer leaves than those who had a child during the first half of the 1980s. Mothers of children born after 1992, when parental leave was extended to a maximum of three years, clearly returned even later, compared to women in the earlier historical periods. However, in the long run (five years after the first child was born) this group is re-entering the labor market in much greater numbers, illustrating the historical decline of female homemaking in West Germany, that was found in earlier studies (Grunow, Hofmeister and Buchholz 2006).

Women's upward, downward and lateral occupational moves upon return to the labor market, a hazard regression analysis

In the next step of the analysis, we focus on the reentering process into the labor market following the birth of a child. The analysis compares the timing, the frequency and the estimated risks of making upward, downward or lateral prestige moves at reentry into paid employment. In contrast to the figures shown above, we now look at any childbirth,

not only first births. Women who have a second child while still on leave are right censored in their first time-out episode and again start from t_0 at birth of their *second* child. In this second spell, however, their ‘time out of the labor market’ is set to the time out for the first child so that this earlier period can add to, and affect, their rate of return to the labor market.

In Figure 4, the survivor curves to upward, downward and lateral moves are shown for the U.S., Germany and Sweden. In all three countries, lateral moves are by far the most common move upon return to the labor market. Women who make a lateral move also tend to return faster in all three countries, this is partly due to a majority of women returning to the same job. For the US (Figure 4) we find that 57 percent of all mothers reenter or stay in the labor market with a lateral move within less than three months, and in the same time period only 4 percent reenter with a downward or upward move. On the average, lateral reentry takes place after 4 months, downward and upward moves after 15 months.

In Sweden, where the return to work after child birth is slower, more than 90 percent of those who later on will go back with an upward or downward move (compared to the job they had before the break) are still out after 18 months. However, among those with lateral moves, only about 40 percent are still at home with their child at this point.

German mothers return more slowly and in much smaller numbers than their American and Swedish peers. After three years, the maximum leave period granted in Germany, only 60 percent have returned to their former job, or have found a position with a similar occupational prestige. By that time, twenty percent either experienced an upward or downward occupational move of more than 10 percent.

[Figure 4 about here]

In Table 2, we take a closer look at factors that affect women's occupational move upon return to the labor market. As shown above, women who make a lateral move are the ones that return fastest to the labor market. The regression models estimating upward and downward moves therefore include a highly selective group of women, most of them leaving the labor market after childbirth for some time. Women who make a lateral move in the U.S. are disproportionately highly educated women. Overall 73 percent of highly educated American women reenter or stay in the labor market with no changes in prestige after the birth of a child. However, leaving the labor market for longer periods seems to put women at a very similar risk of making an upward or downward move (Table 2). These estimated effects on vertical moves hardly differ from each other, an exception are women with more than two children and women with partners, both groups have a higher risk for a downward than for an upward change in prestige after reentering. The risk for lateral moves also decreases for women with more than one child. It is noteworthy that once having left the labor market, women are at the same risk to make an upward or downward move independent of their education or labor market experience. In other words women who left the labor market – in the US context with hardly any parental leave policy – don't seem to be protected from downward moves by education or labor market experience.

[Table 2 about here]

This, however, seems to be the case in Sweden. Highly educated women are more likely to make an upward move after a period out of the labor market. Still, this move is significantly less likely the longer the woman's accumulated time out of the labor market.

Swedish women are also less likely to make a lateral move, the longer they stay out, and the transition rate to a downward move is slightly higher. The fact that more than two children significantly increases the risk for an upward move can be due to the fact that some of these women have taken extensive time out, but once they go back to the labor market, the need for a higher income might makes the search for a 'better' job important. Having three or more children also increases the transition rate to lateral moves, probably for a similar reason, i.e. the need for a second income and the importance of – if possible – returning to the job the woman had before the child birth. Worth noting is that being in a cohabiting relationship to some extent seems to protect women from making a downward move. The reason for this might be that these women can afford to decline a job of lower prestige if they have a husband with a good enough income. Lateral moves are also more common among older women, as these women often are established on the labor market to a higher degree than younger women. Finally, lateral moves in Sweden were less likely during the 1990s. This can be due to the fact that the model includes episodes in unemployment as time out (mainly because we can't separate the two for the U.S.), and consequently, the estimate shows effects of the 1990s recession. Hence, during the 1990s, women on parental leave had bigger difficulties returning to the same job after a period of leave than they had during the 1970s and 1980s.

In Germany, as in Sweden, lateral reentries after childbirth are the institutionally protected norm. The groups that experience upward or downward mobility are – as in the other two countries – highly selective groups. Higher education is a strong predictor of upward mobility upon mother's re-entry to employment in Germany. Educational effects on reentries on a lower or similar occupational level are not significant but point in the

expected directions. Labor force experience has a highly significant positive effect on both kinds of directional mobility, indicating that more experienced women are not sheltered from atypical moves when they return to the labor market. At the same time, a higher age at childbirth has a stabilizing negative effect on directional mobility. Downward mobility is more likely to occur among those with prior time in unpaid care giving, indicating that phases of absence from the labor market may entail future career penalties. The negative effect for lateral mobility underscores this association. Finally, we find a period effect for Germany, interpreted here in the context of increasingly generous parental leave periods; in the period from 1993 and on, the transition rate to a lateral move is significantly lower than in the earlier periods.

After describing the initial reentry process, the following section focuses on the gains and losses women experience partly due to their reentry process. We here estimate the hazard rate to an upward or a downward occupational move upon return to the labor market. Hence, in this model, the clock starts once a woman reenters the labor market (t_0). An event is indicated by a prestige change of a minimum of 10 percent on the Treiman prestige scale (positive - upward move / negative – downward). The results of these models are presented in Table 3.

[Table 3 about here]

For the US we can identify a clear ‘pricing effect’ on future career moves for time at home after the birth of a child. Since the price for time out in the US is not continuously increasing with time out, we used categorical variables to identify breaking points. Women who reenter the labor market between 4 and 12 months after the birth of a child have a 14 percent lower chance of making an upward move compared to the group

that only stays out for less than 4 months. For those reentering after a year, the chances are even lower. What matters for downward moves is if women left the labor market at all. Staying in the labor market with no interruptions lowers the chances of a downward move by 14 percent.

Taking a closer look at the effects children have on moves, it is shown that having more than one child raises the risk for a downward move significantly, and having more than two children increases the risk by over 30 percent. The younger women are at the birth of their child, the lower their chances of making any move. Most of the control variables we included in our model pointed in the expected direction: Education has a positive effect on upward moves and decreases the risk of a downward move. Labor force experience has a positive influence on upward, but not downward moves. African American women experience a much higher risk for downward moves.

Similar to the patterns observed for the US, prior experiences of upward and downward mobility trigger further directional moves in Germany. Upward moves obviously represent in part catch-up moves of mothers with previous downward mobility upon reentry to paid work. But downward mobility may also result in further downward mobility for working mothers. Upward moves are also more likely for those who already realized an upward move upon re-entry to employment. As in the US, we find that higher educated women in Germany are more likely to experience an upward career move. Labor force experience and time out of the labor force trigger both kinds of directional mobility, while older mothers tend to be less mobile. Job tenure generates stability, meaning that mothers are less in danger of having to accept a job with a lower occupational prestige. The number of children does not seem to be of importance for

moves in either direction, net of the other controls. The presence of a ‘male breadwinner’ appears to be ambiguous with respect to the careers of German mothers. It seems women are more likely to accept a loss in occupational prestige when they have a partner at home. On the other hand, upward moves also appear to be associated with being partnered (the effect is not significant). Since the case numbers are very low for both upward and downward moves in Germany –thereby reflecting the ‘German model’ very well–, all coefficients have to be interpreted with caution, though.

For Sweden, we find no significant effect of time out of the labor market for neither upward nor downward moves. Some supplemental analyses (not shown), indicates that time out might increase the transition rate to downward moves for women with a university degree in comparison to everyone else. Women who have some gymnasium or more are also protected, to some extent, from making a downward move. Women who have three or more children are significantly less likely to make an upward move, once they are in the labor market, and women who returned to the labor market in the 1980s move to a job of higher prestige faster than the women who returned in the 1970s or in the 1990s. Apart from that, few of our variables are significant. When they are, the effects are as expected; the higher prestige a person has, the higher the likelihood of a downward move and vice versa (this is due to the ceiling and floor effects). And if the woman experienced an upward move upon return to the labor market, the probability that her next move will be downward again is higher (and the opposite holds for downward moves).

Summary and conclusions

In our results, we demonstrated how the birth of a child affects women's occupational careers in three countries: the U.S., Germany and Sweden. These three countries symbolize very different policy regimes and strikingly different ways of dealing – or not dealing – with the work-family conflict faced by women with children.

In Germany, the male-breadwinner model is still dominant. Not least the tax system with its 'marriage tax splitting' component, encourages a one-breadwinner family model and is part of the reason why it is financially beneficial for a family if the woman stays out of the labor market for several years after child birth. For mothers in Germany, these long career breaks can turn into a final exit from the labor market. The very recent policy changes taking place in Germany at the moment might, however, alter this pattern somewhat.

In Sweden, the parental leave insurance contributes to an overall higher employment rate among women as it, a) encourages women to work for at least a year before the birth of their first child, and, b) speeds up the return to work after childbirth. However, in comparison to the US, Swedish women stay out of the labor market relatively long, contributing most likely to higher overall statistical discrimination against all women in Sweden.

In the U.S., two factors pull in different directions; on the one hand the very short maternity leave period – that isn't even available to everyone – pulls women back into the labor market very soon after a child is born. On the other hand expensive childcare has a high selection effect on the group of women working. To make it worthwhile, women have to earn more than they have to pay for childcare (although reductions are

available to the very poorest). Since – as we demonstrate – women in the US gets punished for time out of the labor market by fewer chances for upward prestige moves in the future career, this mechanism puts already privileged women into an even more privileged position.

Overall, the differences between the countries are remarkable: three quarters of all women are back in the labor market in the US after only 6 months; in Sweden, after approximately 5 years; and, in Germany, not even after 8 years. Highly educated women are more likely to take very little or no time out and the percentage taking very short time out has increased in the more recent years. For Sweden, most women take at least a year off, at about two years after the first child is born, the rate of women reentering increases substantially. Also in Sweden highly educated women return faster to the labor market and the rate of return has increased during the 1990s compared to the 1970s and 1980s. In Germany, women's return to the labor market was prolonged throughout the 1980s and 1990s as most women took at least three years off in connection to childbirth. While these policies in Germany are claimed to be supportive towards women's paid work as they in principle enable mothers to return to the same (or similar) job after a phase of unpaid time out, our findings indicate that the number of women actually returning within three years has declined since the late 1980s.

Looking at the reentry process for all three countries demonstrates that there are differences between the group of women who return to the same prestige jobs and women who experience prestige changes. In all three countries the majority of women returns to the same or a similar prestige job, therefore it is also the event that – on average – happens sooner after childbirth, and at least in the US we, know that higher educated

women are more likely to be in this group. Women who stay out longer have a higher risk of making either an upward or a downward move and in a lot of respects, there are no clear differences between these two groups. Staying out longer is more risky in terms of occupational moves and some get lucky, some don't.

Looking at prestige changes that occur after reentry into the labor market we find no significant effects of time out in connection with the birth of a child in Sweden (although tendencies point in the expected direction). Still, in Sweden the number of children does appear to affect transitions to a job of better prestige; women who have three or more children are less likely to make this move. For the US having more than three children raises the risk for a downward move dramatically. It is noteworthy that neither in the US nor in Swedish, the partner plays a significant role at this career step, but in Germany, having a partner increases the risk for a downward move considerably. Since Germany mainly supports the one or 1½ breadwinner model this result is not at all surprising, in many cases women decide to go back into the labor market with reduced hours that often come with a lower prestige.

The punishing effect for time out is most striking in the US; women's careers do suffer if mothers, at all, leave the labor market after the birth of a child. These effects are especially problematic because in the US context we can not readily assume that women 'self-select' into the groups of 'taking time out' vs. 'staying in the labor market'. Due to the lack of public child care, staying in the labor market depends on the affordability of private compared to those who don't, develops along the well known lines of inequality: Women with lower education and fewer resources are the ones that can't afford child care and therefore have to stay out of the labor market longer to take care of their children. In

the US context, ‘time in’ is something you have to be able to afford. In Sweden, mothers don’t seem to be punished due to time out, at least not once they are back in the labor market again. However, especially in the Swedish context further research has to show if this rather positive outcome results in higher overall discrimination against all women due to their higher probability of becoming a mother and leaving the labor market for a year or more. This could be one explanation for the relatively lower amount of women in high prestige positions in Sweden. For Germany it is worth considering that the policies designed to accommodate a male breadwinner family neglect the crucial consequences for the unpartnered, widowed and abused and their children (Budig 2004). What do women do when they have to support themselves and their children financially without available child care for small children?

Finally, it is worth noting that we have very few occupational moves in the data for both Sweden and Germany. This can be due to the way we use the Treiman prestige variable (with a move being defined as a 10 percent change), however, we also know that women with children hardly make any occupational moves. From the results presented here, we cannot determine the extent to which this is a decision made voluntarily by women or determined by employers’ discrimination. However our analysis show that different policy contexts and institutional settings shape the lives and living conditions of women very differently. Even if the goal is to increase fathers’ involvement in childcare – as in Sweden – and thereby contribute to decreasing occupational gender segregation and discrimination, it doesn’t seem to affect women’s chances in the labor market too much. Instead, the harsher strategy – or lack of a strategy – used in the U.S. with little or no maternity leave and high costs of time out in terms of later labor market opportunities

could be one explanation for more women in higher prestige employment in the US than in Sweden or Germany.

Without further research we are not able to draw final conclusions about the effects of parental leave policies on women's careers. In order to do that, we need to include a study of all women, not only mothers (which is something we are planning to do in the next step). Nonetheless, we have been able to show that the equation is more complicated than 'extended parental leave policies' equals 'women friendly policies' equals 'equal career chances for men and women.' If the results presented here hold up in future research, the policy implications are fairly straight forward: If the goal is to create a space for men and women, including those that are fathers and mothers, to have equal career chances, the legal parental leave length should be kept at a minimum and the state should support child care from very early on to provide mothers with the opportunity to choose uninterrupted careers.

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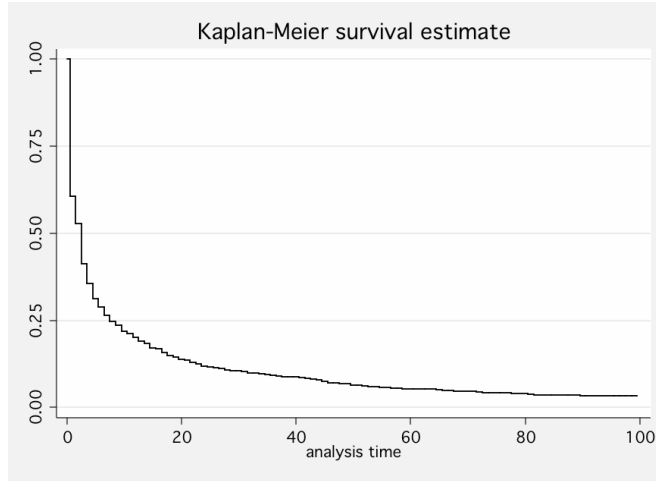
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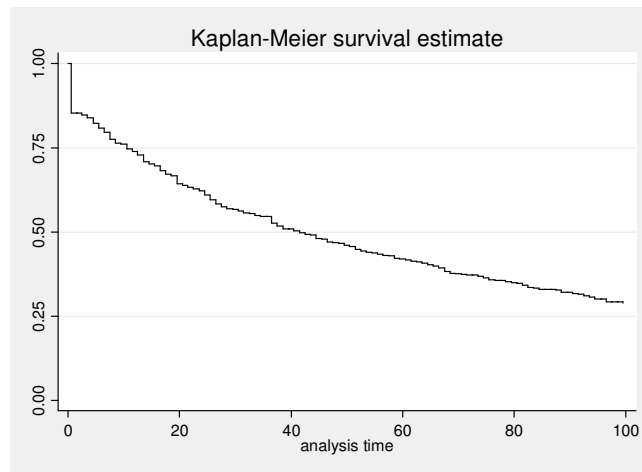
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Figure 1. Survival curves, time out of the labor market after first birth for women

US



Germany



Sweden

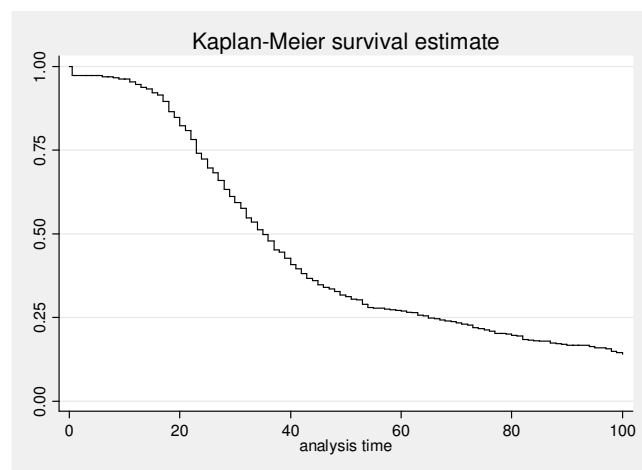
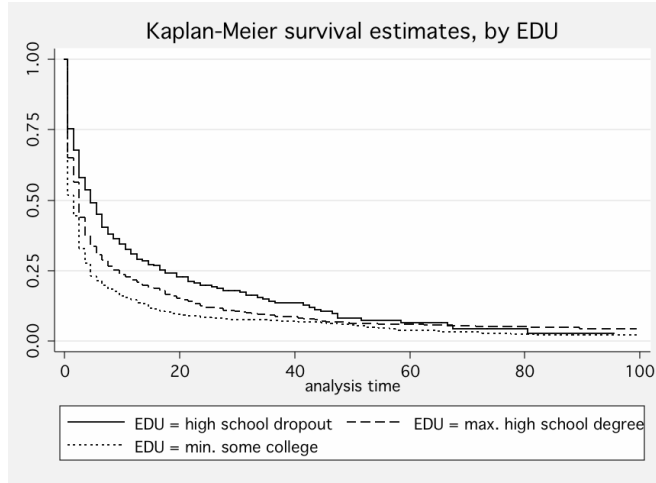
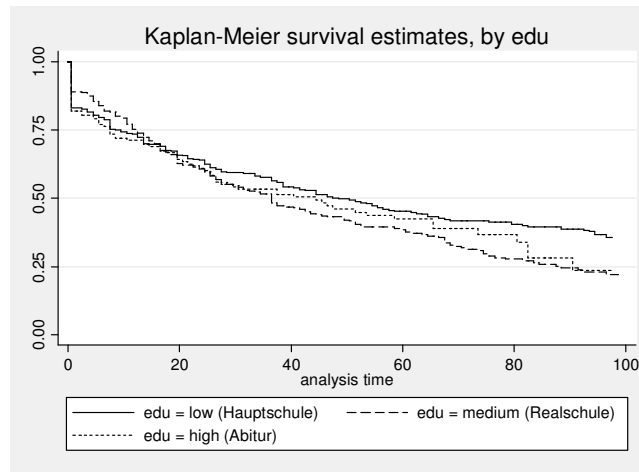


Figure 2. Survival curves, time out of the labor market after first birth by education

US



Germany



Sweden

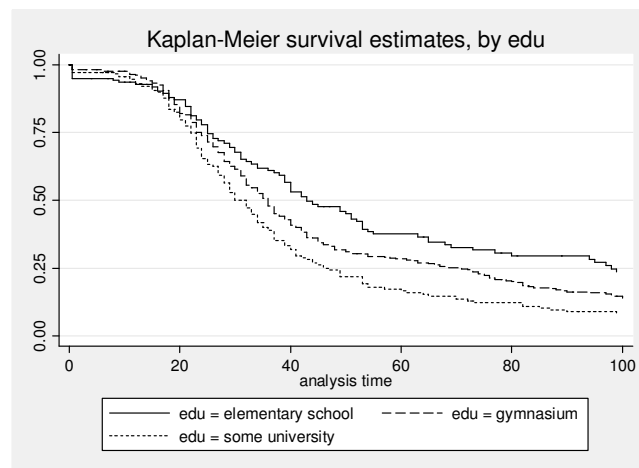
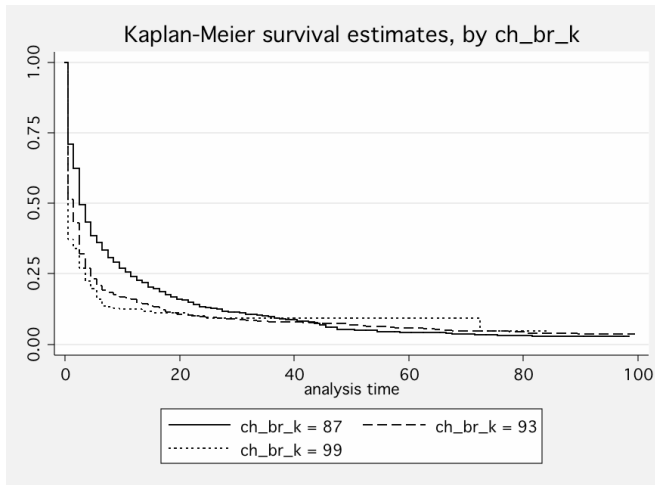
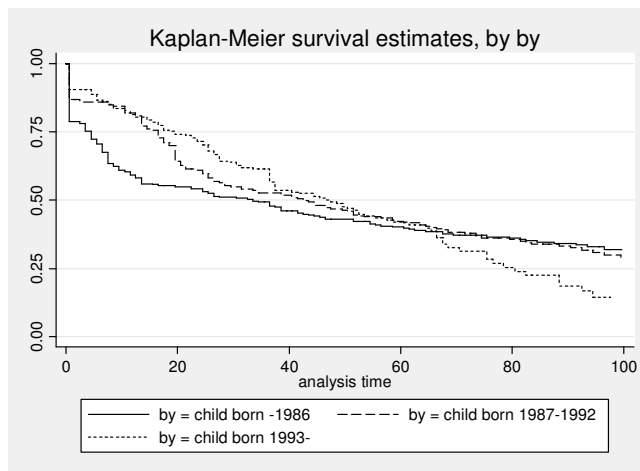


Figure 3. Survival curves, time out of the labor market after first birth by birth period

US



Germany



Sweden

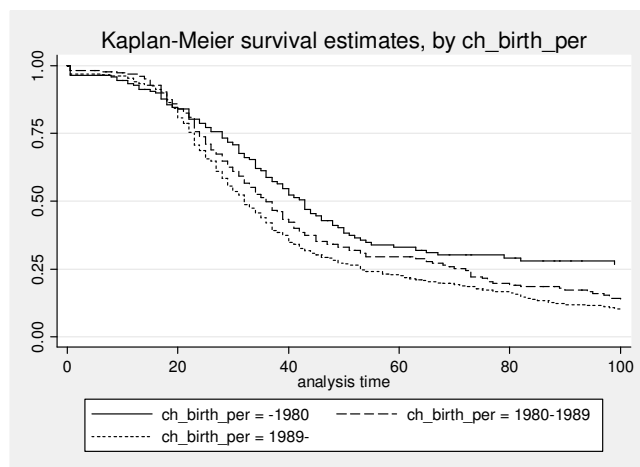
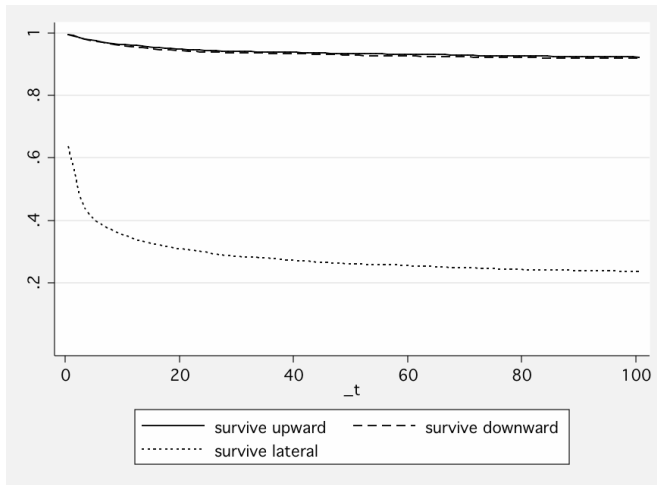
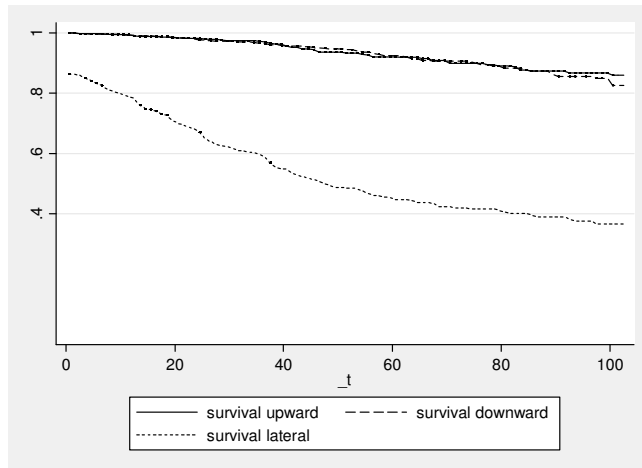


Figure 4. Survival curves, time out of the labor market after first birth for upward, downward and lateral occupational moves.

US



Germany



Sweden

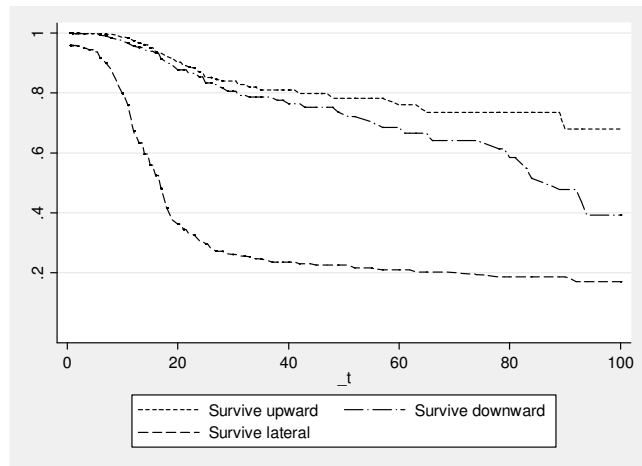


Table 1. Comparison of context differences for the U.S., Germany and Sweden¹

	U.S.	GERMANY	SWEDEN
Economic activity: Women (15+) economic activity rate	59%	49%	76%
Share of women in adult labor force	46%	44%	48%
Part time: Women employment part time	19%	30%	21%
Women's share of part time employment	68%	86%	70%
Gender Wage Gap: Female estimated earned income to the male estimated earned income ²	0.62	0.58	0.81
Occupational Segregation: Women's share of legislators and managers	42%	35%	31%
Women in parliament	15%	32%	45%
Children 0-3 in childcare	49% (0-2) ³	7% ⁴	50% ⁵
Mothers with children under the age of ... in the workforce	One: 51% ⁶	Three: 26% Six: 36% ⁷	Seven: 74% ⁸
Mother's mean age at first birth ⁹	25	28	28
Fertility rate	2.0	1.3	1.6

¹ If not otherwise noted, source: United Nations Statistics division, Statistics and Indicators on Women and Men: <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/indwm/statistics.htm>

² <http://hdr.undp.org/hdr2006/statistics/indicators/227.html> for female: ...indicators/226.html

³ Childcare fact sheet by National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, 2006

⁴ Estimate for 1999-West Germany, based on SOEP data, source: Hank, Karsten and Michaela Kreyenfeld, 2002: A Multilevel Analysis of Child Care and Transition to Motherhood in Western Germany. DIW Berlin (German Institute for Economic Research). Discussion Papers. 290. Berlin: WZB, July 2002.

⁵ Includes only children in public child care. Source: Barn och deras familjer 2000. Statistics Sweden. The numbers refer to the share of children in public day-care and pre-school by October 13, 2000.

⁶ Childcare fact sheet by National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, 2006

⁷ Employment of Mothers after Childbirth: A French-German Comparison Charlotte Lauer and Andrea Maria Weber Centre for European Economic Research Zentrum für Europäische Wirtschaftsforschung (ZEW) Mannheim <http://www.u-paris2.fr/ermes/doctrav/trav0309>

⁸ Labor force survey 2005

⁹ The Statistical Yearbook of the Economic Commission for Europe 2005

Table 2. Cox regression, competing risk model of mother's first occupational move upon reentry into the labor market after childbirth

	United States			Germany			Sweden		
	Up	Down	Lateral	Up	Down	Lateral	Up	Down	Lateral
Education middle	0.897	1.026	1.290**				1.714+	0.835	1.099
Education highest ¹	1.208	0.773	1.330**	7.769**	0.916	1.095	4.537**	0.559	1.106
Previous Treiman	0.943**	1.043**	1.006**	0.921**	1.073**	1.006	0.932**	1.064**	1.003
Labor force experience	0.366**	0.328**	0.745**	1.366**	1.419**	0.883**	1.097	1.081	0.974
Time out of lbf ²	0.922**	0.916**	0.960**	1.094	1.217**	0.613**	0.979*	1.013+	0.963**
Two children ³	1.374*	1.267+	0.870**	1.419	1.096	1.435**	ns	ns	1.560**
More than two children	0.989	1.880**	0.849**				2.581*	0.647	2.945**
Partner	0.874	1.394*	1.020	1.724	0.974	0.943	0.660	0.410+	0.797
Mother's birth year	2.535**	2.815**	1.365**	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
Age at child birth	2.479**	2.538**	1.423**	0.727**	0.721**	1.032	0.910+	0.890+	1.057**
Child birth period middle	1.332	1.330	1.094	1.186	0.950	0.988	1.259	1.323	0.848
Child birth period most recent	1.532	1.116	1.016	0.228	0.656	0.720*	1.386	1.210	0.633**
Black	0.919	1.039	1.177**	–	–	–	–	–	–
Subjects	4681	4663	4689	1156	1172	1173	1436	1436	1436
Failures	311	332	3447	68	73	514	95	129	890

+significant at 10%; * significant at 5%; ** significant at 1%

1 For Germany, the categories middle and highest level of education were collapsed, since the effects do not differ significantly from each other.

2 For the U.S., this variable shows time out of the labor force before the birth of the given child (as we can't separate time out in, for instance, unemployment and childcare for the U.S). For Sweden and Germany, this variable shows time out in parental leave or home-making.

3 For Germany, the categories 'two children' and 'three children or more' were collapsed, since the effects do not differ significantly from each other.

Table 3: Cox Regression, competing risk model of a 10% change in occupational prestige after mother's initial return to the labor market after childbirth

	United States		Germany		Sweden	
	Up	Down	Up	Down	Up	Down
<i>Previous move</i>						
Down	1.278**	1.233*	4.097**	4.136**	4.913**	0.480
Up	1.391**	1.179+	3.506**	1.401	1.071	2.583**
Education middle	1.289**	0.725**			ns	0.428**
Education highest ¹	1.787**	0.544**	3.412**	1.434	1.304	0.129**
Previous Treiman	0.941**	1.046**	0.931**	1.065**	0.970**	1.052**
Labor Force Experience	1.092**	0.998	1.639**	1.600**	1.048	1.022
Time Out of Labor force before birth	1.005	0.999	–	–	–	–
Time Out of Labor in connection to birth ²			1.199*	1.260*	0.991	1.006
Out of Labor force = 0 months		0.863*	–	–	–	–
Out of Labor force 4-12 months	0.857*		–	–	–	–
Out of Labor force over 12 months	0.768**		–	–	–	–
Two children ³	0.976	1.107+	1.288	0.790	ns	ns
More than two children	1.003	1.326**			0.475*	0.594
Partner	0.991	0.960	2.171	4.218*	1.217	0.749
Year of birth	1.078*	1.115**	ns	ns	ns	ns
Age at child birth	0.877**	0.928*	0.671**	0.749*	0.995	0.982
Child birth period middle	1.107	1.157	0.915	1.270	2.127*	1.311
Child birth period most recent	0.663*	0.663*	0.585	2.356	1.299	1.213
Black	0.963	1.227**	–	–	–	–
Tenure			0.997	0.989*	0.996	0.994
Subjects	4076	4031	507	471	1382	1387
Failures	1655	1566	38	34	108	64

+significant at 10%; * significant at 5%; ** significant at 1%

1 For Germany, the categories middle and highest level of education were collapsed, since the effects do not differ significantly from each other.

2 Time out of the labor force in connection to birth can for Sweden and Germany also mean time out in home-making before the birth of the first child. The reason for coding the variable this way is that for the U.S., we can't separate unemployment from parental leave or home-making.

3 For Germany, the categories 'two children' and 'three children or more' were collapsed, since the effects do not differ significantly from each other.