

Family, Employment and Services

The Challenge of Reconciliation for Local Governance

The Final Report of the Briefcase-Project

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February 2008



Disclaimer: 'This document has been produced with the financial assistance of the European Community - Programme relating to the Community Framework Strategy on Gender Equality (2001-2005). The contents of this document are the sole responsibility of the Briefcase - Consortium and can under no circumstances be regarded as reflecting the position or opinion of the European Union'.

The "THE ROLE OF SCHOOLS AND EDUCATION SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN LOCAL POLICIES AIMED AT THE CONCILIATION OF WORK AND HOME LIFE AND THE PROMOTION OF GENDER EQUALITY IN LOCAL DEVELOPMENT, IN PARTICULAR REGARDING THE EMPLOYMENT POTENTIAL OF WOMEN" (acronym "Briefcase") project has been supported by the European Union - Programme relating to the Community Framework Strategy on Gender Equality (2001-2005).

Briefcase Consortium (contract n° VS/2006/0433 and amendment n° VS/2007/0447) is composed of: Municipality of Bologna (IT), Millennia Association (IT), Municipality of Craiova (RO), Amaroussion Municipal Development Agency (EL), Municipality of Plovdiv (BG), Municipality of Dusseldorf (DE), Municipality of Chemnitz (DE), Verwey-Jonker Institute Utrecht (NL), EUROCITIES (BE).

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Foreword

Paola Bosi

Gender equality in European policies

In 2007, the European Union, which has now been enlarged to 27 member states, celebrated both the 50th anniversary of its gender equality policy and the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All. Gender equality policy is at the centre of the main objectives that the Union is pursuing in a globalised world: growth and competitiveness, full employment, demographic change, social inclusion and cohesion.

A special feature of European gender-related policies remains the *dual approach*: the differentiation between gender equality and mainstreaming policies that has been practised for 10 years. Beside the application of horizontal priorities aimed at incorporating gender equality objectives into all policy areas and action plans and at the evaluation of the results in terms of gender differences, the adoption of the mainstreaming approach also entails vertical priorities. These consist of positive actions that allow women to overcome barriers regarding their access to resources and services and regarding their use.

In 2006, the European Commission adopted a Roadmap for equality between men and women for the 2006-2010 period, whereas the European Council adopted the European Pact for Gender Equality. These two key initiatives testify to the Union's commitment to the eradication of gender disparities, both within the common universe of values under construction and the actual development programmes.

With the adoption of the Roadmap for equality between men and women the European Commission defined its priorities and its framework of action for promoting equality in the period until 2010. Thus, it carried on with its task of meeting gender equality objectives and ensuring that these objectives are incorporated into Community policies.

The Roadmap outlines six priority areas for EU action on gender equality in the 2006-2010 period, again according to a dual approach:

- Equal economic independence for men and women,
- Reconciliation of private and professional life,
- Equal representation in decision-making,
- Eradication of all forms of gender-based violence,
- Elimination of gender stereotypes,
- Promotion of gender equality in external and development policies.

Another reason for pursuing these objectives is that, despite the progress made by women all over Europe, inequalities still persist and may worsen as a result of the global events that affect the national and local economies. The priorities imposed by markets and goods on people have a negative impact on the weakest part of the population, in particular on women, who are still striving to balance work and family responsibilities as a result of insufficient care sharing between mothers and fathers and flexibility regarding working hours, a shortage of care services, and the persistence of gender-related stereotypes. However, Europe cannot afford to waste human capital, which is indispensable to its growth, and beco-

me an “old continent” because of the sharp decline in birth rates, which hinders innovation as opposed to younger and more dynamic contexts.

The European Pact for Gender Equality is the affirmation of the member states’ commitment to the implementation of policies aimed at promoting the employment of women and guaranteeing a better balance between professional and private life. The European Institute for Gender Equality, which was established in 2006, aims at providing technical support for the formulation of gender equality policies. At the same time, the Commission launched a formal consultation among the social partners about the possible thrust of Community action regarding the reconciliation of professional, private and family life. This conciliation was to include the promotion of flexible working arrangements, the development of child care services and the revision of the existing legislation on maternity and parental leave.

Promoting a work-life balance: “conciliation” policies

One of the necessary preconditions for an increase of female employment, both in quantitative and qualitative terms, is the settlement of the conflict between work and family responsibilities. The studies, even the latest, reveal that in practically all countries women bear the brunt of household work. This has negative repercussions for their participation in the labour market, in terms of access, continuity and quality.

Policies aimed at balancing work and family responsibilities may contribute to creating an equitable economy that is centred on people and committed to improving the living standards of both sexes.

Conciliation is not a simple policy at all, precisely because the conflict between family and work is the result of many factors that affect almost all levels of the organisation of social and productive life: urban space and time, mobility and transport, people’s working schedule and flexibility, quantity and quality of services, and the division of care tasks within the household. The first objective that the European Union is pursuing is an increase in child care facilities aimed at dependent children, but also at older or disabled people. By 2010, member states should provide child care to at least 33% of the children younger than 3 and 90% of the children aged between 3 and the mandatory school age. The services should be affordable and flexible, and ways must be found to adequately assess the qualification of the staff.

At the same time, it is necessary to support paternity, encourage men to contribute to family responsibilities too. They could be stimulated, for example, to exercise their right to take up parental leave, which in Europe is taken up by only 7,4% of the men on average. This is also connected with the fact that employers are used to granting leave to women, but they become reluctant when it comes to grant the same opportunities to fathers.

The Briefcase project

Within the afore-mentioned European context and in consideration of local policies, we embarked on a project called *Bringing reconciliation in employment and family through care services*, in short Briefcase, the results of which are described in this volume. In our capacity as project leaders, we are convinced of the need to gain insight into the set of constraints and opportunities that hinder or support households and parenthood. We immediately decided that our project on conciliation should focus on the problems of child care provision for

the 0-14 years age bracket, starting from a number of considerations that we deemed extremely important.

The reasons behind the sharp decline in fertility rates are generally associated with financial uncertainties and the conflict between professional and private life. Women are more likely to be chained to a vicious circle that is very difficult to break: should they give up work and be poorer, or should they give up motherhood to be able to work? Yet, child care is not the only task that women perform as part of their household duties. Their responsibilities range from care for older people or dependent adults to ensuring that all family members can lead a regular, healthy, trouble-free life. Thus, the issue of conciliation affects women's life as a whole. This is a crucial point that governments, including local ones, need to keep in mind when they make decisions on the development of a region and the enhancement of social cohesion.

Our investigation into the European context was conducted through Eurocities (the network of major European cities that brings together the local governments of more than 100 cities across Europe). This enabled the Municipality of Bologna to build up a process of transnational exchange, which is very useful when all EU municipalities are discussing the same policy. Past experience teaches us that a European project provides the opportunity to analyse the social needs of the population and the answers of the administrations through an impartial approach that enhances the exchange of good practices and the co-operation between local communities. It is a common undertaking that sometimes goes on even after the end of the project and results in improved services and an increased awareness of city contexts. Briefcase is an example of this kind of project. The project cities are: Amaroussion (Greece), Bologna (Italy), Chemnitz (Germany), Craiova (Romania), Düsseldorf (Germany) and Plovdiv (Bulgaria). Two technical partners, the Agenzia Millennia based in Bologna (Italy) and the Verwey-Jonker Institute based in Utrecht (the Netherlands) were entrusted with the transnational scientific coordination and the assessment activities. The contexts were diverse in terms of history and socio-economic features of the populations, but despite these differences, many common problems associated with conciliation were identified. For example, whereas some initiatives in Bologna were similar to those in Düsseldorf (on-site day-care), some other Bolognese experiences could be better correlated with those of Chemnitz, for example the ageing of the population and the policies regarding services. Numerous examples like this can be found in each section of this volume.

As reported by some policy-makers who dealt with conciliation issues at a local level, in some cities this was not the first project on this topic, nor will it be the last one. There is a great need to raise awareness about the importance of reconciling productive and reproductive life among policy-makers, but also among citizens of both sexes. We can and must acknowledge the huge value of women's unpaid work. We can and must transform gender-related disadvantages into precious resources for the life of individuals and for the community as a whole.



Düsseldorf

Introduction

Giuliana Bertagnoni and Lorenza Malucelli

The Briefcase project was born of the willingness of the Municipality of Bologna to assess its own policies and to set up a transnational consultation on the issue that hinders women's participation in local development the most: the conciliation between professional, personal, and family life.

In Europe, this issue has been of central importance for two decades. With the emergence of epochal social changes (such as women's increasing participation in the labour market; the ageing of the population; and the structural changes that affect the relationships both between men and women and within families), the identification of new tools that could help balance and meet the needs of men and women in their personal lives has become a precondition for the social and economic development of many regions and countries.

In its Lisbon agenda (2000), the European Union defined four basic strategies to approach the problem of conciliation¹ as a whole: the introduction of legislation to govern parental leave; the provision of child care services and care services in general (for older people, ill people, the differently-abled, et cetera); a family-friendly work organisation that respects private and family needs; and the division of domestic labour and unpaid work between men and women. The Barcelona summit (2002) reaffirmed the need to address the barriers to women's participation in the labour market, focusing on the demand for child care services. Well-known determinants of female participation are the age and number of children, marital status, and educational level. Moreover, as many studies have confirmed,² policies supporting family and professional arrangements play an important role with regard to higher participation rates.

Given the possibility of involving the Eurocities network in this project on reconciliation, those entrusted with the writing, planning and coordination of the cross-national research, thought it would be particularly interesting to compare different local contexts within the European area. Until now, comparative studies have almost entirely been carried out at a national level, although many authors stress³ that disparities within the same national context very often outnumber the differences between different countries.

This also applies to care services, because the local civic culture and other peculiarities influence the demand and supply of these services, and the power to implement policies resides with the local authorities.

From the beginning, as the project leader, the City Council of Bologna has been keenly interested in these considerations, because the Emilia-Romagna local model of development,

¹ Malucelli, L. (2005). *Il quadro di riferimento teorico e l'adozione del principio delle pari opportunità*, in CRAS (edited by) *Buone pratiche per le pari opportunità e il mainstreaming di genere nelle azioni del FSE della Regione Emilia-Romagna*. The Emilia-Romagna Region: the Ministry for Employment and Social Policy.

² EC. (2005). *Reconciliation of work and private life: a comparative review of thirty European countries*.

³ Kröger, T. (2001). *Comparative Research On Social Care. The State Of The Art*, SOCCARE Project Report 1, Brussels: European Commission.

while representing a typical modernisation process, differs greatly from other Italian scenario's. Women have played an essential role in the making of this model.

It is a story that started a long time ago, when women gained access to public life after World War II, which in Italy coincided with their right to vote. The model is based on the fact that the caretaking and educational and supportive capabilities, traditionally carried out by women in the private sphere, were turned into governmental activities in line with the "participatory democracy" model that was taking root in some areas of post-war Europe.

In Bologna, the local administrations promoted a system of "good governance", based on the capacity to provide objective answers to the local community's social needs through a network of political bodies, trade unions and associations that was beginning to spread across the area,⁴ also as a result of women's participation. One of the fruits of this work, - even though it reached its peak in other cities in the region (especially in Reggio Emilia) -, is day-care. In the Fifties, the child care services provided to the children of the "mondine" during their endless working days in the fields, were funded with state money, even though they were managed by the women themselves. Faced with organisational and financial problems, the agricultural workers' union, backed by the entire rural population, began to force employers to finance the child care services. It succeeded in making them sign agreements that granted specific shares per hectare and set up a sort of pioneering "company child care" system.

But despite the fundamental role played by women in the Emilia-Romagna model of development, the female participation in political and economic decisions has always lacked visibility, as was clearly shown, among others, by the first report of the Commission on Gender Equality in the Emilia Romagna region.⁵

As a matter of fact, in the economic model typical of Emilia Romagna, based on family-run businesses, women do not receive any formal acknowledgement, as business ownership is always male (or is passed on from fathers to sons), even in predominantly female sectors⁵ such as the manufacture of clothing.

By taking the collective awareness of women's contribution to the national economies for granted, a big gap still exists between the acknowledgement of their contribution and its valuation.⁶

As some studies⁷ have shown, women's participation in the labour force was traditionally attributable to the need of raising the family income. Nowadays, this strategic choice for the

⁴ Bertagnoni, G., (2007). Un nuovo ceto dirigente: culture e pratiche politiche a confronto, in Bertagnoni, G., & Guaraldi, E., *Democrazia e amministrazione: uomini e istituzioni*, from the series *Isrebo Dalla guerra al boom. Territorio, economia, società e politica nei comuni della pianura orientale bolognese*. Bologna: Aspasia.

Maluccelli, L. (2005) *Lo sviluppo istituzionale delle politiche di genere: un'indagine in Emilia-Romagna*, in Associazione "Orlando" (edited by) *Buongoverno della città: strategie di genere*, Bologna: ed. Pitagora.

⁵ Pesce, A. (1990). *Un'altra Emilia Romagna*. Milano": Franco Angeli. On female business ownership see Bertagnoni, G. (2007). La titolarità dell'impresa alberghiera in Umbria: un approccio di genere, in *Il turismo e le città dal XVIII al XXI secolo. Italia e Spagna a confronto*,

⁶ Groppi, A. (1996). *Il lavoro delle donne*. Laterza: Roma-Bari.

⁷ Hareven T.K. (1992). edited by Battilani, P., Strangio, D., Milano & Franco Angeli. Il lavoro delle donne e le strategie famigliari, in *Operaie, serve, maestre, impiegate*, edited by P. Nava, Torino: Rosemberg & Sellier.

survival of the household is sometimes still subordinated to their role as providers of unpaid work, which in most European cultures is shouldered almost exclusively by women.

Recent research on fathers in Europe⁸ shows that many fathers acknowledge that there are ways to come to a more fair division of unpaid work between the sexes. Examples of this are regulations regarding working hours, laws regarding the right to work in part-time positions, good leave schemes (with special attention being paid to the stimulation of men to take up parental leave), and the provision of encompassing child care. However, the emphasis put on paid work in general means that care tasks come second. The individual father who wants to put care first is pulled back by employers and the government stressing the 'work first' principle. As long as work and care are not seen as equally important in society, men will be less inclined or triggered to take up caring tasks.

Today, these three areas (services, employment, and family) on which the local gender-related history is based constitute the thematic pillars of conciliation policies. The dialogue among municipalities promoted by the *Briefcase* project focused on the exchange of cultural models and local development policies that contribute to European integration. The survey conducted as part of the project involved all partner cities in a process that aimed at gaining insight into local contexts. This was achieved by means of a comparative approach that highlighted their differences (the five cities that joined the project besides Bologna are Düsseldorf and Chemnitz in Germany, Craiova in Romania, Plovdiv in Bulgaria, and Amaroussion in Greece).

The analysis followed two directions that we deemed extremely important. On the one hand, this involved the analysis of the real needs and conciliation strategies of the families, with an eye to gender equality. On the other hand, it involved the policies of the local governments, their declarations of their intentions as well as their implementation processes based on the exchange of good practices and, in some cases, even the definition of a pilot action. These choices were supported by a number of previous transnational surveys,⁹ in which it was stated that "the voice of local policy-makers and families has always been absent from the comparative research on *social care*". Within this framework, the added value of the European dimension lies in a better comprehension and description of the questions analysed in the light of the varying civic traditions. In addition, it has also generated an exchange of ideas with regard to the *development*, the *sustainability*, and the strategies adopted in the various contexts between different social actors, especially women.

This volume, containing the results of 15 months of work, is divided into three sections, one for each thematic area tackled by the research.

In the first part, policy-makers from the project's partner cities, experts from the local governments, and organisations from the non-profit service sector answer a number of questions that aim at clarifying how the Briefcase project can be applied to a broader governmental context. The resulting picture shows that, although all are aware of the scope of

⁸ Woerds, S. ter, Stavenuiter, M. & Duyvendak, J.W., (2007). *Caring is sharing. Involvement of fathers in care and household tasks in five European countries*. Utrecht: Verwey-Jonker Institute.

⁹ Kröger, T., op.cit.

conciliation policies, the measures adopted vary significantly from one city to another, depending on whether conciliation is a novelty or an issue that the municipalities have been tackling for a long time. Each municipality acknowledged the need to divide the work according to two priority areas: child care services and gender equality at work. Special importance was attributed to the quality and availability of the services, as well as to the provision of a wide range of additional child care services. Moreover, the changes in the world of work caused by globalisation, which has wiped out national differences, seem to impose the challenge of an improved provision of child care services in all cities, in particular with regard to an increased flexibility. The cities with a certain degree of experience in conciliation policies agree on the need for an increased involvement of the private and non-profit sectors. They also agree on the need for an increased involvement of companies, which in some cities participate directly in the set-up and management of child care services. Last but not least, the municipalities must also come to grips with another issue associated with conciliation policy: promoting awareness of gender equality, especially at the workplace. All the cities, despite their differences, complain that the needs of working mothers are still little thought of in their culture. Thus, it is no coincidence that the social actors (associations, networks, local groups) say they are satisfied, at least most of them, with the policies of their respective municipalities, but insist that more needs to be done regarding training and communication with respect to gender equality.

In the second part of this volume, we will analyse the correspondence between these policies and the needs and/or attitudes of the parents from the partner cities by means of a survey, and we will subsequently present the results. The tool used to obtain and collect information during the survey is a structured and standardised questionnaire divided into five sections: personal data, family, changes after childbirth, work, and child care services. It is made up of 36 questions, translated in all languages of the participating countries. It was administered to a sample of 943 respondents with dependent children aged between 0 and 14 years, one third of which were fathers and two thirds mothers.

Regarding the strategies used by fathers and mothers to reconcile responsibilities, commitments, working hours, and various aspects that influence family and professional life, the research reveals that the traditional pattern is the most rooted. The degree of this traditionalism varies in the different cities, although a slow but steady change of direction seems to be taking place. Of course, men are more likely to be in paid employment and women still bear the brunt of both paid and unpaid work. But it is evident that men are becoming more involved in family responsibilities, especially in child care.

Because the time distribution among activities related to paid and unpaid work is influenced not only by personal preference but also by social norms, the organisation of the work, and the *welfare* system,¹⁰ we focused on the legislative framework with respect to parental roles and gender equality at work and the social opportunities offered by the private market services for infants and pre-teens. The impact of childbirth is still very unequally balanced. After a child is born, men are more likely to start working longer hours, while women are

¹⁰ Malucelli L. (2007). *Lavori di cura. Cooperazione sociale e servizi alla persona. L'esperienza di Cadai*, Bologna: Il Mulino.

more likely to reduce their working hours because they are subject to various forms of discrimination. By contrast, women are not the only ones who benefit from regulations and organisation arrangements that promote maternity and conciliation (flexible working hours, parental leave, part-time work, et cetera): men, too, are beginning to use them, but to a lesser extent, as they fear negative repercussions on their career prospects. Besides these tools, another important aspect is the availability of alternatives, like grandparents and other informal arrangements, although the changes in family patterns make it necessary to turn to the private market of paid child care or domestic labour. The formal public and private services, however, still play a crucial role. Their importance is stressed by all the respondents of all cities, yet to varying degrees according to the availability of such services in their city, which in the last few years must be in line with the objectives established by the European Union. Although pre-school services for children aged between 3 and 6 are almost universally spread, nurseries for children aged between 1 and 3 are not equally available throughout the various contexts. It is precisely in this field, which the cities have been addressing for longer periods, that new ways are being tested to allow the private sector to complement the demand that the public sector cannot meet, and new, original initiatives are being developed together with the companies.

The third part of this volume presents the “good practices” selected by the partners among the initiatives adopted by the local governments with regard to conciliation, as well as three pilot actions to be implemented by the administrations. The thematic areas under which these fall, are on the one hand the availability of child care services, both out-of-home and at-home, and on the other hand initiatives that benefit conciliation at the workplace. These include measures to encourage women’s return to work after maternity or parental leave, flexible working hours arrangements, and other agreements with companies. A very innovative measure is that of teleworking, despite the danger that paid work might impose an even more unjust division of household work at home, thus possibly worsening the present situation. Lastly, another series of “good practices” deals with gender-related stereotypes and aims at raising awareness of gender equality at work and the work-life balance.

There is a remarkable coherence between the political will mentioned in the first part, the needs and requirements of men and women with dependent children analysed in the second part, and the government action which is dealt with in the third part of the volume. The opportunity provided by the *Briefcase* project is precisely the promotion of *local governance* and its unavoidable interrelation with public administration, private stakeholders, and social actors when it comes to the creation of an integrated system of services and policies that enhance the work-life balance.

Part I
**Cities side by side: local services
for the reconciliation of work and
family life**

Laura Fantone and Lorenza Malucelli

Chapter 1: Cities and the importance of a European dialogue

This first chapter presents the six partner cities of the Briefcase project. They all have to deal with the reconciliation of family and working life and, in particular, with the role of child care services. We present the opinions of key political and social actors involved in the different local contexts in a montage of testimonies. Members of the project team interviewed mayors and senior officials of each city, as well as representatives of non-profit organisations and the third sector. The texts we propose are fragments of these interviews. We think that these fragments will speak for themselves.

1. Opinions of mayors and administrators

Public administrators helped us to reconstruct both the framework of reconciliation policies and the local and European dynamics in which the Briefcase project was developed. This section starts from the question “Why do you believe in co-operating with other European cities?” Overall, the interviewees expressed great interest in European partnerships, attributing particular importance to the exchange of knowledge and experience. Another point local representatives often made is that such projects allow for the development of synergies, which can take the form of a long-term collaboration between cities. The quotes reported below were chosen as the most significant from the interviews conducted in Bologna (Italy), Amaroussion (Greece), Düsseldorf (Germany), Chemnitz (Germany), Craiova (Romania) and Plovdiv (Bulgaria).

Adriana Scaramuzzino, Deputy Mayor of Bologna (responsible for family policies (Italy):

The experience gathered in the last few years has proven that exchange and thematic insight experiences carried out jointly with other European cities, constitute a great opportunity for raising awareness and improving the quality of interventions.

The possibility to analyse social needs and identify good practice methods that can be applied to the service industry, communication, and participation strengthens the local community.

Maria Virgilio, Councillor for Schools, Training, and Anti-discrimination Policies in the Council of Bologna (Italy):

We are aware that the challenges we are facing as local government are not so different from those faced by other European cities, where conciliating work and family life somehow influences the development of the area and social gender relations. It is very important to compare the main implications that these problems have on various sectors, as we all live in Europe and must be able to work jointly and in co-ordination with other member states and local communities. The solutions that each of us develops and implements can often be applied to other areas and adapted to other local contexts. If someone was able to think more clearly and effectively than we have been doing, why not follow his or her example?

General Secretary of the Municipality of Amaroussion (Greece):

The added value of this project (Briefcase) and, in general, of working with other EU cities, is to establish a fruitful co-operation, to exchange good practices for the reconciliation of family and professional life and, finally, to transfer the know-how of innovative areas in the field of *Working & Family Life Balance* to the Municipality of Amaroussion.

Joachim Erwin, Lord Mayor of Düsseldorf (Germany):

European cities want to gain more political influence across the continent. Ultimately, cities have to implement the decisions made by European institutions, even if they are not part of the decision making process. Co-operation between European cities in EU-funded projects gives them a chance to present to the European Commission the reality in which each European citizen lives.

City administrations go to great lengths to ensure the well-being of their citizens and the European Commission should become familiar with their efforts and policies. This would help to formulate realistic and essential proposals for a variety of political fields, affecting the daily life of citizens directly. The co-operation between cities will be a huge learning experience, while the exchange of views might lead to co-operation.

Heidemarie Lüth, Deputy Mayor for Family, Children and Social Issues, Elderly People, Culture and Sports of Chemnitz City Council (Germany):

Co-operating with other European cities by participating in common projects and using common measures is of great importance to Chemnitz. This collaboration goes beyond contacting direct partner-cities. Comparing different European cities and exchanging best practises enables us to profit from other experiences on the one hand, and to pass on our knowledge in various fields on the other. The big changes that we have made in the years after 1990 might be of interest to the new EU members in terms of insights and experiential knowledge.

Sorin Iordache, Deputy Mayor of Craiova City Council (Romania):

By definition, a partnership means sharing all financial, material, and human resources and forces, in order to find solutions to common problems. At the same time, it represents a veritable and extremely valuable exchange of experiences, it improves relationships between the countries involved, and it provides adequate information in the field in question. Thus, it is appropriate to say that each country has something to offer and to learn from the other. Here lies the value of collaborating with other countries in the European Union and, because of this, Craiova Municipality agreed with and supported this type of partnership.

Atanas Slavov, Deputy Mayor of Plovdiv City Council (Bulgaria):

Working with other European cities enables us to benefit from the experience of different towns and to exchange good practices.

From these first answers, a very positive overview of European partnership experiences emerges. Despite the wide variety of situations and urban contexts present in this project, the great majority of the respondents see these differences as productive, as part of a wealth of knowledge and practices acquired elsewhere, and as possibilities to invest in local-

ly. Representatives of new European Member States really wish to share their change processes; they display a great willingness to collaborate with cities in old Member States. All administration representatives emphasise the importance of the empowerment to be gained from participating in European projects, and of the role played by the exchange and reciprocity between cities in achieving innovation. Moreover, it appears that they view European projects as opportunities for critical reflection on their own policies and as stimuli for changing and improving their cities.

2. *Reconciliation policies in local government*

In this paragraph interviewees comment upon the role reconciliation policies play within their administration. This provides answers to questions about the importance that local politicians attribute to this subject and about decisions made by the current local government. These fragments of interviews give insight in what preceded and what accompanied the Briefcase project, explaining its position in relation to other reconciliation policies, which have been developed to a greater or lesser extent in each of the cities.

Maria Virgilio, Councillor for Schools, Training, and Anti-discrimination Policies in the Council of Bologna (Italy):

The city of Bologna has always been committed to promoting solidarity, enforcing citizen rights. It has always been aware of the local government's responsibility to enhance the well-being of its population, too. Since the early post-war years, the city administration began to promote a culture of equity and social justice. Together with other cities in the region, it thus contributed to the so-called *Emilia-Romagna welfare system*, acknowledged as the widest and most qualified welfare system in the country.

Bologna is one of the most generous cities with regard to public services, especially those aimed at children and the elderly, which mainly involve care work. This relates to the fact that the city's female population has always worked outside the home, a pattern that dates back to a time when the local economy was based on agriculture. This means, moreover, that women play an active role in social and political life as well as in the work environment. In other words, women have always influenced the administration of this city. The fact that a great number of women worked outside the home urged the city to set up care services, which have always had the double objective of responding to the needs of their beneficiaries, safeguarding and promoting women's employment. I believe that the city administration has always kept in mind that female employment goes hand in hand, both with economic development and with the general well-being of the city.

The percentage of Bolognese women in paid employment exceeds 65%, so it is not surprising that the day care network is well above the target set by the European Commission for Member States by 2010 (33%), whereas the nursery schools already meet the demand. Before the expression "work-life balance" existed, policies already granted a sort of equilibrium between parenthood and work, either consciously or unconsciously.

However, this does not mean that there is no room for improvement. The increase in the number and quality of services is accompanied by a constant increase in the demand. We are

confronted with changing social and demographic patterns. These are followed by new economic trends that pose new challenges and require new solutions that are more flexible, more extensive, and more relevant to cultural differences and to social and employment patterns, expanding and broadening the responsibilities of the government. Work-life balance as an opportunity for gender equality remains an objective that is directly associated with the fact that, despite the high employment rate, women are still the main providers of domestic work and family care. In this sense, very little has changed. However, work-life balance is also a problem connected with the quality of life of all members of the community. This means that, even though we have made progress, the final target has not been attained.

Adriana Scaramuzzino, Deputy Mayor of Bologna responsible for family policies (Italy):

The Municipality of Bologna has been dealing with work-life balance issues, especially by supporting parents through the enhancement of various kinds of child care services, both public and mixed private/public (day-care centres, nursery schools, play schemes, services for children and parents...). In addition, it has set up arrangements considered to be good practice by the National Parenting and Family Institute. These provide financial support for mothers and fathers who choose to take parental leave when their child is born, as set forth in national legislation (Law 53/2000). This project allows many young couples to achieve a work-life balance on an important and delicate moment in their lives. At the same time, the "family centre" service provides the opportunity to experience *time banking*, a way of promoting mutual assistance among citizens, based on the value of individual skills and qualities. In other words, up to now, work-life balance policies have focussed on solving the problems faced by parents in their everyday commitments and on contributing to the promotion of the role that families play in the social fabric. Currently, we are engaged in raising awareness among citizens about the need to set up a *network for concerted action* that brings together the various stakeholders involved in co-ordinating city time policies, with the aim of addressing the problems associated with mobility and access to services (public offices, shops, schools...).

General Secretary of the Municipality of Amaraoussion (Greece):

During the last years, the Municipality of Amaraoussion has undertaken numerous activities related to work-life balance policies. In particular, it has provided full-time school hours, sports activities in the summer, and *Free Programmes for Psychological Support and Vocational orientation*. The main goal of these programmes is to improve the opportunities of women in the labour market by supporting women who have many responsibilities.

Joachim Erwin, Lord Mayor of Düsseldorf (Germany):

Creating equal opportunities for men and women has a long-standing tradition in Düsseldorf. The city administration has acquired a great deal of experience in the field. Since 1989, the Office for Equal Opportunities has implemented a gender approach: services for the reconciliation of family and working life were introduced in the entrepreneurial sector. In the business sector, for example, the government supported the introduction of child care services and of flexible work schedules. Beyond this, political programmes in different committees implement gender training in further education and in the job market. As a result of this

policy, Düsseldorf has the highest rate of child care services in Germany for children aged between four months and three years. Fifteen percent of these children are looked after by child care services. This percentage represents one of the highest figures reported in the largest cities of North-Rhine-Westphalia.

Heidmarie Lüth, Councillor for Child and Family Social Policy in the Municipality of Chemnitz (Germany):

In order to describe reconciliation policies, we need to examine the dynamics currently taking place in Chemnitz. Since 1990, Chemnitz has lost many inhabitants, mainly young people, and especially young women who migrated from the region. In our city, the number of elderly people will increase further during the next years. This requires a multitude of structural changes. We put in our best efforts to make it an attractive city to live in, especially for families. Therefore, it is very important to reconcile work and family life. In order to accomplish this, the city requires jobs, a well-connected public transport system, a social infrastructure with shops, day care options, schools, cultural and educational centres, and local services.

Concerning day care Chemnitz provides very good conditions. For 53 % of the age group of the one- to three-year old children there are day care offers, from four- to six-years for 96% and for the seven- to ten-year old children for 83% of the children. Focus of the political efforts is to ensure and to further develop the quality of the care and to fulfil the educating task according to the Saxon Day-care-Law, including the arrangement of the transition into school. Exemplary thereby is the project "child & co". By a decision of the city council the care hours were adapted to the changes in the working hours. According to this there is a good cooperation with other operators of care facilities and companies who operate an own day care facility. The objective is to incite young women and men to work, live, set up a family here in this region. Family-friendliness and a balanced work-life are very important location factors for Chemnitz.

Sorin Iordache, Deputy Major of the City Council of Craiova (Romania):

Gender equality and any aspect relating to it represent a fundamental right, a common value of the European Union and a condition necessary for the development of society.

As far as the work and life balance is concerned, there are local non-governmental organisations (NGOs) that are carrying out activities within this field, with the help of the Municipality of Craiova. They are working to find solutions by elaborating and subsequently implementing short, medium, and long-term projects. These projects aim to improve women's access to employment and citizens' education, and to promote women's rights. In many of the educational institutes of Craiova, there have been many initiatives to raise awareness among young people of issues concerning gender equality, which will have a positive influence on their future social development. Even though there are still many steps to be taken with regard to the work-life balance, as a municipality, we can say that the situation is not too serious, at least not from this point of view. This is sustained by the existence of a large number of kindergartens with prolonged programmes, offering between 4 and 8 hours of service, which facilitates the work-life balance for parents. During the last years, programmes have been carried out within institutions. There has been a mediated dialogue on

this issue between employees and employers, with the purpose of finding solutions that would benefit both parties. Of course, these are only a few examples. There are many more issues related to this subject that require solving and much more attention.”

Atanas Slavov, Deputy Mayor of Plovdiv (Bulgaria):

Our government policies ensure the right to social benefits during pregnancy, while giving birth, and while raising children. They also provide paid leave to people who look after a child. Other issues are dealt with in the *Child Protection Act*, including support measures for raising children in a family environment, and regulations preventing people from leaving their children in institutions.

All administrators interviewed have a clear idea of the importance of reconciliation policies. However, the identification of tangible measures varies significantly in relation to the specific situation of the city and socioeconomic trends among the population. In some cases, there are major historical differences; in some cities, for example, the issue of reconciliation is more recent, while in others it has been present for some time. In fact, in places where women have been working for many years, the conciliation between household work, family care, and professional responsibilities is discussed in terms of the flexibility of working hours and of child care services (as in the cases of Düsseldorf and Bologna, where percentages are close to European standards). In other contexts, the political willingness to promote reconciliation measures (such as in the cases of Bologna and Chemnitz) are contrasted by a demographic situation that discourages the formation of new families and an increase of the birth rate (migrations, the ageing of the population). Ultimately, all opinions expressed highlight the importance of providing regional child care services and of promoting equality at the workplace. These principles should form the foundation of any reconciliation policy.

Chapter 2: Local governance

1. Reconciliation measures

In this paragraph, we will discuss the reconciliation initiatives actually implemented in partner cities. In this case, the interviews were conducted with council officials working in social policy and child welfare sectors in the councils of Bologna, Amaroùsson, Düsseldorf, Chemnitz, Craiova, and Plovdiv. Although all these interviewees fulfil different roles, and the names of departments and sectors in charge of crosscutting policies vary in each local governmental institution, the answers provided below show a strong similarity in the roles of each partner city within the project.

Maria Rosa Bonomi, responsible for service integration within the education sector of the Council of Bologna (Italy):

Rather than talk about balance, we should talk about harmonisation, acknowledging the equal value of production and reproduction and the central role of care services, which, in our community, are activities still predominantly carried out by women. When the contribution of women's work, paid and unpaid, is taken into account, in addition to the employment rate of 65%, it exceeds that of men by an average 13/14 hours per week.

The Municipality of Bologna has always supported women's right to work by providing quality services. Child care has always had a high priority, despite increasing expenditure problems.

Currently, Bologna's nurseries cater for 34% of the 0-2 age group, compared to a national average of 9%. The attendance rate for state or mixed private/public nursery schools is 98.8%, indicating that nearly all Bolognese children aged between 3 and 6 attend a nursery school.

The city administration is currently committed to promoting the introduction of on-site day-care in the working environment, by identifying the companies that are willing to share the financial costs with the city and to reserve a set number of places for resident children. One on-site nursery is soon to be established in one of the most important engineering companies of the city, Ducati, well known from the international motorcycle competition. Other companies and bodies are co-operating with the city administration to start up similar initiatives in the future.

A collaboration has emerged between the city and private organisations providing alternative services to day-care for children up to the age of three, as well as services that may be considered as an integration with traditional services.

In addition, the city provides support to the educational and care-providing role of the families, through financial aid to parents who voluntarily choose to prolong their leave after birth, or who choose part-time employment up to the child's third birthday. The "Full-time or part-time family" allowances are granted to both fathers and mothers who apply.

Assistance to the elderly and disabled also represents a form of support for families that, for work-related reasons, are unable to dedicate much time to wholly or partially dependent

persons who are either living with them or living elsewhere. A specific training programme for foreign women centred on the needs of elderly and disabled people. A new method for meeting the supply and demand of care is currently being tested by Bolognese families.

The Director of the Social Welfare Organisation of the Municipality of Amaroussion (Greece):

Let me summarise the main services for children and adults that improve the work-life balance in our city. Amaroussion believes that child care services have a strategic role in reconciliation; the city is aiming to improve the nurseries. Since 1994, fourteen Municipal Kindergartens have been established in the Amaroussion District, serving approximately 820 children from 650 families. The Municipal Kindergartens offer children medical care, meals, fun activities, and gymnastics. The fees differ (from zero to €100 per month), depending on the age of the child, the number of children from each family, the marital status of the parents, and/or whether the parents are disabled. The working hours of the municipal kindergartens are from 6:30 am to 16:00 pm. As with school-age children, Amaroussion attributes great importance to sports centres, providing after-school activities especially in the summer. The staff in charge of these activities receives training. The staff members look after the children from the moment they are dropped off in the morning until their return home. The day care schools are open until 16.00 pm, serving the needs of parents who want a well-organised school that supports their children, while simultaneously relieving families from having to pay fees for their children's education due to the variety of courses. There are also initiatives supporting disabled children at home and in Children's Creativity Centres. Amaroussion introduced the project *Help at Home*, to provide services for elderly citizens (such as making their lunch, washing up, or performing medical examinations) that make their everyday life easier. The council also offers training and consultation services for businesses, to women and young people especially, in collaboration with social organisations, trade unions, and training institutes. These initiatives indirectly benefit the employment situation and reconciliation of adult women. Another important resource that should not go unmentioned is the support centre for women or single parents. Finally, the city provides day centres for the elderly (KIFI) with the aim to offer cultural, social, and health-related opportunities for the elderly in their daily life, reducing the care burden for older people in families in which both adults work.

Johannes Horn, Head of the Youth Welfare Office in the City of Düsseldorf (Germany):

It is very important to develop child care locally, enabling parents to balance their work and personal lives. In Düsseldorf, we are able to offer every child between 3 and 6 years of age a place in a day-care facility. As for the children below the age of 3, we aim to provide places for a third of them by 2010. It is important to co-operate with companies, in order to develop company child care facilities that provide better care and services, supporting the reconciliation of work and family life. At present, we have 400 places in company child care facilities in Düsseldorf. By the end of next year, we will have twice as many. In addition, the Youth Welfare Office has a network of assistance services for families, children, and adolescents. Upgrading day-care centres in family centres, where educational and counselling services are clustered together per city district, represents one further step towards a more family-

friendly approach. As head of a local department with a staff of 1900, I would like to emphasize that the company's commitment to increase family-friendliness must go beyond the creation of places in child care centres. I am thinking of part-time jobs, flexible working hours, and telecommuting jobs.

Bettina Bezold, Equal Opportunities Commission in the Council of Chemnitz (Germany):

I work as the equality commissioner of the city of Chemnitz. I am married and I have two children; one of them is in kindergarten and the other goes to school. Working full-time myself, I understand the problems this project addresses very well.

At present, there are two opposite trends in Chemnitz. On the one hand, the economy is growing. Highly engineered companies in the automobile industry and their suppliers, computer science, mechatronics, and engineering companies, face a rising demand for highly qualified specialists. At the same time, however, the population is diminishing. This demographic change is in full swing. The fact that young people, consisting mainly of young well-educated women, still migrate to other regions, adds to the drama of this phenomenon. Our objective is to make Chemnitz a city where young men and women are eager to work, live, and set up a family. Therefore, it is important to provide attractive jobs, and care facilities for children and elderly people that meet the demands of families, enabling parents to go to work knowing that their family members are being looked after. These families need a well-connected public transport system, local services, reasonable cultural facilities, and a family-friendly climate. Family-friendliness and a balanced work and home life have become important factors, both for the economy and for the positive development of the city.

Rodica Tenea, Director of the Social Protection and Assistance Service of Craiova City Council (Romania):

All the requests addressed to local authorities resulted in the establishment of a large number of kindergartens with extended day programmes, from 4 to 8 hours per day. We believe that this initiative had a very positive impact on the conciliation of work and home life. With regard to different fields, educational institutes got involved in the promotion of gender equality in schools, high schools, and universities, through the organisation of training classes and seminars centred on this theme. Moreover, this subject continues to be discussed by locally elected officials in mass media interventions on gender equality.

Nely Stoeva, Social Affairs Department of Plovdiv City Council (Bulgaria):

There are two consultative bodies in the Municipal Council - the Council of Ethnic and Demographic Issues and the Council of Social Issues. The Municipal Development Plan proposes the following measures: granting social benefits to those parents whose children attend school regularly; flexible employment measures for unemployed mothers; support for female entrepreneurs; improving the literacy level of young mothers from ethnic minorities, in order to ensure their employment; municipal centres for extracurricular activities for children, and municipal psychological consultancy centres.

All interviews show that great attention is being paid, both to child care services and to the provision of a high-quality infrastructure that is widely available. Moreover, the testimonies

provide us with insight into the impact that changes in the employment sector have had on each partner city, causing families and working mothers to ask for ever more flexible working hours and a wider choice of services. The harmonisation of social working hours and services is one of the challenges city administrations are faced with, despite the few resources they have available to them. Bologna and Düsseldorf, for example, clearly outline how these changes involve a search for answers in view of horizontal governance. In fact, those interviewed in these cities underline the need for a further involvement of non-profit and third sectors (NGOs, companies and institutes providing child care services), as well as the increasing importance of private enterprises. Unlike the past, companies are now often directly involved in the development and management of child care services. Moreover, a very recent development is that the private care services market for the elderly and disabled people is expanding, with mainly foreign women providing these services. Regarding this development, Bologna has introduced an initiative to regularise and professionalise this type of service, which is often still provided without any regular contract.

2. *The involvement of civil society*

This section describes the ways in which partner cities relate with social institutions when reconciliation issues are concerned. In order to understand these relations between administrations and civil society, interviews were conducted with representatives from different cities who are involved with reconciliation and equality policies. In some cases, we shall report both the opinions of public officials and of spokespersons for the associations, offering an interesting point of contrast. As clearly emerges from the interview fragments, policies are described and presented from the points of view of citizens, users, and social groups who actively benefit from these policies.

Adriana Scaramuzzino, Deputy Mayor of Bologna, responsible for family policies (Italy):

Based on the national and regional legal framework, the City Council of Bologna determines social policies through the elaboration of *zone plans*, through the involvement of associations, the third sector, schools, and various socio-educational and health services. The aim is to analyse the city's needs and develop synergies and co-operative action plans. The issue of work and home life balance and its possible solutions (services, flexibility, the efficiency of information systems, et cetera) falls within this context.

Maria Virgilio, Councillor for Schools, Training, and Anti-discrimination Policies in the Council of Bologna (Italy):

The reconciliation of work and family life requires the involvement of more stakeholders, as it cannot be implemented by the public services alone. One of the Council's objectives is to play a stimulating role and to promote a broader co-operation with the private sector. An example of this is to introduce day-care in city companies, organisations, and other bodies, by promoting a system of joint responsibility of the council and the enterprises. The project has already started, and I hope it will soon yield good results. Another example is the provision of integration services, again in joint collaboration with the private sector. This allows

for the provision of a wide range of opportunities, even if city resources are not sufficient to expand traditional services, which are the most expensive. This is the case of the Sezioni Primavera (Spring Sessions) project for children aged 24-36 months; of the "Tata a Bologna" (Nanny in Bologna) project, which is the pilot initiative and involves allowances for those who are on maternal or paternal leave; and of the numerous complementary services that offer an alternative to day-care centres. All these initiatives are already in the process of being implemented, but our wish is to enhance them by adding new solutions that are more responsive to the individual needs of women and households.

The Director of the Municipal Company of Social Services of Amaroussion (Greece):

The main actors and decision makers, those who develop, design, and implement WLB policies, are the following, in order of authority: the central government, local and regional authorities, educational institutions, trade unions, the Federation of workers, the Federation of Enterprise, and non-governmental and non-profit organisations.

Manuela Lambertz, staff member of Provinzial Rheinland Versicherung AG and chairperson of Provipänz e.V., Düsseldorf (Germany):

I would like to answer this question from my own point of view, as an employee of a large company needing care for her child. Since I was not able to find a place for my child in a day-care centre when he was younger than 3, and as I wanted to return to work at least part-time, I looked for alternatives. Naturally, I also addressed the Human Resources Department. Luckily, my company already had plans in place to accommodate children below the age of 3 (a company kindergarten already existed), and the Human Resources Department had already informed other colleagues on maternity leave of its plans.

This is how the parents' initiative 'Provipänz e.V.' was founded, which set up child care facilities on the company's premises for 13 children below the age of 3 with the assistance of the Provincial Rheinland Versicherung AG. The child care facility was founded with the support of the Youth Welfare Office. I believe that our company has set a good example for other associations or civil society institutions on how to encourage and support the creation of facilities for the reconciliation of work and family life.

Heidi Becherer, unionist of DGB-region Chemnitz (Germany):

I am 51 years old, I am married, and I have two grown-up daughters who are both in vocational training. My job was to lead the *DGB-region Chemnitz* (DGB stands for German Trade Union Association); this is the umbrella organisation for eight member trade unions. I was very committed. As a city council, I honourably represent the interests of the citizens of Chemnitz, together with several other offices; I offer my availability for the realisation of projects such as *Briefcase* in the Managing Committee of the Association for the Vocational Support of Women in Saxony.

Therefore, I have to find a balance between my work and family life every day. This problem practically affects all my daily tasks. The solution is to develop our local economy, and to provide relevant vocational training. In all issues involving the organisation of daily life, it is important that companies provide solutions for their employees, for their own benefit. This specific situation can only be solved in the coming years by using every possible resour-

ce, especially with the help of skilled young women. In future years, the demographic problem will gradually cease to exist if families will be able to develop in safe and secure social environments. This issue does not only involve the child care provisions for young children. This is only one aspect. Thanks to the Briefcase project, it became possible to publish good examples supporting the development of equal opportunities for our children in Chemnitz, while, at the same time, we had the opportunity to compare ourselves with other European cities. Because of this, we are able to confront our problems with children and their vocational orientation and we can look for solutions. In this way, we provide actual help for parents as well as companies.

Silvia Constantinescu, Director of the Association "Equal Opportunities for Everyone" of Craiova (Romania):

The civil organisations that contributed and are still contributing to the implementation of projects on gender equality, that is, to the elaboration of local policies regarding the work-life balance, consist mainly of "The Equal Opportunities for Everyone" Associations and The League for the Assertion of Human Rights. However, these are not the only bodies dealing with this issue. The municipality, including local authorities and the educational system, was very involved as well, supporting the NGOs in solving problems that occurred in various social areas. Their participation resulted in the establishment of more kindergartens in Craiova, in classes and seminars in schools, high schools, and universities on gender equality and, more in general, activities representing a further step towards the strengthening and improvement of local WLB policies. Moreover, the Chamber of Commerce and some agencies falling under the Ministry of Employment supported WLB policies by providing training classes for women on changing their career orientation to suit the current labour market.

Magdalena Delinescheva, Centre for Research on Women's Policies of Plovdiv (Bulgaria):

The main participants in projects are the women's organisations. Another authority involved is the Consultative or Public Council for social activities, family or child protection issues, and then there is the Municipal Council as well.

Overall, it is clear that in each partner city, there is a network linking civil society, associations, and institutions with respect to gender and reconciliation policies. The type of reciprocal involvement and the actual measures implemented vary greatly from case to case. While for some the issues mainly relate to family (Bologna) and training (Chemnitz), for other cities, such as Amarooussion and Düsseldorf, trade unions and work-related matters seem to have a higher priority. For the cities located in the new European Union Member States, Plovdiv and Craiova, political co-ordination activities and the involvement of councils and of authorities providing information are most important. In such situations, associations involved emphasise the importance of educational equality. This is a priority strategy in policy that targets women, especially where employment is concerned, even before the availability of services is considered. Düsseldorf's contribution is particularly significant, as it provides us with an actual example of how interactions between associations, institutions, and enterprises led to the introduction of a new solution supporting mothers on their return to work after maternity leave.

3. *The role of the private and business sector*

This paragraph reports the opinions of representatives from local groups, associations or related networks, with respect to the involvement of the private sector in policies promoting reconciliation and equality at work. The interviews describe the collaboration with the private sector and employers in more detail. The central question is "Are enterprises, trade unions, or other institutions involved? If so, how does it work?" Below, we report the most significant answers provided by various cities.

Adriana Scaramuzzino, Deputy Mayor of Bologna responsible for family policies (Italy):

Private companies have been involved in various initiatives aimed at raising awareness about the work-life balance through European projects such as "New faces", promoted by Eurocities. On-site day-care facilities are beginning to take root, thanks to the collaboration between the local community and the business sector. Finally, as we already mentioned, the Administration plans to bring about a permanent co-operation between businesses, trade unions, and professional associations on the issue of the city's time policies.

Anna Tedesco, President of the Family Associations Council in Bologna (Italy):

The work-life balance is still a marginal issue. Because it has not been tackled in an organised way, solutions are mostly the product of individual efforts. Companies and trade unions are certainly involved, but there is no monitoring of the political resources used. Companies are aware of Law 53/2000, which promotes the work-life balance, but neither the female nor the male employees are really familiar with it.

A survey has shown that 25% of companies interviewed have already adopted work-life balance measures. However, female employees state that this figure is not high enough and that local bodies need to be more active. The survey also reveals that 32% of the entrepreneurs think of children as an obstacle to productivity, which makes women see motherhood as a burden, an impediment. A "New Regional Welfare Programme" is needed to help everyone understand that motherhood is not exclusively a female issue, but a social matter involving the whole community.

The Director of the Municipal Company of Social Services of Amaroussion (Greece):

The General Secretariats responsible for Equality Issues and the Regulation of Labour Relations and, more in general, the legislative framework of both Greece and the EU, are among the main bodies that enhance the conciliation of work and home life by protecting and ensuring the rights of the labour force and by facilitating procedures that enhance work and home life. It is important that the previously mentioned organisations are mainly managed by men. As a result, women's rights do not have the highest priority.

Nonetheless, issues regarding employment relations, such as national collective contracts or contracts on a lower level, are negotiated and approved by all relevant parties, in order to find a common agreement that will ensure, protect, and facilitate the rights of employees who have families.

Manuela Lambertz, staff member of Provinzial Rheinland Versicherung AG and chairperson of Provipänz e.V. of Düsseldorf (Germany):

In our case, a private company was involved. However, if the project does not directly concern a company's own staff, I find it difficult to imagine that a private company will participate. The involvement of trade unions is quite interesting as well. It is striking that political bodies and Chambers of Industry and Commerce are currently getting involved in this issue, encouraging companies to adopt more family-friendly policies. I believe that the supply of facilities can only be improved by the co-operation of all parties concerned: companies, trade unions, staff, authorities, and associations such as Provipänz e.V.

Heidi Becherer, unionist of DGB-region Chemnitz (Germany):

In Chemnitz, various institutions take an active part in the issue of the work-life balance, in addition to the efforts of people to develop equal opportunity policies, which started several years ago. Partners include, among others, trade unions, city council departments, the Chambers *IHK (Chamber of Industry and Commerce)* and *HWK (Chamber of Handicraft)*, trade associations, and sole proprietors. It is almost impossible to name all the active participants who animated the projects in a variety of ways over such a long time. Especially women's associations from the trade unions (*DGB, Verdi*), the Association for the Vocational Support of Women and the Equality Commissioner of the city of Chemnitz have been working on topics such as vocational orientation and the conciliation of work and family life for years. They started the Bologna project as well as the local Family Alliance in Chemnitz.

The local Family Alliance has existed since 2005. Now, it consists of 16 different partners advocating a family-friendlier Chemnitz. Like the departments of the City Council, the Local Family Alliance takes part in processing of the Bologna project. Because this demands extensive public relations, this involves presenting the work-life balance in the local context, and comparing it to that of other partner countries. In this way, the problems have turned into a social issue and have been solved due to private initiatives. Future-oriented financial centres like Chemnitz require general conditions, both for the conciliation of work and family life and for equal opportunities throughout life.

Silvia Constantinescu, Director of the Association "Equal Opportunities for Everyone" of Craiova (Romania):

Yes, I have concluded that some private SMEs and institutions should provide training classes on reconciling work with private life for the benefit of both employees and employers. On the other hand, because the labour market demands people who are specialised in a variety of new areas, the District Agency for the Labour Market and the Chamber of Commerce already jointly organise many training lessons, in order to meet this demand. They do so by offering people the opportunity to choose and work in a different field from the one they have graduated in.

Magdalena Delinescheva, Centre for Research on Women's Policies in Plovdiv (Bulgaria):

Yes, there are representatives of employers' organisations and trade unions in the National Council.

According to a number of the testimonies collected, the involvement of private sector companies is very recent and is not encouraged by all local authorities. However, the interviewees express very determined opinions regarding the need for matching themselves against businesses. The various cities differ greatly in terms of their goals, priorities, and proposals for the realisation of their plans. In fact, both Bologna and Chemnitz foresee the strengthening and expansion of local partnerships, as well as the strengthening of organisations, such as trade unions and associations, which are to be assigned more responsibility in reconciliation policies. Moreover, the answers provided by the cities of Bologna, Craiova, and Amarooussion clearly show that there still is a widespread reluctance in accepting the need for mothers to work. Consequently, there is a demand for further training and public information to change this view and to improve the overall conditions of women. This cannot be achieved by means of specific initiatives or occasional campaigns. The answers provided by Plovdiv describe a reality, in which local councils have hardly any impact on policies that are mainly decided at a national level.

4. *Opinions of administrators and stakeholders*

This paragraph includes the opinions of civil society representatives and of social actors who were locally involved in reconciliation-related organisations and projects. It provides a report on their level of satisfaction regarding local reconciliation policies. This paragraph is particularly important, as it provides us with third-party opinions, gathered in interviews with subjects who are not linked to local institutions involved in the Briefcase project. This allows us to make a useful comparison in our analysis of the subjects and the system of governance to be developed.

Adriana Scaramuzzino, Deputy Mayor of Bologna responsible for family policies (Italy): Work-life balance policies require a comprehensive approach. This approach must enable us to take account of the various segments of the administration (educational services, mobility policies, information, equal opportunities, et cetera) while, at the same time, favouring the involvement and active participation of businesses and economic stakeholders in general. In addition, the issue's *cultural dimension*, especially the need *for men and women to share child care responsibilities equally*, is something that we have to address right from the beginning. It is an epoch-making issue, envisaged by national legislation and by the European Union for all its Member States, which has to be tackled in an organised and coherent way: that is why any assessment of the results obtained so far would be premature.

Anna Tedesco, President of the Family Associations Council in Bologna (Italy): A network of family policies is currently under construction. The Board of Family Associations is participating in this initiative, in line with the three fundamental principles on which its services for the Municipality of Bologna are based. The principles are the promotion, growth, and well-being of families, contained in a document that was submitted to the Department of Social policy on March 14, 2007. We hope that this is not viewed simply as a good document, but that it actually results in the elaboration of targeted policies for the well-being of families living in our territory.

The Director of the Municipal Company of Social Services of Amaroussion (Greece):

Both the central government and local authorities are actively participating by providing specific services to working women. Women's associations are also playing an active role.

The results of these collaborations can be seen in the legislation concerning maternity leave and breastfeeding, the entitlement of parental leave, and the right of parents to ask for a change in their work hours or to go from full-time to part-time work. Nevertheless, it is highly important to go on continuously raising the awareness about the relevant factors, in order to improve and develop the services provided, to remove barriers and stereotypes concerning women's role in Greek society, thus making it easier to promote the conciliation of work and home life.

Manuela Lambertz, staff member of Provinzial Rheinland Versicherung AG and chairperson of Provipänz e.V. of Düsseldorf (Germany):

Child care services are of particular importance in terms of reconciliation; in this respect, both companies and employees require a high level of support from local institutions. I would definitely welcome participation by local institutions. It fits the concept, while the institutions themselves benefit from their participation. Child care, in particular, is the one area within WLB where companies and staff have to rely on local support.

Bettina Bezold, Equality Commissary of the City of Chemnitz (Germany):

In Chemnitz, the care situation for children is good. Difficulties mainly arise when it comes to the motivation of young people, especially girls, to choose professions and areas of study that will provide them with good opportunities in this region. These opportunities lie mostly in engineering and commercial-technical fields. The Briefcase project gives us the chance to further develop good approaches in the field of early vocational orientation. Through the pilot action, it helps us to obtain a more accurate picture of the motivation of boys and girls, which will give us starting points for further action. The exchange with other European cities, too, is very important for finding new approaches to solve these problems.

Silvia Constantinescu, Director of the Association "Equal Opportunities for Everyone" of Craiova (Romania):

Well, as you can see, I can speak of a high degree of involvement of local institutions. We can definitely say that, especially during the last few years, the municipality and all other local institutions that have the power to change and make things better, got very involved and tried to improve and elaborate new policies that support gender equality.

Magdalena Delinescheva, Centre for Research on Women's Policies in Plovdiv (Bulgaria):

The role of local institutions in the promotion of conciliation measures is not the same across the country. It depends very much on the personal involvement of local leaders, as there still are no legal or political obligations in Bulgaria to develop these policies - neither on a national nor on a local level.

The interviews show that urban and national situations are clearly different. Where the social actors of Craiova and Chemnitz find themselves sufficiently satisfied with the public

policies and services provided in the area, the same cannot be said for Bulgaria. Here, institutional efforts are still very far from a well-defined policy, which is commonly recognised.

In fact, the point shared by all these testimonies is the need for a higher level of institutional commitment and involvement. Now, institutions must move beyond good intentions and focus on concrete actions and the requirements for information and training policies, in order to generate a significant impact on equality issues at work, in the family and among citizens.



Amaroussion

Chapter 3: The local impact of European reconciliation policies

1. Different views on the local impact of European projects for reconciliation

In this third section, we go back to the interviews with mayors and with representatives of public administrations. We asked them what their opinion was on the local impact of European policies regarding the conciliation between family and work life. The aim of this section is to compare initial views with final opinions regarding the Briefcase project.

Maria Rosa Bonomi, responsible for service integration in the education sector of the Council of Bologna (Italy):

It goes without saying that the objectives set by the European Union for Member States with regard to employability, and therefore also with regard to the work-life balance, have a huge impact on national policies and, subsequently, on regional and local policies as well. However, Bologna and the Emilia-Romagna region had already developed a “women-friendly” welfare system before the start of the European Union and the Lisbon strategy. This system influenced the national legal framework, especially in relation to nursery schools and day-care centres. Yet, the policies implemented so far to stimulate a work and family life balance are not enough to eradicate the problem. For this reason, Europe’s insistence is producing a renewed involvement of the national government and is bearing fruit, like shown, for example, by the expansion of the day-care network. Locally, even in a context like ours, the opportunity to experiment and familiarise ourselves with other experiences, thanks to community funding, certainly represents a valuable incentive and guidance.

The Director of the Social Welfare Organisation of the Municipality of Amaroussion (Greece):

It is very important to go on and keep raising the awareness about the relevant factors, in order to improve and develop the services provided and to remove barriers and stereotypes concerning women’s role in Greek society, making it easier to promote the conciliation of work and home life.

Johannes Horn, Head of the Youth Welfare Office of the City of Düsseldorf (Germany):

I am under the impression that public attention for this topic has increased over the last two years. The present discussion implies family-friendly offers. Local authorities as well as the city’s commercial enterprises have recognised the positive effects of family-friendliness in Düsseldorf. They offer joint initiatives, such as the Düsseldorf family card or the creation of company child care facilities. This is rounded off by the co-operation at the Düsseldorf Familientisch (family round table = local alliance for families).

Heidi Becherer, unionist of DGB-region Chemnitz (Germany):

The Briefcase project is in line with the work of the Association for the Vocational Support of Women, following already adapted EU-projects. The Association determines, for example,

the existence of factors for family-friendliness, and subsequently rewards a company. At the same time, it is important to explain that equal opportunity conditions are certainly not something to be taken for granted. It is only through these conditions that Chemnitz will become an attractive financial centre, a good location for the economy, and a good family base.

Rodica Tenea, Director of the Social Protection and Assistance Service of Craiova City Council (Romania):

All collaboration entails an exchange of experience and every success is considered an example worthy of imitation. It is for this precise reason that we think that both European and national policies help us to better understand this concept of work-life balance and to select the best examples to apply locally, depending on our own necessities and their features.

The interviewees gave several answers on the reasons for participating in European projects such as Briefcase. Yet, all these answers insist on the importance of the development of cities offering services that are more *woman- and family-friendly, regardless of* different political attitudes. We can, however, identify two contrasting views: on the one hand, the persistence of a traditional and unequal view of society, which is not beneficial for working women, and, on the other hand, the novelty of reconciliation policies (Craiova, Amaroussion). In this dual approach resides the interest in projects such as Briefcase, which offers the opportunity to experiment. In some cases, the attention for reconciliation appears to improve the quality of life even though the welfare system seems to work sufficiently well (Chemnitz, Bologna). Also it aims to eliminate old discriminatory approaches (Bologna, Amaroussion), and to improve equality overall. However, the case of Plovdiv, which did not provide us with a very articulated response, is interesting for a different reason, since its administrators were somewhat pessimistic about the possibility that European policies might effectively change local dynamics.

2. *The Briefcase project: comments, opinions, and ideas for future developments*

This last section includes the most significant comments and opinions expressed by representatives of local institutions with regard to the Briefcase project. These interview fragments convey general ideas, providing useful suggestions for the future development of similar projects based on the partnership between European cities. The interviewees are either officials or administrators working for councils in partner cities.

Maria Rosa Bonomi, responsible for service integration in the education sector of the Council of Bologna (Italy):

Actually, projects such as Briefcase, or other projects in which the Municipality of Bologna has participated, provide the opportunity to establish close contacts with other local bodies that might take place on a regular basis. Maybe organisations representing local governments and their official networks in Europe should tackle these issues as if they were of strategic

importance. They can certainly play a major role, not only with regard to the protection of people's rights, but also regarding the quality of European development and EU competitiveness at an international level. The exchange of knowledge and experiences may also contribute to improving the performance of local governments, making their interventions more efficient and rewarding. Moreover, this involves being able to analyse problems and make decisions by taking account of gender differences.

The Director of the Social Welfare Organisation of the Municipality of Amaroussion (Greece):

EU co-funded projects have as their main goals the promotion and adoption of innovative methods aimed at reducing gender discrimination and raising the awareness of all relevant actors. The results of the Briefcase project will help us to upgrade and promote local policies concerning the conciliation of work and home life in our municipality. For example by adopting and implementing good practices, and by identifying and analysing different methods and practices.

Johannes Horn, Head of the Youth Welfare Office of the City of Düsseldorf (Germany):

I am looking forward to receiving the documentation on examples of good practice and pilot projects, in order to see the issues that European cities are working on. On top of being encouraged in our own work, I would welcome an exchange with cities that have similar aims regarding the work-life balance.

I am thinking about initiatives involving small and medium-sized companies in Bologna, for example, and about our pilot project to promote more family-friendliness in this sector. We will certainly be happy to pass on to other European cities the know-how of Düsseldorf in the areas of child care, and family-supportive and family-friendly offers.

Bettina Bezold, Equality Commissary of the City of Chemnitz (Germany):

Thanks to the Briefcase project, it became possible to publish good examples supporting the development of equal opportunities for our children in Chemnitz. At the same time, it gave us the opportunity to compare ourselves with other European cities. Because of this, we are able to confront our problems with children and their vocational orientation and we can look for solutions. In this way, we provide actual help to parents as well as to companies.

Based on the formation of the Local Alliance for Chemnitz, which was also founded by the *DGB-region Chemnitz*, a network was created for putting the knowledge and results of the Briefcase project into action, and for providing these directly to the economic recipients, who can use them for their own benefit.

Rodica Tenea, Director of the Social Protection and Assistance Service of Craiova City Council (Romania):

Although social necessities and requests differ from one State to the other, we can say that the Briefcase project was, and continues to be, a great opportunity for the countries involved. They are able to learn more about other ways of solving similar problems, no matter their culture or education. From this point of view, the exchange of good practice examples represents a modern and innovative idea that will certainly lead to the elaboration and

implementation of similar projects, and to the improvement of the current situation regarding gender equality, and the work-life balance in particular.

Nely Stoeva, Social Affairs Department of Plovdiv City Council (Bulgaria):

This project is of great importance because it is the first project proving the need for efficient legislation. It also indicates steps to be taken in support of the work-life balance.

So far, the exchange of good practices has been very useful in providing us with ideas for our prospective work. I hope that we will continue to co-operate with these partners in the future.

These answers highlight the positive impact that the Briefcase project overall had, from the very first moment. This was because it served as a locus for a trans-European dialogue between different cities, which was of great use to everyone involved. Plovdiv in particular expressed a very positive opinion, because, thanks to the Briefcase project, the city administration had to confront reconciliation policies for the very first time. We can affirm that the Briefcase project created a virtuous circle that has led to the improvement of local policies and to the revival of decisive approaches towards various problems. This is mainly achieved by exchanging good practices and pilot initiatives, and is appreciated by everyone.

Part II
Work-life balance strategies and
gender roles
A study across six european cities

Giuliana Bertagnoni and Lorenza Malucelli

Chapter 1: Introduction

To conduct a survey on an issue such as work-life balance, which has acquired great relevance from a political viewpoint only in the last few decades, we first of all had to identify the numerous and complex situations involved. Secondly, we had to place it within a framework that would reflect the great changes under way - especially those that affect gender roles in family life and at the workplace - and try to find a new way to observe these changes, analyse them and establish a connection between them.

It is only recently that the remarkable effects of social policies and *welfare* systems on the opportunities that the labour market offers to men and women have become broadly acknowledged. Although the relation between child care services and female employment has been at the centre of many studies and policies for a long time, only today are we focusing on the connection between social care services and male employment. And it is only recently, too, that this discussion has gone beyond the public child care and educational system, to include other public, private, communal, familial, and on-site or off-site solutions that contribute to people's social and personal well-being, taking account of all those activities that support the everyday life of both men and women.

The increase in care needs that took place in the post-industrial world is also connected with the widespread ageing of the population, which is challenging the welfare systems of all European countries and is bringing the issue of care to the forefront. The changing family patterns (increasing divorce rates, decreasing cohabitation of older people with their adult children, etc) and the greater participation of women in paid employment are radically altering the perception of care. It is no longer seen as an exclusively female task, but rather as one of the thorniest social issues.

As has already been demonstrated,¹ the labour market is tightly linked to the social care system. At this point, as many experts warn us,² it is important to go beyond the relation between labour market and welfare state and consider that between families and welfare state. This is necessary for two reasons: in the first place, in order to stop ignoring the significant amount of unpaid work silently performed by women; and in the second place, to realise that the way in which public policies organise social work is decisive for gender relations. In other words, the answers to social care needs provided by these policies have an immediate impact on men's and women's freedom of choice as regards paid employment. We tried to spotlight precisely this freedom of choice and determine whether or not it was supported and, hopefully, granted by public policies. Although many studies³ warn against a too simplistic reading of the relation between social policy and personal attitudes or the direc-

¹ Kröger, T. (2001). *Comparative Research On Social Care. The State Of The Art*. SOCCARE Project Report 1. Brussels: the European Commission.

² Kröger, T., op.cit.

³ Lewis, J., Campbell, M., & Huerta C. (2008). Patterns of paid and unpaid work in Western Europe: gender, commodification, preferences and the implication for policy. *Journal of European Social Policy*, 18, 21, Sage Publication.

tion taken by this relation, our survey tried to identify the choices and decisions made by mothers and fathers of dependent children (aged 0-14 years) as they struggle to balance work and family responsibilities. The interpretation of such choices is never simple. For example, is a mother with a small child who decides to stop working after childbirth expressing her personal preference, influenced by some kind of 'maternal ideal', or is her choice the result of structural factors, such as the lack of support and child care services? According to other relevant studies,⁴ the strategy used in this case by the mother would be that of combining 'possibility with preference'.

Moreover, although it has been demonstrated that public social and educational policies influence female employment rates, it is much more difficult to recognise the connection between such policies and the division of household and care work between men and women. As male employment has never been significantly influenced by parental responsibilities, the survey tried to discover whether this is still true, or whether an increasing share of child-rearing tasks is now assigned to men as well, and with what effects. While we were trying to capture the local peculiarities of the participating cities, we kept track of the opportunities provided in each territory as regards work-life balance. A flexible system of child care services is thought to be one of the most important tools for promoting employment, as evidenced by the studies on many occasions. Its use, however, as well as the adoption of flexible working time arrangements (reduced working hours, parental leave), are also connected with the perceptions that fathers and mothers have as a result of the culture and conventions that are typical of their environment. Last but not least, special attention must be paid to informal help and private market services, which are in great demand and contribute remarkably to a much sought-after sustainability that is still difficult to find.

⁴ European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions .(2006). *Annual Report*.

Chapter 2: Context, players and methodological process of the survey

1. Tracing the background of the cities

The survey that we present in this section has been carried out in collaboration with the local administrations. Its aim was to provide them with reliable data regarding their own context and that of the other European cities, to be used in the elaboration of policies and action plans.

During the first phase of the research activity, the objective was that of elaborating a detailed *ex-ante* analysis of the various local contexts. For this purpose, the municipalities were asked to keep track of the public and private child care services and gather the main statistical data on the population, the households, education, and employment. The latter put a lot of strain on all the partners, but it was essential because, even though databases at city level did exist,⁵ very often the data did not take proper account of gender differences. As a matter of fact, gender statistics are gaining ground in many fields across Europe, but their applicability at a local level is still full of gaps. The process of acquiring *background* information has been time-consuming and did not always yield satisfying results. Nonetheless, the efforts required of the partners were not in vain, because the research carried out across all departments of the municipalities helped raise awareness among city institutions of the need for gender policies to integrate theory with practice, for example through the introduction of gender-related statistical data collection.

⁵ The most important and complete is *Urban Audit* of the European Commission, Directorate General for Regional Policy (<http://www.urbanaudit.org>).

BOX 1. GENDER STATISTICS. A TOOL FOR LOCAL POLICIES.

This box includes some significant clues regarding the difficulties faced by the *partners* during the collection of data on the situation of men and women inhabiting their cities. The shortcomings of the statistical system and the development of a new field of studies specifically dealing with the changes in gender roles is evident in many contexts and is much more broadly diffused than expected. Although gender statistics can suit the informational needs of many stakeholders, from policymakers to the mass media and to social activists, the attention paid to them is still rather scarce, as often happens with gender-related issues (awareness of different social roles, unequal access to resources by men and women, et cetera), which cannot always be translated into real policies and remain mere statements of facts.

'Most of the data required were very specific, and some statistical data that the municipality did have, have never been processed. So it has been very difficult to obtain all the data that were needed. Moreover, each region and each municipality in Greece has its own statistical categories, stemming from different sources and from non-homogeneous periods of time, which is why a comparison of the results was not possible' (Amaroussion).

'I have been working with various institutions. At first I met some experts from the Office for National Statistics. I asked them the necessary statistical data and we discussed them [...]. Specific data on the age groups 65-69, 70-74, et cetera were not available[...] It has been very difficult to collect data regarding the various positions held by men and women in the various sectors. [...] There are no municipal data on the number of housewives [...] It proved to be extremely difficult to collect data on immigration into the municipality. [...] To gather information on education I met the representatives of the city Department of Education [...] in Sofia, I also discovered a centre for studies and policies focusing on women, which for some years has been dealing with gender equality. I was invited to a training project for local policymakers on gender equality. From 28 to 31 March, I visited the city of Veliko Tarnovo to take part in a meeting with two other municipalities, Sofia and Veliko Tarnovo. It was about gender equality policies and I gathered very useful information on Bulgarian legislation in this field. I organised meetings with 10 medium- and large-sized companies to investigate the possibility of implementing gender equality policies, of support for mothers, and of offering flexible working arrangements to parents. [...] In Bulgaria [...], many people [...] believe that] women must work and do the housework. Very few men take up parental leave to take care of the children. Grandmothers usually take care of the children while their mother is at work. Bulgarian women very rarely succeed in reaching top positions in companies and public administration. These are deep-rooted patterns, a legacy of the past' (Plovdiv).

BOX 2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION: THE PARTNER CITIES.

Düsseldorf	<p>The capital city of the North-Rhine Westphalia region, located in the Western part of the German Federal Republic, it is an industrial city and a services centre in a provincial area where agriculture still occupies 50% of the territory***. However, the share of people engaged in agriculture is infinitesimal**.</p> <p>Population (data from 2005): 585.054 inhabitants (1,09 women per man)*. The population has slightly increased in the last few decades (+1,3% since 1991)**. The age structure of the population is rather old, with a high share of people aged 64 and over, compared to a smaller share of people aged 14 and under*. Immigrants comprise 17,2% of the resident population (data 2006)*.</p> <p>Households (data from 2004). The average composition of the household is 1,88 members. 48,7% of households are one-person households (data from 2006)*. The total fertility rate is 1,22*, compared to a national average of 1,34***.</p> <p>Work (data from 2006). The employment rate is 54,2% for men and 45,8% for women (data from 2005)*, compared to a national average of 72,5% and 61,4% respectively***. The unemployment rates is 9,3% for men and 6,5% for women*, compared to a national average of 7% and 8,5% respectively***. The percentages of employees working <i>part-time</i> amounted to 9,2% and 36,7% for women*, compared to a national female average of 45,8%***.</p>
Chemnitz	<p>City in Saxony, located in the eastern part of the Federal Republic of Germany. Because of its proximity to the border with the Czech Republic, it is an important base for the trade with Eastern Europe. It is a city with a long industrial tradition. The engineering industry still makes up the main income source of the population***.</p> <p>Population (data from 2006): 244.012 inhabitants (1,09 women per man)*. The age structure showed a marked ageing of the population, with very high rates of people aged 64 and over, compared to low rates of people aged 14 and under*. Immigrants comprise 2,9% of the resident population*.</p> <p>Households (data from 2006) The average composition of the household is 1,92 members. The total fertility rate is 1,35*, compared to a national average of 1,34***.</p> <p>Work (data from 2006). The employment rate is 41,7% for men and 38,7% for women; The unemployment rate is 17,8% for men and 18,6% for women. Among the employed people, 5,5% of the men and 29,4% of the women have a <i>part-time</i> job*.</p>
Bologna	<p>The capital city of the Emilia-Romagna region, it is located in one of the most thriving areas of Italy. Its economy is based on small and medium-sized companies***.</p> <p>Population (data from 2006): 373.743 inhabitants (1,14 women per man)*, on the decline for many years (-17,2 % since 1991)**. The age structure is one of the oldest in Europe, with rates of people aged 64 and over exceeding those of people aged 14 and under by two and a half times*. Immigrants comprise 8,1% of the resident population*.</p> <p>Households (data from 2006). The average household size is 1,93. 47,6% of the households are one-person households (data from 2007)*, compared to 37,8% in 2001 and 29% in 1991**. The total fertility rate is 1,18*, compared to a national average of 1,34***.</p> <p>Work (data from 2006). The employment rate is 78,6% for men and 66,1% for women*. The unemployment rate is 2,4% for men and 3,5% for women*. The percentages of employees working <i>part-time</i> (data from 2001) amount to 5,5% of the men and 20,9% of the women, several points lower than the national female mean (26,7%)**.</p>

Amaroussion	<p>Located in Attica, close to the capital Athens (Greece). Its economy is based on industry and the tertiary sector, following a remarkable decrease in cultivated land. The population is mostly engaged in the tertiary sector (72%) and to a lesser extent (27%) in industry ***.</p> <p>Population (data from 2001): 69.470 inhabitants (1,15 women per man)*. The age structure of the population is younger than the European average, and people aged 14 and under outnumber those aged 64 and over. Immigrants represent 5,9% of the resident population*.</p> <p>Households (data from 2001). The average household size is 3,0. The national total fertility rate is 1,33*.</p> <p>Work (data from 2001). The employment rate is 71,2% for men and 50,2% for women*. The unemployment rate is 3,6% and 4,1%*, Respectively.</p>
Craiova	<p>The capital city of the Dolj province, located in south-western Romania. Despite a not very high number of companies, the city has a satisfying industrial potential, contributing to the national economy in a significant way***. The population is equally engaged in the services and the industry, whereas the share of agricultural employment is irrelevant*.</p> <p>Population (data from 2006): 300.587 inhabitants (1,08 women per man)*, a figure that has decreased in the last few decades (-1,6% since 1991)**. The age structure is particularly young compared to the European average; the share aged 14 and under is higher than the share aged 64 and over by 6 and a half points*.</p> <p>Households (data from 2001). One-person households represented 15,3% of all households*. The total fertility rate is 2,9 (data from 2006)* compared to a national average of 1,32***.</p> <p>Work (data from 2001). The employment rate is 50,5% for men and 44% for women **. The unemployment rate is 15,1% for men and 12,1% for women**. The percentages of employees working <i>part-time</i> (data from 2006) amount to 0,6% of the men and 1,1% of the women, compared to a national average of 9,3% % and 10,2%, respectively ***.</p>
Plovdiv	<p>The second largest city of Bulgaria, Plovdiv is the chief town of Yuzhen tsentralen region (South -Central), which is, with the South-West region, the heart of the national economy. The city differs from the rest of the regional territory, where agriculture and industry have a big role, for a well-developed, modern economy, oriented to services ***.</p> <p>Population (data from 2007): 340.000 inhabitants (1,09 women per man)*. The age structure of the population is rather old, with a higher percentage of people aged 64 and over compared to those aged 14 and under*.</p> <p>Households (data from 2007). The average household size is 2,78*. One-person households amount to 21,6% (data from 2001)**. The total fertility rate is 1,2*, compared to a national average of 1,31***.</p> <p>Work (data from 2006). The employment rate is 49,5% for men and 40,2% for women*. The unemployment rate is 16,3 for men and 14,6 for women*. The part-time employment rate (data from 2001) is 5,8% for men and 8,8% for women**, compared to a national average of 1,6% and 2,7%, respectively***.</p>

* Data supplied by the municipalities.

** Data available from *Urban Audit* of the European Commission, Directorate General for Regional Policy (<http://www.urbanaudit.org>).

*** Data available from Eurostat (<http://circa.europa.eu>).

2. *Concepts, indicators, and tools of the survey*

Before starting the actual survey of family strategies and work-life balance needs of parents with children aged 0-14, we thought it was important to analyse the concepts with the partners. We therefore held a second meeting (Düsseldorf, 16-17 April 2007) to identify the relative empirical indicators through a participatory process, according to the *producer-user* model. On the basis of the results of this shared work, we elaborated a standardised questionnaire. As we mentioned earlier, the three main thematic areas we tackled were family, employment, and child care services: but which aspects should we take account of and in what way?

The main aspect concerning family had to do with the division of the commitments associated with the social reproduction of its members, especially the dependent ones. Our survey concentrated on child care, leaving behind the care-giving work aimed at older family members, although this is increasing. The main objective has been that of analysing the division of the total work within the household, especially the division of care and domestic responsibilities between fathers and mothers. The questionnaire included a set of questions that aimed at detecting the distribution of time throughout 'a typical working day' and find out who carries out domestic tasks (for example: cooking, cleaning, shopping etc) and takes care of the children (dressing, staying with them when they are back from kindergarten, driving them somewhere, etc). Moreover, we wanted to look into the importance of the informal help the parents relied on, the persons involved (grandparents, friends, neighbours, etc), and what kind of help, for which activities, parents purchased on the private services market. An entire, separate section in the questionnaire was dedicated to the crucial sector of public child care services.

In the case of the thematic area 'employment', the objective was to understand how the participation of mothers and fathers in the labour market changed after the birth of the children in terms of preferences regarding working hours, income, career plans, and considering both the obstacles and the advantages which they could benefit from (for example: parental leave, flexible working hours, part-time employment, teleworking, etc). The impact of childbirth on employment was the topic of a set of questions focusing on two main phenomena affecting the female world: leaving the labour market and/or the reduction in working hours. However, they also took account of the different male pattern, i.e. the fact that men are more likely to increase the time spent on paid employment after childbirth. Last, another set of questions dealt with the use of compulsory or voluntary maternity (and paternity) leave.

Special attention was devoted to formal child care services, to better understand the role they play in work-life balance strategies chosen by families with children aged 0-14. In particular, we tried to look into obstacles concerning the use of such services. They turned out to be of cultural nature (especially in the 0-3 age group, the main trend is to raise and educate children within the family environment) and of a practical-organisational kind as well (for example: opening hours, quality and cost of the services).

To complete the questionnaire, we added a section that asked basic information about the social profile of the respondents and their family, such as their education, employment,

age, sex, number and age of the children, cohabitation between mothers and fathers, the reproductive behaviour in terms of the age of the parents when the first child was born, and the desire to have more children than those already born.

A pre-test of the questionnaire was performed on 20 respondents (10 couples with children aged 0-14) to determine the feasibility of the tool. Special importance was given to the degree of comprehension of the various questions, the length of the questions, the identification of repetitive questions and/or questions that did not provide much insight. Then the test was translated from English into the local languages (Italian, German, Romanian, Bulgarian, and Greek) and handed over to all partner cities (Bologna, Düsseldorf, Chemnitz, Craiova, Plovdiv, and Amaroussion).

3. *The sample and the administration of the questionnaire*

In each of the 6 cities, the partners administered the questionnaire to a random sample through the network of stakeholders involved at the local level. The sample had to be made up of 150 individuals per city (thus forming a total of 900 cases). A set of guidelines for the answers and some criteria for selecting the interviewees were also provided:

- sex: the sample was supposed to consist of an equal number of men and women;
- district: three city districts divided according to the income level of the population (high, mixed, and working-class).

However, as we are going to see, 2/3 of the sample consisted of women and only 1/3 consisted of men.

We might call it a random sample because the *partners* reached the parents to be interviewed through the organisation of *meetings*, using their network of acquaintances, word of mouth, etc. Therefore, the selection was based on the equal probability that any parent could have been included in the sample. We may also call it a 'cluster' sample because the division of the city districts according to the income of the resident population allowed for the selection of three areas inside of which the units of the sample were to be chosen.

The mothers and fathers with children aged 0-14 who responded filled in 943 questionnaires (table 1). But the criteria for the selection of the respondents could be met only in part: most of the respondents were women, and only one third of them were men. This *bias* might have been due to the topic of the survey. As is broadly known and also confirmed by the survey, household work and family responsibilities are predominantly shouldered by women.

Out of the total number of parents who answered, 19% lived in upper-income areas, 45% in mixed-income areas, and 27% in working-class areas. We would also like to stress that the questionnaires were administered during meetings organised specially with the assistance of the local participating stakeholders (mainly child care services and schools that helped reach the parents). In these meetings, in most cases, the questionnaire was self-administered.

4. *The social profile of the respondents*

The 943 respondents from the six European cities were fathers and mothers with children aged between 0 and 14 years. The average age of the responding men was 38, whereas that of the women was 35; the oldest couples lived in Bologna and the youngest ones in Plovdiv.

The mothers and fathers who participated in the survey had a good level of education, with only slight differences between men and women. Most interviewees (42,5%) had a tertiary education (university or similar), 36% had a high school education, while only 18% had left school earlier (compulsory education).

Well-educated in general, the parents surveyed had their first child when the women were 26 and the men 29 years old on average. But the age of men and women when they had their first child changed according to their level of education: parents whose education was higher had their first child later in their lives years for (the women at age 29 and the men at age 31) compared to parents with a basic level of education (tables 2-3). But regardless of the level of education, there are remarkable differences also between the cities: the women of Plovdiv are the youngest mothers, those of Bologna the oldest

The great majority of the respondents live together with the parent of their only or last child. Those who did not live together with the other parent were mostly women, - 16% -, while only 9% were men. Single parents are a small minority; most of them are fathers. In 11% out of the total cases, the households were three-generation families that consist of parents, children, and one or more grandparents. Cohabitation with grandparents was more frequent among the parents of the two Eastern European cities.

Most parents surveyed, almost 50%, had one child only. About 42% had two children, whereas large families, those with three or more children, constituted a minority (table 4).

As the decline in fertility rates constitutes a major issue all over Europe, we thought it was important to let partner cities consider the connection between fertility and employment. The European fertility rate (1,52) is below the replacement level. Many studies have revealed⁶ a change in the correlation between female employment and fertility rates in western countries that started ten years ago. In countries where more women work, birth rates are higher, whereas the number of children is lower when less women have a job,. This large-scale trend shows that the differential of the employment rates of women and their childbearing patterns, - those who do not work have more children -, is declining. It also shows that fertility rates (computed without the contribution of immigrants) are greater in those regions where female employment is higher and where conciliation tools are more widespread.

At first glance, the interviews with the female respondents of our sample seem to confirm this positive correlation. In cities where fertility rates were particularly low, - except in Craiova, where the fertility rate (2,9) is higher than the replacement fertility rate (2,1) -, the female respondents' employment rates were very high, usually higher than the city and national average. An exception is Chemnitz, where unemployment is particularly high (Box 2).

⁶ See for instance: Del Boca, D., & Rosina, A. (2005). *Reconciliation of work and private life. A comparative review of thirty European countries Eppure l'inversione di tendenza c'è, La voce info 24-10-2007*, www.lavoce.info.it. Brussels: the European Commission.

To complete these considerations on the connection between fertility and employment, let us return to the reproductive choices of the respondents and to the question that asked whether the number of children actually born corresponded to the desired one (table 5). 34,5% of the respondents said they wished they had more children than those actually born, whereas 58% were satisfied with the number of children they had. The cities with the greatest gap between the desire to have more children and their actual number are Bologna, where this percentage of mothers and fathers rises to 40% and over, and Amarooussion, where this percentage even reaches 49% among women and 57% among men.

Going back to the number of children actually born, our sample, as we mentioned before, is made up of parents with children aged between 0 and 14, an age group that is particularly dependent on adults, although in varying way. About one third of the respondents had children aged between 3 and 5 years, almost as many had children aged 0-3 years, 23,5% had children of the 6-10 age group, and only 5,5% had pre-teen children. The couples with children who were younger than 1 lived mainly in Bologna and Amarooussion, while those aged from 1 to 3 years, the group representing the potential demand for day-care, lived mostly in Chemnitz, Bologna and Amarooussion. Those aged between 3 and 5 years, the users of nursery schools, were more numerous in Plovdiv, whereas in Düsseldorf and Craiova, more than 40% of the parents surveyed had children of primary school age. The pre-teens were more numerous in Chemnitz and Craiova (table 6).

The analysis of the respondents' employment status reveals that most fathers and mothers have paid work, 85% and 70,5%, respectively (table 7). This figure decreases significantly if we consider German women: in Düsseldorf, 55% of the women were employed, against only 37,5% in Chemnitz.

The most represented professional category among the respondents of our sample is that of the employees, compared to a much lower number of self-employed persons. Among the employees, most parents, especially mothers (39%), held white-collar jobs (against 27% of fathers). The only city where both fathers and mothers were mostly blue-collar workers is Plovdiv. Self-employment and business ownership were well represented, especially among the fathers of Chemnitz, Bologna (which has the greatest share of businessmen), Plovdiv, and Amarooussion (which has the highest share of self-employed men). Self-employed women live predominantly in Bologna, Amarooussion, Chemnitz, and Plovdiv (table 8).

In brief, our European sample of parents consists of nearly one thousand respondents (943), in which fathers represent about one third of the total (309) and mothers the remaining two thirds (634). If we look at the most representative profile of men and women who participated in the survey, it emerges that they are adults (38-year-old men and 35-year-old women), highly educated (42,5% had tertiary level education), employed (85% of the fathers and 70,5% of the mothers), live together with their partners (85%) and have one (50%) or two children (42%) aged between 1 and 10 years.

Chapter 3: The needs and strategies of mothers and fathers

1. Employment and care patterns

As many studies⁷ have shown, the family pattern in which the man is the sole earner and the woman carries out reproductive activities is a thing of the past all over Europe, but in different degrees. The increasing participation of women in the labour market has brought about new work/personal life conciliation needs, urging families to adopt strategies that are much more complex than the conventional ones. Our survey tried to highlight the former and to describe the latter, starting from the interview with fathers and mothers who are overburdened with work. Based on the general assumption that the growth of the female employment rate recorded during the last few years⁸ has not been followed by an equal rise in the participation of men in domestic work and child care, we have tried to look into the various forms of the gender-related division of labour within European households, by identifying, if possible, local and regional peculiarities.

First of all, time use surveys allow us to observe the various behavioural patterns of men and women in the two spheres, family and work. Secondly, the study of the reproductive activities within the domestic sphere highlights the problem of equally sharing family responsibilities between mothers and fathers. Thirdly, in this chapter, we will try to determine if and how the informal network of care-givers (grandparents, neighbours, friends, etc) plays a role. We will also try to establish to what extent the private market of domestic and care services complements and/or replaces women's unpaid work within the household. We shall try to sketch, at least partly, the differentiated 'caring system', whose sustainability is largely based on the formal system of child care services, which is the topic of Chapter four.

A broadly diffused scientific hypothesis⁹ was developed around three coexisting employment patterns in European countries. The first pattern, the so-called *dual-earner model*, i.e. when mothers and fathers both hold full-time jobs, prevails in Northern Europe (Denmark, Sweden, Finland). The second model encompasses dual-earner couples and the traditional model in which only one parent works, usually the father (the *breadwinner model*¹⁰). This model is typical of Southern European countries (Spain, Greece and Portugal) and can be applied to Eastern European countries as well. In other words, it applies to countries where the labour market is still not flexible enough in terms of working hours, thus putting women into a difficult *dilemma*, i.e. choosing between full-time employment and non-employment. The third model, the so-called *one-and-a-half earner or one-and- three-quarters earner*, is

⁷ Øystein Gullvåg, H. (2007). Men's Work and Family Reconciliation in Europe. *Men and Masculinities*, 9, 425.

⁸ The female employment rate in the Member States of the European Union (of 25) has been increasing steadily each year since 2000. In 2005, the growth of total employment reached 0,8%, the greatest increase since 2001. This growth results from an increase in the rates of both sexes. Women's employment has increased by 1,2% against 0,7% of male employment (after three years of stagnation). The gap between male and female employment has decreased further, reaching 15 percentage.

⁹ See for instance Lewis, J., Campbell, M., & Huerta, C., op.cit.

¹⁰ This is known worldwide as '*the male breadwinner/female dependent model*'.

that of families in which one spouse (usually the father) works full-time and the other part-time, besides the unpaid work carried out at home. This model is more widespread in the remaining countries (among them the Netherlands and Germany).¹¹

In addition to the patterns we just mentioned, we shall consider the differences across some European countries regarding the division of care work (especially child care) between the sexes as suggested by the studies on social care services¹² and particularly on childhood.¹³ Two models can be identified: one that confirms the traditional care-giving role of women (*the female caregiver model*) and one that is based on the division of responsibilities between the partners (*the dual carer model*). Sweden is the country where the equal division of labour is more usual, whereas other countries, such as France and Belgium, confirm the persistence of the traditional female caregiver model, while at the same time trying to grant women work-life balance strategies. Italy can be described as a country where child care is basically a personal concern, which may be an important reason why many women choose not to have any children at all.

The relation between employment patterns and the division of labour is not always straightforward and clear. In fact, we would expect that where the 'dual earner' model is the rule, the 'dual carer' model should also occur, but within families very often the traditional gender roles prevail. Despite the difficulties in measuring the adequacy of such models in connection with the radical changes of the last few years and the different local contexts examined, these models were used all the same as a 'rough guide', to analyse the attitude of the respondents and, above all, to identify the discrepancies between our sample and the national situation/population in general.

2. *Time distribution of paid and unpaid work*

We asked parents to divide their typical working day as if it were a cake, according to the amount of time spent in carrying out various activities (paid work, household work, child care, and free time). The aim was to gain insight into the division of family and work responsibilities, and to determine the conciliation needs of mothers and fathers and how they respond to them. Each respondent also had the opportunity to describe the use of time throughout a typical working day of their counterpart, thus providing additional useful information, besides the data provided by each father and mother directly.

If we consider a 'typical' working day of men, regardless of the territorial differences, it emerges that most of the time is devoted to paid work. 78% of fathers hold full-time jobs and two thirds of them spend more than 8 hours at work. Conversely, the great majority of the

¹¹ Especially in the Netherlands, this model is being reviewed to take account of gender equality as regards paid and unpaid work. As a matter of fact, the *one-and-half* and *one-and-three-quarters model* indicates the total amount of time that parents spend on paid work, thus indirectly pointing to a parallel evolution of the gender-related sharing of care and household work.

¹² Lewis J., Campbell M., Huerta C. (2008). *op.cit.*

¹³ Phillips, A., & Moss, P. (1989). *Who Cares for Europe's Children: The Short Report of the European Childcare Network*. European Childcare Network.

fathers surveyed spend a very small amount of time on household tasks. As regards child care, 35% of the men spend only a few hours per day on it, whereas 40% said they devoted one third of the day to it. It is precisely this peculiarity that reveals a reversal of the conventional model according to which fathers spend little time with their family. Most fathers have little time for themselves, but a considerable 30% manage to dedicate themselves for up to one third of a working day.

Even though the majority of the women hold full-time jobs, yet a lower percentage compared to the men (53,5% against 78%), the 'typical' day of mothers shows a much more complex time use pattern. Among full-time working women, 26% spend more than 8 hours per day at work and approximately 17% of the working women hold part-time jobs. But besides work-related commitments, we need to take account of household tasks, family responsibilities, and child care, which leaves a very small amount of time for spare time activities to 45% of the mothers surveyed. As many studies on this topic have stressed,¹⁴ the traditional behaviour of women has changed to try to balance work and family commitments. Our survey confirms this as well. Women who are in paid work perform an internal redistribution of time within the domestic sphere, by cutting down the amount of time spent on household work to dedicate more time to the children. About 40% of the female respondents devote a very small proportion of their daily time to household work and only 20% dedicate an equally small amount of time to their children. But even though 40% of women take care of their children for at least one third of their daily time, just like fathers, another 31% take care of the children for half of the day or more (table 9).

In brief, all contexts surveyed demonstrate that the vast majority of men are in paid work and the factor that most of all urges men to change their behaviour towards the family and reproductive context is the new attitude towards paternity. Despite the significant number of men who contribute to child care, women still spend much more time with the children and spend it more regularly. Moreover, male unpaid work does not usually include household work. On the other hand, even though women devote less time to paid work than men, their share of total work remains higher than that of their counterparts. This is indicated by the lesser amount of spare time that the women surveyed said they had compared to their partners.

3. *Domestic and care work: who does what?*

The analysis went on to gain insight into the qualitative aspects pertaining to the division of care and household work between mothers and fathers. In other words, which activities are carried out mostly by mothers and which by fathers? Which sources of informal help (grandparents, relatives, friends, et cetera) support the couple? And which private market resources (baby-sitters, housemaids, et cetera) do families purchase to respond to family commitments?

¹⁴ Sabbadini, L.L. (2004). *Come cambia la vita delle donne*. ISTAT Office for National Statistics - Ministry for Equal Opportunities.

The data on care and household work aim at 'monitoring' a type of work that is often taken for granted and the function of which, as an 'extension of well-being'¹⁵, is not sufficiently acknowledged in terms of economic and social value. The conceptualisation of the work of social reproduction is not simple. The activities that we considered belong to three macro-categories that deal with the relational, practical, and organisational factors. Taking into account that these factors very often coexist within family-related work,¹⁶ each of them can be employed in its own right to describe and analyse the set of activities that characterise everyday life in a family with children.

The relational and organisational aspects are mainly connected with child care. They comprise: 1) *care, relational, and educational activities* aimed at children directly (for example: primary child care - washing, dressing, feeding - and secondary child care that includes playing together, listening, help with schoolwork, et cetera); 2) *activities that involve the relation of the domestic environment with the exterior world, like services and bodies that provide child care* (for example: relations with the school, health sector, sport centres, emergency situations - sickness, accidents, et cetera). The practical part of family-related work includes 3) *domestic activities* (for example: the preparation of meals, cleaning, doing the laundry, ironing, tidying up, et cetera), as well as *home maintenance and the purchase of goods*.

The data collected in the cities show very clearly that, despite the increased paternal involvement in child care, fathers (70%) prefer to carry out activities that are associated with the relational sphere (leisure, playing together) and offer their help in about 50% of emergency cases or relations with the exterior world, be it the school or health bodies. It stands out clearly (table 10) that fathers are seldom available when the needs of the children coincide with the demands arising from their job. In fact, very few fathers take time off when the children are sick and even less of them choose to stay at home when children come back from their day-care centre or school.

Conversely, mothers are keener and perform all kinds of tasks associated with child care: more than 90% handle the relations with the institutions, get out of bed at night when children wake up, play with the children, cope with emergency situations, while the vast majority are ready to take time off when children are sick (85%).

4. *Informal help and private market services*

Grandparents offer significant help in the difficult child-rearing, care and educational tasks. As the social profile of the sample has shown, although only 11% of the grandparents live together with the families surveyed, grandparents very often participate in family responsibilities. The data show very clearly that their availability is crucial (for 66% of the respondents),

¹⁵ Picchio, A. (ed). (2003). *Unpaid work and the economy. A gender analysis of the standard of living*. London: Routledge.

¹⁶ Malucelli, L. (2007). *Lavori di cura. Cooperazione sociale e servizi alla persona. L'esperienza di Cadiai* Bologna: Il Mulino. Trafiletti, R., Pratesi, A., & Simoni, S. (2001). *Care Arrangements in Lone Parents Families. SOCCARE, New Kinds of Family. New Kinds of Social Care*. www.uta.fi/laitokset/sospol/soccare. Italy: National Report.

especially when the working hours of the parents do not match the times of service provision and someone has to look after the children until one of the parents is back home (table 11).

Another useful finding about the role of grandparents who function as conciliation 'tools' for parents with jobs is the high percentage (40%) of grandparents who look after grandchildren when they are sick and cannot go to the formal services, or during emergency situations (33%). Another task often carried out by grandparents is to accompany children to extracurricular school activities. But grandparents are not merely minders; they also contribute to their grandchild's education, while many of them (45%) play and share leisure time with their grandchildren in all the cities.

The network of informal help does not consist of grandparents alone: other relatives are also involved. Sometimes older brothers and sisters help take care of their younger siblings. The situations in which the broader network of relatives provides support are rather rare, but in about 10% of the cases, this network offers help when children return home while the parents are still at work. The time spent with older sisters and brothers and other relatives is usually spent on playing. Neighbours and friends also constitute an informal source of help for working mothers and fathers, but their help is not used so often and parents rely less on them than on private services (baby-sitters).

The commodification of functions and relations that pertained to women in the past has not particularly spread, at least as far as our sample is concerned. It is interesting to note that families that hire a baby-sitter represent about 10%, whereas many more use the formal child care services (33% for public day-care centres and 66% for nursery schools). Parents hire baby-sitters primarily to fill the time gaps between child care services and working hours, or when children are sick. It is mainly highly educated parents (table 12) with top-level positions who resort to private market services, which belong to the formal or informal labour market.

Unlike other studies on this issue,¹⁷ we believe it is important to differentiate the relational, educational, and care-related work from domestic labour in a narrow sense, because the latter is undoubtedly the less socially acknowledged one among all the reproductive tasks. It comprises various activities, both practical and technical, such as home maintenance and household paperwork, which are usually performed by men, as well as the purchase of goods and services, cooking, doing the laundry, ironing, cleaning, et cetera, which are predominantly performed by women. The gap between female and male responsibilities stands out very clearly: the percentage of mothers who dedicate themselves to all kinds of domestic activities is much higher than that of fathers (table 10).

Informal help occurs more frequently in the field of child care than in that of domestic labour. Grandparents do not help much with household work, but when they live together with the family, their contribution remains significant. In Craiova and Plovdiv, where three-generation families account for 13% and 38% of the households respectively, they help with the cleaning four times more than in other cities, where cohabitation is less significant. Housemaids are employed especially for the most tiring tasks, such as cleaning and ironing, by about 30% of the wealthier families, by less than 20% of the middle-income and by approximately 10% of the low-income families.

¹⁷ Ermisch, J., & Francesconi, M. Parental investments and Children Welfare, In Boeri, T., Del Boca, D., & Pissarides C. (2005). *Women at work: an economic perspective*. Cambridge: Oxford University Press.

Finally, we would like to consider the replies to the question about fathers' and mothers' satisfaction in relation to the division of tasks (table 13). Most fathers and mothers said they were satisfied, but fathers were much more satisfied than mothers: 60% against 41%. Only 5% of the men said they were totally unsatisfied, a figure that rises to 17% among the women. If we analyse the opinions of men and women about the division of tasks, the only explanation for the positive opinion of some parents, especially women, expressed in particular in the Eastern European cities, is that it may be attributed to the persistence of the traditional gender roles within families, which not even women's emancipation has managed to overcome.

Chapter 4: Gender career paths

1. Parenthood and employment

This section deals with the constraints and the opportunities that affect the careers of fathers and, most of all, mothers: the changes in working time arrangements caused by family events, - for example, the birth of a child -, and the decisions and strategies that men and women use to accomplish their endeavours despite the often hostile cultural and structural setting.

Special attention has been devoted in the last few years to women's career patterns, characterised by voluntary redundancy and difficulties when re-entering the labour market after childbirth.¹⁸ Besides voluntary redundancy, another important consequence which many studies have tackled is the reduction in working hours. Parenthood has a greater impact on mothers than on fathers, as is confirmed by the results of our survey.

The working time arrangement did not change after childbirth for 41% of the female respondents, but a significant 25% stopped working: 20% voluntarily and 4,9% was laid off (table 14). The difficulties in rejoining the labour market after having left it as a result of childbirth were stressed by the respondents who were not in paid employment as the survey was being carried out. About 20% of the female respondents did not have a paid job, while 17,8% of them had been working in the past and only 2,4% had never been in paid employment. The main reasons for giving up work are the birth of the first child, followed by the birth of more children, with marriage occupying the third place. Moreover, of the surveyed mothers, 11% are not looking for a job because they want to be able to look after their children. Women who have held top management/executive jobs are more likely to keep the same arrangement after childbirth, whereas women who stop working are more likely to be found among white-collar workers and teachers than among self-employed and blue-collar workers (table 15).

When they do not stop working after childbirth, many women usually work reduced hours (22% of the respondents), confirming the traditional gender role of women as mothers and not as income earners. The lack of services is the most important reason for giving up work after childbirth, but in cities with high coverage rates, this reason has to do more with the mothers' wish to stay with their children.

The answers of the respondents show that the factor that most of all influences the strategies of mothers with regard to their employment is their level of education, which explains why some women stick more to their job than others. The professional category with the highest percentage of women who are less inclined to change their employment status after childbirth is that of top management/executive jobs: these women are likely to try to upgrade their position, which brings them closer to blue-collar women. The most significant changes

¹⁸ See for instance the studies of the OECD, *Employment Outlook 2002*; Isfol (edited by), *Maternità, lavoro e discriminazioni*, 2006.

in working schedules occur among self-employed women: some of them increased their working hours, while some others, who enjoy greater flexibility, reduced them. White-collar women and teachers were affected by motherhood in a more complex way; among them, the rate of mothers who work shorter hours after childbirth and give up career prospects is the highest.

Among male respondents, the consequences of childbirth on employment are much less drastic, but changes in employment status can be found all the same. In 65% of the cases, fathers do not change their arrangement after childbirth, but 5,5% of them said their career was interrupted. Other, less radical changes also occur: they generally involve an increase in work-related commitments, like, for example, longer working hours (almost 13%) or a career advancement (19% of the respondents). As a general rule, when children are born, fathers try to get a promotion, a practice that is associated with the conventional *male breadwinner* model. However, the shift towards a greater involvement of men in care and family responsibilities is also beginning to emerge in the field of male working time arrangements after childbirth. As a matter of fact, in Chemnitz and in Plovdiv, 9% and 13% of respondents, respectively, said they worked reduced hours, whereas in Chemnitz, Bologna, and Amaroussion about 8%-9% of the respondents said they had given up career aspirations (table 14).

The grouping of these data by profession shows that men who do change their working arrangements after childbirth are usually self-employed or blue-collar workers. Men in top management/executive positions, on the other hand, and, again, a significant share of blue-collar workers, try to work longer hours and upgrade their position to increase their income. Only self-employed fathers are likely to interrupt their career and change between jobs (10%), or decrease the time spent working (19%). By contrast, blue-collar workers try to improve their status, either by getting a second job (7%), or by working longer hours (15,5%). Fathers in top management/executive positions try to work longer hours and improve their position to increase their income (21%). White-collar workers/teachers are more likely to choose lower career paths, but also to increase their earnings by taking a second job.

2. *Conciliation tools: parental leave*

At this point, we are going to analyse the data on compulsory maternity leave and parental leave policies that allow parents to look after their children. Whereas maternity leave is a deep-rooted tradition in European countries, parental leave policies are more recent and vary from country to country. These policies are important for balancing work and personal commitments, especially when the children are small: together with voluntary redundancy and shorter working hours, they are crucial for achieving conciliation between work and family life. But how many people do actually exercise this right?

Let us begin by stressing the fact that on average 42% of the mothers took up parental leave (table 16). If we add the compulsory leave to parental leave, the period off from work in the cities of the *Briefcase* project ranges from 38 months to 7. Data about fathers confirm that they are reluctant to exercise their rights when it comes to child care, and the average share of those who take up parental leave is 13%. Moreover, the paternal leave of fathers is much shorter than that of mothers, ranging from a maximum of 16 months to a minimum of one month in the project cities. These data reflect a major problem that prevents mothers

and fathers from seizing the opportunities that the legislation offers: the negative impact of parental leave in terms of both income and future career prospects.

The use of the tools that support parenthood is associated, as many recent studies¹⁹ have shown, with a number of decisive factors, such as the salary-level, organisational culture, flexibility in terms of part-time options and similar, the labour market sector (in the public sector the share is higher), and the parents' level of education (especially the men's). Of course, generous and well-paid leave is taken up more often than unpaid leave.

The attitude towards breastfeeding breaks, sick leave, and allowances is much more complex across the six project cities. Women are of course much more involved than men in the breastfeeding stage, but they are also more available when children are ill. In some urban contexts, like Bologna and Amaraoussion, self-employed women, who do not enjoy the same rights as white-collar women, received a compensatory indemnity²⁰ when the child was born in 26-27% of the cases.

Men, too, have started to benefit from the policies that support the work-life balance in the various countries. Besides parental leave, the men surveyed have taken sick leave when their children are ill (12,3%), feeding breaks (4%, but 9% in Bologna), paternity allowances (4% in total, but 8% in Bologna and 9% in Amaraoussion).

What happens with those men and women who did not take time off work at all, or who took time off for less than three months? As we already mentioned when we talked about informal help, grandparents remain the primary source of parenthood support. 19% of our male and female respondents who could not stay away from work after childbirth said the children were left with the grandparents. Secondly, parents turn to the private market that provides qualified minders for the newborns. Shorter working hours, as already mentioned, is a common practice among the respondents of the survey. The analysis by profession reveals that grandparents are more likely to help managers and white-collar men and, to a lesser extent, self-employed women and women in top positions. Baby-sitters are typically hired by self-employed persons and managers. Shorter working hours are usually chosen by self-employed persons, as mentioned above.

¹⁹ *Reconciliation of work and private life: a comparative review of thirty European countries*. (2005) Brussels: the European Commission.

²⁰ Family/child allowances are tools of conciliation policies and include financial contributions to families and allowances following the birth of a child. They exist in most European countries. They are not conciliation policies as such, but rather income-related policies. They become conciliation policies when they are aimed directly at parents who are in paid employment and struggle to balance work and family responsibilities

BOX 3. LEGISLATION ON PARENTAL LEAVES

Germany	<p>Amended in 2007 (the <i>BEEG Act</i>), the legislation on parental leave enables parents to both take up leave and choose to divide the overall period between themselves. Workers receive an amount that is two thirds of the last salary (up to a maximum of 1,800euro's) for 14 months (12 months plus 2 if the other parent also takes up leave). Parents who are not in employment receive a bonus of a minimum of 300 euro's, even if they did not work before the pregnancy **.</p> <p>People who attend vocational training courses or upper-secondary education courses and carry out household tasks are entitled to leave**. Parental leave enables parents to assume care for their child up to the completion of its third year of life. During this time, employment is suspended and work is resumed with the previous employer afterwards.</p> <p>'85% of entitled parents take up the leave. Most women stay at home until the child's first birthday and they work part-time when they return to work. Only 5% of fathers take leave**.</p>
Italy	<p>Law N.53/2000 enables employees (both sexes) to take up parental leave up to the child's eighth year of age for a total period of 10 months following the compulsory maternity leave (which is 5 months). If fathers take up parental leave as well, the period is extended to 11 months. 30% of pay is granted up to a maximum of 6 months. Until the child's first birthday, provided that both parents work full-time, one of them is entitled to 2 hours of daily rest**. Self-employed women are entitled to 3 months leave, and receive a compensatory allowance from the National Social Security Institute, which is granted within the child's first year of life**.</p> <p>'75% of the mothers (and only 7% of the fathers) take parental leave. Unpaid leave remains an option for women working in public administration**.</p>
Greece	<p>Law N. 2683/99 provides that parental leave is working time dedicated to welfare and is therefore fully paid. 'Statistical data reveal that the take-up rates by both men and women are very low and vary according to the size of the company and the trade unions' presence in it**. Unlike the public sector, in the private sector, both parents are entitled to leave. One parent can choose to work one hour less per day for 30 months, following the compulsory maternity leave (which is 4 months). On agreement with the employer, one can choose to work 2 hours less per day up to the child's first birthday. Another option is that of extending the leave after the expiry of the compulsory leave. In public sector employment, mothers can choose to work 2 hours less per day up to the child's second birthday and one hour less up to the fourth. The other option is to extend the leave by 9 months**.</p> <p>As from 2003 (law N. 41/2003), the State grants an extension of the leave in specific cases**.</p>
Romania	<p>Measures that combat gender discrimination, promote equal opportunities for men and women, and social security have been recently introduced to adapt to the legislative framework of the European Union. Law N.25/2004, in particular, provides for maternity leave and breastfeeding at the workplace**.</p>
Bulgaria	<p>A law on parental leave was introduced in 2004 for both parents up to the child's eighth year of age. This leave is not paid at all**.</p>

* Source: European Commission, *Reconciliation of work and private life: a comparative review of 30 European countries*, 2005.

** Source: Information supplied by the municipalities participating in the *Briefcase* project.

3. *Flexible working hours and a family-friendly organisation of work*

As we mentioned in chapter one, most mothers and fathers surveyed were employed (table 7), usually on a permanent basis and in white-collar jobs. Working hours were particularly tough for blue-collar men and women - who also work shifts - and for businessmen/self-employed men and managers/executives. Part-time employment is typically female (table 17). Most respondents reach their workplace in less than half an hour, with men needing more time than women. Almost 9% of the self-employed people, both men and women, and people who run a business have the possibility to work at home.

Whereas most fathers said they had chosen their working schedule because their employers had not offered any alternative solution, most mothers said that their choice was subject to the need to reconcile work and family responsibilities rather than the organisational requirements of their job. Fathers choose their working arrangement primarily with a view to earning as much as possible, while the need to balance work and family responsibilities ranks only third. If we analyse the data according to the kind of employment involved, we noticed that male and female working time patterns are different. On the one hand, self-employed men/businessmen choose working time arrangements that allow them to perform family tasks. On the other hand, men in management jobs, white-collar workers, teachers, and blue-collar workers are forced to comply with a given working schedule, with the aim of increasing their income ranking second. Self-employed women, female teachers, and white-collar women pursue arrangements that allow them to balance work and family commitments, whereas women in higher positions prefer arrangements that comply with financial and income-related objectives. Only blue-collar women said they did not have the possibility to make a choice.

Male job seekers said they wanted a full-time job, whereas women prefer part-time jobs. The grouping of these data according to the various professional categories reveals that the women who look for part-time jobs belong to the self-employed or white-collar/teachers categories, whereas those in top management and blue-collar work look for full-time jobs.

Studies show that in all countries, regardless of their peculiarities, the presence of work-life balance policies and gender equality practices at work not only helps workers, but the involved organisations as well. We tried to find out whether the mothers and fathers from the various cities were offered, and had benefited from, family-friendly practices, such as flexitime, on-site day-care facilities, teleworking, et cetera.

In all six cities, except Plovdiv, 23% of the working parents seem to enjoy a certain degree of working time flexibility (table 18). The respondents also participated in other initiatives, such as on-site child care, teleworking, special maternity programmes, job sharing, which can be combined in each urban context in various ways to suit the needs and conciliation strategies that mothers and fathers aspire to.

Looking at the various professional categories, we may conclude that teleworking is usually chosen by managers/senior executives, both men and women, whereas job-sharing is practised especially by white-collar men and women in top management positions (table 19).

When asked to express their satisfaction with the level of work-life balance achieved, the majority of the respondents, men and women alike, said they were very satisfied, regardless of their employment, except for blue-collar women (table 20).

BOX 4. LEGISLATION ON WORKING TIME FLEXIBILITY

Germany	<p>« The law introduced in 2001 aims at strengthening the employee's position in the bargaining process over flexible working hours arrangements. Employees have the right to demand a part-time job if: the employer has hired more than 15 employees; the duration of employment is more than 6 months; there are no organisational reasons that are incompatible with part-time work. Most employers grant part-time work to their employees. A study showed that 23% of the workers may work at home at least partially»*.</p> <p>There is a law in Saxony for 'The promotion of women and the reconciliation of family and work in the public service'. This applies to all public local and regional authorities. Only for these institutions, every four years a 'Supporting Plan for Women' is elaborated. This law is not applied in the private sector. These measures include flexible working hours or part-time work, that allow for children or other dependent persons to be taken care of, without denying employees the possibility to return to full-time work, and without influencing the chances of career advancement. They also promote arrangements that are based on teleworking**.</p> <p>Since 1989, in the municipality of Düsseldorf, an advancement programme for women had been in existence that has now been replaced by the programme on equal opportunities: the 'Plan for equal professional opportunities for women and men at the Düsseldorf municipality', which has the work-life balance among its aims **.</p>
Italy	<p>Law N.53/2000, in force since 2000, introduced measures that allow parents to benefit from flexible working hours and a flexible organisation of work (part-time work, teleworking, and work at home). 'Despite these measures, the availability of part-time work in the private sector is limited and progression towards a more flexible working hours system has been slower than in other countries'*.</p>
Greece	<p>A law (N. 1892/90) on part-time work that dates back to 1990 and was implemented through law N.3385/2005, has introduced flexibility as regards overtime work and the possibility to reduce working hours **.</p>
Romania	<p>Unavailable**.</p>
Bulgaria	<p>'Very limited flexible working time arrangements'*.</p>

* Source: European Commission, *Reconciliation of work and private life: a comparative review of 30 European countries*, 2005.

** Source: Information supplied by the municipalities participating in the *Briefcase* project.

Chapter 5: The role of child care services

1. Child care services and family's responsibilities

Child care services constitute a crucial issue among the policies that aim at enhancing the work-life balance. As a matter of fact, the European Union (Lisbon Agenda, 2000) set the target of a coverage rate of 33% for children aged between 0 and 3 and 90% for children aged between 3 and 6. The comparative survey of the European countries²¹ revealed that many countries are close to the target set for the 3-6 age group, but many difficulties persist with regard to the coverage rate for the 0-3 group. The services for children younger than 1 are not a political issue discussed in Europe.

Given the age of the respondents' children, we focused on the day-care services for children of the 0-3 age group, which is the thorniest issue. If we consider all sorts of day-care services for children aged between 0 and 3 (public, private, and on-site facilities), the respondents who said they used these facilities constituted 43% of the total. Day-care centres, both public and private, were mostly attended by children of middle-class parents. Upper-income mothers and fathers had children in private facilities, too, while those with a lower income used public facilities. There is another difference between the two kinds of services: in public facilities, there is a majority of families with two children, while most children in private ones were only children.

The analysis of the households revealed that most parents are in paid employment (85% in total) and hold full-time jobs. Fathers usually work longer hours, whereas mothers prefer part-time jobs to be able to look after their children while spending less time on household work. It is interesting to note that in families that use day-care facilities, fathers are more likely to spend time on household work (53% spend up to 10% of their day on it, but 26% up to 30%) and 58% spend up to one third of the day with the children, a figure that is significantly higher than the 40% of the total male sample (table 9).

The figures on female employment show that there is a correlation between the early enrolment of children and female employment. Within this group of households, women's employment amount to 83%, against 70,5% of the total sample. The data division by sex and profession of the respondents (table 21) reveals that women in top management positions are the most likely to bring their children to day-care services, followed by self-employed women, then by teachers/white-collar women, and lastly by blue-collar women.²² For these mothers too, however, the impact of childbirth on employment is significant: 23% stop working, 29% work shorter hours, but a good 18% say they improved their position. The data on the profession of fathers show that the children of managers/senior executives are the most likely to attend day-care centres, followed by the children of white-collar workers and

²¹ Kröger, T., *op cit.*

²² These data may be influenced by differences within the sample, for example the high number of blue-collar workers in the interviews of Plovdiv, where the services for the 0-3 age group are not sufficient.

teachers, while the children of businessmen/self-employed workers and blue-collar workers are the less likely to attend these centres (only 15,5%).

With regard to the division of family responsibilities, children of school age who do not attend day-care facilities are predominantly looked after by their mothers, then by grandparents, whereas fathers rank only third. The data on the division of care by sex confirm what was mentioned in chapter two, although the gap between mothers and fathers is in this case less marked., Between 51% and 62% of fathers, for example, deal with emergency situations, drive the children to nursery school or extracurricular activities, put them to bed, handle the relations with the institutions, get out of bed when children wake up at night, or wash and dress them. Moreover, a share between 34% and 42%, - much higher than the general one -, stays at home when children are ill or when the nursery school is closed during working hours. With regard to household work the gap is even smaller, but in a less significant way. The tasks performed by grandparents, on the other hand, are basic and limited to some areas only: driving children to school, emergency situations such as illness, leisure-time activities with their grandchildren, or the preparation of meals. The private market of services (*baby-sitters, domestic help*) is used when it comes to household work (above all ironing and cleaning) and home maintenance.

In other words, when the women's desire to keep working is accompanied by an adequate provision of services (or, vice-versa, when an adequate provision of services allows women to stick to their job), the division of roles is more equal., It is probable that the organisation of time in everyday life naturally speeds up the shifting of traditional gender roles into more equal ones.

2. *The provision of services in the cities*

We shall now describe the situation of the services in the six cities of the *Briefcase* project, taking account of the political context described in chapter one. As the coverage of the public services, which varies from city to city (Box 5), is inadequate with respect to the 0-3 age group almost everywhere, all municipalities are introducing new initiatives to address the situation. In Bologna, for example, some problems regarding the availability and sustainability of the public services are coming to the surface. For this reason, the city has decided to provide parents with alternative forms of care, such as the pilot action elaborated as part of this project that is described in the third part of the volume. In other cities, the public service is improved through collaboration with companies, a strategy that many policymakers of the *Briefcase* municipalities consider extremely important. Whereas on-site day-care facilities are typical of large-size companies,²³ which are better 'equipped' for such kind of initiatives, the pilot action of Düsseldorf involved small and medium-sized companies as well. The initiative falls within the innovative family-friendly policies that gained ground after the national reunification; these policies are bringing Germany closer to France and the

²³ For details. see Del Boca, B., Saraceno, C., & Billari, F. *Politica per la famiglia a costo zero. O quasi. La voce info*, 17 July 2006.

Scandinavian countries.²⁴ During the last few years, a nationwide public debate in which the business world participates has brought about new legislation on parental leave as well as a renewed willingness to collaborate with the companies. This provided the setting for Düsseldorf's political project on conciliation, which aims for an increase in the coverage rate of day-care centres.

Recent studies show that Greece, too, has launched a project of collaboration between day-care facilities and the largest companies of the country.²⁵

The attempts to boost the provision of services, in line with the European target, sometimes conflict with aspects of a cultural nature, such as the belief, deeply rooted in some countries, that children up to 3 years of age should be educated and raised within the family environment. According to the findings of the World Values Survey²⁶, a very high percentage of families in some Italian regions, much higher than in other European countries, believe that small children suffer when they are left at the day-care centre while their mother is at work. A recent survey carried out by the De Benedetti Foundation²⁷ revealed that a high percentage of Italian parents did not use day-care services, because they thought that these offer a poor-quality service (the European classification places Italian services at the tenth place out of fifteen where the quality of the services is concerned, especially pertaining to the children-to-staff ratio).²⁸ However, in Italy there can be large differences among regions with regard to the provision of welfare services and people's perception of community life. This is demonstrated by the figures expressing the level of satisfaction with Bologna's public child care facilities, the coverage rate of which has risen to 34,5%. Disparities among regions can also be found in other countries. An example of this is Germany, where the national coverage rate is 7%, while Chemnitz shows a coverage rate of almost 53%, a good 20 points above the Lisbon target that the EU Member States should comply with. The high coverage rate of public child care services is a result of policy in former East Germany; as such, it is not only a local outcome. In the cities where the coverage rate is lower, studies have shown that the 'shortage of child care services [...] [is also influenced by the choice] not to interfere with in-family socialisation', and at the same time '[by] generous parental leave and *part-time* arrangements for mothers'.²⁹ As we have seen, the opportunities provided by the law and by the local services constitute the basis on which mothers and fathers build their conciliation strategies.

²⁴ For details, see Saraceno, C. Quando il vento dell'Est aiuta le lavoratrici. *La voce.info*, 3 January 2007.

²⁵ *Gender Equality Report. Reconciliation of work and private life. A comparative review of thirty European countries.* (2005) Brussels: European Commission.

²⁶ See Del Boca, D., & Yuri, D. Mi fa paura l'asilo nido? *La voce info*, 3 January 2007.

²⁷ See Ermisch, J., & Francesconi, M., *op.cit.*

²⁸ See Del Boca, D., & Yuri, D., *op.cit.*

²⁹ Erler, D. (2007). *Nuovo welfare e le politiche per la conciliazione tra lavoro e vita familiare.* Siena: Corso di politica sociale, Università di Siena.

BOX 5. MAP OF THE SERVICES

Düsseldorf*	<p>Day-care centres accept children aged from 4 months to 3 years, the coverage rate is 15 %; the children-to-staff ratio is 5:1; care is provided for up to 10 hours a day.</p> <p>Nursery schools accept children aged 3-6 years, with a coverage rate of 100%; the children-to-staff ratio is 7:1; schools are open for up to 8 hours a day; 70 % of these places offer full-time care.</p> <p>Additional child care services are also available, such as on-site day-care facilities, baby-parking and nanny share.</p>
Chemnitz*	<p>Day-care centres accept children aged between 9 weeks and 3 years, the coverage rate is 53%; the children-to-staff ratio is 6:1; care is provided for up to 11 hours a day.</p> <p>Nursery schools accept children aged 3-6 years, the coverage rate is 95,6%; the children-to-staff ratio is 13:1; schools are open up to 11 hours a day.</p> <p>Additional child care services are also available, such as on-site day-care facilities, baby-parking, and nanny shares.</p>
Germany**	<p>The national coverage rate for day-care centres is 7%, and for nursery schools 89%. An Act passed in 1996 establishes that each child older than 3 is entitled to a place in a public child care facility. Parents pay school fees according to their income. The average fee is about 110 euro's per month in public schools and amount to a maximum of 690 euro's in private facilities.</p>

Bologna*	<p>Day-care centres accept children aged between 3 months and 3 years, and the coverage rate is 34,5%; the children-to-staff ratio is 4:1; care is provided for up to 10,5 hours a day.</p> <p>Nursery schools accept children aged between 3 and 6 years, the coverage rate is 102,2% (as also non-resident children are accepted); the children-to-staff ratio is 24:1; nursery schools are open for up to 10 hours a day.</p> <p>Additional child care services are also available, such as on-site day-care facilities, baby-parking and nanny shares.</p>
Italy**	<p>The national coverage rate for day-care centres is 9%, for nursery schools it is 93%. The national data confirm that there are large disparities among regions in terms of services (quality and quantity). School fees, which in some regions amount to a maximum of 400-600 euro's, vary in relation to income. Grandparents spend a lot of time on child care, especially during the first years.</p>
Amaroussion*	<p>Day-care centres and nursery schools accept children aged between 8 months and 6 years, with a coverage rate of 5,2% and 17,8% respectively; the children-to-staff ratio is 9:1; open 10 hours per day.</p> <p>Day-care centres cost from 0 to 100 euro's according to age, number of children per family, and social status.</p>
Greece**	<p>The national coverage rate is 7% for day care centres, and 60% for nursery schools. The coverage rate for children younger than 3 is very low at the national level. Due to a decentralisation of the provision of public child care, there is severe lack of data. Parents pay for the services according to their income. Fees are below 300 euro's per month in public facilities, and they range from 250 to 420 euro's in private facilities. Private and public organisations with more than 300 employees must provide an on-site day-care facility, but they often fail to comply with this rule.</p>
Craiova*	<p>The day-care centres' coverage rate is 10,5%.</p> <p>The coverage rate of nursery schools is 56%; care is provided for 6-10 hours a day.</p>
Romania**	<p>Very low coverage rates at the national level; the quality of the services is poor, mainly because the staff is not adequately qualified.</p>
Plovdiv*	<p>Day-care centres accept children aged between 0 and 3 years; care is provided for up to 12 hours.</p> <p>Nursery schools accept children aged between 3 and 6 years; schools are open for 12 hours per day.</p> <p>Integrated services are scarce. There are 3 private nursery schools.</p>
Bulgaria**	<p>The coverage rate of day-care centres is 7%, and that of nursery schools is 74%. The number of facilities is decreasing at the national level as a result of the birth-rate decline, high unemployment, and poor living standards. Grandparents play a crucial role in the care for children up to the age of 3.</p>

* Source: Data supplied by the municipalities participating in the *Briefcase* project.

** Source: European Commission, Gender Equality Report, *Reconciliation of work and private life. A comparative review of thirty European countries*, 2005.

3. *Reconciliation tools and strategies*

First of all, the surveyed parents developed their conciliation strategies by integrating the public services with the private ones and on-site facilities (table 22) and by using all tools available in their cities such as nanny sharing (table 23), extracurricular services (holiday schemes and after-school activities), or recreational ones (playgrounds and sports centres) provided at the local level (table 24). Of course, the parents participating in the survey answered the questions according to the variety or shortage of such facilities and opportunities in their own city.

Other parents said they opted for, or would rather receive, financial contributions (table 23), which allow them to organise the activities of their child autonomously, thus confirming the cultural tendency towards a more family-oriented care for smaller children. This attitude is also typical of mothers and fathers who choose pre-school or extracurricular services (play schemes after school or during the holidays) for just a few hours rather than on a full-time basis (table 25).

Moreover, families develop strategies that integrate services and opportunities available at the local level with informal help or private market solutions, as we saw in chapter two. Lastly, fathers and mothers take advantage of conciliation opportunities offered by both the national or local legislation and the companies (parental leave, part-time employment, special programmes, et cetera), as we saw in chapter three.

That the combination of all these tools meets the conciliation needs of many parents, is shown by the level of satisfaction with the city services expressed by most of them (table 26). By grouping these data according to the professional category and sex of the respondents, we can conclude that satisfaction with the quality of the services was highest among self-employed/businesspersons and blue-collar workers, followed by managers/executives and white-collar workers. The female level of satisfaction is higher and more homogeneous. The level of satisfaction falls, however, when it comes to the fees. Yet, it is still at a good level, although it is much lower among blue-collar men.

If we consider that the supply of services is related to the demand of civil society, meeting the European guidelines in the field of conciliation means more than just having met the demand: it means the demand has been stimulated. The patterns analysed by this survey, and by other ones as well, were highlighted by the European guidelines, which allowed the cities to consider their conciliation policies and, in some cases, to develop them from scratch. In other words, the European dimension has promoted a positive attitude towards conciliation tools and has reduced the differences between European cities (even though they still persist). Challenges still remain, not so much of an organisational kind, but rather of a cultural nature. An example of this is the need to reconcile services with the network of informal help during the child's first years. The public service ought to take account of this aspect, too, (in Bologna, for example, the absence of grandparents is considered preferential when it comes to gaining access to the services) to implement a *family-friendly* policy.

Chapter 6: Conclusions

The survey of the work-life balance needs and strategies used by fathers and mothers of dependent children (aged 0-14 years) from six European cities has highlighted three main aspects of a social problem, the implications of which have only recently been acknowledged. Since we were aware that it would be impossible to cover all aspects associated with family, work and services, we identified a number of crucial elements that fall within the three broader types of social relations between the sexes. On these we focused our attention.

The study on men's and women's orientation towards paid and unpaid work was conducted through the analysis of the distribution of time among various everyday activities. Regardless of territorial variations, the traditional model in which the man is in paid employment and the woman is overwhelmed by work and family responsibilities was reaffirmed. But are there any changes to this all too general pattern, that reflect the new domestic division of labour between the sexes, and the new employment and family patterns at a local level? The distribution of time between paid and unpaid work is influenced not only by personal preference and social norms, but also by structural aspects, such as labour market developments and the welfare system in the context concerned.

The goal of our focus on families and the multiplicity of household models was to highlight the division of care tasks between mothers and fathers. Our approach was meant to avoid the risk, often run in many studies on conciliation, that both the unpaid work carried out by women and the gender inequality that is associated with it would not be properly visible. In general, the results showed that fathers are more involved in child care than expected. The increased participation of women in the labour market has urged fathers to take on some family commitments, although men are not always willing to do so. Another important aspect has to do with the type of unpaid work done by the men, including men with working partners. These tasks very rarely include domestic labour, confirming once again that that is the activity against which men entertain the strongest resistance. The female response to work-life balance pressure is characterised by a reorganisation within the domain of unpaid work, in which domestic labour is reduced in favour of child care.

Another thorny issue that the survey looked into has to do with the connection between cultural expectations, - such as 'parenthood ideals' -, and the attitude towards paid work. The analysis of the changes in fathers' and mothers' employment patterns after childbirth confirmed that the impact of parenthood is completely unbalanced. Whereas women often choose to work shorter hours to be able to keep up with the commitments associated with the birth of the child, fathers generally do the opposite, i.e. they work longer hours and try to get a promotion. Yet, in this case, too, the general trend does not provide a clear picture of the various attitudes that are reflected in the analysis of the different contexts. Although this is not the most popular solution, after childbirth, some women leave the labour market for good, as their employment is not compatible with their carer role. Another reason, highly relevant as well, is that they fall victim to discriminatory events that range from *mobbing* to their actual discharge. By contrast, the educational level and the position held before child-

birth play a crucial role in women's decision to stick to their job, thus reducing the impact of parenthood on employment.

Another part of the survey focused on the legislative and company-based tools available to mothers and fathers, which support maternity and favour a work-life balance. The main arrangements that were considered are flexible working hours and the take-up of parental leave. We could not base the results on general schemes due to the differences in legislation. As shown by the data on national legislation, in most countries flexible working hours are at the discretion of employers, except in Greece, Italy and Germany. These countries have national legislation on this matter. Part-time work is one of the most acknowledged solutions chosen by the mothers surveyed, although they do not constitute a majority. The fathers opted for this solution far less frequently. Because of the differentiated legislative framework and the actual implementation of the existing regulations, the issue of parental leave makes for a complicated picture as well. However, we presume that it is mostly mothers who take up parental leave. When fathers decide to do so, it is usually for shorter periods, in order to avoid the negative consequences for their career that are still common in many workplaces, especially private ones.

The analysis of the availability of informal services that help families cope with professional responsibilities, child care, and domestic labour, has provided significant results concerning the presence (or absence) of the network of relatives and friends, in which grandparents play a crucial role. The sharing of unpaid work across the various generations of women is still a consolidated pattern, even among households in which older people do not live together with their adult children and grandchildren. Late in life, care work is carried out by men, too. Grandfathers are equally involved in providing care and support to families with children. Other informal sources of help that we considered are paid child care and domestic labour services. The survey confirms the entry of the private market into the domestic sphere. The unpaid work carried out by women from within the family environment, whose affordability, flexibility, and personalisation allowed families, especially high-income ones, to focus on quality rather than quantity, is increasingly being replaced with paid services.

The relation between the availability of child care services and women's participation in the labour market is broadly acknowledged, which is why it still represents a challenge and constitutes a political objective of the European Union. Public child care services are a milestone of family policies that aim for a work-life balance; they include a direct and/or indirect money transfer and parental leave. The provision of child care services is highly differentiated across the European countries. While nursery schools (for children aged between 3 and 6) are very common, public day-care centres (for children aged between 0 and 3) are not equally available across the various contexts. Almost half of the parents surveyed are using or have used these facilities, but a significant number of parents said they would have liked to but could not. The survey also showed that the formal child care service, which usually needs to be complemented by informal care, is becoming increasingly flexible thanks to a series of integrating services, mostly managed by municipalities, and in some cases thanks to community-based organisations. These are very often mixed facilities (educational and care facilities, targeting both children and parents, et cetera) that complement the demand for child care in the area. Lastly, the survey showed that private and on-site child care facilities need to become more widespread, as they might be able to cover the demand for services

that the public sector cannot always meet.

If it is true that local authorities have discretionary power to implement care policies, we believe this survey provides a good opportunity to confront the local governments now willing to grapple with the complex subject of conciliation with the expectations of parents with regard to care. This prospect is absent from most comparative research studies.

The innovative contribution of our survey is that it shifts the focus from the national to the urban level, placing the cities at the heart of the integrated system of care, educational and recreational services that can optimise work-life balance policies. Using different political approaches, the local governments of each city, in carrying out their ordinary everyday work, must respond to challenges common to many European countries. Such challenges are the increased participation of women in the labour market, and the need to address zero population growth and boost fertility rates.

PART III

Past performance and future potential: good practices and pilot actions in six european cities

Hugo Swinnen and Sandra ter Woerds

This section is based upon information delivered by each of the city teams involved in the Briefcase Project.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Aim and objective of collecting good practices

Within the Briefcase project, all participating municipalities (Amaroussion, Bologna, Chemnitz, Craiova, Düsseldorf, and Plovdiv) searched for good practices in their own town and in their own country. With regard to the use of care services, these are good practices that facilitate parents in the conciliation of their professional, family, and private lives. The main issue addressed by the good practices is how to increase gender equality within families through the use they (can) make of care services.

By identifying good practices, sharing them among the Briefcase partners as well as with a broad European audience, we hope to improve the situation for parents throughout Europe regarding their use of care services.

For the cities themselves, the good practice exchange serves three goals. The first is to exchange knowledge among each other; the second is to translate the outcomes and lessons of the collected practices and apply them in local practices; and the third is to identify the most innovative practices by comparing different good practices within the EU.

Criteria

The good practices were collected while the following levels and areas of intervention were kept in mind: families, schools, and child care services, the public and private sector, and employers. In addition, the following criteria served as a guideline for selection:

1. Transferability to other settings and countries;
2. Uniqueness;
3. Innovativeness;
4. Recent/current;
5. Sustainability;
6. Participation of a social network and the participation of the target group;
7. Policy potential;
8. Diversity and variation among the good practices:
 - Practices at different levels: local, regional, and national level;
 - Practices in different settings: families, services, and employers;
 - Practices with different targets or goals.

Each Briefcase partner selected three good practices after a selection procedure in which a local expert group selected the best three out of a longlist, keeping the criteria above in mind. In this way, 18 practices were selected.

Thematic areas

The Briefcase good practices turn out to reflect the local situations in the municipalities, although common denominators can also be found. Overlooking the practices, we see the following thematic areas represented:

- Day-care facilities (outside the house);
- Care arrangements within families;
- Facilities for job returnees;
- Flexibility in organisation and management of time;
- Info on gender equality/awareness-raising.

In the conclusions, we will relate the thematic areas to the locality where they originally came from.

From good practices to pilot actions

In the course of 2007, three participating cities in the Briefcase project started a pilot action. These cities are Bologna, Düsseldorf, and Chemnitz. The actions served to discover and develop new ways of dealing with care services in the local community. In this way, these cities could use ideas and incentives from the good practices and from the exchange with other participants in the Briefcase network, and put them into practice locally. Of course, local circumstances play an important role. Each of the pilot activities focuses on a specific local problem, need, or desire for the future. We will describe the pilot actions after the presentation of the good practices of the respective cities. There is no relationship between the (relatively) short reporting on the pilot actions and the large amount of time and energy devoted to these by the partner cities.

This report

In the following paragraphs, we will describe the practices within their local context. For each city, we will present the practices after a short 'state of the art' regarding conciliation issues in that particular city. In the concluding paragraph, we will place the practices within a European context, reflect on the thematic areas in which they are developed, and go into their transferability as seen through the eyes of the Briefcase partner cities.

Chapter 2: Amaroussion

1. Picture of Amaroussion

The municipality of Amaroussion is situated in the northern part of the Attica basin. Its population amounts to about 150.000 inhabitants. The town is considered to be one of the most developed and high-income districts of Attica. During the last years, the town has developed into a growing business centre where more than 1400 enterprises have been established, which makes Amaroussion the country's economic, financial, and political "powerhouse". Despite this, Amaroussion preserves suburban features, because its neighbourhoods provide the inhabitants with a satisfactory level of life quality, with larger areas of green field than other urban municipalities.

Rapid urbanisation growth rates created a specific socio-economic situation, with significant demographic changes taking place during the last three decades. Amaroussion attracted many employees in the tertiary sector and the municipality had to invest in resolving the emerging related socio-economic problems. For these reasons, it established and utilised innovative social structures and tools, and it is interested in building to relative capacity and in investing in this field. This includes investments in social care, like kindergartens and Third Age Protection Centres, in telework, and in a Research Centre for Gender Equality.

2. Amaroussion Kindergartens

General

The municipality of Amaroussion offers care services and education to children between the ages of 8 months and 6 years. The goal of the kindergartens is to offer care services to children whose parents are away from home to work. Since 1994, 14 municipal kindergartens have been established in the Amaroussion district.

The municipal kindergartens offer the children medical care, meals, games, gymnastics, and to some of them also foreign language lessons, thus reflecting the priorities of the local families. Before, only five private kindergartens existed. The municipal kindergartens answer a great need in addition to these relatively more expensive private services. This is neither a unique nor an innovative practice with regard to the conciliation of work and family life. However, the Amaroussion kindergartens are different in that they combine high quality services and low fees for the parents.

Method

Amaroussion kindergartens do not differ much from "common" kindergartens. Their final structure, programme, and services were developed during a continuous process from the moment of their establishment in 1994 on. Since then, many changes have been made to cover the needs of the children and to improve the prospects of their parents.

The fees of the kindergartens range from zero to €100 per month, depending on the age

of the child, the number of children from one family, the marital status of the parents, and/or whether the parents are handicapped. The working hours of the municipal kindergartens are from 6:30 to 16:00 hours. All of them are open 11 months a year, while one of them is open the whole year from 6:30 to 18:00 hours. The precondition for accepting a child in a municipal kindergarten is that at least one of the parents is an Amaroussion citizen.

Most parents are actively involved in the kindergartens from the beginning of the school year. Parents often participate and/or attend most of the events that are organised, such as Christmas, Easter Festival, or National Holiday Events. They also participate in the "Children's festival" that is organised every year and in the "Sports Event" at the end of the school year.

The active participation of parents and of the social network is promoted by means of the open-door policy adopted by the municipal kindergartens to discuss issues related to the child's behaviour. If needed, since 2000, the municipal kindergartens provide direct and specific services to children and parents in association with the Municipal Centre of Psychological Health.

A problem the kindergartens currently face is the limited number of places. This is due both to the high demand for these services, and to the fact that only a certain number of children are admitted per kindergarten to maintain the high standards.

Results and effects

Today, the municipal kindergartens host approximately 820 children from 650 families. One of the successes of the Amaroussion kindergartens is that the citizens of the municipality trust them. The services seem to be more satisfactory than they were expected to be, especially in comparison to the private kindergartens. Although it is very difficult to identify concrete and tangible results from the services of kindergartens, the main output is their influence on the education and upbringing of future generations in Amaroussion. On the one hand, the kindergartens cover the need of children for gaming and learning while, on the other hand, they provide the opportunity to the parents to pursue their career, without being worried during their busy hours about the proper upbringing for their children.

Seen from a long-term perspective, the sustainability of the current situation is revealed by the increasing demand for new municipal kindergartens and, simultaneously, the decreasing number of private kindergartens. This in fact implies that there is no general increasing demand for educational services, but a higher demand exclusively for the Amaroussion kindergartens.

The model of the Amaroussion kindergartens can be easily adopted by and transferred to other counties and other municipalities. The uniqueness lies in its high quality services combined with low fees for the parents. This combination should be guaranteed at all times.

By itself, this specific practice constitutes a tool for attaining a work-life balance. It is a practice strongly linked to the conciliation of family life and working life. Therefore, it has a high potential within social policy at the local level.

More kindergartens are scheduled to open in the future, due to the increased local need for the provision of child care services. In addition, the municipality aims at extending the working hours of the kindergartens in order to meet the needs of the parents. Due to the long working hours of these kindergartens, both parents will have the opportunity to work full-time on a daily basis. The increasing number of kindergartens will also contribute to the reduction of unemployment, by providing jobs.

3. *Telework in Greek universities*

General

Telework is a practical solution for academic personnel in general, but especially for working parents. It provides employee with flexibility, and eases the working parents' burden. Furthermore, research has shown that it increases employee productivity. In Greece, teleworking is taking place mainly within universities. The universities were among the first Greek employers to use telework. This mainly stems from their former experience in teleeducation, where students would do the main share of their studying from home, using the Internet as a means of connection with their teachers.

By now, telework has been in use very effectively for many decades and it keeps getting more effective, with all the means that modern technology offers. This way of working can be of great importance for mothers and fathers who are willing to work or study while at the same time wanting to balance work and family life.

Telework is currently being implemented in those regions where Universities or Technical Schools are located that have the proper infrastructure to support IT services. The Hellenic Open University (HOU) was the first to adopt teleeducation and telework to a vast extent.

Although teleworking is an innovative practice within the Greek context, there are many countries, such as Austria, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, et cetera, where teleworking is already common practice. Yet, for those countries where new technologies involving the Internet, secure networks, internet-enabled mobile telephony, and wireless communication have not been as far developed, teleworking is a unique and innovative solution.

Method

The Hellenic Open University (HOU) was the first to adopt teleeducation and telework extensively. The main reason for the initiative of the HOU was the high demand for appropriate learning environments within tertiary education. Furthermore, the massive entry of women into the work forces strengthened the so-called 'flexible Open Education systems'. The development of the primary sector of the economy and other services also contributed to the continuously increasing need for employees to further their studies through flexible forms of education. Under these circumstances, the HOU was established, providing not only teleeducation but also teleworking, since most of the scientific personnel and researchers are teleworkers.

Recent surveys in Greece have revealed that teleworking parents avoid the stressful workplace. They work in a more pleasant working environment, which helps them to be more productive and more organised. One of the main disadvantages of telework is that employees can feel isolated from their co-workers.

Although there are no statistical data regarding teleworkers, the studies referred to above indicate that the number of teleworkers is continuously increasing. However, when we compare Greece to other European countries, we see that with regard to its IT infrastructure, it is rather behind. Yet, the universities do generally have the necessary infrastructure at their disposal, one of the reasons why the Greek universities are among the first employers to actively stimulate telework.

Surveys indicate a strong wish among the Greek population to be able to do telework.

Approximately 50% of Greek respondents are considering telework as a possibility. However, we also see reluctance among work organisations, employers, and employees when it comes to adopting telework.

Results and effects

The use of telework requires less resources and universities can work at low cost. The children feel the presence and care of the parents; in addition, teleworking saves money for babysitting and transportation.

The added value of the project lies in a higher productivity of the scientists, as well as in the way it strengthens the family relations of scientific personnel. Teleworking in universities enables scientific personnel to work from home, thus helping both their family and the students, since they can share time with their family, but can also very quickly get in touch with their workplace and their students.

The overall picture concerning the impact of telework is positive and encouraging. Parents spend less time in their workplace and more time with their children. As a side effect, children actually see how their parents earn a living. Furthermore, beside direct benefits for the family, there are also indirect benefits for local society, as telework contributes to the devolvement of work, the reduction of traffic congestion, and the conciliation of work and family life.

During the last decade, the rapid development of new technologies and ICT tools resulted in the increase in numbers of teleworking employees, not only within universities, but also in the private sector. The growing demand from both the employees and the employers underlines the sustainability of this practice.

It is relatively easy to transfer the expertise and experience of teleworking to other sectors and work environments. The only preconditions are that a proper technological infrastructure must be available, that the type of activity is suitable to be executed from a distance, and that employees must be familiar with the use of these technologies. Research has shown that people who work at home are, generally, more productive, which is good for both sides: employees as well as employers. Parents who work at home can more easily combine taking care of their children and their work without the pressure of the office environment itself. They can create their own office and working hours. Another very important use of telework is the reduction of commuter traffic and all the effects this has on the environment (traffic, emissions, noise, and the use of natural resources).

4. *The Research Centre for Gender Equality: KETHI*

General

KETHI is a research centre that conducts research and studies on gender equality, provides documentation, informs, advises, monitors and evaluates projects and raises awareness on gender issues. Its main target groups are unemployed women, women wishing to set up a business, women requesting information on employment career and legislation.

KETHI was established in 1994 with the aim to provide information, train and sensitise teachers, develop networks, and co-operate with international organisations, all with regard

to the enhancement of knowledge on gender equality. Initiator is the General Secretariat for Equality of the Greek Ministry of the Interior.

KETHI's activities have a dual focus. The first goal is to conduct social research on gender equality issues. The second goal is to improve women's status and enable their advancement in all areas of political, economic, and social life, within the framework of the policies defined by the General Secretariat for Equality. The main office is in Athens and there are four suboffices in Thessaloniki, Patras, Heraklion, and Volos.

The uniqueness and innovation of KETHI is revealed in its services. It was the first actor in Greece to focus on discrimination against women, in particular with regard to education, decision-making, and employment. KETHI, in that sense, was a pioneering centre that found answers to gender stereotypes through innovative tools and through advisory campaigns, training initiatives, and publications.

Method

The centre operates on a national level, and the results and output are disseminated throughout Greece. It aims at the improvement of gender equality, not only in specific geographical areas, but throughout Greece as a whole. That is also the reason they have established departments in the five largest cities in the country. The Greek Ministry of the Interior has donated the infrastructure. This enabled KETHI to set up their offices and attract the necessary personnel, experienced in issues of gender equality. Lately, KETHI is being co-funded through EU initiatives.

KETHI gradually gained the confidence of Greek women. Nowadays, they often visit the centres with their questions and requests. For this reason, in recent years, the centres expanded their role and filled up their staff with specialised personnel. At the same time, they trained their already employed staff to deal with gender discrimination. Recently, they have also laid the basis for the development of consultation for men.

KETHI has produced a large amount of material, has written reports and developed tools regarding gender equality issues, especially in the employment sector. Furthermore, the website of KETHI is an interactive tool that provides not only useful information, but also access to integrated research and guides on good practices in gender equality. KETHI is continuing its successful activities, despite the end of its co-financing by the European Commission.

Results and effects

KETHI has issued publications, guides, books, studies, and other materials. KETHI actively participates in a large number of national and European projects in a leading or partner role. Specifically, KETHI has published a number of guides on good practices that relate to the conciliation of work and family life, establishing i.e. networks of children's creativity centres. As a good practice, the municipality of Amaroussion is willing to develop local centres, based on the experience and expertise of KETHI, which will be able to offer advisory activities, psychological support, and social and legal information.

KETHI provides proof of its efficient research, educational and informational work in equal opportunities and gender mainstreaming matters all over the country, and trans-nationally as well. Its interest in gender mainstreaming and its engagement and capability to co-operate are well known and appreciated. Its active co-operation in this area is directed at

participation, empowerment, and the development of civil society, and this is its main impact on local society.

Despite the lack of data on its results, the sustainability of KETHI is revealed by the number of women that visit the centres for counselling, by the increasing number of studies and the gradually positive outcomes they show regarding gender equality issues.

A centre like KETHI might easily be established on a national level in other European countries if the following criteria are fulfilled. Firstly, the political willingness must be there to promote and encourage similar initiatives, which in other words means that the government should provide the means for the foundation of a Research Centre. Secondly, the government should take responsibility for the exploitation of financial resources during the first years of the establishment of the practice, when there are vast expenses.

KETHI provides a sound reference point for women regarding gender equality issues, as it processes and disseminates statistical data and information through its website (www.kethi.gr) concerning issues pertaining to women's rights and gender equality. KETHI organises and updates the sites that provide information on projects, studies, publications, and issues on gender equality; it also drafts the periodical report on female employment situation in Greece (CEDAW).

Chapter 3: Bologna

1. Picture of Bologna

Bologna is the capital city of the Emilia-Romagna region, a communication node between the north and the south of the peninsula for goods and people alike. Population: 372,505 inhabitants, with an ongoing increase of percentage of foreigners in the last decade.

A comparison with the 2001 census reveals that the population of Bologna is made up of long-term residents. Once again, Bologna turns out to be one of the Italian cities with the highest mean age, preceded only by Ferrara and Trieste. With regard to foreigners, their percentage out of the resident population places Bologna at the central part of the scale led by Brescia and Milan. The data on local businesses confirm Bologna's status as a city of services. This means that most of the enterprises present in the area are small or medium-sized.

Bologna is a rather rich city, second in Italy for declared incomes and gross domestic product. The 2006 data confirm Bologna's first ranking in the labour market: first in Italy as regards activity rate and last but three with regard to the total unemployment rate.

The ageing of the population is one of the most significant phenomena, accompanied by zero population growth as regards the number of births. Bologna has 193,555 mostly small families; there are many single-parent families (90,488).

Employment rates are very high, also as regards the female population, which accounts for the low birth rate despite a good network of services for both children and dependent older people. The employment rate in the province of Bologna is 78.6% for men and 66.1% for women, while the activity rates are 80.6% and 68.6% respectively, and the unemployment rates 2.4% and 3.5%.

Day-care services cover 34.5% of the 0-2 age group, but the demand is well over 40%. Infant schools (age 3 to 5) cover 98.8%. So the whole area needs more investment. The goal of the administration is to cover 100% of the day-care demand, but also to provide a series of flexible opportunities that are different from the conventional and well-established ones. For this reason, alternative forms of services are being tested in the educational area.

Another objective is to enhance the response of private stakeholders in the production and social sectors because the preconditions mentioned before are not met. Neither would it be right for public money to be the only resource used to meet the needs of the population. This is why the municipality enters into agreements to set up company-operated day-care centres, to which it contributes municipal resources in exchange for the availability of places for children residing within the territory. However, this option is more viable for larger organisations, while the problem mostly affects smaller businesses that cannot address this issue alone.

2. *Futura Vouchers*

General

The vouchers were a financial contribution to buy care and domestic services for women at high risk of unemployment. These women received a voucher as a credit to buy care and domestic services for a maximum period of six months per person. They could 'cash' these vouchers in at a number of co-operative companies authorised and controlled by a consortium. These could be nurseries, schools, centres, and either public or private child care services. The project provided access to good services, selected and accredited by the leading organisation, with regional authorisation.

The project was running since 2002 and ended in 2006. The majority (96.5%) of women who used this service had children younger than 15. The majority of requests came from women who returned or wanted to return to work after maternity leave or after a period of unemployment.

Initiators and partners were the Friuli Venezia Giulia Region, two consortia of co-operative companies, one training centre, and a big consumers' co-operative. The project was financed by The European Social Fund to enhance the female employment rate in the region, which was under 40% when the project started. The Region invested € 9,300,000 (80% for the vouchers and 20% for awareness-raising and organisation costs). The project took place in all four provinces of the Region, mainly within the boundaries of the cities of Trieste, Udine, Pordenone, and Gorizia.

The vouchers were meant for women (and later also for men) with a low income and with family care expenses (for children and elderly or disabled persons) who found themselves in particular situations. They were taking part in training courses, in a programme for integration or re-integration at work after maternity leave or unemployment, or their situation was special, such as for former prisoners, new entrepreneurs, or women without a family or a parental network.

The innovation as well as the uniqueness of the vouchers derived from the fact that it provided the opportunity to get support quickly when needed, but not simply as cash benefit. Futura vouchers is a good example of supporting women in need, since it is not an alternative for, but rather functioning in addition to, existing services.

Method

A consortium of service suppliers was set up after the regional authorities selected a leading organisation and had approved the project. The suppliers were selected on the basis of quality, long-standing locally embedded activities, and competences. In addition to this, many publicity activities were planned to make people aware of the existence of the vouchers: brochures, press conferences, articles, meetings and a website. The vouchers were distributed through a broad social network of partners, who were mobilised and active in all the planning and implementation activities. The leading partner took care of the monitoring, while users were interviewed by means of a satisfaction questionnaire.

Results and effects

During four years, about 4800 women used the vouchers (which comes down to about 100

women per month). The services used most were nurseries and infant schools, summer centres, day centres for old people, home services for children or elderly relatives, cleaning services, and the supply of meals on wheels. The price of the voucher was not more than € 350 for a maximum of 6 months. The project also had an exploratory function for the regional government concerning the needs of conciliation tools and yielded an important political and methodological input for the growth of new forms of governance.

The project is not easily sustainable as such, because of the organisational requirements and large financial efforts needed. Yet, if adapted and restricted, it might turn out not to be very expensive compared to other services.

The practice is easily transferable to other settings and territories. In fact, this already occurred in some cities of the Emilia-Romagna, like Parma, Modena, and Ferrara.

The intervention could be settled as a local, supplementary method to be used when services are insufficient or not flexible. The practice may be particularly useful in case of a short-time emergency, before a definitive solution for an urgent care problem is found.

The project, although temporary, contributed to improve female employment and the professional training of women. It addressed the existing gender gap and introduced the compatibility of work and family life as an element of social policy.

3. *Full-time in the family*

General

In 1997, an experimental action named 'One year in the family' started, to provide to parents the opportunity to stay home from work for a period of one year. For ten years, this action has been running as an alternative way to support the work-life balance of young parents. Mothers and/or fathers who are working but who cannot or do not want to entrust their children to a kindergarten or baby-sitter during the first year of life, can make use of this facility. The project targets low-income families resident in the city of Bologna. In short, it consists of a financial contribution, meant as an incentive for parents to take up parental leave. Although the initiator is the municipality of Bologna, the same practice is applied in other municipalities in the Emilia-Romagna region as well.

The expert group considered this practice of great value, even if only a small number of parents per year are actually involved, because it attains two goals: supporting care activities of parents by reducing the conflict between work and family life, and encouraging fathers to take up care tasks. The goal of 'full-time in the family' is to support both motherhood and fatherhood. Its aim is to give parents more choices and to stimulate the use they make of existing benefits regarding leave arrangements. This will benefit family relationships in an important period of a family's existence.

The municipality of Bologna pays out its contribution directly to the mother or father. This practice is the first one in the areas of local welfare in Bologna that issues families with a financial contribution instead of providing day-care services. In that sense, the project is very innovative. Another innovation is the fact that fathers are addressed directly as well, since it is still very unusual in Italy for fathers to take up paternal leave.

Method

The municipality of Bologna defined the requirements that applicants should meet before the project's actual kickoff. The PR Offices of the municipality and the municipal website provide the families with the necessary information. An application form is available both at the municipal School Offices and on-line, and the request must be preceded by a preliminary conversation (intake). Every two months, a list of applicants is prepared and the contributions are assigned. These amount to €350 a month per child (465 euros in case of a single parent or two children). The children must not be older than one year, with the exception of disabled children, who can be up to three years of age and still be included in the project.

The planning of the practice and the evaluation of the results are carried out annually by experts (such as pedagogues) assigned by the municipality. Feedback from the parents is not foreseen. It is very likely that this practice will be extended because the demand for places in nurseries has increased with more than 40%, and it will be impossible to cover this increase within a short time period. In the meantime, 'Full-time in the family' is a very good alternative.

The main problem that the practice encounters is the low participation of fathers. They take up parental leave very rarely and only for a short period, generally because their salary is higher than that of the mothers. The municipality has held a small campaign to inform fathers and make them aware of their parental rights as laid down by law.

The action is now running for about ten years. It is the municipality's intention to increase its investment in this project and to increase the number of parents involved.

Results and effects

Currently, around 300 mothers or fathers receive the annual contribution. The municipality of Bologna thinks, however, that it will be possible to extend this practice to more parents if more information is made available to more parents. The project shows its capability to reach parents who prefer a 'mixed' care strategy, based on different opportunities for different needs during childhood and professional life.

The practice is relatively simple; it is not very expensive and thus financially stable. It would be easy to transfer it to and reproduce it in other settings (cities and countries), and even small municipalities can execute it. 'Full-time in the family' could be part of a flexible welfare strategy, containing full-time services, part-time services, home services, et cetera. The financial contribution to support conciliation may be increased and given in other ways like, for example, vouchers to buy care and domestic services at home, or to attend private services.

In order to be effective, policies concerning conciliation must be diverse, because the needs of the people involved are diverse and change according to different phases within family and working life. This practice attains three objectives:

- It supports care activities that reduce the conflict between work and family life during the very important phase of the first year of a child's life;
- It encourages fathers to take up responsibilities regarding care tasks;
- It introduces a flexible idea of the role of public policy and of the effectiveness of conciliation policies, making available a diversity of tools to meet the different needs and wishes of parents.

4. *IQ Woman – Enterprises and the quality of female employment*

General

The goals of IQ Woman (IQ Donna) are to increase the knowledge and discussion about the conciliation of work and family life, the organisation of work and rights of workers, and flexible working hours; to promote pilot actions inside the enterprises to instigate new processes; to create an “e-quality” label; and to plan a useful model at the regional level for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

The label stimulates the planning, testing and experimentation within the enterprises regarding the quality of procedures with respect to gender equality and conciliation issues. IQ Woman has produced a handbook and guidelines. Initiators and partners are the Emilia-Romagna Region, ESF (the European Social Fund), COFIMP, UNIONAPI (Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises Union), COOP, and several enterprises/companies.

The expert group that selected the practices in Bologna considered IQ Woman to be of great value, because this trademark is easily transferable to smaller companies (the majority of businesses in Italy), which do not have the same resources to provide measures for the benefit of employees as big companies. This project is easily transferable and has already been taken up by a large number of enterprises.

The balance between work and family life is one of the main problems in the region of Emilia-Romagna, where the unemployment rate is about 2% and women’s participation rate is over 60%. The majority of women is employed in particular sectors and at a lower level than men, but this picture is changing. For example, female entrepreneurs represent more than 25% of the total amount of entrepreneurs, and the number of female managers has increased, even in the technical professions.

The rationale behind IQ Donna is that a new organisation of time is essential, both for services and for the work organisation. Enterprises have the responsibility to contribute to a flexible and family-friendly organisation of time. In the project, the enterprises are approached directly and are asked to examine the main problems of their female labour force and to study and propose solutions, and to experiment with new instruments and procedures. The intention is to propose available and concrete procedures, that can be realised within a short time period and that are not expensive for the company.

The main beneficiaries are the women and men employed in companies that are searching for better measures supporting conciliation. An additional benefit, however, is the dissemination of a family-friendly culture among the industries. IQ Donna was implemented at a regional level, in different provincial territories: Ferrara, Modena, Ravenna, Rimini, and Bologna.

The main innovation of the project lies in the transfer of family-friendly and easy to handle practices in SMEs concerning issues regarding gender equality and conciliation.

Method

The project has been developed in the course of five stages:

1. A context analysis of the conciliation problems at a national and regional level in relation to the social and gender equality responsibility of enterprises;
2. 18 case studies and an evaluation of their transferability in SMEs, followed by the writing of a handbook;

3. A diagnosis of the need for advice and technical assistance in the companies' organisation with the use of 4 focus groups;
4. The planning of the practical instruments for the enterprises and for the e-quality label;
5. The provision of assistance and support for four enterprises during their introduction of improved measures in their organisations.

From the start of the project, the SME's Unions (UNIONAPI and Co-operative Unions) were consulted to acquire their approval and collaboration by formal letters of agreement. The local Trade Unions were involved to increase the effectiveness of the actions. A network specialised in learning for innovation purposes analysed the experimental practices and supported all the products provided for the enterprises and the assistance. All the enterprises involved implemented some improving measures, and these demonstrated their usefulness and adaptability. In fact, after the end of the project, the Emilia-Romagna Region passed a new financing proposal to implement the methodology in another 10 enterprises, and to involve a municipality in a process of territorial governance supporting conciliation.

The main problem encountered was the 'caution' of the entrepreneurs. Their main worry was about costs, which slowed down the process. However, once started, they realised that the benefits are more important than the problems, and each of the entrepreneurs involved declared their readiness to increase the measures. Although the project has ended, the implemented measures are still in place. In the meantime, a new round of the project has started.

Results and effects

Enterprises need a specific awareness and training to provide family-friendly practices in their organisation in order to facilitate families that want to set up less complex care strategies. The knowledge among companies about family-friendly practices encouraged their diffusion, and another 15 enterprises asked to be involved in the same process. At the same time, the municipality of Castelmaggiore (near the city of Bologna) was facing a conciliation problem mainly linked to school times, and decided to enter into the project. At present, another 10 enterprises are studying procedures and drawing up their business plan, while the municipality, too, is working on measures for the benefit of its own employees, and a study for an inter-factories nursery is in progress.

The main product is a handbook with all the necessary information on issues of conciliation and gender, descriptions of good practices, and info on the e-quality label.

The project demonstrated to the entrepreneurs the advantages for the well-being of their workforces and the possibility of low-cost measures. The instruments' adaptability to a large number of enterprises makes the process transferable to other contexts.

5. *Pilot Action: Baby-sitting service*

In Bologna, as in other cities and countries, the supply of regular child care is too limited to respond to a growing demand. In addition, there is a growing need for flexible child care and thus for a greater diversity of child care facilities. At the same time, and partly due to this

increasing demand, an important part of the existing child care is provided on the black market.

In this pilot action, the city of Bologna wanted to actively engage baby-sitters that are currently working on the local black market. They want to integrate them into the formal market of demand and supply of care services. By providing training and qualification for the baby-sitters, they would be given the opportunity to improve their skills and qualifications. Beside this, the city of Bologna set up a system of supply and demand for families and baby-sitters. In this way, the municipality hoped to enable the baby-sitters to 'escape' the black market while, at the same time, increasing the quality of care services for Bolognese parents.

On the supply side, the municipality signed a co-operation agreement with three associations in order to develop and run the professional training of baby-sitters. A training standard has been agreed upon and in the course of 2007, two series of training sessions (starting in May and September) have been organised for 20 people each.

The training course consists of three modules with a total of 52 hours.

- The first module of 30 hours is a series of thematic lessons about the following topics: the family today; the development of the child in its family; health and safety issues; resources for children and families in the city; professional deontology and norms.
- The second module of 10 hours is about practice training.
- After these two modules, a validation is carried out before the participants are accepted for the third module of 12 hours. These hours are used for reflective meetings with the participants while they are already working.
- Participants obtain a certificate after a final evaluation.

A list of some 20 qualified baby-sitters is now available at the municipal services.

On the demand side, the city of Bologna has made available a subsidy of about €100 per month to pay social security expenses, if a family contracts a baby-sitter for at least 24 hours per week by regular contract. Furthermore, the municipality has started a publicity campaign to make this new service known to the public.

After (only) a few months of experience, the results of the project are rather limited. There seems to be more enthusiasm on the supply side than on the demand side. Very few parents have subscribed to the service. There is no clear (researched) evidence about the reason(s) for this. Yet, a plausible explanation could be that the financial burden of hiring a baby-sitter for at least 24 hours a week, with only a subsidy of €100 a month, is still too much for many families. The full cost of such a baby-sitter amounts to approximately €800 a month, and the subsidy falls far short of covering the difference in cost with a place in a regular nursery (approximately €450). Another problem could be the minimum number of hours a week set by the city. Thus, the municipality will probably have to review either the amount of subsidy, or the criterion about the minimum number of hours, or both.



Chemitz

Chapter 4: Chemnitz

1. Picture of Chemnitz

A study of the Federal Ministry for Family, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth - the "Family Atlas 2007" - inspected the family-friendliness in several categories of cities and administrative districts in Germany. Criteria were the compatibility of family and work, reasonable and child-friendly living, education and leisure time activities. Chemnitz occupies rank 54 out of 439 analysed cities and administrative districts in the field of the compatibility of family and work. This is mainly due to the good situation of child care. In Chemnitz, child care facilities are available for every age group; they are meeting the demands and are of high quality. This is historically caused by the all-encompassing caretaking system and the high rate of employed women in the former German Democratic Republic. The city succeeded in maintaining a big part of these structures; at present, they are being adapted to the growing demand. According to the Saxon Day-Care Act, these facilities fulfil an educating task.

The demographic and economic situation, however, is unsatisfactory with regard to the availability of qualified specialists. Chemnitz struggles with the ageing of its population. Despite the ongoing structural change, the unemployment rate is 14.5%. Well-trained young specialists still migrate to other regions of Germany and Europe, especially in the age group of 20 to 30, whereas in the group of the 20- to 25-year-olds clearly more young women than men leave the city.

In the past ten years, technical and scientific vocational training has focused too one-sidedly on male applicants. That is why there is a lack of female specialists in the commercial technical field today.

A declared objective of the city of Chemnitz is, therefore, to offer qualified vocational and study orientation for pupils, as well as more practical experience in companies. In doing so, one focus lies on the compensation of the developmental lag of girls and on providing support for girls to achieve equal opportunity vocational and life perspectives, especially in innovative economic sectors with a promising future, which offer particularly good employment chances in Chemnitz.

The choice of good practice examples in Chemnitz on the one hand takes into account the focus of high-quality child care and its further development within the project "child & co". On the other hand, examples like "MUT" and "Girls day" show the efforts of the city of Chemnitz to improve the situation described above. Such projects and actions are instruments for the accurate training of specialists and for putting a stop to emigration. These projects constitute an offer to help with the life planning and training orientation of children in a heavily renewing economy.

Building on the economic and demographic situation and the choice of good practices, the city started a pilot action in the form of a questionnaire. At the age of 14, young people were questioned about their vocational and family-related future perceptions and orientations. At the same time, they were sensitised to the idea of equal opportunities. They were presented with a demonstration of stereotypical acting. Their competences and interests became identifiable.

In Chemnitz, the most diverse networks take active part in the topic of “the compatibility of work and family”, in combination with the effort to provide people with an equal opportunity life development. Partners are the trade unions, the parties on the city council, the Chambers *IHK (Chamber of Industry and Commerce)* and *HWK (Chamber of Handicraft)*, trade associations, and individual entrepreneurs. It is almost impossible to name all active participants who, over such a long period, have animated the projects in ever-new constellations. For years, beside the *local alliance for family in Chemnitz*, in particular the women’s groups of the trade unions (*DGB, Verdi*), the association for the vocational support of women, and the city’s equality commissary have been working on the topics of vocational orientation and compatibility of work and family life.

The local alliance for family was founded in 2005 and by now counts 16 different partners working for a family-friendlier Chemnitz. The local alliance emphasises extensive public relations and the development of a coherent vision in the field of the work-life balance and gender.

2. *MUT: girls in environment and technology*

General

This career guidance project of the Solaris Support Centre for Youth and Environment, a non-profit centre in Saxony, teaches young girls and women in a practical way about future professions and jobs in technological branches. *MUT* aims to improve the chances of girls and young women in the labour market and to demonstrate to them future resources within their home region. The intention is to motivate them to stay, since qualified women are clearly underrepresented within the fields of technology, engineering and environmental technologies.

The project is a close co-operation between schools and companies. It stimulates girls to take up technical professions. Having female specialists and professionals available in the Chemnitz region will enhance the compatibility of family and career in the long run.

Statistics show that it is especially hard for young girls and women to decide upon their future profession. That is why *MUT* wants to stimulate them to learn a technical profession. This target group is clearly underrepresented in the sector. The project is to show that they really do have very good chances regarding their employment and income in the region of Chemnitz. Within the project, the girls visit companies, manufacturers, and training centres where they can test their abilities and skills. Up to a 100 girls and young women, seventh-graders and older, have attended these job-oriented courses each year (since 2002).

MUT is a result of the economic position of Chemnitz as a city of the automotive and engineering industry, metal processing, and other technical industries. The demand for specialists, now very high, will grow steadily in the future. Although future industries and branches are willing to train and hire new staff, there will be a lack of well-qualified personnel due to demographic changes and the increasing emigration trend of young adults without training or jobs. This is especially true for girls and young women, who tend to concentrate on women-typical occupations in the services and social sector. *MUT* wants to improve the opportunities of girls and young women in the labour market and show them the future resources in their

home regions in the fields of engineering and environmental engineering. In addition, regional companies will be sensitised to train these target groups and to support the potential of female specialists.

The project addresses girls and young women and is unique in the region of Chemnitz. The MUT project is repeated every year. The long-term and continuous job preparation in close co-operation with companies and businesses is innovative and exemplary.

Method

First, the companies were contacted in order to schedule excursions and practical exercises. Furthermore, lecturers for theoretical courses and questions were chosen. Secondly, participants were recruited through a network of regional schools. The project is now being introduced regularly to students, teachers, and parents. As a result, each year, 70-100 girls and young women take an interest in the project and participate in the courses during their free time. The courses are taught at the Solaris Support Centre for Youth and Environment, as well as in companies and regional training institutions.

The project has a public relations machinery at its disposal that continually informs the public about the project and about job preparation in general. This provides the project leader with the necessary acceptance and publicity for the topic among the public in the region. Next to that, it is important to make use of existing contacts and networks.

The main success of the project is that it reaches a large number of female students and pupils to give them information about technical professions and to influence and promote a conscious choice of their future occupation. A second success is the public discussion about topics like job preparation and demography in Chemnitz, which are of great importance. Finally, another important success is the networking done by all the participants and players. However, the girls' traditional behaviour when choosing a profession remains problematic. Still, they mainly opt for the traditionally female professions in the services and social sectors.

Results and effects

Female students who participate in MUT learn about future professions in a practical manner. They also learn about regional requirements and trends in our economy's development. Many different jobs, most of them until then unknown to the target group, are presented to them. MUT presents technical professions and reduces the prejudices concerning these. The girls will lose their fear of technical occupations and 'male domains'. Mostly, these girls and their parents think about another possibility for their future career for the first time. Through the project, local businesses acquire urgently needed specialists. An effectiveness study, carried out by Chemnitz Technical University in 2006, has proven the sustainability of the project methods, and has underlined the necessity of a regular continuation of job support for girls and young women. The networks created enable future generations of school graduates to realise their educational and occupational chances, and bind important trainees to the region.

Referring to its methods and its necessary networking structure, the gender-specific job preparation is easily transferable to every region with similar economic and demographic challenges. The project establishes good and varied opportunities for the occupation and

income for women. It counteracts emigration and commuting, creating some breathing space while the demographic situation eases off. The purchasing power is sustained and economic perspectives and the region's attractiveness are gaining importance. A regional job secures the compatibility of family, career, and social calm.

MUT addresses the gender-biased choices of profession and job orientation of girls and young women. In its approach, it combines usability and an orientation on the demand side. Furthermore, the prospects are positive for the future in technological branches. Girls who are interested in one of the promoted professions and companies will receive active consultation with regard to application procedures. It is expected and hoped that, in the end, young people will stay in the region to build a sustainable career.

3. *Child & Co*

General

Child & Co is a community-level pilot project aimed at improving the developmental and learning opportunities for children in the first eight years of their life. The cities of Chemnitz (East Germany) and Paderborn (West Germany) have joined in the project and have set the goal to promote each child individually, as well as to create optimal learning environments in co-operation with parents, educators, and other child care professionals.

The activities of Child & Co are aimed at sharpening the interest of all participants for the individual needs of every single child. Building on a common understanding of children's learning processes it is possible to develop needs-oriented offers for children and their families. Beside that, Child & Co encourages politicians, administrations, and associations to feel committed to the early promotion and education of children. It is actively engaged in setting up a regional network around early childhood education, in which parents as well as political and professional partners are to be involved.

Child & Co wants to improve the opportunities in education and the development of all children. The project affects all fields of early childhood education within a municipality. From the midwife to the primary school teacher, different professions and institutions are involved.

The innovation of this practice lies in the linking of different fields of early childhood education within the city. The project unites professionals, parents, and volunteers in their common work. These partners elaborate concrete measures to improve the opportunities in education and development of children in a participating process, while also taking into account the decision makers.

Method

This pilot project was initiated and supported by the Bertelsmann Foundation and the Heinz Nixdorf Foundation. It started early in 2005, and came to an end in December 2007. The Bertelsmann Foundation supports institutions and measures in the fields of education and culture and is committed to the improvement and development of the educational scene in Germany. It planned the implementation of Child & Co together with the Heinz Nixdorf Foundation, and co-operates with two pilot municipalities: Chemnitz and Paderborn. These municipalities guaranteed a continuation after the pilot period.

To develop concrete activities and initiatives, the 'forum on early childhood education' was set up. It unites approximately 60 representatives of municipal institutions and has the task to reflect upon the principles, activities, and the initial stages of actions of the early childhood support and education. In addition, the forum supports and advises regarding the strategic development and implementation of Child & Co. In Chemnitz, the forum led to nine local co-operation projects and two parental questionnaires. These resulted in three working groups: one 'for all aspects of birth', another one called 'child and family in focus', and a third group titled 'transition from day-care to primary school'. These working groups developed the main lines of action for the city and more in particular for the youth welfare services committee. Another important committee was the steering group composed of political decision makers of the city, which adopted the principle resolutions for the project. The project team of the Bertelsmann Foundation supported the project's conceptual and strategic orientation.

One of the successes of Child & Co is the co-operation and networks that arise within the municipality. Thus, new structures and committees are established and the participation of partners and key actors becomes daily routine, although it can be difficult to overcome the individual interests of professionals. There is an ongoing process to find a common language and a common understanding regarding education.

Towards the end of the project, the individual working groups are working on the implementation of the main lines of action. At the same time, they keep an eye on whether or not the measures that have already been introduced are implemented and further developed in a sustainable manner.

Results and Effects

The questionnaires held among parents in Chemnitz show that they experience a growing commitment to their children. These questionnaires were initiated by Child & Co and contained questions regarding the caretaking and education of children in Chemnitz. (Altogether, 1700 parents participated).

Child & Co shows that it is only possible to develop a common understanding of education and establish further educational facilities for children, through close, mutual co-operation. The current Child & Co network, for example, is not imaginable without paediatricians and midwives; next to the educators in the day nurseries, they belong to the most important persons holding a position of trust vis-à-vis the parents, with whom they can discuss the development of their child. Yet, headmasters and teachers, employees of advice centres, of libraries, of the adult education centre, the nature study museum, the house of family, and many other institutions are committed to the project as well.

As a spin-off of the project, the so-called 'education and learning stories' are now being introduced in 70 day nurseries in Chemnitz, which is an observing- and documenting procedure for day nurseries. Through written stories of children, the educators become aware of the individual strengths of each child.

Common strategies in the fields of health, social questions, and education are elaborated, too. Partners participate in the development of political measures. Thus, it is occasionally possible to establish new structures of control.

The central intention of "Child & Co" is to encourage politics, administration, and associations to co-operate on the early support and education of children. The city of Chemnitz

looks upon Child & Co as a challenge that has not yet been completed. It is an ongoing process, which will see many changes in the future, and which will always be in need of new partners to bring in new ideas. This challenge continued after the end of the project in December 2007. The city of Chemnitz has officially declared to be willing to continue the project for at least 3 years. The experiences and outcomes of the project will be disseminated on the regional and national level by means of a publication, "*Municipal Networks for Children. A Manual on Governance for Early Childhood Education*", in the spring of 2008.

4. *Girls' day*

General

Usually, girls get better marks at school than boys. Nevertheless, more than half of them decide for a so-called 'typically female' apprenticeship. Women are significantly underrepresented in studies like technology or computer science. At the same time, in the Saxony Region, a lack of qualified junior staff is expected in the near future, especially in technical areas. 'Girls' day' wants to extend the range of occupational choices for women in order to increase the number of women in technology, IT, handicraft, and science.

On 'Girls' day', a yearly federal action day for career guidance, organised in Chemnitz since 2001, companies, enterprises, authorities, universities, and research centres invite schoolgirls for an impression of the possibilities within their work organisation. In this way, they want to counter prejudices from women and girls against technical and scientific professions. Girls are familiarised with a plurality of professions in a practical way and experience the 'world of labour'. They receive information about career options and entrepreneurship.

In addition, girls get the opportunity to take part in a competition on technical knowledge and win prizes. Every year, the Technical University of Chemnitz develops the competition in a new way. In addition, a prize is awarded every year on Girls' day to a company that trains girls in technical or scientific professions and employs them in the company after their apprenticeship.

Beside the girls themselves, their parents and families, too, stand to gain from this project. Parents benefit from a forward-looking preparation of their children for an independent life. Moreover, families in which mothers are working in a sustainable and good profession will be less vulnerable. Furthermore, employers will also benefit from the influx of professionals. Through Girls' day, they can exert influence on their potential pool of future employees in an early phase.

Method

The project is taking place during one day in April. The preparation consists of a selection of companies, setting up the programme, the preparation of the technical competition, et cetera. The city of Chemnitz is responsible for the project, but 'Girls' day' is supported by a federal and nation-wide campaign in which unions, associations of entrepreneurs, ministries, chambers of commerce and universities (and many more) participate. Every year, the Technical University of Chemnitz and the Employment Office in Chemnitz prepare the documentation for the activities on Girls' Day. This material is disseminated among companies,

training agencies, schools, and institutions. The department of gender equality in Chemnitz set up a working group (in 2001), in which representatives of the municipality and region of Chemnitz have been working together with employment agencies, associations, unions, and councils. In total, around 12 partners are actively contributing to this working group.

The success of the project is proven by the increasing number of participants, on the side of the pupils as well as on that of the companies. Even pupils from the broader region of Chemnitz started visiting the meetings on Girls' day. For them it is the only possibility to visit a company that also offers apprenticeships. The organisation receives a lot of positive feedback from parents, who appreciate this kind of support for their children.

The major problem that Girls' day has to overcome is the (low) motivation of teachers to co-operate in the activities. They do not feel responsible and they have little or no understanding at all for the special attention they must pay to the girls during this day only. Many of them see this as discrimination of the boys.

Results and effects

The active participation of municipal offices shows the growing awareness among local administrators that it is important to pay attention to the gendered career choices of young people. Companies recognise the benefits from the project as well. They experience more activity from future female senior staff members. However, in particular the families benefit from the activities on Girls' day. They get support from various social actors during a difficult phase of their children's upbringing. Furthermore, the future economical prospects of families within the region of Chemnitz have improved, due to an expected increase of the labour market participation of women in technical professions.

Participants in the project are schoolgirls and -boys of the fifth grade and higher. Most of them are around 14 years old, which makes it possible to involve them in projects, activities, and informative events on career choices during their coming school years. Practical exercises and training courses will deepen this process for the pupils.

The project is a decisive step towards the promotion of gender equality between men and women. Although the priority of Girls' Day is to open up technical and scientific professions for girls, as a side effect, it improves the social competences of boys.

The effect of role models upon young people is illustrative. It increases the self-confidence of the individual student. Girls learn that they can cope with technology, and boys learn to value social skills. Companies recognise that families need support during the process of choosing a career of their children, and companies themselves need more specialists for the future. In this way, the project cuts both ways and benefits both the companies and the individuals. Politicians now recognise that this kind of support for families can help to keep the structure of the population within the region healthy. It results in a lower level of labour emigration of especially young women and it will boost the amount of young people staying in the region. As a final outcome, it will increase the amount of families that choose to live in the region.

The project can be easily implemented in different regions and countries. Wherever volunteers or professionals are available to organise the day and offer their potential to pupils, Girls' day can be put into practice.

5. *Pilot Action: Awareness-raising among the young*

The city of Chemnitz organised a questionnaire among young people of around 14 years old. These secondary school pupils were questioned about how they look upon their future career and family planning, as well as about their views on care services for children. In short, the goal of the pilot action was to provide an answer to the following question: how do young people in Chemnitz want to organise work and care in the future?

The reason that Chemnitz undertook this activity is the underlying problem of work migration to other regions. Especially young girls tend to leave the city and look for employment elsewhere. Beside that, there is a shortage of women in the 'male-dominated' sectors of the labour market like engineering, the technical professions, and IT, while there is a shortage of men in the traditionally 'female' sectors. By questioning young people about their future needs and visions on child care and careers, the city wants to raise the awareness with regard to these issues among the inhabitants of Chemnitz and, more importantly, among local employers. The desired result is that the need to work in other parts of the country or abroad will decrease for future families in Chemnitz (because the labour market opportunities for women will improve), thus keeping young people and young families within the city of Chemnitz.

Some 300 questionnaires have been administered in six schools, three general secondary schools, and three technical secondary schools. After having organised the permission of the schools and parents, the questionnaires were filled out by the pupils during class. About half of the respondents were girls and the other half boys. Getting the permission of schools and parents took some time, and not all parents gave permission for their child to participate. The reasons for this refusal are not fully clear yet, but communication problems seem to be the most important ones.

The scientific responsibility for the questionnaire and the analysis lies in the hands of the sociology department of the Technical University of Chemnitz. The subjects of the questionnaire are:

- The socio-economic background of the pupils' parents and the pupils' experience with child care;
- The estimation of their own talents by the pupils themselves, their school choice and parents' influence in this, how pupils spend their free time;
- The vision of the pupils on their future family life, having children and how to take care of them;
- The vision of the pupils on their future professional life and the way in which they are preparing their choice (informational sources and people).

Some first very rough results of the 262 filled out questionnaire show the following:

- About 50% of the interviewees visited kindergarten and 39% went to the day care for school children;
- Thinking of the future, 72.5% of the respondents think of family and job as being equally important;
- The vast majority wants to marry (33.6%) or live with a partner (47%);

- About two third of all respondents would like to have one or two children;
- 83,4 % of the interviewed persons want their children to attend the day nursery and kindergarten; about 9% would like to stay at home or would like the partner to stay at home;
- Once their children would be between 6 and 12 years old, the respondents conceive of a variety of solutions: 40% would entrust the children to the day care at school; 22% would take care of the children alternately with their partner; 12% would make sure to be at home when the children return after school;
- 37 % of the respondents do not see their parents as a vocational model, but also 37 % mention both of their parents as vocational model. 11 % see their mother as their own vocational model, while 14 % consider their father to be their vocational model;
- Most of the young people (about 23%) worry about not to find an employment, not to have enough money (about 21%) and time for their family, because of their work (about 17%).

Of course, the fully analysed outcomes of this study will be presented to the Equal Opportunities Office of the city of Chemnitz, where adequate follow-up activities will be organised in due time. However, some side effects must already be mentioned. In the first place, administering the questionnaires raised great interest among the teachers and pupils involved. Some teachers used the subjects of the questionnaires in their lessons. Furthermore, a presentation of the outcomes of the study for the respondents in their classes will probably be organised. The sociology department involved will also follow-up on the subject. A Master thesis will be devoted to the subject and follow-up research among the pupils in their first year of apprenticeship is being planned. Finally, there is a growing interest for the inclusion of professional orientation in the regular school programme. The regional government of Saxony is currently discussing the subject.

Chapter 5: Craiova

1. Picture of Craiova

The city of Craiova has 304.142 inhabitants (2005). The agglomeration has close to 400.000 inhabitants.

The three projects chosen as good practices by the team and experts in Craiova provide answers to three major gender equality problems in Romania:

- The lack of awareness about gender equality among young people, and the conviction that young people are expected to be more receptive and easier to influence when it comes to changing attitudes, values and mentalities. In this respect, the City of Craiova believes that, for female students, developing a positive self-image will lead to a more confident attitude about women's abilities to pursue the education of their own choice, regardless of gender stereotypes, more in particular affecting women with a lower socio-economic background.
- At a different level, women on maternity- or parental leave often complain about the difficulty to reintegrate at the workplace, some of them even losing their job due to the two years of absence from work, after pregnancy, especially in the private sector. This was the background for developing local policies in order to help women to stay in touch with their working environment.
- Furthermore, there is a persistent gap between men and women regarding their pay, not (only) because women are paid less for the same work, but because having to reconcile work with their home duties, they often have little time left to occupy themselves with their career. On the other hand, men generally occupy the managerial jobs, and the risk to be unemployed is higher for men. All these factors explain the need for professional training at the workplace, for the purpose of guaranteeing equal opportunities for both men and women.

2. Guaranteeing equal opportunities for men and women in the workplace

General

Equality between men and women is a fundamental principle of Romanian Community Law, that applies to all aspects of life, and therefore also to the labour market. The principle of equality between the sexes is explicitly regulated under Article 4 of the Romanian Constitution and in a number of other national regulations. Nevertheless, the current legislation provides no concrete measures, administrative or financial, to guarantee that it is possible for working men and women to reconcile family and professional responsibilities. Mothers are encouraged, by the existing maternity and child protection policies, to look after their children at home. Work-life balance tensions, combined with stereotypes, gender-biased pay and evaluation systems continue to hold women back on the labour market.

The CPE (Centre for Partnership and Equality) and the Labour Inspection decided to initia-

te and implement the project 'Guaranteeing equal opportunities for men and women in the workplace' in order to inform people and change their mentalities. The main goal of the project, which was carried out during the first half of 2006, was to develop and implement policies that guarantee equal opportunities for women and men in different organisations. Its focus was on SMEs (small and medium-sized enterprises), NGOs, and organisations in the services sector. By applying measures focused on equal opportunities, it aims to improve the situation for employees, for example regarding leave arrangements, human resources (HR) policies and tools, and regarding conciliation issues as well.

The CPE elaborated a research programme with regard to equality management and organised training sessions for 60 human resources management professionals: 30 representatives from SMEs, state institutions, and NGOs, and 30 representatives from personnel services providers (a municipal employment agency, universities, recruitment companies). All companies involved are from Bucharest city and/or the Bucharest region.

The research that was part of the project showed that discrimination of women often stems from long-established and persistent stereotypes regarding female roles. Women are said to give priority to family commitments, to have less professional experience than men do, and to have a lower production capacity. What this project managed to achieve was, first of all, to make people become aware of these preconceptions and then, with the help of the companies involved, to increase the capacities and abilities for identifying gender discrimination, and also to apply tools and legal means in order to prevent and combat this kind of discrimination.

Method

The first and most important step was to decide who the partners in the project should be. After serious considerations, the CPE and the Labour Inspection decided that the most appropriate partners were to be found where issues of inequality mainly arise. These are companies, SMEs, state institutions and, last but not least, the NGOs. The following step was to select the members of the team and the project co-ordinator, and to find the companies in which the research and training sessions would be implemented. This constituted, at the same time, the first problem the team encountered: to find companies willing to participate in this project. The issue of equality is still covered with preconceptions and stereotypes that had to be set aside. Nonetheless, there were also open-minded companies, the interest of which in the project was aroused and which later on contributed to the successful implementation of the project.

Results and effects

The target groups, at the same time the main beneficiaries, were the companies and organisations involved in this project, and especially their human resources representatives. The project is expected to have a positive and long-lasting effect upon these organisations. The success of the project lies in the fact that it managed to make people, and especially women, aware of their rights and, to a certain extent, started to change people's mentality and attitudes.

The main achievement of the project was to enlist the companies and organisations that were to be involved in the continuous effort to inform people, and especially women, of their rights and of their ability to change people's preconceived mentality. The project was

successfully implemented and many of the problems related to gender discrimination have been disclosed and countered. The greatest impact the project had, was to highlight gender discrimination at the workplace and to make women and men aware of their rights when it comes to equal opportunities. The most important results were that gender discrimination was clearly identified, both by the partners involved and by society in general, and that possible solutions were given. The sustainability of the project consists in the fact that people finally became aware of the double standard that had always existed on the labour market; they became more open-minded, which, in the long run, means an improvement in their attitudes and mentality regarding gender aspects at the workplace. This will definitely have long-term effects.

This project brought to light a very important idea, which initiated a powerful shift in the Romanian labour system that could also be integrated in conciliation and work-life balance policies. This idea is that without removing gender-specific responsibilities in the family and at work, equality in general and more specifically in the workplace is not achievable.

The value of this project lies in the fact that it managed to raise the awareness of representative companies and organisations regarding the gender discrimination that exists in Romanian society in the field of employment. It brought to light the causes of this phenomenon (mainly the lack of a work-life balance, the inability to identify the specific gender needs of employees, and the lack of shared responsibilities in the household). It also was the beginning of a success fight against stereotypes and for the changing of obsolete mentalities. As such, it constituted an important ideological tool and proved that it is never too late to change for the better the way people think.

This sort of project can be successfully applied anywhere, regardless of the type of company, organisation or country, because the issue of discrimination is an omnipresent one, and people with preconceived mentalities that need to be changed can be found anywhere.

3. *Girls and Boys - All Different, All Equal. Education for Gender Equality*

General

'Girls and Boys' is an ongoing project of the association 'Equal Chances for Everyone'. It aims at fighting against gender stereotypes in education and at achieving a mentality change in favour of gender equality. The project is about raising awareness among teachers and students regarding gender differences and equality issues. Another of its goals is to stimulate the confidence of women with regard to their abilities in all fields of life. The target group and the beneficiaries being teachers and students, consequences and effects are expected only in the longer run. This might lead to a continuous promotion of gender equality, an effect that can stretch far beyond the limits of the schools involved. In partnership with the Craiova municipality and Craiova-Dolj Association of Women, the Association 'Equal Chances for Everyone', was convinced that a project with a long-term effect and lasting consequences is needed to make a difference. It was also clear that such a project should address the young generation, which is more receptive and can be influenced much easier in the direction of changing attitudes, values and mentalities.

Foremost, the project aims at promoting gender equality in education. This can be obtai-

ned by raising teachers' and students' awareness on the prevalence of gender stereotypes. For female students, the development of a positive self-concept will finally result in an attitude of trust regarding women's abilities to pursue the education of their own choice, without gender limitation.

The target group consists of secondary school teachers, who volunteer to take part in training sessions and later will use their newly acquired knowledge in their classes. They are trained in two modules: gender conceptions in the work place and gender conceptions in private life. A guide has been edited on gendered stereotypes for women, applicable in secondary schools. The training sessions take place within the school, the best place for both the teachers and the students to interact freely.

'Girls and boys' is a unique project, because it is the only one on the subject of gender equality implemented in the city of Craiova. Its core value lies in the fact that it addresses young people, who can make a real difference regarding these matters in the long run.

Method

Firstly, a partnership was established between 'Equal chances for everyone', the Craiova Municipality Town Hall and the Craiova-Dolj Association of Women. After signing the contracts, the members of the team and the project co-ordinator were appointed. In order to have reliable results, the partnership's first aim was to involve a school where both the teachers and the students would be susceptible to the idea of gender equality. For this purpose, one school within Craiova was selected. The Craiova-Dolj Association of Women provided the group that had the professional background and abilities to train the 10 teachers that were then selected to take part in the first training sessions on gender equality. After their training sessions, these teachers had the responsibility and duty to promote the concept of gender equality among their students, during special classes.

The first problems encountered were the selection of criteria that the specific school should meet, and the school's agreement to collaborate. The school management was rather sceptic regarding the approach of such a subject. On the other hand, the involvement and dedication of the first group of 10 trained teachers was most convincing. The project is still in the process of implementation. There are many more activities waiting to be started and finished and many more schools and teachers to be involved.

Results and effects

A leaflet has been made to be distributed at schools, which contains information regarding gender equality and raising awareness on the prevalence of gender stereotypes. A guide for future trainees is in progress: '*The Guide for Teachers: Girls and boys. Partners in Private and Public Life. Gender Perspective*'.

The people of the 'Girls and boys' project were pleased to have found a receptive and eager to be taught target group. The 10 teachers found the themes of the training sessions most interesting and well developed. Most of the beneficiaries, students of different ages, were curious to know more about this subject and participated in all the classes.

What stands as proof that this practice will attain its objectives in the long run, is the fact that the 10 teachers, helped by the Guide, will continue to teach special classes on gender equality to their next groups of students.

This project can initiate a shift in gender policy in Romanian education (particularly in Craiova), by creating a set of tools necessary for the instruction of teachers and parents in order to elaborate an emancipatory tutorial strategy regarding gender issues.

Because hardly any such projects exist in Romania and more particularly in Craiova, this practice can be a start at the local level and an example for new ideas to be implemented. This kind of practice can be applied to schools all over the world: it does not require specific legislation or a large amount of money, just fertile ground and a good collaboration between partners.

4. *Professional training for parents on maternity or parental leave, who choose to return to work*

General

Romanian legislation provides leave arrangements for parents until the child is two years old. This national project, carried out locally in Craiova, aims at parents on leave who want to keep in touch with their workplace. During the leave period, contact is maintained through email and the Internet. Maintaining the work email account makes the return to work after the leave period easier. Upon an employee's return, training sessions are organised as well.

The project's objective was to prevent possible stressful situations for both employees and employers, to manage and support parental leave by giving the necessary information about the best methods to maintain contact. The most demanding activity of the project was the creation of an email system of communication, enabling women and men on maternity and paternity leave to remain in permanent contact with their work and to receive all kinds of information regarding their work.

During the past years, the number of employees who were forced to give up their job while being on parental leave has increased. Because it encountered previous problems in this field, The Human Rights League, in association with local SMEs and the District Labour Exchange Agency, concluded that a solution to this problem had to be found. A 'professional training for parents on leave' was set up to counter this development. Foremost, the project aimed at finding and concretizing ways to make parental leave easier for the benefit of both employee and employer.

The target group consisted of employees of three SMEs in Craiova. These companies benefit from the project because they get a better impression of the efficiency and commitment of their employees, which enables them to stimulate these. Through training sessions, the employees were made familiar with the tools they could make use of while they were or will be on leave.

The project's uniqueness and innovation consists, in the first place, of the fact that it is the first to deal with employees on maternity or parental leave that is implemented in Craiova. In addition, it is the first attempt to solve the problem of reintegration in the working environment.

Method

After establishing the partnership and the project, an awareness-raising campaign was carried out. The partners wanted to draw attention to the problem of losing touch with the job

while parents were on leave and wanted to find a suitable solution. The only social organisation involved in practice was the Human Rights League. They were the leading organisation. They had come to the conclusion that there was a social need for the acknowledgement and understanding of the laws and the rights of parents. The biggest problem was to find three SMEs willing to collaborate and to be partners in such a project. Most of these enterprises were sceptic at first, since they thought this problem did not concern them. That was also the reason why the project started off as an awareness-raising campaign. The success of the project can be measured in the efficiency realised in a short time after the parents' comeback to work after their leave period, and the ease with which they catch up with the 'new' and further developed working environment. The project ended in July 2006; its results were a large number of trained employees, and websites where information can be found about maternity and paternity leave, as well as descriptions of possible solutions to problems caused by this process.

Results and effects

More than 300 leaflets were printed and distributed within the companies selected to take part in the professional trainings. A website was set up where the interested population gets access to information and where it can find out what its rights are.

The project became efficient within a short period and the level of commitment of participants increased considerably. Moreover, the employees on leave did not lose their self-esteem and quickly caught up with innovations at the workplace.

In the long run, an important result will be the experience gained by local authorities, businesses, and organisations, which they can share with their future employees and other companies interested in this subject. This kind of practice is applicable to companies and organisations all over the world that have encountered such problems and want to find a solution for a better future of the women and men on maternity or parental leave.

This project can initiate a shift with regard to the introduction of measures to encourage improvements at the workplace for pregnant workers, improvements that could also benefit the employers.

Chapter 6: Düsseldorf

1. Picture of Düsseldorf

Düsseldorf is the capital city of North Rhine-Westphalia. It has 585.054 inhabitants. The surface of the town covers 217 square kilometres, which results in 2.684 inhabitants per square kilometre.

Düsseldorf is an attractive economic centre with an industrial imprint. Important enterprises are based in Düsseldorf, or have established a principal office or their European subsidiary here. In line with Düsseldorf's status as a trade and services hub, some of the city's biggest employers are active in industries such as retail, consulting, and banks/insurance. Firms doing business in this line are: management consultancies, information consultancies, advertising, real estate, auditing, tax accountancies, legal advisers and architects, and engineering firms. Public services also employ a significant share of the work force.

At the same time, Düsseldorf continues to be a modern "production facility". Some of the city's most important employers are still to be found in the manufacturing sector. The most important of these Düsseldorf manufacturers are companies in the chemical industry, electrotechnology (including mobile communications), and vehicle construction industries. The Gross Domestic Product per employed person in 2005 was 78.882 Euro. This is higher than in other German cities.

In times of demographic change, Düsseldorf has a good generation mix. Due to family-friendly offers and the attractive employment market, the migration of families could be stopped and reversed. Young, qualified employees settle down in Düsseldorf in increasing numbers. Düsseldorf is also an exquisite location for art and culture, which complements the economic attractiveness.

2. Metro Sternchen, a Company Day-Care Centre

General

'As one of Düsseldorf's largest employers we recognize our social responsibility. With the construction of our company child-day-care centre we want to make a family-friendly contribution and help our staff in their work-life balance', confirmed Zygmunt Mirdorf, member of the board of the METRO AG when its day-care centre for children was opened on 23 September 2005. Service provider for the centre is the German Red Cross Düsseldorf (DRK), a charity organisation. The project is thus company-initiated and sponsored, and provided by a charity organisation.

The day-care centre for children offers all-day care for 65 children, aged from 4 months to school entry age. Fifty places are reserved for the children of Metro staff, while the other fifteen places are open to the public.

A speciality of this new day-care centre for children is its bilingual education. The children are attended to in both German and English. In doing so, the centre aims for the children

to acquire and develop knowledge of a foreign language at an early age. With the bilingual approach, the METRO Group responds to the company's increasing internationalisation. According to the Metro Group, in Düsseldorf alone the group employs people from 30 nations. Of the 14 teachers and staff available in the centre, 4 are native English speakers.

Metro is a big (international) company and a large employer in the region. It was of the utmost importance for the METRO Group to provide their staff with child care services in a company day-care centre because of the synergetic effect for their Düsseldorf location as an attractive place of employment and, in this same context, the safeguarding and development of young families' social security within the company. METRO aimed for the creation of high-quality child care for the children of METRO Group staff and other children from the district. According to the principles of the German Red Cross and in agreement with the METRO Group, the centre accepts children of parents from all nationalities, ethnic groups and convictions, political affiliations, religious beliefs and social classes. In this way, the centre benefits the families of Metro staff as well as families from the district where the day-care centre is located.

The centre is active on a local level, but it attracted attention from beyond the region because of its high quality. Its main features are its consistent bilingual operation, optimal manpower, the premises and open spaces that were planned with children in mind, the premises' optimal equipment, and fees that are analogous to municipal fees (far below the fees of private providers).

Method

Agreements were made between the executive mayor of the state capital Düsseldorf and the Metro Group. Family-friendliness is an image factor for METRO Group as well as for the city of Düsseldorf, which recognises that family-friendliness and a balanced generation mix are important location factors. The DRK has all-round experience with the implementation of company-supported child care; the METRO Group chose it as its project partner. Both METRO Group and DRK are committed to the principles of diversity management. The City of Düsseldorf accompanied the process of implementation.

In a survey conducted among parents and staff, the DRK determined the need for child care amongst the Metro staff. A supervision team consisting of representatives of DRK and Metro Group supports the project. In addition, a presentation was made for important municipal bodies.

Due to the high number of applications in the course of the project, admission criteria were amended in order to make the places primarily available to parents who need the child care facilities of the „Metro Sternchen“. The goal was to create a work-life balance, for instance for single parents. The opening hours, from 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., were also determined on the basis of the survey amongst parents.

Results and effects

The project is very successful and serves as a showcase for company-supported child care. It helps parents to combine and balance work and family life. Through the social commitment of the company and the integration of the day-care centre for children in the district, parents who are not Metro Group staff members, too, have the opportunity to use the facility and participate in professional life.

The METRO facility has created quite a stir, both locally and beyond the region. Other companies in Düsseldorf are planning company child care centres or are extending their facilities. The 'Metro-Sternchen' project made clear once again how a company can use its own child care centre as an image factor and create a win-win situation for the company as well as the target group. The standards of child care in this facility are exemplary. Metro itself is planning to expand its facility. At present, a new building is under construction that will expand the facility by another 65 places. Forty-five places are reserved for the children of Metro Group staff, while 20 places are open to the public. Among others, the continuing high demand for places for Metro-Staff children below the age of 3 is being taken into account, since the company wants to promote early re-entry into professional life.

Metro Sternchen illustrates how company-supported child care can be used for the benefit of the company and the municipality; as such, it can very well be applied in other countries. Guaranteed child care for children from the age of 4 months and older enables women and men to return to their professional life at an early stage. The moderate fees are affordable, even for parents with low and medium incomes.

3. *Hell-Ga multi-generation house*

General

Hell-Ga is a multi-generation house that was established in 2002 as a self-help centre for mothers. The objective of Hell-Ga is to develop a network of neighbour-to-neighbour help and social services, and the organisation of mutual support among young and old people and their families. It translates the idea of the cohabitation of several generations from private to public space. It makes use of the expertise and potential of all generations, thereby activating the social capital of all.

Up until now, this programme has been dominated by services for young mothers. Against the background of recent demographic developments, it now turns towards an expansion to other target groups. The potential of the project lies in the promotion of private initiative and volunteering. Multi-generational houses provide varied services, one of the focal points being the procurement of services for both the household and the family.

The Hell-Ga project improves the image of the district and makes an important contribution towards its social development. The centre is a network hub and is actively involved in district management. It provides a platform for the most diversified abilities and people's predisposition for involvement, occupation, and work. To this platform, it brings other local players and services.

Hell-Ga is able to react flexibly to the needs existing in the district. The services provided consist of modules that are constantly adapted to current developments and ways of live. The contents are defined based on the needs of the users; they change depending on the demand. This cycle has turned the concept into a self-developing system. Offers relate to such areas as work, education, health, counselling, everyday life, and leisure. Central facilities of Hell-Ga are the café, the citizens' advice bureau, the child care centre, the second-hand shop, and family education and counselling courses.

Whereas social services directed to specific target groups prevailed in the past, the most important events now taking place are the co-operation between generations and the transfer of support services from the private into the public sphere. Thus, the experiences and potentials of all generations are called upon. Hell-Ga aims at the creation of a network of neighbourhood support and social services on site, and the organisation of mutual support among younger and older persons and families.

The concept builds on a high degree of civil and voluntary involvement. By providing premises and advice, Hell-Ga assists users who are organising services themselves. The objective is not the offer itself, but a structure that is open to new ideas and ways of organising services. In this way, not only social service providers benefit from Hell-Ga, but also the inhabitants of the district: citizens, women, men, young people, children, babies, families, parents, grandparents, single parents, the young and the elderly, the old with the young, and the old beside the young. The services on offer consistently follow users' requirements, whose interests are promptly incorporated into new services. Voluntary activities as well as volunteers' potentials are encouraged and recognised. Full-time employees and volunteers are on an equal footing.

Method

The association Hell-Ga started to operate as a mother centre on the premises of a protestant church in the Düsseldorf districts of Garath and Hellerhof. For financial reasons, the church building was to be closed in 2001. The Hell-Ga association, founded by committed women from the district, rented the parish hall, with the aim to create a new neighbourhood-friendly centre. In 2004, their concept of the 'project motor', which was intended to activate help for self-help and volunteering, was granted an award by the initiative 'start social'. In the sponsored project 'Taking the initiative', the premises will be modernised within the next 2-3 years and enlarged to approximately 730 m² with the assistance of the state of NRW and the city of Düsseldorf. The Hell-Ga was approved as a multi-generation house within the project of the Federal Ministry for Families, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth in February 2007. With this approval comes additional financial support for the project. Hell-Ga is a registered non-profit organisation. It is a recognized youth welfare services provider. The association is getting financial assistance from the municipality and several federal and NRW state projects.

The involvement of both the district's citizens and social services providers is part of the concept of Hell-Ga. There is cooperation and linkage with many local players in the district.

The association quickly became known in the district. Its membership regularly rises by 2 or 3 members per month. At present, the association counts 150 members. Eight hundred people from the district regularly attend the services offered, and the demand is constantly increasing. The problems caused by the increase of the financial requirements can only be met by additional projects. The development of further cross-generation projects together with the local players in the district (i.e. the organisation of events in the district, or a public viewing) is being continued. Within the scope of family education and counselling, additional qualifying programmes for women in the IT sector will be offered in the future.

Results and effects

The family support that Hell-Ga offers, consisting of professional child care services, family education and counselling services, and cross-generation voluntary assistance, enable people to acquire a better work-life balance, facilitate a re-entry into professional life for women and the participation of fathers in parental leave.

Over the past years, the inclination of associations and institutions in the district to inter-link has increased. Offers are increasingly adapted to the requirements of the inhabitants of the district. One example is the new emergency care service for children of working parents, offered by elderly neighbours living on their own, or help with shopping offered to elderly persons by schoolchildren.

The changing of structures in the district is apparent, as the co-ordination between the citizens and the institutions has improved. However, volunteers alone cannot sustain the current high-quality offers. Facilities must be provided, and the expenses of both the operation and the necessary personnel must be met. Future financial coverage should therefore be guaranteed in order to secure the sustainable success of the project.

It is quite possible to translate the concept of a multi-generation house to any meeting centre, such as nursery schools, family centres, mother centres, meeting centres, leisure centres, citizens' centres, or senior day-care centres. The concept is applicable irrespective of differences in culture and social origin. It can be used in cities as well as in rural areas.

The project's value lies in the creation of a linkage of neighbour help and on-site social services, reacting consistently to the needs of the people in the district. Against the background of demographic developments and social tendencies to withdraw into private life, the organisation of mutual assistance between the young and the elderly and the families is pointing in the right direction.

For more information, check the Hell-Ga website: www.hell-ga.de

4. *Qualification and training for women on parental leave: telecommuting and e-learning*

General

This qualification project aimed at encouraging women on parental leave and women who have no professional employment to use their home office both as an instrument for the individual brushing-up of professional skills, through e-learning, and to use it as a telecommuting workplace. In this way, it wanted to guarantee an early linkup with the job returnee's company and to open up future possibilities to react flexibly to peak periods without having to make longer in-company working hours.

Re-entry into professional life after a period of parental leave is often quite difficult. Job returnees are often limited in their work flexibility due to fixed child care times. The longer the leave from work lasts, the more difficult the subsequent re-entry into the job is. Whilst companies undergo technological developments, like software updates and modernisation, job returnees miss their integration into this process.

This qualification project included counselling, coaching, and support with individual e-learning concepts, as well as the setting-up and support of a telework place, including its linking up. The training scheme proved that highly flexible study hours are possible. It also explicitly addressed the needs of job returnees, since for many women re-entry via telecommuting is a desirable alternative to regular part-time work. The high demand and a good quota of integration into the general employment market led to the implementation of similar training schemes elsewhere.

Support during the project enabled the participants to use their home computer as an instrument for individually updating their professional skills, as well as for teleworking. In the course of their modular qualification by theoretical training and practical trial, the participants were prepared for the use of their home office for computer-based training and e-learning, as well as for telework. A total of 300 hours of training included the following main topics: self-management, stress management, reflection, job-related communication, conflict management, document management, data definition, contact management, email processing and forwarding, Internet research, data protection and data security, extended basic principles of telework, and other practical application problems.

The staff member's telework gives the company a future opportunity to respond flexibly to peak workloads without the required attendance of that staff member in the office itself.

The project was a local one, financed by means from the European Social Fund. The project took place at an educational institute as a combination of five further training courses offered by five different training facilities, for job returnees and women on parental leave. Wherever necessary, child care facilities on the premises could be used. So far, 37 parents participated who are on parental leave and prepared themselves to return to their job.

Method

Participants were recruited by counselling services with the help of a leaflet and a newspaper advertisement, resulting in a huge response.

The project was supported by a supervision team consisting of one member each from the five project parts of the Agentur für Arbeit (employment agency), the Frauenbüro (office for women's equal opportunities), and the local agency for the allocation of ESF funds. There was a regular exchange with the study group for re-entry into professional life (Arbeitskreis Berufsrückkehr), consisting of specialists on the subject of work-life balance.

Apart from providing a professional qualification, the project also gave the participants the self-confidence necessary to take up a job. As a rule, they acquired the confidence to work more hours per week than they had originally planned. They recognised the prospects of flexible working hours. It also became evident that the participants had acquired many competences for research and independent study, which they were able to apply even after the project.

One of the problems with the project was that it attracted more interest from job returnees, i.e. more women who no longer had a steady place of employment, than from women who were on parental leave. The latter tend to expect that their company will enable them to update and adjust their qualifications after the period of parental leave.

At the moment, a follow-up project using a slightly changed concept is in progress. This project explicitly addresses job returnees and, by means of co-operation with an educational institute from the tourism sector, enables women who wish to do so, to obtain a Chamber of

Industry and Commerce certificate as a tourism agent. Against the background of the expanding online market for travel bookings, this is a new opportunity for telework.

Results and effects

The combined project was presented on a fair for continuing education for women, and meetings with small and medium-sized companies are organised in order to discuss the companies' concerns regarding re-entry.

The project made re-entry into professional life easier for its participants. Apart from qualification, it also conveyed new perspectives on the organisation of the work process. The request for places in the follow-up project is very high. At the moment, however, further financing is uncertain.

The issues of up-to-date qualifications for women at their re-entry into professional life, the possibility to combine child care, qualification and a job, and an improved co-operation with companies before re-entry have been raised in many countries. Telework offers the possibility of creating a win-win situation between women and companies, since companies using telework are able to react flexibly to peak periods, enabling women to create a better work-life balance for themselves. The combination of flexible working hours and flexible child care schedules was supplemented by flexible education schedules.

The project's value is in the combination of highly flexible study hours and contents, which can be adapted to the participants' individual requirements, at the same time taking into consideration the companies' concerns. The project also made sure that women got into contact with companies at an early stage in order to prepare their re-entry in the best interest of both the women and the companies.

As a side effect, other training and qualification offers for job returnees in Düsseldorf supplemented or replaced the traditional courses by highly flexible study opportunities, making use of electronic devices.

More information is to be found on the website: www.duesseldorf-staerkt-frauen.de

5. *Pilot action: company-supported child care in small and medium-sized companies*

It is the conviction of the Düsseldorf City Council that a balanced mix of generations is important for the infrastructure and the economy of the city. Through activities like the 'family card' and the expansion of child care services, Düsseldorf is working closely with local companies towards the implementation of family friendliness as a standard factor in its policies.

The city of Düsseldorf has set up a partnership between the local Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Youth Welfare Office. Together, they want to stimulate company-supported child care in small and medium-sized companies (SMEs) in the region. The aim is to increase the involvement of these employers in care services for their employees' young children. The pilot action consists of raising awareness among SMEs concerning the possibilities for and advantages of company child care services.

According to the latest questionnaire from June 2007, produced by the Allensbach Institute for Opinion Research on the request of the German Ministry of Family, Seniors,

Women and Youth, employers who already offer child care services report positive effects on work motivation (94%), on the image of the firm (76%), and also on the recruitment of employees (58%). The German Chamber of Commerce and the Ministry of Family, Seniors, Women and Youth want to stimulate SMEs to support this kind of services.

The following observations were starting points for this pilot action:

- There is a shortage of company-supported child care enabling the conciliation of flexible care times and flexible working hours.
- Some big companies in Düsseldorf already provide company-supported child care in their own child care facilities, or by offering a number of places in an existing day-care centre.
- Yet, 70% of all employed people are working in SMEs. So far, such companies show no commitment to facilitate child care.
- The potential for company-supported child care by SMEs has not been sufficiently analysed and is not well known.

The project started with the establishment of a network between companies, the Youth Welfare Office of the city and the Düsseldorf Chamber of Industry and Commerce. The objective was to address SMEs in order to inform them about the different models of company-supported child care. The partners in the project also wanted to identify and analyse the demand for company-supported child care. Finally, the project aimed at reaching agreements with interested companies about the organisation of company-supported child care facilities.

As a first step, the project's initiators decided to approach the 330 medium-sized companies rather than very small ones, i.e. companies with a staff of between 50 and 499 people. To these, they addressed a questionnaire about company-supported child care. To show the importance of the initiative, Düsseldorf's Mayor and the chief executive of the Chamber of Industry and Commerce co-signed the covering letter. The questionnaire was kept short, asking only the essentials. The subjects were the following: the need for child care among the staff of the company; already existing facilities in the company; the type of care that the company could /would offer; ideas about a possible framework; and financial commitments. Of course, respondents could also raise other points and/or ask questions. The whole questionnaire was no longer than one page.

Twenty-five companies filled out and returned the questionnaire, while some others showed interest in the project without returning the questionnaire. Seven of these companies have some kind of company support for child care. This ranges from using services of the mother company, or a co-operation with "Familienservice" (Family Service is an company specialised in the provision of conciliation of work and family life services), to paying for places in public day-care centres.

Ten of the companies without child care facilities are interested in contributing financially to child care services for their employees. Fourteen companies would like to get more information. Ten companies choose not to help with organising child care, but some of these nevertheless would like to get more information, or prefer to support the use of public day-care centres. Fifteen companies out of the 25 would like to offer child care facilities to their staff. A proper analysis of their staff's needs, however, has not taken place in the companies concerned. The figures given about these needs are based on the number of children, and range from between 2 to 20 per company.

Other remarks of the respondents concern the need for flexible opening hours of the

public day-care centres, the preference of child care near home instead of near the companies, the expansion of opening hours of day-care centres with qualified staff, and co-operation between nearby companies to successfully organise child care.

At the same time that the questionnaire was administered and its response was analysed, promotion activities for company-supported child care were organised. These consisted of:

- Informational meetings with corporate networks to present the project.
- A conference of women's representatives from companies and public authorities.
- A meeting of the project network Jocer (Job, Orientierung, Coaching, Erwerbstätigkeit = job orientation, coaching, employment) with SMEs to discuss common activities for facilitating a return to the labour market.
- Co-operation with the municipal Office for Economic Development to get more companies interested in company-supported child care.

At the end of November 2007, a final event of the pilot project was organised to discuss the results with all interested parties, in order to disseminate the outcomes of the questionnaire, to give further information about possibilities for company-supported child care, and to organise a further co-operation with representatives of interested companies. Some 35 people participated in that meeting and received detailed information. Moreover, company representatives were present here, who had experience with company-supported child care, and who shared that experience with the audience.

The exchange on the occasion of the final event was looked upon favourably, since the big companies and the staff using their child care facilities gave many practical hints. Subjects of discussion were the motives for company commitment to child care, the corporate groups participating in its implementation and the cooperation between companies and authorities. Practical hints were also given, for example regarding the advantage of child care for children younger than 3 directly on the company premises, allowing parents to attend to their children quickly in case of problems. It became apparent that some companies who have been offering child care for a long time extend their offer, e.g. including the care for school children or offering more places for children younger than 3. This obviously meets the requirements of the staff, and the companies have recognised that they themselves benefit from company child care. They confirm positive effects on work motivation and satisfaction and the staff's identification with the company, as well as an enhancement of the company's reputation.

Networking between the companies is to be continued. Thus, Provinzial Rheinland Versicherung AG has offered small and medium-sized companies to visit their child care facilities for children younger than 3 on their headquarters premises.

In general, feedback to the pilot action is good. Due to accessory press releases and the presentation of the project in the political committees of the Düsseldorf city council, there still is a growing number of requests from small and medium-sized companies regarding child care facilities. Some of the companies seem to have realised only now that even as a small company they are able to offer child care.

The following activities have been initiated locally for further implementation:

- Concrete negotiations with small and medium-sized companies about setting up child care facilities.
- A continuation of networking and the planning of another event for interested companies.

- The publication of a brochure by the Youth Welfare Office on the subject of company child care. This will be addressed to companies to inform them on the advantages and benefits of corporate child care facilities and on strategies for implementing their projects. One of the issues raised will be the financing of corporate child care facilities. The questionnaire used in the pilot project for determining the requirements for child care will also be included.



Plovdiv

Chapter 7: Plovdiv

1. Picture of Plovdiv

With more than 340,000 inhabitants, Plovdiv is the second largest city in Bulgaria. The education level of the population is relatively high, and the municipality has specific policies for combating illiteracy and early school leaving, which are part of the fight against unemployment.

The general employment and income situation in Bulgaria, and more particularly in Plovdiv, makes it necessary to support working parents by all means possible. Unemployment is high, activity rates and incomes are (relatively) low, while the economy is growing fast. There is a need for parents to both work (more than) full-time. Furthermore, with an ageing population, an increase of the birth rate is an important policy objective.

Within the limits of its budget, the local government of Plovdiv is putting a lot of effort in support for these working parents. The good practices chosen are in accordance with the major integrated local policy objectives: to make the conciliation of work and the family burden easier for parents, to improve the health and well-being of young children (through baby kitchens); and the school performances of the older ones (study locale service). The municipality pays special attention to very vulnerable people, such as working parents with a disabled child (through a social assistance service at home). The number of beneficiaries and the waiting lists for each of these good practices are a sign of their success and necessity.

2. Baby Kitchens

General

In the baby kitchens, every day, fresh food is prepared for children from 9 months to 2 years of age. The kitchens were established in Plovdiv in 1970-1975 by and at the full expenses of the municipality. Children's kitchens support parents in the care for their children. The personnel has been trained to cook for small children. A strict control of the quality of the products used and of hygiene gives the parents confidence that this is a healthy initiative. The time saved by parents can be devoted to other activities with their children. Children's kitchens will increase numerically in the future because parents do not have the necessary time and qualification to prepare nourishing and diversified food of high quality. This practice facilitates parents significantly in the conciliation of their work and private life. Currently, also private baby kitchens are being developed.

Method

Baby kitchens are organised in every neighbourhood of Plovdiv, in order to enable access close to the living environment of the families. Due to the popularity of the service, parents have to sign on as early as possible, because there are waiting lists. The number of kitchens is still growing.

Criteria for selecting the children for the baby kitchen are:

- the parents submit an application form to the district department;
- the parents have to live near the kitchen;
- the children have to be aged between 7 months and 2 years.

The kitchens are open every workday between 11:30 and 12:30 am. The kitchen offers a three-course meal (soup, main course, and dessert). The costs of one meal are about €0.40, of which the parents pay €0.25. The municipality covers the remaining €0.15.

Results and effects

The time that parents save can be devoted to other occupations and games with their children. Children eat food of excellent quality, and grow up healthy and cared for.

The particularity of this service is the age of the target group. Most meal services are either for children of school age, or for children in day-care centres. Since many couples in Plovdiv are both working, most of them in shift work, this service is very much appreciated.

The number of baby kitchens is 16, and the number of beneficiaries is 2100. The number of people waiting for access to the service is 254.

3. *Social assistants at home for parents with disabled children*

General

The aim of this project is to ensure families with a disabled child of the availability of a social assistant at home. This social assistance programme started in 2003 as a government initiative. It was continued by the municipality of Plovdiv. Bringing up a disabled child requires a lot of time and effort, physically as well as psychologically. That was the reason for setting up this programme. It consists of having 14 social assistants available for families with a disabled child at home. The municipality provides financial support. As a result, parents can go to work and leave their home without having to worry. They are reassured because a qualified social worker looks after their child(ren). This service is facilitating the conciliation of work and family life, but it also improves the quality of life for the disabled children getting professional support. There also is another, similar service called "personal assistant", which is to remunerate an assisting family member. The government financed this service and the number of beneficiaries is much larger.

Method

The service is advertised on the official website of the municipality, making it easy for the parents to get the information needed. The service is offered to working parents with a child that has a disability of more than 50%. The social assistant could be a parent, a relative, or another person, who takes care of the child for a specified number of hours and is paid by the municipality. Each year, a municipal committee sets the list of families in need of the social assistant service. The service is provided for the duration of one year and can be renewed.

Results and effects

In 2007, there were 17 social assistants working within the territory of the Plovdiv municipality. This was insufficient for all the families who had applied, a shortage caused by budget limitations. There is a waiting list of 148 families (all applications to be checked and selected).

The municipality remunerates social assistants at minimum wage level. This creates a considerable turnover of personnel.

Most important is the psychological effect on parents, because they can go to work and leave without having to worry. The quality of life for the children improves, too. Thus, it is a way to help disabled children to stay at home with their parents instead of having to go into residential care.

4. *Study Locale, groups for self-study*

General

This project wants to ensure a good educational and highly professional preparation at school. Children whose parents are working, are under surveillance while studying. In 1980, a system was created within the boundaries of the municipality of Plovdiv for the different primary schools, providing teachers outside of school hours, so that children could work in groups. In this way, they could make their homework and prepare lessons for the next day. It was a well-elaborated system that still is a great success at present. Children are well prepared, they are not exposed to the harmful influence of "the street", and their parents need worry less while they are at work. The expenses are paid by the schools, which are the property of the municipality.

Method

Parents who are working and lack the time to help their children to prepare their lessons, fill out an application form to the school director. The service is free of charge for the parents. It is at the expense of the schools, which are municipal property. There is an informational bulletin board at every school, where information is published on the location and hours of the study locale programme.

Schoolteachers take care of the supervision of the children. Each group consists of 20-25 pupils. The children are up to 14 years of age and attend the study locale in the morning or the afternoon, depending on their regular classes. The activities of the study locales include the preparation of homework, games, and sports, and last 6 hours a day.

All children regularly attending school and of whom the parents live or work near that school, can participate in the study locale programme.

Results and effects

This system was set up in Plovdiv in 1980, at first in 15 primary schools, where after that number increased to 130 schools across the country.

At present, the municipality of Plovdiv maintains and finances the service. It now counts 150 groups of pupils making use of this service at 47 schools.

The effects of this service are obvious:

- Children are well-prepared for school due to professional supervision;
- They are not exposed to the harmful "street" influence;
- Parents can do their work without worrying;
- Parents can use the time spent at home with their children for other activities;
- It provides the teachers involved with extra remuneration.

Chapter 8: Conclusions and lessons to be learned

The overall impression of the selected good practices and the pilot actions is that of a great variety, of relevance to a number of major European priorities regarding the work-life balance, and of great interest for the development of local governance. In that sense, these practices can be considered as useful and transferable to many different contexts. At the same time, the choice of good practices and pilot actions reflects the specific state of affairs in each of the cities concerned, in general socio-economic terms as well as in terms of the gender equality situation.

The major European priorities have been described in the Communication of the European Commission "A Roadmap for equality between women and men 2006-2010" (COM (2006) 92 final). The six priority areas identified in this document are:

1. Achieving equal economic independence for women and men.
2. Enhancing the conciliation of work, private and family life.
3. Promoting equal participation of women and men in decision-making.
4. Eradicating gender-based violence and trafficking.
5. Eliminating gender stereotypes in society.
6. Promoting gender equality outside the EU.

The Briefcase Project was essentially about the conciliation of work, private and family life, and more in particular about the role to be played by local government through the promotion of better care and educational services. It is logical that the good practices selected in the first place covered the third priority area. It is interesting to see that one or the other of the good practices cover all three domains of action within this priority area. These domains of action are: flexible working arrangements for both women and men; increasing care services; better conciliation policies for both women and men. Yet, a lot of attention is also paid to the fifth priority area: eliminating gender stereotypes in society. Indeed, the local context in some of the cities (countries) involved in the Briefcase Project apparently makes it important to raise more awareness about gender equality issues, or to take action in the field of gender equality in education and training. These practices aim at increasing the use of existing possibilities and opportunities rather than creating new ones.

The importance of local governance related to gender equality issues (and transversal issues in general) cannot be overestimated. Local governments are progressively more aware of, and taking responsibility for, organising or facilitating the match between different policies and practices. These include the match between:

- (national) regulations and (local) implementation;
- working hours and care hours;
- the school's organisation and the organisation of child care;
- public and private care services;
- the interests of employers vis-à-vis those of families;
- existing provisions and newly emerging needs;
- the interests of children vis-à-vis the interests of (working) parents.

Five thematic areas

When we look more concretely, once again, at the 18 good practices (GPs) and 3 pilot actions (PAs) in the cities involved in the Briefcase Project, we can place them under the following headings.

Day-care facilities (outside the house)

1. Amaroussion kindergartens (GP - Amaroussion)
2. Child & Co - A Local Pilot Project to Improve Education and Development Opportunities for Children (GP - Chemnitz)
3. Metro Sternchen, company day-care centre of the METRO Group (GP - Düsseldorf)
4. Company-supported child care in small and medium-sized companies (PA - Düsseldorf)
5. Baby kitchen (GP - Plovdiv)
6. Study Locale/ Groups for self-study (GP - Plovdiv)

Care arrangements within families

7. Full-time in the family (In famiglia a tempo pieno)(GP - Bologna)
8. Futura Vouchers (GP - Bologna)
9. Baby-sitting service (PA - Bologna)
10. Social assistant (GP - Plovdiv)

Facilities for job returnees

11. Professional training for female and male employees on maternity or parental leave who choose to come back to work (GP - Craiova).
12. Alternating telecommuting and e-learning as a job security prospect during parental leave (GP - Düsseldorf).

Flexibility in organisation and management of time

13. Teleworking in Greek universities (GP - Amaroussion).
14. IQ DONNA (GP - Bologna).
15. Hell-Ga multi-generation house (GP - Düsseldorf).

Awareness-raising about gender equality

16. Research Centre for Gender Equality (GP - Amaroussion).
17. MUT - Brave girls in environment and technology (GP - Chemnitz).
18. Girls' Day - Girls' Future Day (GP - Chemnitz).
19. Awareness-raising among young people (PA - Chemnitz).
20. Guaranteeing equal opportunities for men and women in the workplace (GP - Craiova).
21. Girls and Boys - All Different, All Equal. Education for Gender Equality (GP - Craiova).

The spreading of the good practices and pilot actions in the different thematic areas over the participating cities can be visualised as follows.

Table 1: Good Practices and Pilot Actions of the participating cities according to five thematic areas.

City	Amaroussion	Bologna	Chemnitz	Craiova	Düsseldorf	Plovdiv
Thematic area						
Day-care facilities (outside the house)	Amaroussion kindergartens (GP)		Child & Co - (GP)		Metro Sternchen (GP) Company supported child care in SMEs (PA)	Baby kitchen (GP) Study-Locale/ Groups for self - study (GP)
Care arrangements within families		Full-time in the family (GP) Futura Vouchers (GP) Baby-sitting service (PA)				Social assistant (GP)
Facilities for job returnees				Training for employees on maternity or parental leave (GP)	Telecommuting and e-learning during parental leave (GP)	
Flexibility in organisation and management of time	Teleworking in universities (GP)	IQ DONNA (GP)			Hell-Ga multi-generation house (GP)	
Awareness-raising in gender equality	Research Centre for Gender Equality (GP)		Awareness raising among municipality, local institutions, HR managers, employers, youth (PA) MUT - Brave girls in environment and technology (GP) Girls' Day - Girls' Future Day (GP)	Equal opportunities in the workplace (GP) Girls and Boys - All Different, All Equal. (GP)		

Observations

We see an important need to provide for more (quantity) and good (quality) day-care facilities for children outside the house. On this point, municipalities have undertaken action. The innovative aspects are diverse: while the focus in Plovdiv and Amaroussion is on the availability of these facilities as such, the source of innovation in Chemnitz is the quality, and in Düsseldorf, it is the setting in which it is offered (small and medium-sized companies).

However, the care for children within the families is a municipality's concern, too. With three initiatives in this field, Bologna is the big innovator on this issue. A combination of factors is behind this development. The city of Bologna mentions problems with available and affordable child care, but also a political choice for flexible arrangements giving parents the possibility to choose between different child care models, including spending more time with their (young) children.

The return to work after maternity or parental leave is a generally recognised problem, both from the point of view of the employer (replacement and re-integration) and from the point of view of the employee (job security and the updating of knowledge). It is, therefore, positive that in two of the Briefcase cities, initiatives in this field have been identified as good practices. Moreover, the local socio-economic contexts in Düsseldorf and Craiova are very different. Clearly, the awareness is growing everywhere that the full participation on the labour market of both women and men is important.

For a better work-life balance and a more just sharing of tasks between men and women, flexible work and care arrangements are important. Flexibility at the workplace, as in the good practices from Bologna and Düsseldorf, but also the potential of teleworking as described in the example of Greek universities, are developments in that direction. For telework, it is important to keep a close look at the conditions under which employees are doing this work, to avoid that paid work would dominate the division of tasks at home even more than without telework. It is clear, however, that the flexibility of work and care arrangements comes to the fore only if there is sufficient awareness of the issue of *balancing* work, private and family life.

In that respect, raising awareness about gender equality is a continuously important topic. The choice of the Amaroussion team to present the research centre on gender equality as a good practice is very understandable. The city of Craiova sees the gender stereotypes in education and the unequal opportunities at the workplace as serious obstacles for a better organisation of the work-life balance, and presents two good practices in this field. The city of Chemnitz has even made this area the subject of its pilot action, although it has done so for a very specific reason. It seems difficult to keep young families in Chemnitz, because of the vocational perspectives of boys and girls in relation to the (newly created) job opportunities. It does not make too much sense to put the care services for families on the agenda if there are no families left to discuss this with in the first place.

Here, we can also find the reason why Chemnitz chose two initiatives aiming for the promotion of girls in technical professions as good practices. In reality, one of the reasons why families are leaving the city (region) is that Chemnitz offers more job opportunities in technical professions than in the services sector, which traditionally employs more women.

Transferability

The Briefcase Project offered the opportunity to the participating cities, not only to collect good practices and to show them to others, but also to discuss their transferability. To this end, at one of the project meetings, a discussion session was devoted to exchange concrete ideas about the possible transfer of (elements of) the good practices.

A first step was to identify the added value of the different good practices. Partners in the project saw this added value for instance in the combination of issues tackled in such a practice. A good example is the multi-generation house, which links the issue of ageing to that of the conciliation of work and family life. Another example is that of the Baby Kitchens, where the reconciliation of work and family life goes hand in hand with health education (healthy food). Other examples underline the possibilities for innovation and uniqueness. Such examples are the bilingual education in the Amaroussion kindergartens and the e-learning methods for job returnees.

The second step consisted of imagining the concrete transfer of a given (element of a) good practice from one of the other partner cities. According to the partners from Bologna, the multi-generation house (Düsseldorf) could be applied very well in Italy. There are experiences with grandparents looking after children in an organised way, but these are not very well known. The IQ Donna project from Bologna could be imported in Düsseldorf and even linked to Düsseldorf's pilot action, since it addresses SMEs. The city of Craiova (Ro) is very interested in the Greek initiative to set up municipal kindergartens, while Plovdiv (Bg) in particular looks at the bilingual teaching in the Amaroussion kindergartens. Amaroussion (EL) takes an interest in the Futura Vouchers from Bologna, because it is relatively easy to apply to its own context. Finally, the project Girls and Boys, All Different/All Equal from Craiova could very well fit into a follow-up to the pilot action in Chemnitz.

When talking about the transferability of practices, a reflexion on the preconditions is, of course, necessary. The partners in the Briefcase Project discern two major preconditions: high-level political support and sufficient resources, also with regard to the continuity of the practices. In reality, all too often, resources are provided on a project- or ad hoc basis, which hampers the sustainability of many good practices.

Back to Europe - back to basics

The issue of gender equality in general, and more in particular equal opportunities for men and women on the labour market, is high on the agenda of the European Union. In combination with the Lisbon Agenda for Growth and Jobs, the promotion of adequate measures for the conciliation of work and family life stands logically in this European tradition. All EU Member States develop regulations, measures, provisions, and practices for the conciliation of work and family life. Although the quantity and quality of these initiatives differ greatly across Europe, in all countries the take-up of existing resources for a better work-life balance lags behind the possibilities on offer. There are at least two major reasons for this: the degree to which the existing possibilities are adapted to concrete needs and contexts, and the level of awareness and behaviour of the actors involved. With regard to both these reasons, initiatives taken by local authorities to promote gender equality and their concrete measures to adapt the resources to the local context are very valuable. Good practices and

pilot actions are not necessarily the most unique or most innovative ones. Rather, they are the ones best adapted to the actual local context. And exactly that is the case for the good practices and pilot actions, described in this report, in Bologna, Düsseldorf, Plovdiv, Craiova, Amaroussion and Chemnitz.

Annex Tables Part II

Tab. 1 Number of interviews by city and gender (absolute numbers and percentage)

	M	W	T	M	W	T
(DE) Düsseldorf	31	91	122	25,4	74,6	100,0
(DE) Chemnitz	53	104	157	33,8	66,2	100,0
(IT) Bologna	86	148	234	36,8	63,2	100,0
(EL) Amaroussion	44	88	132	33,3	66,7	100,0
(RO) Craiova	20	128	148	13,5	86,5	100,0
(BG) Plovdiv	75	75	150	50,0	50,0	100,0
Total	309	634	943	32,8	67,2	100,0

Tab. 2 Average age at birth of first child by city and gender

	M	W
(DE) Düsseldorf	30	27
(DE) Chemnitz	28	25
(IT) Bologna	34	31
(EL) Amaroussion	33	29
(RO) Craiova	27	25
(BG) Plovdiv	23	21
Average	29	26

Tab. 3 Average age at birth of first child by gender and educational level

	M			W		
educational level	primary	secondary	tertiary	primary	secondary	tertiary
age at birth of first child	26	29	31	24	27	29

Tab. 4 Number of children by city (percentage)

Number of children	(DE) Düsseldorf			(DE) Chemnitz			(IT) Bologna			(EL) Amaroussion			(RO) Craiova			(BG) Plovdiv			Total		
	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T
1	45,2	59,3	55,7	52,8	47,1	49	45,3	43,9	44,4	54,5	43,2	47,0	70	60,9	62,2	34,7	52	43,3	46,9	50,9	49,6
2	41,9	33	35,2	35,8	34,6	35	44,2	50,7	48,3	43,2	50	47,7	30	35,9	35,1	52	40	46	43,4	41,2	41,9
≥3	12,9	7,7	9	11,3	17,3	15,3	10,5	5,4	7,2	2,3	5,7	4,5	1,6	1,4	13,4	8	10,7	9,7	7,3	8,1	

Tab. 5 Actual number of children compared to the number of children desired, by city and gender (percentage)

n.of children desired < actual	M			W			T			M			W			T			M			W			T		
	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T			
n.of children desired = actual	22,6	25,3	24,6	28,3	29,8	29,3	40,7	41,9	41,5	56,8	48,9	51,5	30,0	21,1	22,3	33,3	34,7	34,0	36,6	33,4	34,5						
n.of children desired > actual	61,3	64,8	63,9	62,3	53,8	56,7	52,3	54,1	53,4	38,6	48,9	45,5	65,0	67,2	66,9	62,7	65,3	64,0	56,3	58,8	58,0						
n.of children desired > actual	16,1	7,7	9,8	9,4	16,3	14,0	3,5	1,4	2,1	2,3	1,1	1,5	0	3,1	2,7	4	0	2,0	5,5	4,9	5,1						

Tab.6 Only/last child's age by city (percentage)

Only/last child's age	M			W			T			M			W			T			M			W			T		
	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T			
< 1 year old	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	5,4	6	11,4	10,2	10,6	0	0,8	0,7	0	0	0	3,6	2,8	3,1						
between 1 and 3	19,4	14,3	15,6	45,3	41,3	42,7	40,7	44,6	43,2	34,1	40,9	38,6	0	6,3	5,4	18,7	9,3	14	30,4	27,3	28,3						
between 4 and 5	29	30,8	30,3	11,3	17,3	15,3	23,3	16,2	18,8	18,2	21,6	20,5	20	11,7	12,8	45,3	49,3	47,3	26,2	22,2	23,5						
between 6 and 10	45,2	46,2	45,9	18,9	23,1	21,7	18,6	22,3	20,9	27,3	20,5	22,7	50	47,7	48,0	32	40	36	27,8	32,8	31,2						
between 11 and 14	3,2	5,5	4,92	7,5	8,7	8,28	5,8	2,7	3,85	6,8	3,4	4,5	20	9,4	10,8	2,7	0	1,3	6,1	5,2	5,5						

Tab. 7 Working condition by city and gender (percentage)

	(DE) Düsseldorf		(DE) Chemnitz		(IT) Bologna		(EL) Amaroussion		(RO) Craiova		(BG) Plovdiv		Total	
	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W
employed	77,4	54,9	64,2	37,5	89,5	85,8	97,7	88,6	90,0	78,9	89,3	69,3	85,1	70,5
looking for a job	0,0	3,3	3,8	18,3	1,2	4,1	0,0	3,4	0,0	3,9	0,0	1,3	1,0	5,8
unemployed	3,2	6,6	1,9	6,7	2,3	1,4	0,0	3,4	5,0	2,3	9,3	12,0	3,9	4,7
student	0,0	1,1	1,9	1,9	0,0	0,7	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,8	0,0	0,0	0,3	0,8
retired	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	2,3	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,3	0,0
housewife	0,0	24,2	0,0	12,5	0,0	6,8	0,0	2,3	0,0	7,0	0,0	16,0	0,0	10,7

Tab. 8 Professional position by city and gender (percentage)

	(DE) Düsseldorf		(DE) Chemnitz		(IT) Bologna		(EL) Amaroussion		(RO) Craiova		(BG) Plovdiv		Total	
	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W
subordinate employment														
manager	19,4	5,5	5,7	1,9	8,1	1,4	11,4	3,4	0,0	0,8	0,0	0,0	6,8	2,1
executive	19,4	7,7	1,9	1,0	12,8	2,7	27,3	13,6	20,0	10,9	6,7	1,3	12,6	6,2
teacher	9,7	1,1	0,0	1,9	5,8	15,5	2,3	8,0	5,0	10,2	1,3	12,0	3,6	8,7
clerk	19,4	42,9	45,3	58,7	45,3	45,9	22,7	54,5	15,0	18,8	2,7	12,0	27,2	39,3
factory worker	9,7	1,1	5,7	1,0	5,8	4,1	0,0	0,0	25,0	14,1	57,3	45,3	19,1	9,5
apprentice	0,0	3,3	3,8	2,9	0,0	0,0	0,0	1,1	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,6	1,1
self-employment														
entrepreneur	3,2	0,0	3,8	1,9	5,8	0,0	4,5	1,1	0,0	0,0	4,0	0,0	4,2	0,5
freelance														
professional	0,0	2,2	9,4	6,7	10,5	9,5	22,7	6,8	5,0	3,1	4,0	4,0	9,1	5,7
owns small business	3,2	0,0	7,5	2,9	1,2	3,4	0,0	3,4	5,0	7,0	13,3	8,0	5,5	4,1
member of cooperative	3,2	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,7	4,5	2,3	0,0	0,0	0,0	1,3	1,0	0,6
assistant	0,0	0,0	0,0	1,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	1,1	0,0	1,6	5,3	0,0	1,3	0,6
temp.worker	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	1,2	1,4	0,0	1,1	0,0	0,0	2,7	0,0	1,3	0,5

Tab. 9 Time distribution in a weekday by gender, activity, and city (percentage)

time percentage	(DE) Düsseldorf		(DE) Chemnitz		(IT) Bologna		(EL) Amaroussion		(RO) Craiova		(BG) Plovdiv		Total	
	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W
paid work														
up to 10%	0	0	1,0	6,2	1,2	1,6	2,3	5,7	1,6	1,2	0,0	0,0	0,6	2,1
between 10% and 30%	2,7	18,7	13,3	22,9	11,3	22,0	4,0	19,3	18,0	22,3	0,0	0,0	8,0	16,3
between 31% and 50%	12,0	22,9	52,7	25,2	26,7	36,0	40,9	48,9	37,5	40,5	2,7	1,3	27,6	29,0
>50%	69,4	23,3	11,0	1,9	49,0	21,0	44,9	12,5	32,3	20,7	91,3	72,0	50,2	25,8
child care work														
up to 10%	14,1	9,8	30,0	12,8	26,7	7,2	29,5	4,5	14,0	7,2	82,2	69,3	35,0	19,7
between 10% and 30%	24,0	24,6	41,3	43,4	49,3	45,3	54,5	65,9	62,7	60,9	11,3	3,3	40,2	40,0
between 31% and 50%	5,9	22,9	3,3	19,1	10,1	27,2	6,8	15,9	9,8	21,9	3,3	16,7	6,4	20,8
>50%	1,1	16,8	1,0	12,4	1,6	10,1	0,0	7,4	3,7	6,0	0,0	8,7	1,0	10,0
domestic work														
up to 10%	26,7	30,0	50,4	30,5	48,6	34,4	56,3	35,2	41,9	45,3	87,3	67,3	55,4	40,4
between 10% and 30%	6,0	35,9	17,1	54,8	23,8	47,7	10,8	52,3	38,0	29,2	2,0	16,0	13,8	42,5
between 31% and 50%	0,0	4,4	1,4	3,3	2,7	5,7	2,3	5,1	3,9	4,0	1,3	14,7	1,0	6,2
>50%	3,6	0,0	1,0	0,0	0,0	0,7	2,3	0,0	0,0	1,5	0,0	0,0	0,3	0,5
leisure time														
up to 10%	37,1	17,4	31,6	38,1	43,5	47,2	38,6	48,9	43,3	62,3	38,0	56,0	39,9	45,6
between 10% and 30%	31,4	31,1	39,9	24,7	27,8	21,4	30,7	23,3	34,3	15,2	26,0	17,3	31,4	21,3
between 31% and 50%	3,8	4,4	13,9	18,9	5,4	3,2	9,1	2,3	7,9	0,0	12,7	6,7	9,0	4,2
>50%	0,0	0,0	0,0	2,4	1,5	0,7	2,3	0,0	0,0	5,0	2,7	0,0	0,9	0,6

Tab. 10 Distribution of care and educational activities for the child by gender (percentage)

Care activities	Mother	Care activities	Father
deals with the child's school matters, health institutions, and other	93,1	stays with the child during his/her leisure time	70
wakes up at night to take care of the child	93,1	takes care of emergencies (accidents or illnesses)?	52,5
stays with the child during his/her leisure time	91,3	deals with the child's school matters, health institutions, and other	50,4
takes care of emergencies (accidents or illnesses)?	90,7	puts the child to sleep	47,3
puts the child to sleep	89,7	takes the child to school/ day-care centre	42
washes and dresses the child	89,4	wakes up at night to take care of the child	41,1
stays home when the child is ill	85,4	washes and dresses the child	40,7
takes the child to school/ day-care centre	70,8	takes him to sports facilities, libraries, and other non-school activities	38,1
stays with the child when he/she is not at school/kindergarten on week-days and/or during working hours	65,5	helps the child with homework	34
helps the child with homework	59,4	stays home when the child is ill	29,5
takes him to sports facilities, libraries, and other non-school activities	59,3	stays with the child when he/she is not at school/kindergarten on week-days and/or during working hours	26,8
Domestic activities	Mother	Domestic activities	Father
cooking meals	92,2	Paying bills, taking care of building matters	70,5
washing	92,5	shopping	63,9
cleaning rooms	88,4	house maintenance	55,4
shopping	84,3	cleaning rooms	28,3
ironing	82,3	cooking meals	25,6
house maintenance	61,3	washing	14,5
Paying bills, taking care of building matters	61,1	ironing	8,3

Tab. 11 Informal aids for care and educational activities for the child, and for domestic work (percentage)

Care activities	Grandparents	Domestic activities	Grandparents
stays with the child when he/she is not at school/kindergarten on weekdays and/or during working hours	66,3	cooking meals	22,3
stays with the child during his/her leisure time	45,5	house maintenance	14,1
stays home when the child is ill	40,4	shopping	13,1
takes care of emergencies (accidents or illnesses)?	33,1	ironing	12,4
takes the child to school/day-care centre	28,6		
takes him to sports facilities, libraries, and other non-school activities	18,5	washing	10,8
washes and dresses the child	15		
deals with the child's school matters, health institutions, and other	10,5	cleaning rooms	10
helps the child with homework	9,5		
puts the child to sleep	8,7	Paying bills, taking care of building matters	
wakes up at night to take care of the child	3,4		8,9

Tab. 12 Use of personal, private services (baby-sitting) for care and educational activities for the child by educational level and professional position of the parents (percentage)

educational level			professional position			
primary	secondary	tertiary	self-employed	manager or executive	clerk-teacher	factory worker
5,3	18,3	75,3	58,9	75,9	34,0	12,7

Tab. 13 Satisfaction about the sharing of domestic tasks by city and gender (percentage)

	(DE) Düsseldorf		(DE) Chemnitz		(IT) Bologna		(EL) Amaroussion		(RO) Craiova		(BG) Plovdiv		Total	
	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W
low satisfaction	9,7	22	20,2	7	4,5	20,5	9,4	1,3	5,5	17	0	0	3,6	2,8
average satisfaction	38,7	31,9	13,2	37,5	23,3	28,4	22,7	37,5	15	25,8	28	44	23,6	33
high satisfaction	45,2	37,4	66	35,6	52,3	34,5	68,2	37,5	85	59,4	60	41,3	60,2	41,3

Tab.14 Changes after childbirth by city and gender (percentage)

	(DE) Düsseldorf		(DE) Chemnitz		(IT) Bologna		(EL) Amaroussion		(RO) Craiova		(BG) Plovdiv		Total	
	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W
no changes in working condition	87,1	23,1	73,6	22,1	73,3	50,0	68,2	55,7	70,0	54,7	37,3	32,0	65,0	41,2
exit from labour market														
discharge	0,0	3,3	0,0	10,6	1,2	4,7	0,0	3,4	0,0	3,1	1,3	4,0	1,0	4,9
resignation	0,0	38,5	1,9	52,9	5,8	7,4	4,5	18,2	0,0	7,8	2,7	1,3	3,6	20,2
decrease in working hours	6,5	31,9	9,4	20,2	5,8	36,5	6,8	20,5	0,0	3,1	13,3	16,0	8,1	21,8
renounced career	0,0	8,8	9,4	9,6	8,1	21,6	9,1	29,5	0,0	7,8	1,3	9,3	5,5	14,7
increase in working hours	3,2	3,3	3,8	3,8	8,1	5,4	36,4	10,2	40,0	17,2	6,7	0,0	12,6	7,3
improvement of professional position	3,2	5,5	11,3	7,7	20,9	10,8	18,2	23,9	45,0	22,7	21,3	6,7	18,8	13,2
second job	0,0	8,8	1,9	2,9	3,5	2,7	6,8	1,1	15,0	5,5	2,7	0,0	3,9	3,6

Tab. 15 Changes after childbirth by professional position and gender (percentage)

	Men				Women			
	Self-employed	Manager-executive	Clerk-teacher	Factory worker	Self-employed	Manager-executive	Clerk-teacher	Factory worker
no changes in working condition	53,6	81,0	75,3	48,3	37,8	70,0	42,2	43,3
exit from labour market								
discharge	0,0	1,7	0,0	1,7	2,4	0,0	5,3	5,0
resignation	10,1	3,4	1,1	0,0	17,1	2,0	19,9	8,3
decrease in working hours	18,8	3,4	7,5	3,4	31,7	14,0	28,2	6,7
renounced career	5,8	5,2	8,6	0,0	14,6	4,0	19,6	5,0
increase in working hours	8,7	15,5	12,9	15,5	11,0	6,0	6,3	8,3
improvement of professional position	14,5	20,7	16,1	25,9	13,4	14,0	11,6	15,0
second job	1,4	1,7	6,5	6,9	3,7	0,0	3,3	3,3

Tab. 16 Use of parental leave by city and gender (percentage)

	(DE) Düsseldorf		(DE) Chemnitz		(IT) Bologna		(EL) Amaroussion		(RO) Craiova		(BG) Plovdiv		Total	
	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W
optional parental leave	3,2	33,0	13,2	73,1	26,7	41,2	18,2	33,0	10,0	14,1	0,0	69,3	13,3	42,0

Tab. 17 Type of contract and part-time employment by city and gender (percentage)

Type of contract	(DE) Düsseldorf		(DE) Chemnitz		(IT) Bologna		(EL) Amaroussion		(RO) Craiova		(BG) Plovdiv		Total	
	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W
short-term contract	0,0	5,5	11,3	10,6	8,1	10,1	2,3	14,8	0,0	2,3	6,7	4,0	6,1	7,9
lifelong contract	35,5	34,1	47,2	26,9	70,9	60,8	54,5	48,9	90,0	71,9	82,7	65,3	65,0	52,5
Part-time employment	0,0	16,5	7,5	16,3	3,5	31,1	2,3	5,7	0,0	23,4	0,0	0,0	2,6	17,8

Tab. 18 Interviewees who used initiatives/services promoted on their own job to reconcile work and family, by city and gender (percentage)

Type of company initiative	(DE) Düsseldorf			(DE) Chemnitz			(IT) Bologna			(EL) Amaraoussion			(RO) Craiova			(BG) Plovdiv			Total			
	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T	
Flexible entry and exit time	45,2	41,8	42,6	13,2	14,4	14,0	34,9	21,6	26,5	27,3	44,3	38,6	25,0	19,5	20,3	1,3	2,7	2,0	22,3	23,8	23,3	
Company day-care centre	32,3	13,2	18,0	1,9	3,8	3,2	0,0	0,7	0,4	0,0	8,0	5,3	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	3,6	3,8	3,7
Teleworking	19,4	9,9	12,3	0,0	5,8	3,8	2,3	0,0	0,9	2,3	5,7	4,5	0,0	3,9	3,4	0,0	4,0	2,0	2,9	4,4	3,9	
Job sharing	3,2	13,2	10,7	11,3	18,3	15,9	0,0	0,0	0,0	6,8	4,5	5,3	0,0	4,7	4,1	2,7	5,3	4,0	3,9	7,1	6,0	
Special maternity support programmes	6,5	3,3	4,1	0,0	1,0	0,6	0,0	0,7	0,4	2,3	5,7	4,5	0,0	2,3	2,0	2,7	0,0	1,3	1,6	2,1	1,9	

Tab. 19 Interviewees who used initiatives/services promoted on their own job to reconcile work and family, by professional position and gender (percentage)

Type of company initiative	Men				Women			
	Self-employed	Manager-executive	Clerk-teacher	Factory worker	Self-employed	Manager-executive	Clerk-teacher	Factory worker
Flexible entry and exit time	11,6	31,0	35,5	6,9	15,9	56,0	27,9	8,3
Company day-care centre	0	12,1	3,2	1,7	2,4	16,0	3,3	0,0
Teleworking	1,4	6,9	2,2	0,0	6,1	12,0	4,3	1,7
Job sharing	4,3	3,4	6,5	0,0	4,9	20,0	9,6	0,0
Special maternity support programmes	1,4	1,7	0,0	0,0	0,0	6,0	2,0	1,7

Tab. 20 Satisfaction about reconciliation between work and family by professional position and gender (percentage)

Reasons	Men				Women			
	Self-employed	Manager-executive	Clerk-teacher	Factory worker	Self-employed	Manager-executive	Clerk-teacher	Factory worker
low satisfaction	13,0	17,2	37,6	18,3	12,2	8,0	19,6	18,3
average satisfaction	29,0	34,5	25,8	33,3	31,7	34,0	31,9	38,3
high satisfaction	52,2	41,4	45,2	50,0	51,2	48,0	42,2	33,3

Tab.21 Parents who used services 0-3, by professional position and gender (percentage)

Reasons	Men				Women			
	Self-employed	Manager-executive	Clerk-teacher	Factory worker	Self-employed	Manager-executive	Clerk-teacher	Factory worker
Public day-care centre	26,1	36,2	39,8	13,8	43,9	32,0	40,5	16,7
Private day-care centre	11,6	10,3	5,4	0,0	7,3	12,0	6,6	3,3
Company day-care centre	18,0	12,1	3,2	1,7	2,4	16,0	3,3	0,0
Total	37,7	58,6	48,4	15,5	53,6	60,0	50,4	20,0

Tab.22 Parents who used services 0-3 by city (percentage)

	(DE) Düsseldorf	(DE) Chemnitz	(IT) Bologna	(EL) Amaroussion	(RO) Craiova	(BG) Plovdiv	Total
Public day-care centre	12,3	15,3	65,4	61,4	23	1,3	32,8
Private day-care centre	4,9	2,5	9,4	16,7	4,1	0,7	6,5
Company day-care centre	18	3,2	0,4	5,3	0	0	3,7
Total	35,2	21	75,2	83,4	27,1	2	43

Tab. 23 Parents who used other services (percentage)

	(DE) Düsseldorf	(DE) Chemnitz	(IT) Bologna	(EL) Amaroussion	(RO) Craiova	(BG) Plovdiv	Total
Economic contribution instead of the service	3,3	3,8	1,7	3	18,2	0,7	4,9
Family-based childcare worker	8,2	19,7	1,7	18,2	8,8	1,3	8,9

Tab. 24 Parents who used additional services by city (percentage)

	(DE) Düsseldorf	(DE) Chemnitz	(IT) Bologna	(EL) Amaroussion	(RO) Craiova	(BG) Plovdiv	Total
Playgrounds and indoor spaces	20,5	45,2	45,3	55,3	29,1	0,7	33,8
Religious/lay activities	4,9	10,8	15,8	0,8	8,1	1,4	8
Sports facilities	16,4	45,9	35	38,6	20,3	2,7	27,5
Summer camps	5,7	21	29,5	6,8	15,5	2,7	15,4
Optional school hours	5,7	21	8,1	12,1	14,2	1,3	10,4

Tab. 25 Take-up of services by time, city and gender (percentage)

	(DE) Düsseldorf		(DE) Chemnitz		(IT) Bologna		(EL) Amaroussion		(RO) Craiova		(BG) Plovdiv		Total	
	full-time	part-time or some hours	full-time	part-time or some hours	full-time	part-time or some hours	full-time	part-time or some hours	full-time	part-time or some hours	full-time	part-time or some hours	full-time	part-time or some hours
Public nursery	27,8	72,2	51,9	48,1	71,2	28,8	31,2	68,8	41,7	58,3	0	100	52,9	47,1
Private nursery	60	40	33,3	66,7	76,2	23,8	15,8	84,2	42,9	57,1	100	0	48,2	51,8
Kindergarten	24,4	75,6	44,4	55,6	82,7	17,3	30,9	69,1	18,3	81,7	94,9	5,1	53,7	46,3
Primary school	10,6	89,4	37,2	62,8	83,6	16,4	33,3	66,7	0,6	99,4	90,6	9,4	37,8	62,2
Summer camps	60	40	81	19	83	17	85,7	14,3	78,6	21,4	100	0	81,8	18,2

Tab. 26 Satisfaction by service, city and gender (percentage)

	(DE) Düsseldorf		(DE) Chemnitz		(IT) Bologna		(EL) Amaroussion		(RO) Craiova		(BG) Plovdiv		Total	
	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W
low	6,5	2,2	13,2	12,5	10,5	5,4	2,3	6,8		3,1			6,1	5,2
average	6,5	24,2	32,1	27,9	24,4	16,9	22,7	11,4	15,0	10,2	12,0	28,0	20,1	18,9
high	12,9	29,7	26,4	33,6	33,7	36,5	20,5	19,4	75,0	64,1	86,7	69,3	44,0	42,1

Acknowledgements

Project Manager: Raffaella Gentile, Municipality of Bologna, International Relations, Co-operation and Projects Office.

Financial Manager: Manijeh Morshedi, Municipality of Bologna, International Relations, Co-operation and Projects Office.

Municipality of Bologna (Italy)

Milli Virgilio, Deputy Mayor for Education, Training and Policies of Differences, Municipality of Bologna.

Paola Bosi, Local Project Co-ordinator, Education and Policies of Differences Department, Municipality of Bologna.

Staff of the "Education and Policies of Differences" Department, Municipality of Bologna.

Municipality of Craiova (Romania)

Antonie Solomon, Mayor of Craiova.

Municipal Development Company of Amaroussion (Greece)

The European Projects Office.

The Legal Entity of Amaroussion Kindergartens.

Social Welfare Organisation of the Municipality of Amaroussion.

Municipal Company of Social Services.

Municipality of Plovdiv (Bulgaria)

Krasimir Loykov, Local Coordinator.

Diana Vaneva, Technical expert.

Municipality of Düsseldorf (Germany)

Sabine Hand, Technical expert on gender policies, Youth Welfare Office

Annette Kranz, Local Coordinator, Office for regional and European Co-operation.

Peter van Toorenburg, Local Coordinator, Office for regional and European Co-operation.

Municipality of Chemnitz (Germany)

Heidemarie Lüth, Deputy Mayor for Family, Children and Social Issues, Elderly People, Culture and Sports.

Bettina Bezold, Officer for Gender Equality.

Pia Sachs, EU-Coordinator.

Gabriele Aurich, Project-Coordinator Department of Childrens' and Young Peoples' Affairs.

Dr. Heidi Becherer, Chairwoman of the Trade Unions (DGB) in the region Chemnitz and City Councillor in Chemnitz.

Elke Teller, Chairwoman VbFF-Sachsen.

Silke Ullrich, Project Manager VbFF-Sachsen.

Dr. Anja Langness, Project Manager, Bertelsmann Foundation in Gütersloh.

Bertram Kurze, Solaris Support Center for Youth and Environment.

Andreas Töpfer, Solaris Support Center for Youth and Environment.

Verwey-Jonker Institute Utrecht (The Netherlands)

Hugo Swinnen, Local Coordinator.

Sandra ter Woerds, Technical expert on gender policies.

Monique Stavenuiter, Technical expert on gender policies.

Associazione Millennia (Italy)

Lorenza Malucelli and Giuliana Bertagnoni, Transnational Scientific Coordinators.

Laura Fantoni and Francesca Rossi, Technical experts on gender equality.

Federico Bomba, Technical project assistant.

Raimondo Pavarin, Statistician - coordinator.

Beatrice Galli, Statistician - assistant.

Nicola Limonta, Statistician - assistant.

Valerio Vanelli, Methodology expert.

Antonio Schiavulli, Technical assistant for the Italian version of the final report.

Colophon

Financer	European Commission - DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities. Action Programme relating to the Community framework strategy on gender equality (2001-2005).
Cover	Grafital, Valkenswaard
Layout	Leijten BV, Dongen
Photo	Photographic Archive - Cineteca del Comune di Bologna
Published by	Verwey-Jonker Instituut Kromme Nieuwegracht 6 3512 HG Utrecht telefoon 030-2300799 telefax 030-2300683 e-mail secr@verwey-jonker.nl website www.verwey-jonker.nl

The publication

This publication is available and can be ordered through our website:
<http://www.verwey-jonker.nl>. Also you can order the publication by e-mail:
verwey-jonker@adrepak.nl or fax 0031-70-359 07 01.

ISBN 978-90-5830-274-8

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