

THESIS ON ECONOMICS AND BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION H46

**Combining Work and Family Life –  
A Comparative Perspective on Changes in  
Parental Roles in Estonia,  
Finland and Sweden**

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Declaration:

*Hereby I declare that this doctoral thesis, my original investigation and achievement, submitted for the doctoral degree at Tallinn University of Technology has not been submitted for any other degree or examination.*

/Helbe Põder/



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**Töö- ja pereelu ühitamise rollide  
muutustest lastevanematel Eesti,  
Soome ja Rootsi võrdluses**

HELBE PÕDDER



*Pühendan kolmele suurepärasele inimesele minu elus – vanaemale Salme Öösalule,  
ämmale Inge Põdder'ile ja äiale Kalju Põdder'ile*

*Dedicated to three wonderful people in my life – Grandmother Salme Öösalu, mother in  
law Inge Põdder and father in law Kalju Põdder*



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## INTRODUCTION

The European social model is based on highly developed welfare states and consistent attention on equality and redistribution as well as the provision of public goods and collective insurance against risk for individuals (COM2005, 3). However, several authors (e.g. Esping-Andersen 1999; Bonoli 2005; Gough 2008; Newman 2009; Kerem, Pöder 2010; Ebbinghaus 2012; Seccombe 2012) have argued that since the late 1990s welfare states in the EU have seen changes in their economies and family forms as well as a shift towards ageing societies. Many authors (e.g., Esping-Andersen 1990; 1999; 2009; Esping-Andersen, Gallie, Hemerijck and Myles 2002; Orloff 1996) have pointed out the ‘masculinisation’ of a woman’s life and women’s position in society as one of the key moments in the future of the welfare state. On the other hand, the course of life for men has not changed substantially. In developed countries continuing demand exists for women’s labour, and women now perform 66 percent of the world’s work (Women’s economic empowerment 2012, 4). At the same time they are still a vulnerable social group in the labour market, especially in the context of family life. Based on the aforementioned, three work-family policy context indicators are relevant to parents who take care of young children: the right to take time off work to care for children, access to and the affordability of childcare, and the possibility to combine work and family life (OECD 2007; 2011a, b; Boeckmann & Joya 2012). In 2010 (11, 13, 15) Kerem and Pöder argued that social-democratic welfare regimes in the Nordic countries have achieved success because of a high level of labour market flexibility accompanied by high social protection, while Post-soviet regimes are providing lower social protection and labour market flexibility and are thus achieving less success. As was pointed out in the *Annual Review of Development Effectiveness* (2004, 9-10) a good policy is a context specific policy. Therefore, governments can ensure a future supply of labour and sustained growth by employing social policy measures and developing female and family friendly policies for the labour market. Based on this, contemporary family policy should concentrate on working parents, public services for children, and opportunities for families to choose how to manage their work and family lives.

The literature on the welfare state reveals that the welfare state is studied, firstly, through its policy-making process, problem-facing practices, the position of the state in providing social protection and the level of the interventions at the individual level (e.g., Esping-Andersen 1990; 1999; Björnberg 2002; Parvikko 2003; Schoon, Hansson & Salmela-Aro 2005; Duvander 2008; Leira 2010; Ebbinghaus 2012; Himmelstrand 2013); and secondly through domestic equality and the distribution of housework/paid work and child care responsibilities (e.g., Bittman 1999; Van Dongen 2009; Orloff 2009; Leira 2010; OECD 2007; OECD 2011a, b). This thesis examines the attitudes of the inhabitants of three states towards the work-life balance in a particular environment (social context) of the specific state. The thesis will report on: 1) findings from an empirical study carried out by the author that employed Peter Weinreich’s Identity Structure Analysis (ISA) as a research tool; and 2) a comparative analysis of the empirical results and contextual literature, also carried out by the author. ISA has been used in several empirical studies but not as a field investigation method in the context of

parenthood in ageing European societies (Sweden, Finland and Estonia in this thesis). Earlier research in other fields has shown that it is possible to extract new and meaningful data using the ISA method. ISA enables one to analyse an individual's identity structure within the value system of that particular individual. The value system can be determined from data in terms of significant others. As Weinrich (2003, 1) has emphasised, ISA is not merely a method but an open-ended conceptual framework which, due to common lines between the subject matters, provides an interface between disciplines such as psychology, sociology and social anthropology, and related subject areas such as political science, economics, social policy, education etc. That makes ISA a fascinating tool for studying social phenomena at the individual level. The methodological characteristics of ISA can represent both quantitative and qualitative approaches to issues in an investigation. ISA as a method can be used to explore processes on both an individual and a group level. Thus, ISA was chosen as the most suitable method to investigate identity processes in the current study of mother- and fatherhood in order to more easily understand the role of the social context as the background to the respondents' parenthood.

The identity instrument to explore the attitudes of mothers and fathers towards combining work and family life, entities (the situated self in various contexts, individuals, groups, institutions) and bipolar constructs were constructed for the individuals participating in the study. The constructed identity instrument is unique and was used for the first time. The list of entities and bipolar constructs were produced in the process of research. The set of questions and problems for the context of work and family life was gathered and designed in the process of preparing the first paper (for previous overview of the work and family time context on the EU level, in Scandinavia, Finland and Estonia, see Appendix 1).

The attitudinal aspects concerning family policies are compared in three cultural settings: Sweden, Finland, and Estonia. Studies (e.g., Ferrarini & Duvander 2009; Himmelstrand 2013) suggest that Sweden, being greatly admired for its equality (including gender equality) oriented policies and as a reference case for policy makers in other welfare states, is a primary study case for researchers of comparative gender and family policy. Therefore, being an example of success in the field of family policy, Sweden was chosen as one of the welfare state models for the comparison. Finland was chosen for its family policy that differs from Sweden, accentuating a flexible mix of childcare which allows families to decide their level of defamilisation; Finland also sets an example with its feminist attitudes towards equality, having accepted these attitudes on a social policy level (Parvikko 2003). The third comparison case is Estonia. As a young democracy, it has chosen the Nordic path of progression, and by doing so is also providing social security for its citizens (Lauristin, Vihalemm, Norkus, Terk, Reid 2011; Roots, Ainsaar, Aidukaite, Eamets, Realo, Dobewall 2011). The systems of reference for Estonia are other EU Member States, mainly its wealthy Scandinavian neighbours (Lauristin 2011, 10; Puur, Sakkeus, Tammaru 2013, 24). Estonia is an interesting case where many path-dependent institutional choices have realized the dual-earner and state (instead of labour market) provided childcare model without explicit emphasis on gender aspects in family policies. However, as a post-Soviet country, Estonia has many

path-dependent institutions such as high female labour market participation, gender segregation in the labour market and a large gender pay gap. The differences and similarities between the problems faced in balancing family and work life in the aforementioned three states were analysed in papers 1, 3 and 4.

**The aim of this doctoral thesis** is to create an empirical research based model of the core values and conflicted themes of the interviewed parents of three countries in the context of family matters; and in light of these construed models to bring forth how successful the family policies of the three studied states have been in meeting the expectations of the parents.

The five research questions of this thesis are:

- What kinds of attitudes do parents have towards balancing work and family life?
- How do parents see the roles of women and men within a family?
- What kinds of attitudes do parents have towards having children?
- What measures do parents expect the state to offer to support the combining of work and family life?
- What kinds of attitudes towards combining work and family life have respondents experienced from employers?

To achieve the objective set forth in this doctoral thesis the research questions and main results were addressed in four papers completed for the study (Table 1). The research papers comprise: 1) a literature review (paper 1), and 2) research findings (papers 2, 3 and 4). Weinreich (2003, 79) has pointed out that ISA cannot be adopted for investigations in the form of psychometric scales. In the context of ISA each investigation requires preliminary ethnographic-style groundwork to elicit discourses in the vernacular, which will form the basis for a customised identity instrument. Paper 1 therefore concentrated on research questions that would help create the background for further research by finding the issues connected to the theme of *Combining Work and Family Life in the EU Context* that need to be addressed further.

*Table 1. The research questions, method, data and main results of the four papers completed for the study*

<b>Paper</b>	<b>Research Question</b>	<b>Method</b>	<b>Data</b>	<b>Main result</b>
1.	What are the main institutional and attitudinal features of family policies?	Conceptualisation	Secondary sources, including statistical data	Constructing the investigation instrument.
2.	What are the identity processes of Estonian individuals in respect to the interrelationship between contemporary state norms and the personal values and beliefs concerning work and family as identity dimensions?	ISA	Data from in-depth interview (Participant J)	The study demonstrated that the person's identity processes proceed as a nexus of the individual and society that is an inextricably interrelated individual.

Paper	Research Question	Method	Data	Main result
3.	What kinds of attitudes and wishes do parents have towards balancing work and family life?	ISA	90 respondents, parents, from Estonia, Sweden and Finland (15 women and 15 men from each country).	1. Core values of Swedes, Finns and Estonians. 2. Conflicting themes and their gender specificities in the case countries.
4.	How successful have the family policies of the three studied states been in meeting the expectations of the parents, as expressed through the core values and conflicted themes in the context of family matters?	ISA	90 respondents, parents, from Estonia, Sweden and Finland (15 women and 15 men from each country).	Constructed the value systems of the respondents in order to identify „solved“ and „unsolved“ family matters.

The empirical research was carried out using P. Weinreich’s ISA method in three case studies. The contextualisation (Chapter 1 of this thesis) of the theme (see Figure 1) emphasizes a) parenthood in the context of a welfare state; b) family models as changing institutions over time; c) the Swedish, Finnish and Estonian family policy key trends and specific features; and d) the effects of the family policy measures in question in a particular social context. By answering “which” and “how” type, questions the respondents’ value system related to family matters was constructed, which enabled to determine the issues considered ‘solved’ or still in need of solving for the respondents.

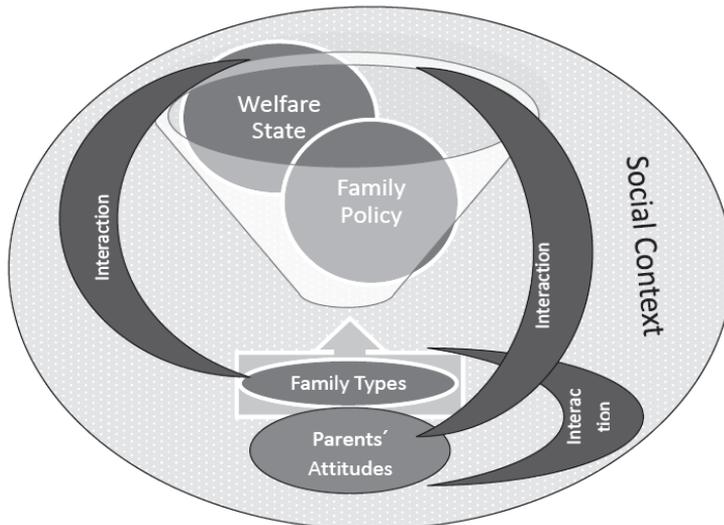


Figure 1. The conceptual background of the theme „Combining Work and Family Life” in this thesis. Produced by the author

The current doctoral thesis contributes both to literature and policy research through (a) offering an in-depth analysis of parental roles in three different family policy contexts and (b) the application of the ISA method to explore the attitudes of mothers and fathers towards combining work and family life. The latter includes the construction and application of a new investigation instrument, i.e. empirical research with data collection via in-depth interviews.

The dissertation is based on the following original publications. Papers 1 and 2 were single-authored, papers 3 and 4 co-authored:

Literature review paper:

1. Põdder, H. (2011). Employment of Mothers and Fathers: A Comparison of Welfare States in Scandinavia and Estonia (85-102). In: *Baltic Journal of European Studies* (Vol 1, no 2 (10), September 2011). Tallinn: Tallinn University of Technology.

Research papers:

2. Põdder, H. (2013). Nation-state ‘political ineptitude’ revealed in a citizen’s identity processes? A case study using Identity Structure Analysis (136-154). In: *Baltic Journal of European Studies* (Vol 3, Issue 1).
3. Põdder, H., Kirch, A. (2013). Combining work and family life: attitudes and their implementation - mothers and fathers in Estonia, Sweden and Finland. In: *EUROPEAN INTEGRATION STUDIES* (2013. No 7).
4. Põdder, H., Põder, K. (2014). The Societal Context of Significant others: Comparative Perceptions of Mother- and Fatherhood in Sweden, Finland and Estonia. In: *European Scientific Journal* (vol.11, No.10, No.11 and No.12; April 2015 edition).

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## **Abbreviations**

EU – European Union  
EM – Estonian men  
EW – Estonian women  
FM – Finnish men  
FW – Finnish women  
ISA – Identity Structural Analysis  
SM – Swedish men  
SW – Swedish women

# 1 CONTEXTUALISATION

## 1.1 G. Esping-Andersen's Welfare State as Background for Family Policy

The concept of the 'welfare state' (Esping-Andersen 1990; 1999; 2009) emerged in the post-war decades. According to several authors (e.g., Esping-Andersen 1999; Shcoon et al. 2005), welfare states provide citizens with resources that affect their earnings potential, primarily services that reduce social risks (life course risks, inter-generational risks, class risks) through the provision of education, health care, training programmes, and support to working mothers. The welfare state becomes especially important for the very young, the elderly, for mothers and fathers who temporarily cannot participate in the labour market because of caring responsibilities, and for working parents who are in need of support with childcare. In these cases, if the market fails, citizens will seek recourse in either the family or the government. Family 'failure' according to Esping-Andersen (1999; 2009) is the transmission of care services out of the family because of women attending paid work. Modern societies face cumulative problems of failure and neither markets nor families are capable of responding adequately to social needs. In the case of double welfare failure, only the welfare state remains. The current thesis elaborates on life course risks in the context of parenthood.

In 1990 Esping-Andersen (1990; 1999) classified and characterized in his monograph three distinct regimes (Table 2) of the modern welfare state – three ideal-type categories, as noted by Ebbinghaus (2012).

Table 2. *Esping-Andersen's (1990; 1999) three distinct welfare regimes*

<b>Welfare Regime</b>	<b>Characteristics</b>
<u>The 'liberal' regime</u> (Represents Anglo-Saxon countries)	Favours minimal public intervention; assuming that the majority of citizens can obtain adequate welfare from the market; preference for targeting public benefits to the neediest, traditionally via means-testing.
<u>The 'social-democratic'</u> (Nordic countries, represented in the current thesis by Finland and Sweden)	Emphasises universal inclusion and its comprehensive definition of social entitlements; trying to equalize living conditions across the citizenry; boosts female labour supply; service-intensive welfare state.
<u>The 'conservative'</u> (The majority of Continental European countries)	Social insurance often connected with occupational distinctions; historically has helped cement the male-breadwinner logic of social protection; assuming that primary welfare responsibilities lie with family members; policies towards reconciling motherhood and careers are relatively undeveloped.

As Ebbinghaus (2012, 2-3) has emphasized, hybrid types of welfare states also exist in empirical cases. Various authors have described more specific welfare state types. According to its socio-historical differences, Estonia fits the ‘post-Soviet welfare state’ (Appleton, Hantrais 2000, 6) or Ebbinghaus’s (2012, 15) ‘Central and Eastern Europe’ classification. In Estonia’s case the modern welfare state as a choice option became possible in the beginning of the 1990s, a period that brought about changes on the state level as well as in the attitudes of the population.

Esping-Andersen (1990; 1999; 2009) tightly connected the future of a welfare state with the altered position of women in its society. According to several authors (e.g. Esping-Andersen et al., 2002; Esping-Andersen, 2009), “women have experienced a ‘masculinisation’ of their life course preferences” in Europe. However, according to Esping-Andersen (2009), the women’s revolution has not yet been met with an adequate policy response (e.g. job security of mothers, ways to “feminise” the male life course, and the adjustment of institutions that support the balancing of work and family life), and this is the reason for low fertility, not the citizens’ unwillingness to have children. The postponement of first births is a logical response to a lack of change in social policy in the context of parenthood (De Graaf & Sprangers, 1999; Olah, Bernardt & Goldscheider, 2002; Gustafsson & Kenjoh, 2004; OECD, 2011a).

Subsequently, it is important to discuss new problems that appear alongside the changing position of women in society, both on the micro and macro levels. Firstly, on the micro level, trends such as women’s tendency to have fewer children and/or postpone family formation affects macro indicators such as long-term population stability and growth, and also brings about increased marital instability and the proliferation of “atypical” families. The latter, without institutional change, contributes to the increasing material vulnerability of women and children. Secondly, macro effects, such as the new division of labour caused by large numbers of women working outside the home, redistribute labour by creating more social and elderly care jobs. Thus, the central question for society to address when developing new policy measures is how such measures would help balance work and family life, as has been pointed out by several authors (De Graaf & Sprangers, 1999; Esping-Andersen, 2009; Ainsaar & Maripuu, 2008).

Two possible models have been proposed for solving the problems caused by changes in the labour market and parents’ roles in EU Member States: full employment, and a combination of work and family life (Employment, Economic Reform and Social Cohesion 2000; EC 2000; EC 2006; Leira, 2010), accompanied by changing gender stereotypes (EC, 2006; Consolidated versions, 2008, Art. 8; EC, 2011a, b). As pointed out by the OECD report (2007), countries with policies that facilitate women’s employment through more family-friendly approaches are those with the highest fertility rates (Employment rate, 2013; Eurostat, 2012). Figure 2 (p. 16) below illustrates the total proportion of women of working age in the labour market (aged 20-64) and fertility rates (live births per woman) in three states – Sweden, Finland and Estonia. As the data show, in the three countries presented the fertility rate and women’s employment rate are positively correlated. Fertility rates as well as women’s employment rates have risen between 2000 and 2011. As was pointed out in the

statistical report *Parents at Work* (2014, 3), Sweden is the only EU Member State that has already reached the 2020 employment rate target of the EU (75% for both women and men between 20 and 64 year old).

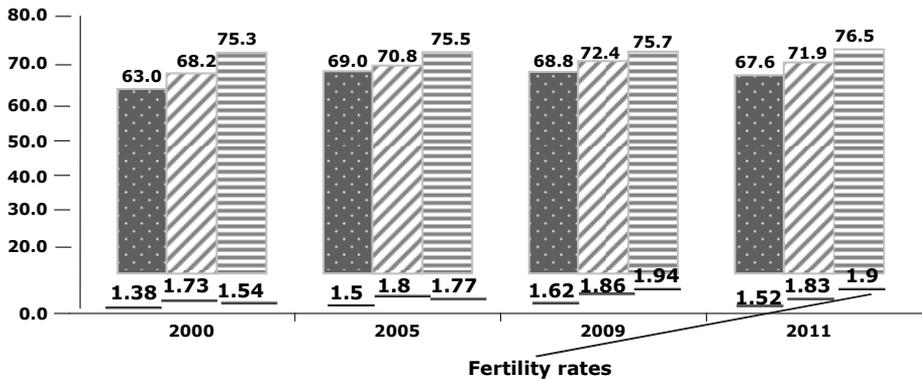


Figure 2. The total proportion of women of working age (aged 20-64) in the labour market (columns) and total fertility rates (in 2000, 2005, 2009 and in 2011). Sources: *Employment rate, by sex (2013)*; *Total fertility rate, 1960-2011 (live births per woman) (2012)*. In the four blocks: 1. columns – Estonia; 2. columns – Finland; 3. columns – Sweden. Produced by the author

However, women's participating in paid work has brought to light several issues both on the individual and the societal level. Firstly, changes in the labour market cause changes in the roles of women and men not only as workers, but also as parents. Secondly, an issue exists concerning gender equality within the double roles of parents. Even though, in addition to the breadwinner model, the model of a caring father has developed in the Western world since in the mid-1990s, the new model of fatherhood has not been very successful in reducing the workload of mothers at home (Esping-Andersen, Gallie, Hemerijck & Myles, 2002; Esping-Andersen, 2009; Leira, 2010). Paper 1 discussed the equality gap, which is more sharply observed in Estonia but also exists in Finland and Sweden (Tackling the gender pay gap in the European Union 2014, 12-13). In Estonia, this women's double burden has relatively recent roots in the Soviet regime, and is widely acknowledged as an acceptable norm even today. As Esping-Andersen and Myles (2008) and Leira (2010) pointed out, it is difficult to change familial attitudes because of the need to accept the privacy of the family, though all three countries are trying to improve matters in this domain.

## 1.2 Family types in the context of work and family time

This chapter concentrates on authors who have discussed family matters as topical questions appeared in the context of social policy at a particular time and place, and on authors who have developed new models of family types in their research. The author of this thesis focuses on the readiness of parents to behave according to one of the family

types classified by Leira (2010) among other matters (classification follows below). The process through which family types (i.e. models) are developed will be described according to the authors who have established new ideas in the field. As family types change, several accompanying topics emerge. Of these, the current thesis focuses on the following: the parents' roles inside and outside the family, and the factors which influence the number of children in families.

The author of the thesis has pointed out in paper 1 that changes at the state level will take place in the following order:

- the need for women to participate in the labour market;
- the adaptation of policy measures to changes in the labour market; and
- changes at the population level, which is the slowest process of the three.

Resolving the work-family-time conflict—how to offer backup and security to parents, mainly mothers participating in the labour market—has always been one of the most important issues for welfare state social policy makers. The work-family-time conflict is not a new issue for welfare states, having been present in Europe since the 1940s (despite the term “welfare state” coming into use later, see section 1.1), even during World War II when female labour force was in demand. Figure 3 below demonstrates the main stages in accepting new motherhood and fatherhood at the government level in Europe since the 1940s.

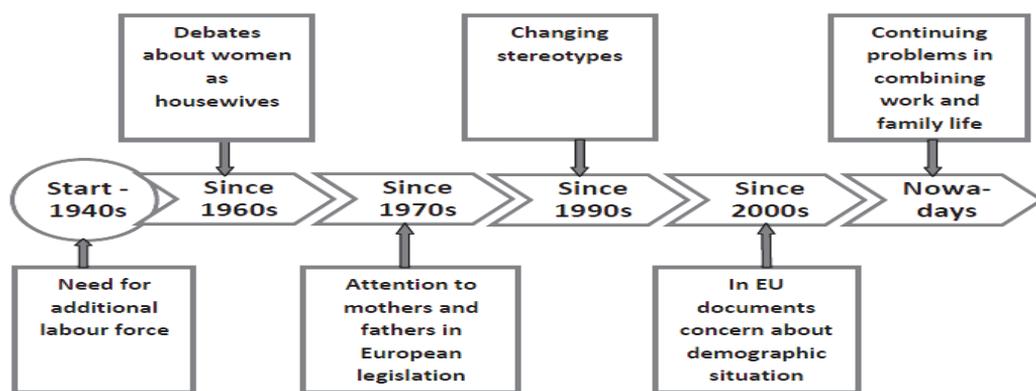


Figure 3. The development of the legislative background in acceptance of new motherhood and fatherhood in Europe since 1940s. Produced by the author

According to Newman (2009) and Seccombe (2012), family in the modern world continues to change and EU Member States face a choice as to which models of work and family to support. Families are changing in accordance with the changes in the structure of the labour force, but the change also presupposes parents' adapting to new roles inside and outside of the family. Many researchers have focused on the changes that have led from traditional segregated roles towards more joint forms of relationships, housework/domestic responsibilities, and paid work balance in a partnership (e.g., Young & Wilmott, 1973; Oakley, 1974; Aldous, 1982; Giddens, 1992; Duncombe & Marsden, 1995; Hobson, 2002; Lammi-Taskula, 2006; Strandh & Nordenmark, 2006;

Thevenon, 2008; Forsberg, 2009; Jordan, 2009). All the aforementioned authors have found that individuals are not very eager to adopt new roles, which means that the imbalance between work and family life still exists, and that it is important to find new flexible measures to support families within the framework of social policy measures. From an empirical perspective, commemorative studies (Maron & Meulders, 2007; Ainsaar & Paajanen, 2009; Rønsen & Skrede, 2010) and single case studies (Ainsaar & Oras, 2000; Hoem, 2000) have found that the most problematic topic is the double burden of women. Duncombe and Marsden (1995) have even described women's 'triple shift' of obligations: paid work, housework, and emotional work. In Estonia's case, insecurity in the labour market adds to women's double burden.

Already in 1905 Weber (2005), and later Goode in 1963, examined the changing family structure – they indicated that the extended family structure as the norm belonged to the pre-industrial society because of its multifunctional efficiency. Both authors discussed predictable changes in family patterns in the setting of a capitalistic economy where the individual's independence becomes important. Goode (1963) analysed existing data from all over the world in his macro-sociological study of the family and found that individuals had become less dependent on extended family groups during the industrial revolution in the West, and concluded that other societies would go through the same family structure changes.

In 1955, Parsons (1966) first described the 'model family of industrialism', in which he saw men (as fathers) as economic providers and women (as mothers, i.e., married women) as homemakers. In 1956, in parallel with the Parsons model, Myrdal and Klein (1968) presented a new family model in light of the inescapable fact that married women 'go out' to participate in paid work on a sequential basis, meaning that family forms were changing towards dual-earners.

According to Goffmann (1977, p. 301) the term *arrangement between the sexes*, i.e. the need to find new forms of family, the labour market and the welfare state, was taken into use in the context of work and family time balance. Up to the 1970s, European policies mention only participation in the labour market, whereas from the 1970s onward, legislation in Europe already highlights both fathers and mothers as employees, for example in connection to allowing them absence from work to carry out childcare responsibilities (Leira 2010, 11–12). Based on the rethinking of parenthood in policies in 1970s' Scandinavia, the 'shared roles model' was formulated by Liljeström (1978), in which women and men do not have gender-based obligations.

Van Dongen (2009) argued that the 'Complete Combination Model' (in which both men and women in the professional population combine their professional, family and other activities in a balanced way during their life course, preventing one of the basic activities from becoming threatened or neglected) is the most suitable long-term policy model for all democratic welfare states.

Two authors, Leira (2010, 4-5) and Ellingsaetter (1998, 59-73), presented three types of families which can be adopted as a basis for policy measures (Table 3, p. 19).

Table 3. Three family types by Leira and Ellingsaetter

Family type	Characteristics
Leira's: <u>specialisation of the roles of mother and father</u> ('model family of industrialism'); Ellingsaeter: <u>father as sole provider</u> .	"Naturally", mothers are homemakers and carers, while fathers are economic providers.
Leira's: <u>the sequential employment of mothers</u> ; Ellingsaeter: <u>mother as junior provider</u> .	Mothers taking over the responsibilities of the economic provider during periods when paid work does not conflict with motherly duties. This is an early version of a dual-earner family model.
Leira's: <u>'shared roles model'</u> ; Ellingsaeter: <u>equal providers</u> .	Both mothers and fathers are employees and take care of children.

Leira's and Ellingsaeter's three family types were the basis of discussion in papers 1 and 3, where the author compared the three welfare states in the aspect of parents' attitudes towards the equal sharing of responsibilities as parents at home and as employees in the labour market. Based on theory and data, it was concluded in paper 1 that in their attitudes and strategies the EU Member States are active supporters of Leira's 'shared roles model', even though the strength and realization of policy measures varies among the states. Women and men are shifting towards the third model in their labour market behaviours, but behaviour on the level of the family indicates that in reality the second family type, the early version of a dual-earner family model, is more common.

Leira (2010), Van Lancker and Ghysels (2012) have argued that childcare acts are a precondition for parents to engage in employment. Childcare is inarguably a substantial part of family policy and plays an important role in the context of the 'gender contract' (Leira 2010, 4). Childcare acts are beyond the scope of this thesis, but the above-mentioned facts offer some background information – in Sweden and Finland the availability and quality of childcare is a current and topical question; in Estonia the availability and cost of childcare is a problem for parents (the Estonian context was researched recently by Roosalu 2012).

The current thesis focuses on the readiness of mothers and fathers on a basic level to share responsibilities at home. Even when childcare is readily available in various forms and conditions, the issue of the supporting role of childcare policies for mothers participating in the labour market remains. Some basic questions still need to be answered: who is willing to stay home with an ill child? Who takes children to and from childcare? It should be noted that in EU countries where data are available parental leave is mainly taken by mothers. The discussion brings us once again to the willingness of citizens to assume parent roles of a certain kind, and to a particular social context as the background for understanding the roles of mothers and fathers and the readiness of parents to adopt parenting roles with new meanings. As Connell (e.g.) stated in 2002, gender is not an attribute of individuals but a social relationship – it crosses individual subjectivities, institutions, culture and language. Newman (2009, 5) has noted that family is socially constructed – it is a matter of collective definition and human agreement.

Orloff (2009, 2) also discussed that feminist scholars, rather than developing a new totalizing theory, seek to understand men's and women's diverse gendered dispositions, capacities, resources, goals and modes of problem solving, deployed in gendered political action. As was pointed out by Orloff in 1996, gender relations cannot be understood without the wider context of the state, politics and policy.

### **1.3 The family policies of Sweden, Finland and Estonia**

The modern family policies of Nordic welfare states are tools which encourage not only EU Member States but societies over the world to move towards the so-called Scandinavian social model. In 1999 Esping-Andersen (Table 5.4) described the Swedish model as a 'social democratic' welfare state model example. Many authors (e.g., Anxo 2006, 20; Ferrarini, Duvander 2009) have suggested that Sweden is a primary case for comparative gender and family policy analysts. Aspects of these policies have become a point of reference for policy makers in other advanced welfare states (*Families report 2009*, 3).

In Estonia the legal framework for family policy is very explicit in regulating family obligations and duties, but financial pressures limit the amount of support that the government can provide for families (Appleton, Hantrais 2000, 68; CFB-Estonia 2012). Comparing the data regarding the percentage of GDP invested in social benefits targeted towards families and/or children reveals that Estonia invests less (1,7%) in the mentioned domain than Finland and Sweden do (both 3%). The majority of EU welfare states invest between 1% and 2% (Wall, Pappámikail, Leitão, Marinho 2009, 10).

However, a comparison of the data related to the most topical family policy objectives of 2009 (data: Wall, Pappámikail, Leitão, Marinho 2009, 24-26) in Estonia, Finland and Sweden (see Figure 4 below, p. 21) reveals that the state pays high attention to the pro-natalist objective only in Estonia, and none of the three pay remarkable attention to large families. Based on the data (Figure 4) it is also possible to say that the Estonian welfare state offers less financial aid to families in general and provides fewer services for children.

The following nine important aspects can be observed in the family policies of Sweden, Finland and Estonia: path-dependency, the dual-earner family, gender equality, children's rights, childcare services, full employment, flexibility, the 'caring father' and 'state feminism', and incentives. While these aspects are similar and important in all three countries, it is possible to point out some differences when taking a closer look at the pillars of family policy in each country. In Sweden and Finland policies have been stable and long-lasting (=path-dependency) (Hantrais 2006; CM-Finland 2012; Haas 1996). In Estonia's case the socio-historical context of family policy is different in comparison to its northern neighbours and it first needs to forswear its soviet legacy of stereotypes and beliefs. It is important for all three welfare states to value all children equally by, for example, providing the same standard and quality childcare services to the poor and the rich (Esping-Andersen 2007). All countries under examination in this thesis have enabled father's leave (Brantner 2010, 4-5; Duvander, Lappegard, Andersson 2010; Isapuhkus ja lapsepuhkus 2014).

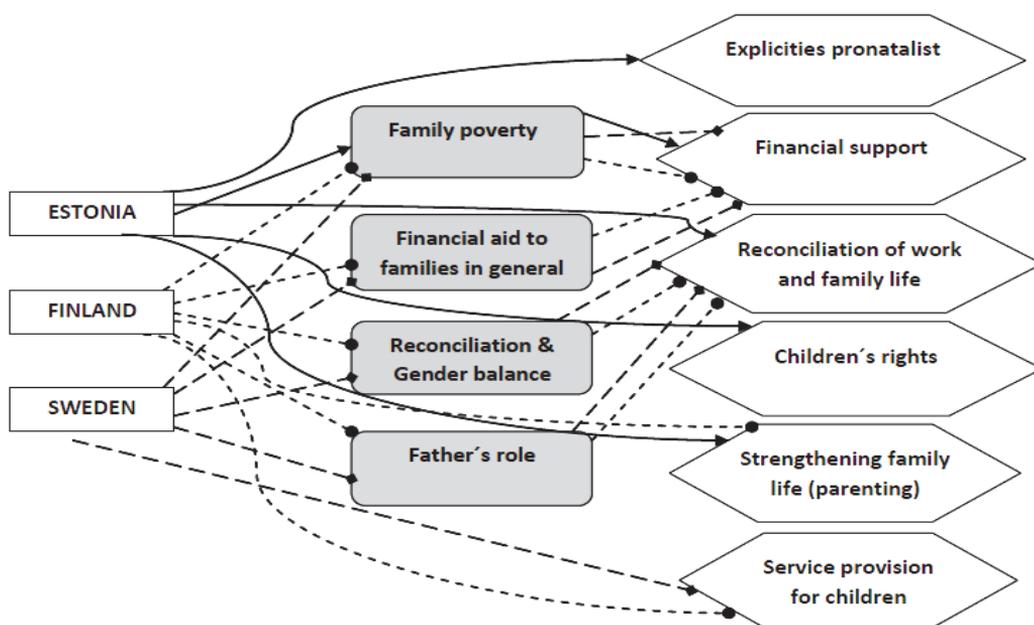


Figure 4. Family policy objectives in Estonia, Finland and Sweden in 2009 (data: Wall, Pappámikail, Leitão, Marinho 2009, 24-26). Current figure produced by the author

The family policies of all three countries support the dual-earner model, but they implement their support in slightly different ways. Increasing parents' possibilities to reconcile work and family life is one of the pillars of the Swedish and Finnish family policy models, whereas the Estonian family policy model does not appear to include this objective. Data show (e.g., OECD, 2011, 16) that in Sweden and Finland both the state and employers encourage women to adopt flexible work time patterns.

Figures 5 to 7 (pp. 22-23) illustrate the family policy models of Sweden, Finland and Estonia respectively. The models represent a summary of applied policy studies. The white and grey boxes together indicate the ingredients of the family policies, whereas grey boxes indicate the pillars (pointed out as pillars in the referred literature) of the family policies of each country.

In Sweden, the dual-earner family model has gradually been reinforced by good quality public day-care, earnings-related parental leave, the individualised income taxation of spouses (Ferrarini, Duvander 2009) and both parents' equal responsibility to raise their children (joint custody legislation) (Esping-Andersen 2007; Ferrarini, Duvander 2009). The Swedish family policy model may be called an 'individual-centred security' model. Individualisation with its changed values and norms is the emergence of a new lifestyle which Anxo (2006, 1-2), and Aspalter (2001, 15) have classified as a living standard security providing model. The incentives can be taken as an example of individualisation - in Sweden and Estonia, the current family policy uses the measure of parent compensation to encourage women to focus on their career before having

children (The changing face of motherhood in Western Europe — Sweden 2012, 6; Rønsen & Skrede 2010, 323-324; Vanemahüvitise seadus, RT I, 16.05.2013, 43).

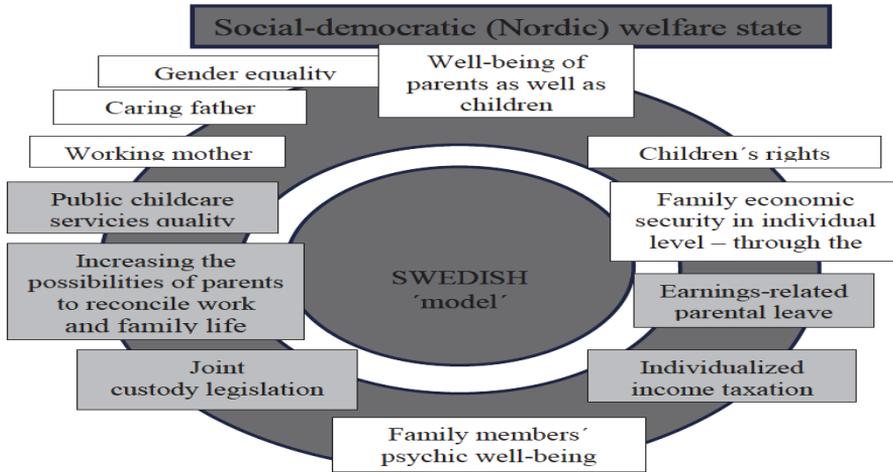


Figure 5. The Swedish family policy model. Sources: Esping-Andersen (2007); Ferrarini, Duvander (2009); Leira (2010); Rønsen & Skrede (2010). Produced by the author

In the Swedish and Finnish family policy models, a family member's psychological wellbeing is given importance, while in the Estonian family policy model psychological well-being is not so deeply emphasized – the policy focuses on general improvement of the well-being and quality of life of children and families.

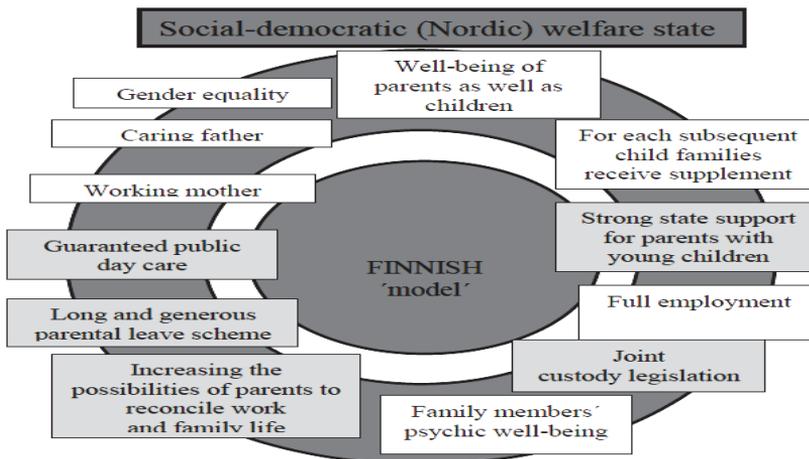


Figure 6. The Finnish family policy model. Sources: Finland: Towards a healthy balance between work and family life (2012); The changing face of motherhood in Western Europe — Finland 2012 (2012); Child and Family Policy in Finland (2013). Produced by the author

As already mentioned, one of the pillars of the Finnish family policy model is increasing a parent's possibilities to reconcile work and family life. This pillar is supported by long and generous parental leave schemes, generally strong state aid for parents with young children (Child and Family Policy in Finland 2013), and public day-care for every child (Finland: Towards a healthy balance 2012). The concept of a caring father is without a doubt an important objective of the family policy model in both Finland and Sweden. It clearly adds security and thus improves the psychological well-being of family members, together with joint custody legislation, gender equality, and keeping parents' jobs secure during their child-raising duties. The Finnish family policy model may be called a 'family-centred interests' model, where policy measures are based on the mother and father as the common foundation of the family. So both Swedish and Finnish family policies are individual-based in regards to labour market participation but in whole are based more on both parents as the foundation of the family. Davaki (2010, 8) handled the Swedish and Finnish family policy model as a 'valued care model' in which care is a joint public/private responsibility by providing parents with the opportunity to take parental leave in order to care for young children; offering financial compensation and guaranteeing job security; giving access to quality care services; and encouraging fathers to take parental leave (to help divide care responsibilities equally).

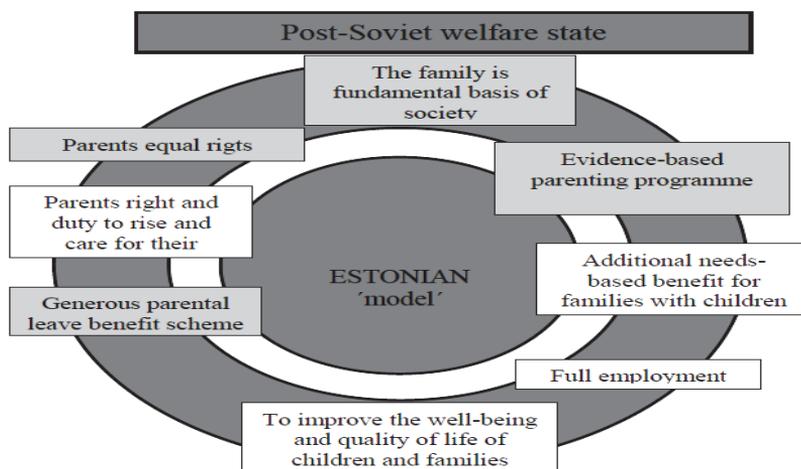


Figure 7. The Estonian family policy model.

Sources: Estonia: child and family benefits set to become most important next political issue (2012); Eesti Vabariigi põhiseadus (RT 1992, 26, 349); Measuring child poverty (2012). Produced by the author

One of the mainstays of the Estonian family policy is a generous parental leave benefit scheme. However, even though national campaigns have been held in Estonia to affirm and prioritize the father's role as a carer in the family (e.g., *Laps ei ole nukk!* - *The child is not a doll!* 2004), the caring father concept is still not under as much focus

as in the family policies of Finland and Sweden. Estonian family policy measures focus on mothers and children despite being based on gender equality and the equal rights of both mothers and fathers (*Laste ja perede arengukava 2012–2020* (2011/2013, 12-13). In Estonia, families in the poverty risk group are supported by needs-based benefits – this principle differs from the one in Swedish and Finnish family policy models where the emphasis is on measures directed at preventing families with children from falling into poverty. The Estonian family policy model may be called an ‘effect-based model’, but, similar to the Swedish and Finnish models, supporting full employment is an important individual-based method for preventing poverty. Unfortunately reconciling work and family life is still a problem in Estonia, especially for parents who have a child or children aged under two (CFB-Estonia 2012). The provision of childcare is one of the most pressing issues in Estonia and it is commonly believed that women have more difficulties coping with childcare without a partner’s support (CFB-Estonia 2012).

Based on this and previous subchapters, it can be concluded that the family policies of the three states studied bear both similarities and differences. All in all, each of the states has formed their own unique package of measures to support families in the combining of work and family life on the basis of the specific needs of the country, parents and cultural background. However, comparing the data in Figure 2 (Chapter 1.1) and the indicators in Figures 4, 5, 6 and 7, it can be argued that even though Estonia has chosen liberal economic development (compared to the Nordic social democratic path of development), and the family policy decisions have been made mostly on the macro level, birth rates are not notably different. Based on Figure 2 it can be said that the birth rates depend on the opportunity for women to have security (=flexibility) in the labour market, as was discussed in papers 1, 2 and 3. It can also be presumed based on the discussion in paper 1 that attitudes towards the roles of women (=mothers) and men (=fathers) in Estonia are more traditional, which can be a negative factor in women’s (=mothers) financial stability. Therefore, it can be assumed that birth rates are dependent on women’s financial security. It is also important to emphasize gender equality (as discussed in paper 1) as one of the factors that affect birth rates. Following the indicators of gender equality of the three investigated states in Figures 4, 5, 6 and 7, it can be seen that gender equality is one of the key features of Finnish and Swedish family policies, which is not the case with Estonian family policy – instead of gender equality the focus is on the parents’ equal responsibilities in raising children. The following chapters aim to explore if—and to which extent—the respondents are satisfied with the packages provided by their states. It is also important to assess parents’ satisfaction with particular components of the measure packages. Another issue to be investigated is the parents’ satisfaction with their own roles inside and outside the family, and with their ability to combine work and family life. The method of Identity Structure Analysis (ISA) was used to explore and study these matters. The following subchapter aims to introduce this method.

## **2 THE EMPIRICAL METHOD: IDENTITY STRUCTURE ANALYSIS**

The purpose of this section is to: 1) together with an overview of the ISA concepts and tools, to explain through the sociological perspective of individuals and groups why Weinreich's Identity Structure Analysis was chosen for use in this field work research; 2) discuss the weaknesses of the chosen method, therefore the possible problems of using ISA as an empirical method are also discussed.

### **2.1 The methodological characteristics and theoretical underpinnings of ISA**

In 1959 Mills was one of the first to write about the sociological perspective – seeing and recognizing the societal patterns that influence individual and group life. Mills (1959) used the term 'sociological imagination' to mean that people see the world differently and defined it as the ability to see the societal patterns that influence both the individual and groups of individuals. Andersen, Taylor (2009) and Seccombe (2012) stressed that to understand the experience of a given person or group of people, it is necessary also to consider and understand the social and historical context in which they lived and/or continue to live.

According to Newman (2009) and Seccombe (2012) families are one of the most important groups in societies to affect the quality of people's lives. All societies have to find reliable strategies of reproduction, and in this context the attitudes, behaviours, and experiences of family members, formed in the society in which they live, are important links and should be prioritized in research into family matters. The ISA method was chosen for this purpose in this thesis.

As Weinrich (2003,1) has pointed out, the ISA is not merely a method but an open-ended conceptual framework providing an interface between disciplines such as psychology, sociology and social anthropology, and related subject areas such as political science, economics, social policy, education, and so on, because of the common lines between the subject matters of these disciplines. That makes ISA a fascinating tool for studying social phenomena at the individual level. First, it proposes an open-ended metatheoretical framework of concepts and postulates about content, structure and processes of a person's identity. Weinreich (1989a, 234) also stresses that ISA is not an „identity theory“, but a “theoretical orientation to identify phenomena”. The aim of the ISA concepts and postulates is to assist the theoretical analysis of a variety of contextualized issues dealing with processes of self-definition and a person's identity development and change, and enables to empirically derive theoretical propositions from the particular study where it has been used. As a whole these concepts and outcomes stand for more adequate and complete explanations for issues in investigations (Weinreich 2003, 107).

ISA is based on highlighting the distinction between the two “oneselves”: 1) the view that others have of oneself, and 2) the view that one ascribes to oneself. Then a profound analysis of several identity theories and approaches is performed and accompanied by

the application of special computer software to support data analysis. According to Weinreich (2010b, 126) it is therefore possible to say that ISA is a common method for investigating selfhood as identity in its individual and general meanings, a method which, consisting of explicit definitions of psychological concepts and theoretical postulates about identity processes, is operationalized for empirical studies using the specialized computer software Ipeus (Weinreich & Ewart 2007).

The common method is one of the necessary conditions for cross-person and cross-situational comparisons and generalisations. The method of analysis should employ a common system of categories and attributes. Therefore, as Weinreich has posited (2003, xix), ISA is aimed at tracking the development of identities in both the sense of the unique and the generic – how people appraise their situations; the events in which they play a part and their own way of activity (characters and roles) in these events.

The study aims were approached from three angles: Mill's sociological perspective; the necessity to understand a person's social and historical context, emphasized by Andersen, Taylor and Seccombe; and people's continuous appraisal process in their social context, theorized by Weinreich. The first significant step in the study on which the empirical outcome of the current thesis is based was to provide a literature and statistics based background on topical issues related to balancing work and family life for Europe in general and for the three countries under investigation: Estonia, Finland and Sweden (see Appendix 1: „Employment of Mothers and Fathers: A Comparison of Welfare States in Scandinavia and Estonia”). The study instrument was designed based on the family and work life balance issues highlighted in the mentioned article.

The methodological characteristics and theoretical underpinnings of ISA are subsequently explicated. According to Weinreich (2003, xix), a key principle of the ISA approach is: *A person's appraisal of the social world and its significance is an expression of his or her identity.*

The methodological characteristics of ISA can represent both quantitative and qualitative approaches. ISA as a method can be used to explore processes on both an individual and a group level due to identity operationalization – a structured methodological schema, partly depending on Boolean algebraic procedures, which enables the transformation of idiographic, qualitative information into ‘normalized’ quantitative indices. These indices make it possible to compare respondents on both an individual and a group level. ISA as a method enables comparisons and generalisations to be made from case to case (Weinreich 1997; Weinreich 2003). Thus the author considers ISA to be a suitable empirical tool for investigating identity processes in a study focusing on father- and motherhood; at the same time these identity processes help understand the role of the social context as the background to the respondents' parenthood.

ISA enables the analysis of an individual's identity structure within the value system of that particular individual. In a study the value system can be determined from data in terms of **significant others** – entities, and constructs (bipolar propositions). When starting to design an ISA investigation instrument for a particular research context a researcher has to carry out an appropriate pilot inquiry on an individual level to build up a unique investigation instrument, thereafter using the instrument on a group level.

Moreover, it means that each ISA instrument constructed by a researcher is unique and designed for particular target group/groups.

As Weinreich (2003, 7-20, Chapter 1) has stated, the theoretical underpinnings of ISA are a series of self and identity conceptualisations, aspects of which are integrated within the method:

- the psychodynamic approach (identity over the lifespan through identifications) - applied by E. H. Erikson (1950; 1959a, b; 1968), J. Marcia (1980; 1987; Marcia et al. 1993), R. D. Laing (1960; 1961; Laing & Esterson 1964), E. Berne (1961, 1964);
- symbolic interactionism (identity through communication) – applied by G. H. Mead (1934); C. H. Cooley (1953), H. S. Sullivan (1953), S. Stryker (1980), A. J. Weigert (1983), E. Goffman (1959; 1963; 1981) , J. Shotter and K. J. Gergen (1989);
- self-concept, social identity and self-esteem (identity through society) – applied by M. Rosenberg (1965; 1981), S. Coopersmith (1967), S. Harter (1982; 1990; Harter & Monsour 1992), H. Tajfel (1981), J. C. Turner (Turner et al. 1987), M. A. Hogg and D. Abrams (1999);
- construal and appraisal (identity by way of idiosyncratic personal constructions – applied by G. A. Kelly (1955), M. B. Arnold (1960), R. S. Lazarus (1966; 1991; Lazarus & Folkman 1984), R. A. Schweder (1991);
- cognitive-affective consistency theory (identity subject to emotional and cognitive pressures) – applied by F. Heider (1958), C. E. Osgood and P. H. Tannenbaum (1955), M. J. Rosenberg and R. P. Abelson (1960; Abelson et al. 1968), L. Festinger (1957), R. Wickland and J. Brehm (1976), E. Aronson (1992);
- social anthropology and indigenous psychologies (identity located in the cultural context) – applied by R. A. Schweder (1991), B. Pasternack, C. R. Ember and M. Ember (1997), J. Valsiner (2000);
- the fundamental issue of ‘agency’: applied by R. Harré (1998) – (the agentic self)”. P. Weinreich highlights R. Harré’s concept of ‘self’, where - self 1 (the person’s identity which provides the enduring concept of agency or uniqueness that continues over the time); self 2 (the person’s identity which interacts with another – people or other agencies); self 3 (people or other agencies interaction with person). ISA embraces self 2 and self 3.

The following empirical studies have used ISA: a study on female entrepreneurship (MacNabb et al. 1993); female academics’ private and professional identity (Wager 1994); female anorectic and bulimic patients (Harris 1998); ethnic and national identity (Kirch et al. 1997; Weinreich, et al. 2003); urban population attitudes towards the European Union (Kirch et al. 2004); patients diagnosed with a ‘personality disorder’ (Malone 2006); identity processes in migrant communities (Weinreich 2009); catholicism and nationalism in Northern and Southern Ireland (Stapleton and Northover 2010); the identity processes of extreme Islamist and anti-extremist Muslims (Weinreich 2010a); the ethno-national identities of Estonian and Russian youth (Tuisk 2012). However, ISA as a field investigation method has not been used before in the context of parenthood in ageing European societies (Sweden, Finland and Estonia in this research). Earlier research in other fields has shown that it is possible to extract new and meaningful data by using the ISA method.

According to Weinreich (2003), ISA sees identity as a continuous process, emerging from identifications with others in the socio-biographical context throughout childhood and beyond hence to processes of identity development and redefinition of identity. People evaluate the world in which they live through the identifications they have made with others. The two central aspects of ISA are 1) one's appraisal and reappraisal oneself in flux and 2) etic and emic. Firstly, a person appraises and reappraises oneself through biographical experience and reflection over time, elaborating, refining, expanding and constructing one's perspectives on life, people and the self – one's identity is open-ended and continuously in flux, ranging from gradual updatings when the self merely keeps in touch with contemporary times, to major transitions when the self makes life-changing decisions (applied by Weinreich 2003, 77). Secondly, there is the assessment of psychological dimensions postulated as being cross-cultural universals – etics – given that culturally specific interpretations characterise the indigenous psychologies of local cultures – emics (Weinreich 2003, 77). Identity cannot be understood without its particular social and historical context. Context has many layers in this thesis, but the main focus is on the socio-political context of the Scandinavian and Estonian societies as it relates to family policies.

## 2.2 Identity in the context of Identity Structure Analysis

In this section: 1) the aspects of a person's identity are defined within the ISA context; 2) the set of algorithms that direct the computational procedures for assessing ISA parameters of identity will be given (as used in the ISA operational software Ipseus). Figure 8 below illustrates the basis for constructing an identity instrument: there are ten aspects of a person's identity defined within the ISA context relevant to this thesis; and the cultural context (society and significant others inside a particular society) for constructing an identity instrument.

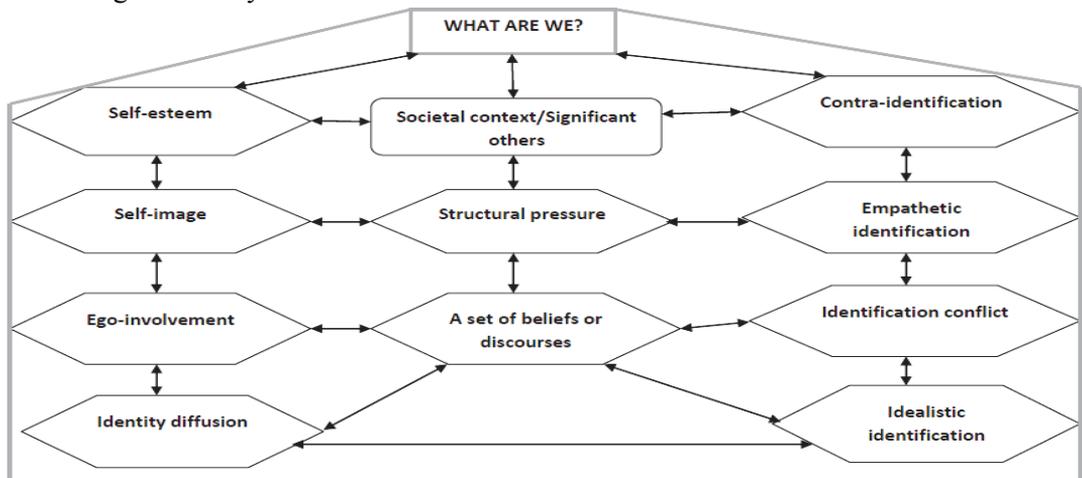


Figure 8. The aspects of a person's identity within the ISA context relevant to this thesis. Schematically constructed by the author from definitions explained below. Produced by the author

Harré (2003, xxii) has emphasized that ISA as a research tool can shed light on the interplay between self-construal and construal of others through the relation of ‘identification with (or not with)’. People identify with significant others who have influence (good or not) over their well-being. They form an *aspirational identification* with others in two aspects when they wish to emulate their prized features or dissociate from their unpalatable aspects.

The two aspects may be conceptualised as being with positive and negative role models – with favoured agents whom the ‘self’ wishes to emulate or despised ones from whom the ‘self’ wishes to dissociate:

- **idealistic-identification** when the self wishes to emulate one’s prized features: *The extent of one’s idealistic-identification with another is defined as the similarity between the qualities one attributes to the other and those one would like to possess as part of one’s ideal self-image* (Weinreich 2003, 97).

$$(1) \text{ Idealistic-identification with entity } E_i: f_i^I = \frac{I \cap E_i}{I}$$

Where:  $I$  – the ideal self-image attributes;  $E_i$  - those of the other;  $I \cap E_i$  – overlap between  $I$  and  $E_i$ .

- **contra-identification** when the self wishes to dissociate from one’s unpalatable aspects: *The extent of one’s contra-identification with another is defined as the similarity between the qualities one attributes to the other and those from which one would wish to dissociate* (Weinreich 2003, 97).

$$(2) \text{ Contra-identification with entity } E_i: \Phi_i^I = \frac{\tilde{I} \cap E_i}{\tilde{I}}$$

Where:  $\tilde{I} \cap E_i$  represents the negative attributes of  $E_i$ .

- When people recognize in others features of themselves they **identify empathetically** with others: *The extent of one’s current empathetic identification with another is defined as the degree of similarity between the qualities one attributes to the other, whether ‘good’ or ‘bad’, and those of one’s current self-image* (Weinreich 2003, 98).

$$(3) \text{ Empathetic identification with entity } E_i: \Psi_i^c = E_c \cap E_i = \frac{(E_c^+ \cap E_i^+) + (E_c^- \cap E_i^-)}{E_c^+ + E_c^-}$$

Where:  $E_c$  – one’s construal of one’s current self-image;  $E^+$  and  $E^-$  – the positive and negative characteristics attributed to the entity in question.

- In an instance where the self empathetically identifies with another, while simultaneously contra-identifying with another, the self’s identification with the

other is **conflicted**. A person's self may be as the other in several respects, while wishing to dissociate from some of the characteristics of the other – “to be as the other, while not wishing to be” (Weinreich 2010b): *In terms of one's current self-image the extent of one's identification conflict with another is defined as a multiplicative function of one's current empathetic identification and contra-identification with that other* (Weinreich 2003, 100).

(4) *Current conflict in identification with entity  $E_i$ :*

$$K_i^c = \sqrt{((\text{emph identification})_i (\text{contra - identification})_i)} = \sqrt{(\Psi_i^c \Phi_i^c)}$$

- The situation where an individual is unable to reconcile the incompatibilities between his own self-identifications and those of others is interpreted in ISA as **identity diffusion**. People's conflicted identifications with others may be dispersed across several people. A state of high identity diffusion manifests when the self's conflicted identifications with others are both substantial and dispersed across many others: *The degree of one's identity diffusion is defined as the overall dispersion and magnitude of one's identification conflicts with others* (Weinreich 2003, 64, 101).

(5) *Overall current identity diffusion:*  $\Delta_c = \frac{\sum_i G_i K_i^c}{\sum_i G_i}$

Where:  $G_i$  - the person's *ego-involvement* with entity  $E_i$ .

- Empathetic identification, conflicted identifications and the extent of identity diffusion modulate according to situations, contexts and mood states.

One's self is usually much involved with those agents whom one knows well – they impact one with different sway whether one likes it or not. One tends to attribute many qualities and characteristics to these accustomed personas, and by contrast few to remote passers-by. In the ISA context - **ego-involvement** with entities is defined as follows:

*One's ego-involvement with another is defined as one's overall responsiveness to the other in terms of the extensiveness both in quantity and strength of the attributes one construes the other as possessing* (Weinreich 2003, 88).

(6) *Extensiveness of a person's response to  $E_i$ :*  $\sigma_i = \frac{\sum_i |\alpha_j S_{i,j}|}{\sum_j \alpha_j}$

Where:  $\alpha_j$  - one's ego-ratings of the constructs in study instrument one uses;  $s_{i,j}$  - the magnitude of the scores on used characteristics.

- The concept of **evaluation** is understood in two aspects: one's constructions of the self and the perceptions held about identified others.

The same logic can be applied to the different selves - past (e.g. ‘Me before I became a parent’), present (e.g. ‘Me as I am now’), future (e.g. ‘Me as I would like to be’): *One’s evaluation of one’s current (past) self is defined as one’s overall self assessment in terms of the positive and negative evaluative connotations of the attributes one construes as making up one’s current (past) self-image, in accordance with one’s value system* (Weinreich 2003, 90).

$$(7) \text{ Standardised evaluation of current self-image: } \check{R}(E_c) = \frac{R(E_c)}{|\max R|}$$

$$(8) \text{ Standardised evaluation of past self-image: } \check{R}(E_p) = \frac{R(E_p)}{|\max R|}$$

Where:  $R(E_c)$  - given by the expression for  $R(E_i)$  where  $i=c$  (current self-image);  $R(E_p)$  - given by the expression for  $R(E_i)$  where  $i=p$  (past self-image), and  $E_{p1}, E_{p2}, E_{p3} \dots$  represent alternative past biographical/situated selves and identity states.

An individual may be strongly ego-involved with another positively (a person whom one respects and likes immensely) or negatively (a different, distressingly hateful person: *One’s evaluation of another is defined as one’s overall assessment of the other in terms of the positive and negative evaluative connotations of the attributes one construes in that other, in accordance with one’s value system* (Weinreich 2003, 89).

$$(9) \text{ Evaluation of entity } E_i: R(E_i) = \frac{\sum_j \alpha_j S_{i,j}}{\sum_j j}$$

Where: in the situation when the entity obtains a score  $s_{i,j} = 0$ , then  $v_j = 0$ , if not -  $v_j = \alpha_j$  (meaning - the person’s evaluation of another is based only on those constructs used to appraise that other).

- The evaluative component of **self-esteem** can be construed in positive or negative terms, interpreted as a combined assessment of one’s evaluation of one’s current and past self-images: *One’s self-esteem is defined as one’s overall self-assessment in evaluative terms of the continuing relationship between one’s past and current self-images, in accordance with one’s value system* (Weinreich 2003, 90).

$$(10) \text{ Self-esteem: } S = \frac{G_c \check{R}(E_c) + G_p \check{R}(E_p)}{G_c + G_p}$$

- An individual or groups can hold sentiments of **primordialism**, but some individual or groups hold such sentiments as **situationalism**:

*Primordialism — a sentiment, or affect-laden set of beliefs and discourses, about a perceived essential continuity from group ancestry to progeny (perceived kith and kin),*

located symbolically in a specific territory or place (which may or may not be the current place of the people concerned) (Weinreich, Bacova & Rougier 2003, 119).

*Situationalism* — a set of beliefs or discourses about the instrumental and socially constructed nature of the group, in which interpretations and reinterpretations of history provide rationales justifying the legitimacy of a peoplehood (Weinreich, Bacova & Rougier 2003, 119).

- **Structural pressure** enables the researcher to deal with a person’s ‘core evaluative dimension’ of the identity and the ‘conflicted evaluative dimension’ of a person’s identity – through the pressures that arise from the structures of cognitive–affective consonances and dissonances associated with the use of the construct: *The structural pressure on a person’s construct is defined as the overall strength of the excess of compatibilities over incompatibilities between the evaluative connotations of attributions one makes to each entity by way of the one construct and one’s overall evaluation of each entity* (Weinreich 2003, 103).

$$(11) \text{ Standardised structural pressure on construct } j: \Omega_j = \frac{\Omega_j}{\max(\Omega^+ + |\Omega^-|)} \times 100$$

### 2.3 Research strategy: Identity instrument and data analysis

This chapter focuses on the creation of an operating of the ISA and an ISA identity instrument. Figure 9 below (p. 33) demonstrates schematically how the ISA conceptual framework (Identity exploration) operates.

The first step in the ISA method based investigation is to establish the person’s socio-historical context by adding biographical and societal data through empirically grounded theoretical propositions (in the current case: outcomes from previous parenthood studies, Figure 8 – previous investigation). Then, for common processes within groups, each person’s identity parameters are assessed idiographically (for individual analyses) before being collated for nomothetic (for group) analyses. Empirically grounded theoretical propositions may then be derived for criterion groups in the socio-historical context, for another era and a different context. The empirically grounded theoretical propositions will differ in accordance with the norms of the prevailing socio-historical context. As Weinreich (2003, 77-87) has said, the theoretical propositions hold for the eras in question, but can change in time.

To develop the identity instrument, salient themes from previous investigations (ethnographic, sociological, socio-historical etc.) need to be represented in the identity instrument as bipolar constructs, consisting of contrasting discourses about, or representations of, experiences and expectations, beliefs and values, attributes, stereotypes etc. Bipolar constructs are codifications that the person uses to differentiate one meaning from another (statements or discourses) (Weinreich 2003, 81-83). The idea of the ISA method is that no questions are asked from respondents; a person (people)

instead construes the self in a particular society through the identity instrument by evaluating entities and bipolar constructs.

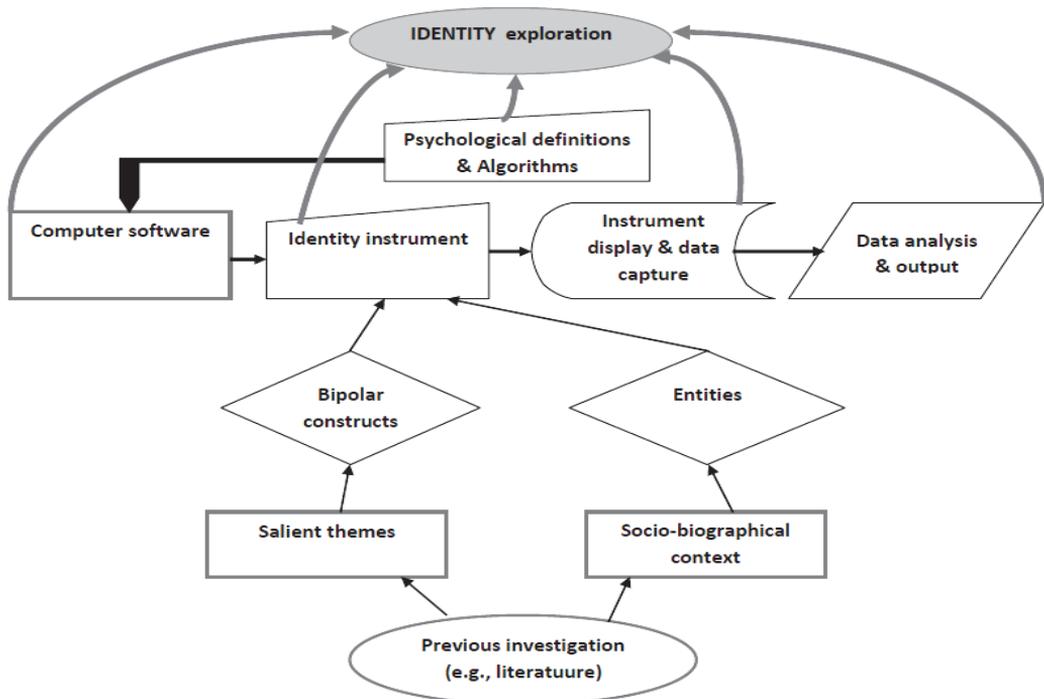


Figure 9. The operating of the method 'Identity Structure Analysis'. Source: Weinreich 2003, 77-87; Weinreich 2010b. Constructed by the author

According to Weinreich (2003, 80-87), the domains of most relevance to the delineated themes to be represented in the identity instrument as entities are: the self in various contexts (e.g.: current self-image – ‘me, as I am now’; past self-image – in current study e.g.: ‘me, before I became a parent’); and other agents (such as people, groups, institutions, emblems, icons, images, events, abstractions, material objects, etc.), whose significance in terms of themes and appraisal in terms of the bipolar constructs is assessed for each person. For example, based on previous studies the variables assigned as significant others in the current thesis are: 1) family – e.g. the respondent’s parents – ‘My mother’/’My father’; 2) wider socio-biographic domains – e.g. ‘Other women’/’Other men’/’Colleagues’/’Friends’; 3) political and public representatives – e.g. ‘the Present government’; ‘the Opposition’; ‘Media’.

The text and syntax of the instrument were formulated by the author using the Ipeus software editor, which relies on psychological definitions, algorithms (explained in Chapter 2.2.) and computer software. The completed instrument is displayed onscreen for the participant's appraisal of the self and the social world. A nine-point centre-zero scale is used to obtain a person’s construal of entities (see Table 4, p. 34: as the instrument looked on paper).

As Harré stresses (2003, xx), ISA has been developed together with a computerised procedure for analysing the huge amount of material that all efforts at detailed and realistic psychological studies tend to produce. The Ipeus software is designed to construct data analysis and primary\_output which serves as the starting point for further germane analysis for the investigator(s).

Table 4. A nine-point centre-zero scale (example). The current table is a fragment from the author's study instrument

<b>Construct 1</b>										
<b>Number of children in the family is positively affected by women actively participating in the job market</b>	4	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	4	<b>Number of children in the family is negatively affected by women actively participating in the job market</b>
<b>Entities (e.g.):</b>										
Me as I am now										
My partner										
My mother										
My father										
Present government										

Source: Weinreich 2003, 85-87.

Comment: the technical guide, to setting up an ISA instrument is available on the address: [http://identityexploration.com/uploads/files/ISA\\_identity\\_instrument\\_guide.pdf](http://identityexploration.com/uploads/files/ISA_identity_instrument_guide.pdf)

In the research (see Appendices 2, 3 and 4) carried out and represented in the current thesis, ISA as a research method enabled to investigate the respondents' (women and men) attitudes towards: combining work and family life; the roles of parents (mothers and fathers); the number of children in the family; expectations towards the state to offer supportive measures that would help combine work and family life; and employers' attitudes towards combining work and family life. The above mentioned subthemes are the subject of in-depth research by the author and have been presented in previous family policy investigations and corresponding statistical data, and enable one to make conclusions.

For the study carried out by the author, an instrument consisting of 22 bipolar constructs and 3 domains with 18 entities (full study instrument: Appendix 3; partly Appendix 2) was constructed.

## 2.4 ISA as an empirical method: critique, alternative investigation methods and advocacy towards the scale-type methods

This subchapter focuses on the critique of ISA and discusses possible alternatives to investigate a person in his or her socio-historical context through the evaluation of one's subjective well-being.

When assessing ISA as an investigation method, it is important to note the following:

- Data collection with ISA is unique and specific to each author because of the need to gather appropriate background data and information, based on which the topical questions and problems are formulated; so the newly designed ISA instruments, even though aimed to study similar issues, might vary from author to author. In view of this, the results may not be replicable. However, in order to understand the study results to full extent, the investigator is obligated to also publish the study instrument they have constructed. If this is taken into consideration, the results can be replicated by using the same published instrument for specific study issues.
- It is a time-consuming data collection method, for both the investigator and the respondent, especially in the case of comparative investigations. The minimum time for a respondent to complete the survey was 40 minutes, and the maximum time 2 hours.
- Because ISA as a method is very time-consuming, it can be said that ISA is not convenient and suitable for very large study groups (for example, 1000 respondents). ISA is suitable for single case investigations (Appendix 2), but also, for example, for a study with 120 respondents (Saunderson 2003, 236-253).
- D. De Lange, F. Agneessens and H. Waeghe (2004, 353) pay attention to how the social network (social context) studies differ from ordinary survey questions: they frequently have a "sensitive" nature or a "threatening character". The respondents might feel that their privacy is being invaded; they might be reluctant to unfold their emotional contacts and relationships with particular social group/groups. Considering this, finding cooperative respondents and preparing them for answering is a time-consuming, yet vital process.

There are a number of scales, the question format favoured by psychologists (by Strack and Shwarz 2007), created and designed for different measurements and based on several theories, but in most cases they are aimed at gathering data in narrow and specific areas. For example, one can look at an investigation method called Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) (created by Bass & Avolio in 1985), presented here as it is described on the homepage of Transformational Leadership (2014). The theory of MLQ is based on J. MacGregor Burns' two basic concepts of "transformational" and "transactional" leadership (1978), and on B. M. Bass and B. Avolio's model of „the full range of leadership". Due to this 1) MLQ as a tool for measuring Transformational Leadership has a set of items that are clear, behaviourally based, and so central to the concepts that there are only four items per concept (scale); 2) numerous independent studies with MLQ consistently showed considerable validity and prediction of organizational performance, it is extensively used by researchers; and 3) MLQ is valid across different cultures and all types of organizations. Similarly to the ISA, MLQ has

theory-based measuring scales and validity across different cultures; they have both passed various improvements over the years, and rely on a person's self-evaluation, providing the possibility of forming data into an organized outcome and offering numerous independent researchers a good assessment method.

The main questions in this thesis are: through evaluating themselves in their social environment, how do empirically studied individuals see themselves as parents, and how they evaluate the state-offered supportive measures that help combine work and family life? As D. De Lange, F. Agneessens, and H. Waege (2004, 352) pointed out - social relations, formal as well as informal, and their influence on people's life decisions have become an important explanatory attribute in social science research. As stated by several authors, gender is a social relationship (e.g., Lorber 1994; Connell, 2002; Orloff, 2009), and family is socially constructed (Newman, 2009) – they are a matter of collective definition and human agreement, they are historically varying and cross individual subjectivities, institutions, culture and language. Based on this, one of the many self-esteem scales can be used for investigation. In self-esteem scales, statements (instead of questions) and scales are mostly used to determine the intensity of an attitude towards a statement. They are usually pre-designed (with an added key for understanding and interpretation) and do not require any further designing from a researcher. Because the design usually remains the same, the results of different studies are equally comparable. There are a lot of self-esteem scales and identity questionnaires designed by several authors in use by researchers.

Two of them are presented here as examples. Firstly, M. Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Scale (SES) (2014) consists of 10 statements and a four-point Likert scale format ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Scale (author M. Rosenberg, 1965) is a widely used self-report instrument for evaluating individual self-esteem measuring both positive and negative feelings about the self. SES is a brief and unidimensional measure of general self-esteem that has demonstrated good reliability and validity across a large number of different sample groups (e.g. drug abusers and other clinical groups) (Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale 2006). As it is noted on the homepage (Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale 2014b) of the Department of Sociology of the University of Maryland, the Rosenberg SES is perhaps the most widely-used self-esteem measure in social science research. But in the research context of this thesis, the mentioned measurement method did not offer the possibility of investigating the evaluation of social context by the participants.

The second example is the Aspects of Identity Questionnaire (AIQ, III, IV) consisting of 45 questions (statements) and a five-point scale ranging from not important to extremely important. As J. M. Cheek and L. R. Tropp (2002) pointed out, AIQ is based on Sampson's (1978) list of identity characteristics which were determined to represent the domains of personal and social identity, and have also been modified over time – the latest version (AIQ-IV) was constructed in 2002. The latest version of the questionnaire consists of such domains as family, social and collective relationships. AIQ does include elements of the social world which are relevant to this thesis, but, as has been mentioned above, it is also pre-designed and does not allow for the application of additional aspects of investigation that are based on previous studies and statistics.

The second major group of methods for gathering data are the surveys which use both quantitative and qualitative questions/statements and „satisfaction scales“ rated mostly from „very dissatisfied“ to „very satisfied“ (or „don’t know“) numbered from 1 to 10. The results of these survey types are presented by category in descending order, from the category with the highest satisfaction to the lowest satisfaction, and the data enables to make both quantitative and qualitative conclusions. These surveys enable to collect a large number of data and results in a relatively short period of time, and the investigator can design an appropriate, topical questionnaire. Two examples are presented. Firstly, the study commissioned by the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound 2012). Surveys designed in this manner certainly enable to investigate family policy issues, but at the same time it is debatable whether they serve to explain how individuals construe themselves in a social world as efficiently and in the same depth as ISA. Secondly, the World Values Survey (WVS 2010-2012), a world-wide study of what people value in life. In this survey, the questionnaire is designed to investigate a large scale of value categories, including questions about family, family background, social relationships, and the government’s responsibility to ensure that everyone is provided for. In studying some issues, the last wave survey (WVS 2010-2012) also used bipolar statements with scales from 1 to 10. This survey, however, does not use the self-evaluation of respondents through different social agents (significant others).

To summarize, the reasons why ISA was chosen as an empirical method are:

- its universality due to its possibilities to investigate identity structure and identity development in clinical, societal and cross-cultural settings, as mentioned by Weinreich and Saunderson (2003, i);
- because ISA is based on psychological, sociological and social anthropological theories in formulating a system of concepts, it efficiently serves to explain and explore the notion of identity.
- According to Strack and Schwarz (2007, 225-226), the use of specially designed instruments has an important role in social sciences because some characteristics of persons (e. g., attitudes, motives) cannot be directly perceived and studied (as opposed to those that can be directly assessed – e. g., gender, age). In those special instruments, the assessment of these characteristics is facilitated by appropriately designed statements that can be answered by the respondent by using a scale of numbers.
- Based on the arguments of J. Valsiner, R. Bibace and T. LaPushin (2005, 284-285), the statements in scale-forms as reflections of the psychological process are universal by their very nature. In itself, every statement acts as a trigger to the actualization of a field, it triggers different tensions between opposed meanings, and enables to bring out a person’s intimate history and experiences. As Strack and Schwarts (2007, 246) stressed, respondents’ answers are always generated in a social context.
- ISA enables to design a topical instrument.
- ISA is supported by specialized computer software that has been modified and improved over time.

### 3 RESULTS: PARENTHOOD IN SWEDEN, FINLAND AND ESTONIA

#### 3.1 Data collection, the participants of the study

The fieldwork was carried out in three countries: Estonia, Sweden and Finland. From each country 15 women and 15 men (together 90 respondents) who met the sampling criteria were examined. The fieldwork was carried out from February 2012 to June 2013 (see Appendices 3, 4). Information on control variables such as age, education, number of children and place of residence was also collected. A pilot study using the preliminary instruments was held in Estonia in January 2012 with 4 female and 4 male respondents, after which the study instruments were modified. The sampling criteria were as follows:

- must be in custody of at least one child under the age of 16;
- must be in a two-way relationship/partnership;
- must be currently living in the area (resident of Estonia, Sweden, and Finland).

The age of the female respondents varied from 23-50, the age of the male respondents varied from 28-52; the number of children varied from 1-5. Each group's composition is presented in Table 5.

*Table 5. The composition of respondent group*

<b>Participant group</b>	<b>Age group/number of children</b>
SW	1) group=9 women/1-2 children
	2) group=6 women/2 children
	3) group=not represented
SM	1) group=4 men/1-2 children
	2) group=10 men/2-4 children
	3) group=1 man/3 children
FW	1) group=6 women/2-3 children
	2) group=8 women/2-5 children
	3) group=1 woman/4 children
FM	1) group=4 men/1-2 children
	2) group=10 men/3-5 children
	3) group=1 man/3 children
EW	1) group=8 women/1-4 children
	2) group=6 women/2-3 children
	3) group=1 woman/2 children
EM	1) group=5 men/1-2 children
	2) group=7 men/1-4 children
	3) group=3 men/2-5 children

*Notes: The groups of respondents are marked as follows – SW (Swedish women), SM (Swedish men), FW (Finnish women), FM (Finnish men), EW (Estonian women), and EM (Estonian men). Respondent groups are divided into three age groups: 1) group: 23-35, 2) group: 36-45 and 3) group: 46-52.*

In general, participants had more than 1 child; most respondents had 2-3 children in the family. 13 respondents (14,4% of the total sample) had 1 child.

Each participant had to respond to 396 queries. The study instrument was available to respondents from Sweden, Finland and Estonia in the participants' native language at the internet address [www.sotsiaalkoolitus.ee](http://www.sotsiaalkoolitus.ee) from February 2012 to June 2013. The address was not made public but people were invited to respond only in person by the author's social contacts who were previously instructed by the author. Respondents were also encouraged to contact the author personally in case of misunderstandings or insights related to the study. However, Estonian respondents were mostly instructed personally by the author.

### **3.2 Results: The attitudes of Estonian women and men towards combining work and family life compared to their Nordic neighbours – Sweden and Finland**

The following subchapter will discuss five subthemes, which are the respondents' attitudes towards: combining work and family life; the roles of parents (mothers and fathers); the number of children in the family; the respondents' expectations towards the state to offer supportive measures that would help combine work and family life; and the respondent's experiences with employers' attitudes towards combining work and family life. It is important to note that in the context of this thesis the terms „ideas“, „aspirations“, „attitudes“ and „expectations“ are used as synonyms. The sixth subtheme analysed in this section is how respondents appraise the social world they live in as a key aspect in investigating the respondents' influencers in their attitudes towards family matters. The respondents' appraisals of different domains (entities) presented in paper 3 are presented as follows.

- First, patterns of identifications: 1) positive role models – idealistic identification with others; 2) negative role models – contra-identifications with others.
- Second - conflicted identification.
- Third - evaluation of the self in the different contexts (*to illustrate how the respondents evaluate bipolar constructs and entities through the themes contained in the study's instruments, tables of splits are presented in Appendix 5, tables 6-8: Respondents rated the 'ideal self' against bipolar constructs*).

Figures 10, 11 and 12 below illustrate how groups of respondents reported their ego-involvement with the socio-biographical context and the wider socio-cultural domain.

In the process of evaluating entities and bipolar constructs Estonian respondents surprisingly produced much lower ratings than respondents from Sweden and Finland, while women on average had lower rates than men regardless of nationality. In addition, the answers of female respondents in the groups of Estonian and Finnish women had significantly lower ratings than those of the Swedish female and male respondents.

The first subset in family matters in this thesis is the mothers' and fathers' **attitudes towards the combining of work and family life**. The study revealed that all female respondents were more concerned than men about coping with the combining of work and family life independently from the social context, which could be evidence of men's

more traditional views towards non-paid work (i.e. at home). Swedish and Estonian women found combining family and children with a career problematic and believed that combining work and family life is not possible because of the large workload of a paid job. Finnish women, however, had a more positive and optimistic attitude towards the possibility of integrating work and family life - they believed that work and family life could be better combined through a more efficient division of time and chores in the family. Most respondents treasure their social networks, but only Finnish women treasure their social networks as helpers in combining work and family life. The current study shows that, independent of cultural and social background, all men are oriented towards managing with family matters only within the nuclear family itself.

The research data show that combining work and family life is a source of tension to Swedish and Finnish men, while Estonian men are not particularly worried about this issue. Swedish and Finnish men believe that combining work and family time is difficult and may depend on social expectations towards gender equality. These social expectations put pressure on men to become 'newcoming' fathers, but all Sweden and Finnish respondents' highly valued financial independence and found that both parents have to work indicating that paid work is a core value for them.

Participating in the labour market is important for all respondents and emerged as a core value for Finnish and Swedish respondents, while Estonian respondents did not see it as a core value and instead regarded paid work as a highly conflicted issue. According to the study, Estonian men are willing to be the main breadwinners of the family. Most of the Estonian men thought that women are responsible for the functional combining of work and family life (whilst Estonian women are more eager to share responsibilities at home), while at the same time showing conflict with this issue. These conflicts reported by Estonian men can be explained through the social expectations towards 'newcoming' fathers. As the double earner family type grows in popularity, Estonian fathers feel the increasing pressure to be 'caring fathers', while on the other hand, men are still traditionally the providers of financial security for their families in Estonia. Considering this it is understandable that whether or not the family should be managed only by the nuclear family itself was reported as a conflicted issue by Estonian men. Consequently, it seems that both Estonian women and men understand the contemporary disapproval of such social values, but in everyday life they must manage without making choices that could possibly satisfy both parties.

Findings from this research allow to speculate that the attitudes of men depend on education, age, number of children and place of residence and the attitudes of women on education, number of children and current life situation (e.g., currently being housewives or working). Younger men with higher education levels are oriented more towards individual financial independency.

The second subset in family matters in this thesis is the respondents' **ideas about mothers' and fathers' responsibilities**. The results indicate that Estonian women do not think that their role as a parent is valued (three current housewives especially find that women and men are not respected as parents in Estonia), while other groups of respondents are satisfied with their position as a parent as viewed by society.

Swedish men saw mothers as the main caretakers of children (other groups of respondents found that both parents are equally responsible for raising children and it was one of the core values), but at the same time it was the highest source of conflict for them. So while they want to be ‘newcoming’ fathers, combining work and family life is difficult because of the work overload in their paid jobs (as was also reported by Finnish men). Swedish women believe that both parents have a responsibility to raise children and staying home with children shouldn’t depend on the parent’s gender.

Finnish women reported worry over re-entering the labour market after periods of childcare. In addition to this Finnish women also mentioned as a conflicted issue that Finnish employers are gender-based in their attitudes towards employees. Finnish men “agree” with Finnish women that it is hard for women to take breaks from a career, and their most conflicted issue appears to be the notion that a person who cannot combine work and family life is not a good parent/partner. Finnish women strongly believe that a good parent is capable of combining work and family life. It can be assumed that Finnish men are eager to support their children’s mothers; however they believe that staying home with children is a woman’s responsibility. This is also the second conflicted theme for them.

For the women in Finland the notions about gender equality are clearly understandable – Finnish women were and are the pioneers of women’s rights, and through this the Finnish men’s conflict about their traditional standpoint about childcare responsibilities is understandable. It is also possible to bring out that Finnish women and men do not really care about “sharing in the name of sharing” (sharing responsibilities because of social expectations).

For most of the respondents the argument that women have greater responsibility at home holds true, while Swedish women reported a conflict in this matter and seem to wish that men held more responsibility at home. Men with two or more children evaluate their responsibilities at home and in raising children more highly.

The third subset in family matters in this thesis is the **respondents’ attitudes towards having children in the family and seeing aging as a problem**. Swedish and Finnish respondents believe that having children is not compulsory. While Estonian men do not think that solving the problem of population aging is very important (while still having the highest conflict for them), other groups found that population ageing is a problem in society. All respondents believe that women’s active participation in the job market negatively affects the birth rate. For Swedish and Finnish women and men it is a conflicted theme, while both Estonian men and women are convinced that women’s active participation in paid work is responsible for the low birth rate. The conviction of Estonian men of the mentioned reason for the low birth rate is strong, while the conviction of Estonian women is weak, but still exists. All respondent groups believe that women of working age shouldn’t necessarily work, at least not full time, and that it is more important for women to focus on raising children. This belief was strongest for Swedish men, Swedish women and Finnish men. Finnish and Estonian women on the other hand are not so convinced. For Estonian men it is a conflicted theme – they agree that it is more important for women to focus on raising children, but through this belief a concern about the family’s financial stability may be seen.

The fourth subset in family matters in this thesis is **the respondent's experiences with employers' attitudes towards combining work and family life**. Swedish men are strongly convinced, and Finnish men and Swedish women are convinced that employers do not consider gender important (for example: they are also understanding when male employees stay at home with sick children). However, Estonian and Finnish women and Estonian men believe that employers are strongly affected by gender stereotypes. For Estonian women it is the most conflicted theme. Employers' gender-based attitudes concern Estonian women with two or more children more than others, which is understandable since more children demand more attention and devotion at home, but so do employers in paid work.

Swedish men hold the most negative views towards working overtime, while Swedish women regard working overtime positively for both men and women, but it is at the same time a conflicted value. Finnish women and men are convinced, that working overtime is not a normal part of modern working culture for neither men nor women.

Estonian women and men saw working overtime as a normal part of modern working culture with Estonian men reporting women working overtime as a slightly conflicted issue. It can be interpreted as further proof that Estonian men value their role as a provider but are worried about managing the family's financial budget on their own.

The fifth subset in family matters in this thesis is the **respondents' expectations towards the state to offer supportive measures that would help combine work and family life**. The majority of the respondents feel that supporting fatherhood is not very relevant in raising the birth rate; all respondent groups find that the government should first and foremost support motherhood. This might indicate that men see their role as more outside the household.

Swedish and Finnish respondents believe that having children is not compulsory and therefore taking care of children should not be equalized with paid work. Both groups found that becoming a parent is an individual decision independent of financial support provided by the state. Estonian respondents, on the other hand, believe that taking care of children should be equalized with paid work because women can't participate in paid work during certain life periods (the birth of a child, taking care of the infant).

Finnish respondents believe that more supportive measures from the state are welcome, but in the light of previously represented data it is possible to assume that they expect more non-fiscal supportive measures, especially after women's breaks from the labour market. Estonian respondents have high expectations towards the welfare state for more supportive measures (financial support + different services) for families with children. It is important to point out that Estonian women and men have high hopes towards governmental support, both financially and through shaping family values. However, Estonian women and men are prepared to participate in the labour market and fathers expect to be the main breadwinners, not "home-husbands" and mothers not „housewives“. Interestingly, Estonian men have more "modern" attitudes towards paid work than non-paid work. Arguably, the stances of Estonian women and men are understandable because the 'European model' is relatively new in Estonia; there is less social and financial security and on a societal level attitudes towards women's and men's gender-based roles are more traditional.

Swedish respondents are satisfied with the current supportive family policy measures, but not very highly, which is apparent in their worries about combining work and family life.

The sixth subset in family matters in this thesis is the **respondents' appraisal of the social world**. Appraisal in the ISA context was presented in subchapter 2.2. Figure 8 explains the ten aspects of a person's identity defined within the ISA context (relevant to this thesis) and the cultural context. Paper 3 discussed how, in compliance with the results of ego-involvement with the wider societal context and significant others inside a particular society, it is possible to conclude which agents may have a strong influence towards the respondents' attitudes towards family matters. The data of the 'significant others' and 'societal context' in Figures 10, 11 and 12 below is based on tables 6 and 7 of paper 3. On the other hand, the mentioned ego-involvement demonstrates the respondents' satisfaction with the family and work life situation through the context of the particular society.

The study revealed that idealistically respondents identify themselves the most with the media and the influence of the media is present with both female and male respondents. Interestingly, while neighbours are in fourth place for Estonian men, they do not assign the same importance to the social network in family matters as Finnish women do. Instead, they are oriented towards managing family matters only within the nuclear family itself, as are all the interviewed men.

In conflicted identifications, 'My partner' is among the first three for all respondent groups, which affirms the unsolved problem of finding balance in work and family life. While Estonian women and men have the most conflicted identifications with the opposition, Swedish as well as Finnish women and men on the other hand do with the government. The government comes sixth for Estonian women and ninth for Estonian men. The groups of Swedish women and men, and Finnish women and men identify themselves most with the government (in the socio-biographical context), showing that they are pleased with the current support measures provided by their states. This variance could be explained by the fact brought out by Van Oorschot and Meuleman (2010) that the social legitimacy of the welfare state's multidimensional nature – individuals who emphatically endorsed a substantial role for government in the provision of welfare could, at the same time, be critical about specific aspects of such provision (i.e., Crouch (2013) indicates high taxation).

Ego-involvement in the socio-biographical context is strongest with the partner for Estonian women and men, while the entity with the weakest value is the partner's father. The importance of being a partner for Estonian respondents may cast light on the more traditional attitudes Estonian respondents hold towards being in a partnership as compared to Finnish and Swedish respondents. Within the wider social context (in the current entities), Estonian women and men identify themselves the most with other women in Estonia.

From the 'political and public perspective' Estonian respondents identify themselves empathetically more with the opposition, which demonstrates their slight dissatisfaction with their life situations. It can be explained with Estonia's fast and different development compared to the Nordic countries. Estonian respondents have the closest

empathetic identification with the media.

All female respondents have empathetically closely identified themselves with other people by gender, which affirms that women are more connected with their social context and also affected by it more than men.

From the wider socio-biographical domains nearly all respondents identify themselves empathetically more with colleagues than friends, which is understandable if one take into consideration that all respondents were employees, except three housewives from Estonia. The ego-involvement of Estonian respondents with the wider societal context and significant others inside a particular society is represented in Figure 10 below.

Figures 10, 11 and 12 are based on data from Table 6 (ego-involvement with the socio-biographical context for groups of respondents) and Table 7 (ego-involvement with the wider socio-cultural domain for groups of respondents) of paper 3.

As the data show (Figure 10), the range of values is different in Estonian women and men, but the order of the societal agents is the same.

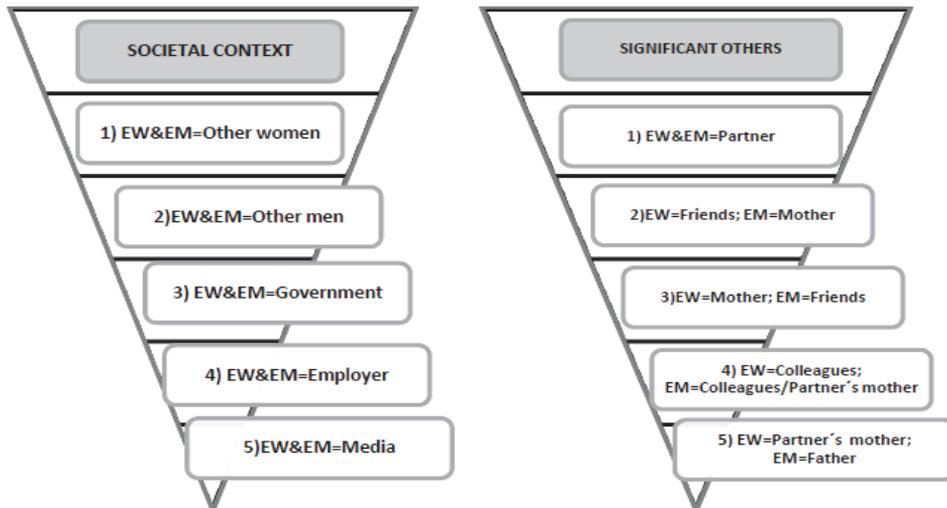


Figure 10. The ego-involvement of Estonian respondents with the wider societal context and significant others inside a particular society

Finnish women and men idealistically identify themselves the most with the father of the partner. The father of the partner is in the top three and thus a common trait for these groups. This is also true for men in Sweden (fourth place). A common trait for women and men in Sweden is the employer being among the first three. It is understandable and affirms the flexibility and human-centeredness of workplaces.

Swedish women identify themselves the least with men in Sweden and Swedish men the least with the opposition.

For both Swedish and Finnish women and men the ego-involvement in the socio-biographical context is strongest with their father, and the last entity for the value is the partner's mother.

In the case of contra-identification, the mother is in the top three for all respondent groups. Swedish men are the sole exception here with the entity 'Mother' in fourth

place. The ego-involvement of Swedish respondents with the wider societal context and significant others inside a particular society is represented in Figure 11 below.

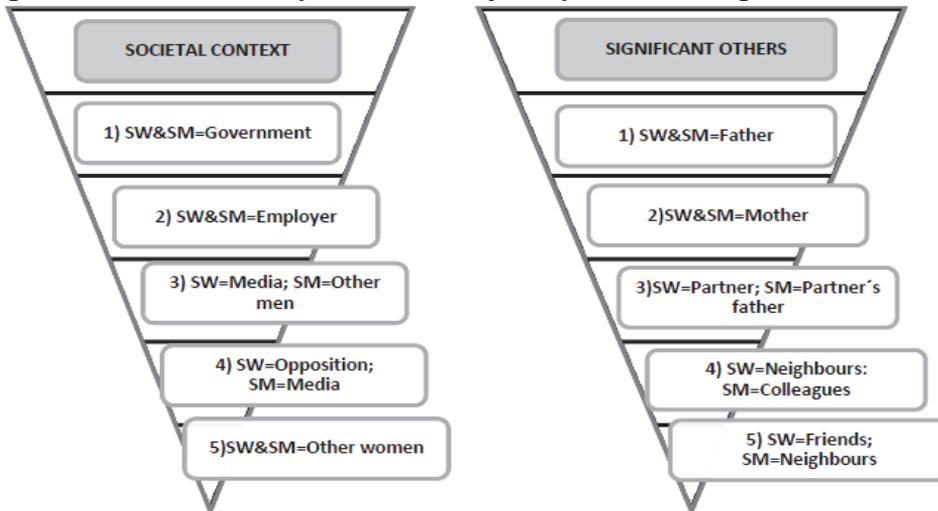


Figure 11. The ego-involvement of Swedish respondents with the wider societal context and significant others inside a particular society

Finnish women identify themselves the least with the employer, Finnish men the least with the opposition. For Finnish men the employer is second on the contra-identification scale, while for Finnish women the employer has one of the lowest values. For all groups of respondents the mother is in the first three. The ego-involvement of Finnish respondents with the wider societal context and significant others inside a particular society is represented in figure 12 below.

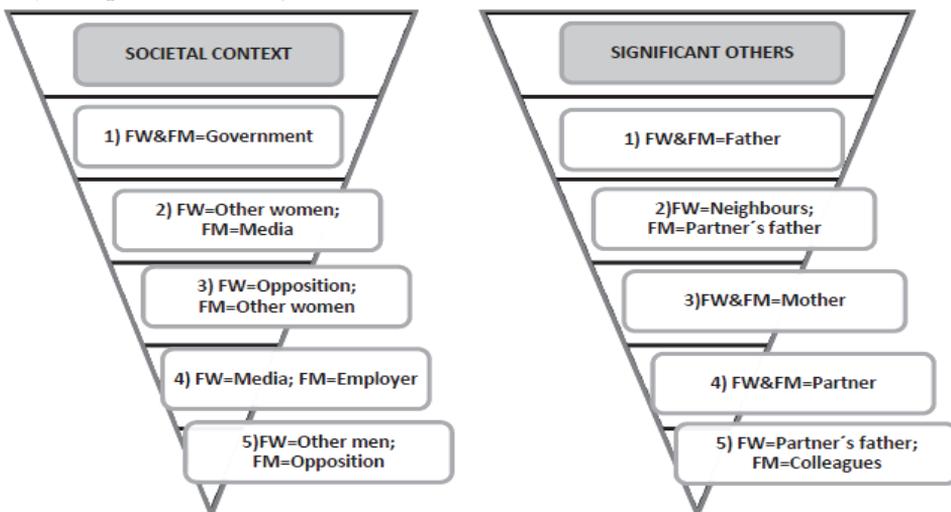


Figure 12. The ego-involvement of Finnish respondents with the wider societal context and significant others inside a particular society

Estonian respondents show similar results in wider socio-cultural domains and through this demonstrate their similar, unsatisfied expectations towards the welfare state, as well as a similar understanding of the roles of parents in society. Inside the family, Estonian respondents demonstrate a strong commitment to the family and strong support for the partner.

Both Swedish and Finnish respondents strongly demonstrate their satisfaction with the welfare state. However, it can be assumed that Swedish respondents are not satisfied with their roles as parents at home. Finnish respondents demonstrated the greatest similarities in the evaluation of significant others, and it can thus be assumed that Finnish respondents are quite satisfied with the situation inside the family. Both Swedish and Finnish welfare states pay attention to gender equality inside and outside the family, including the role of the father as a caretaker. It seems that Swedish and Finnish men feel the expectation of society towards the father as a caretaker and just need encouragement by the state. On the other hand, Swedish and Finnish women expect more gender equality when sharing responsibilities at home, while Finnish women wish for more gender equality in the labour market.

The respondents evaluated the self through three aspects of 'Me': past ('Me before I became a parent'), present ('Me as I am now'), and future ('Me as I would like to be'). From the groups of respondents, Estonian women and men relate the most to the past, while being content with the present is seen the most in Swedish women and men. 'Me in the future' is the most relatable for Estonian women and the least relatable for Finnish men. Before they became parents, Estonian and Swedish men identified themselves empathetically more with friends than in the present and in the future.

Even though Estonian women and men express strong opinions on 'Me as I would not like to be', the Estonian respondents still identify themselves more empathetically closely within the domain 'family' than do other respondents, and they are therefore considered to be primordialists in the context of this thesis—their attitudes are obviously affected by the older generation more than those of Swedish and Finnish respondents, who were considered to be situationalists in the context of this thesis (based on ISA, subchapter 2.2).

All respondent groups except Estonian men classify as identity diffusions indeterminate. Two thirds of the respondents in the group of Estonian men classify as identity diffusions indeterminate. These groups have moderate self-evaluation and moderate identity diffusion. This may indicate that they see themselves as important and quite well liked. One third of the group of Estonian men classifies as identity diffusions crisis. This group has low self-evaluation and high identity diffusion. High identity diffusion indicates a strong identity conflict, which is interwoven with low self-evaluation.

## 4 CONCLUSIONS

**The aim of this doctoral thesis** was to create an empirical research based model of the core values and conflicted themes for the interviewed parents of three countries in the context of family matters; and in light of these models to examine how successful the family policies of the three studied states have been in meeting the expectations of the parents. The thesis is based on four papers connected by the theme *Combining Work and Family Life – a Comparative Perspective on Changes in Parental Roles in Estonia, Finland and Sweden*. Paper 1 (Appendix 1) concentrated on the conceptualisation of the theme, based on which the investigation instrument was constructed by the author. Papers 2, 3 and 4 (Appendices 2, 3 and 4, respectively) were research papers, which focused on the respondents' identity processes in a particular society in respect to family matters. As a result of the responses given by Swedish, Finnish and Estonian participants 1) conflicting themes and their gender specificities in case countries were identified; and 2) value systems were constructed for identifying „solved“ and „unsolved“ family issues. The study results enable to conclude whether or not the family policies of the three states have met the expectations of the respondents.

The data from **Estonian respondents** show that the most important **core values** for them are supportive measures by the welfare state (Figure 13), followed by both parents participating in the labour market and the greater responsibilities of women at home. The third and fourth place core values clearly demonstrate traditional attitudes towards family matters, especially for men.

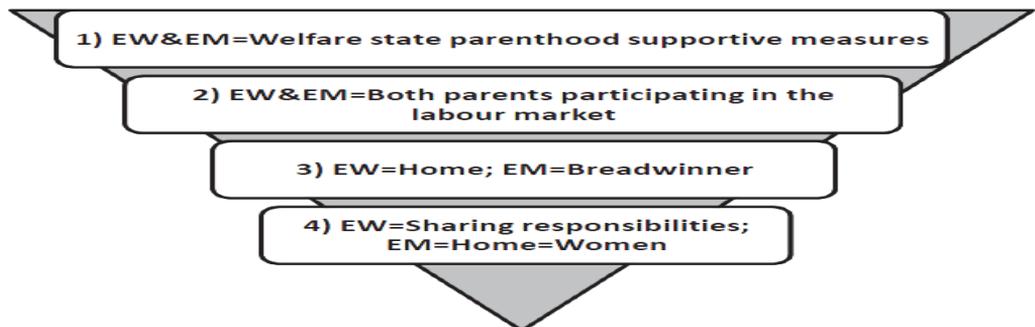


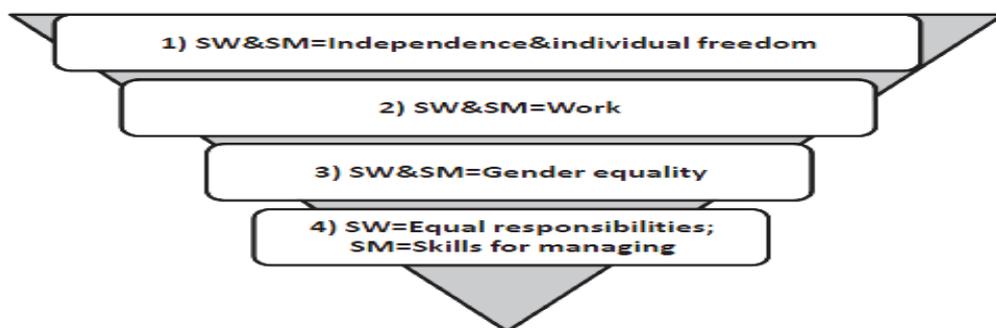
Figure 13. The core values of Estonian respondents.

Note: Figure constructed as core value levels for respondents where the first is the most important and the following have lesser importance

For Estonian women the most **conflicted theme** is the employer's gender-based attitude towards employees, followed by combining work and family life. As to Estonian men, the gender-based attitudes of employers are also conflicted, although with a lower value. For them, the source of the highest conflict is the ageing of society—both groups obviously know that population ageing is a problem in Estonian society and while they seem to feel some responsibility, their willingness to solve this problem is influenced by a high level of concern about coping with everyday life situations.

In Estonia the most important topics on a governmental level are family poverty (but not the financial aid to families in general), reconciliation and gender balance and the father’s role, as shown in Figure 4 (in subchapter 1.3). It is apparent that the aims of the welfare state for financial support are the opposite of the expectations of the interviewed respondents, but the aims of the welfare state and the desires of the respondents are similar on the gender balance issue, which is proof that one of the conflicted themes for Estonian female respondents will be dealt with. It is also important to pay attention to employers’ gender-based attitudes on a policy level. Comparing the Estonian family policy model (Figure 7, subchapter 1.3.) and the attitudes of Estonian respondents towards family matters, it can be argued that, for example, two of the pillars of the Estonian family policy—a generous parental leave benefit scheme and additional needs-based benefits for families with children who live in relative poverty—are not as important as general financial aid to families.

Looking at the data gathered from **Swedish respondents** it is apparent that for this group the most important **core values** are financial independence through participating in the labour market and gender equality (Figure 14). For Swedish men the core value is parents’ ‘skills’ in combining work and family life. While Swedish women worry about combining work and family life, Swedish men view the sharing of childcare responsibilities in a more traditional way (see results, Chapter 3). For Swedish women the most **conflicted theme** is how to manage with childcare responsibilities and combine work and family life. The argument that having children isn’t compulsory is highly conflicted for Swedish women. For Swedish men the most conflicted theme is their belief in the statement that when raising a child, most of the responsibility is on the mother and combining work and family life isn’t possible. As the data in Figure 4 (in subchapter 1.3) demonstrates, the important topics emphasised in Swedish policy are family poverty (reduced though general financial aid to families), reconciliation and gender balance, and the father’s role. The data shows, that the aims of the welfare state and the interviewed respondents are similar on the issues of gender balance and financial independence. Gender equality and combining work and family life are conflicted themes even though these are not currently relevant in ongoing policy discussions.



*Figure 14. The core values of Swedish respondents.*

*Note: Figure constructed as core value levels for respondents where the first is the most important and the following have lesser importance*

Comparing the Swedish family policy model (Figure 5, subchapter 1.3.) and the attitudes of the Swedish respondents towards family matters, gender equality is not one of the pillars, but it seems to be an important issue for Swedish parents, and therefore additional action may be needed. Gender equality in the labour market accompanied by the universality and continuing promotion of work has been seen by the Swedish Ministry of Health and Social Affairs as the solution to producing an effective family policy to reduce child poverty (Effective use of family policy 2014).

From the data collected from **Finnish respondents** it can be seen that for Finnish women the **core values** are the respectability of parents in society, parents' 'skills' in combining work and family life and the social network (Figure 15). For Finnish men, the core values are financial independence, the shared responsibility of both parents in raising children and adults participating in the labour market. For younger men an additional core value is the equality of women and men in combining work and family life.

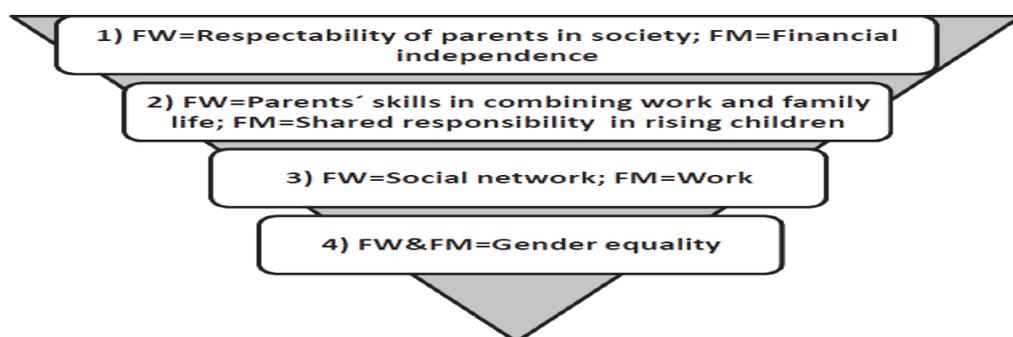


Figure 15. The core values of Finnish respondents.

Note: Figure constructed as core value levels for respondents where the first is the most important and the following have lesser importance

For Finnish women the most **conflicted theme** is re-entering the labour market following periods of childcare. In addition, they believe that Finnish employers' attitudes towards employees are gender-based. The most conflicted issue for Finnish men is the belief that a person who cannot combine work and family life isn't a good parent/partner. It may be assumed that Finnish men are eager to support their children's mothers and they believe that 'staying home with children is 'a woman's responsibility', but at the same time the belief was the second conflicted theme for them.

As the data in figure 4 (in subchapter 1.3) shows, the important topics in Finnish policy are family poverty mitigation by general financial aid to families, reconciliation and gender balance. The results of the study show that the aims of the welfare state and the interviewed respondents' attitudes are similar concerning the issues of gender balance and financial independence. Combining work and family life is a core value for Finnish women and a conflicted theme even though it is also currently relevant in a policy context.

Comparing the Finnish family policy model (figure 6, subchapter 1.3.) and the attitudes of the Finnish respondents towards family matters, it can be said that gender equality is not one of the pillars, but it is still an important issue in family policy, just as in the Swedish model. However, in both Sweden and Finland, gender equality is reflected in one of the pillars of the family policies – increasing the possibilities of parents to reconcile work and family life.

Esping-Andersen (1990; 1999) connected the future of the welfare state tightly with the altered position of women in a society. Esping-Andersen (1999; 2009) also sees the welfare state as an important institution for parents who temporarily cannot participate in the labour market because of caring responsibilities. Esping-Andersen (1990; 1999) and Cavalcanti & Tavares (2011) have argued that an increase in female labour force participation raises the demand of public services, e.g., to reduce the cost of child rearing and childcare. Relying on the author's study results, it is possible to argue that all interviewed respondents are proponents of Leira's (2010) 'shared roles model' (Ellingsaeter's equal providers) in their attitudes towards participating in the labour market. The same is true for the three states studied in this thesis (as has also been pointed out in papers 1 and 3). However, when 'stepping over the threshold of the home', the attitudes are more similar to Leira's (2010) sequential employment of mothers model (Ellingsaeter's mother as junior provider).

The study revealed Estonian women's concern that their role as a parent is not appreciated, while other groups of respondents are satisfied with their position as a parent as viewed by society. In particular, all the respondent groups found that the government should support motherhood. The majority of the respondents of the current study believed that supporting fatherhood is not very relevant in raising the birth rate. The study results confirm that fathers are, in principle, ready to be newcoming fathers, but the gender-based roles are still deeply rooted, especially in Estonian respondents.

Following Esping-Andersen's (1990; 1999) classification of three distinct regimes of the modern welfare state it is possible to conclude that for the specific Swedish and Finnish respondents the 'social-democratic' welfare state has 'been effective', with the exception of gender equality. Gender equality was the only problematic topic for respondents, especially for women, inside the family and in the attitudes of employers (for Finnish women and Estonian respondents). In *Wellbeing of Families in Future Europe - Challenges for Research and Policy* (2011) it was pointed out that the work and family balance approach focuses on state policies as well as employers' measures to facilitate employment of individuals with family commitments. The current study confirmed the presence of a strong gender aspect and gender role related social norms that shape individual attitudes. In the case of Estonia it is possible to argue (in the context of this thesis) that Estonia with its transitional values and low living standards is still a 'post-Soviet welfare state' (or liberal, it can be argued). Men in Estonia are seen as material security providers and Estonian men, aware of their role, are concerned about their economic survival. It can be presumed that through relying on a partner Estonian parents compensate for the lack of safety from the welfare state. However, in light of the results of the study it is possible to argue that even though Estonian women and men have high expectations of governmental support, they also support paid work

and try to manage with parenthood by themselves. It can be assumed that through their hopes towards the government for supporting acts they demonstrate uncertainty over coping financially. In addition to that, Estonian respondents may feel ‘unsafe’ because, as Vörk and Karu (2009, 3) have pointed out, family subsidies in Estonia are directed at the birth of a child and at infants, while the generous birth and maternity allowances (the latter of which lasts 1,5 years) are not supported by any (neither ECEC nor parental leaves) later policies.

While Swedish and Finnish men feel the pressure of having to be newcoming fathers and are concerned about balancing family and work time, they nevertheless seem to feel secure in the knowledge that they are supported in parenthood by the welfare state and their employers. Kerem and Pöder (2010, 13) describe the social-democratic regime as being characterized by high labour market flexibility and high social protection, while post-communist regimes are low on both scales, which is also apparent from the current study. The study results reveal that Estonian parents are highly concerned about employers’ attitudes about parenthood and the lack of flexible work schedules.

The study revealed that each investigated country has its own clear problems which it continues to face. Surprisingly, even though the Estonian respondents feel ‘unsafe, the fertility rate is nearly similar to those of Sweden and Finland. Based on the current study it can be assumed that the similar fertility rate is influenced by the more traditional view of gender roles and by a close correlation with the socio-biographical context. The conclusion reached in *Wellbeing of Families in Future Europe - Challenges for Research and Policy* (2011) was that a gender gap in incomes can contribute to imbalances in the division of domestic labour. As was pointed out in papers 1, 2 and 3, the gender gap is highest in Estonia. It seems that, in the case of Estonia, the state family policy reproduces the stereotypical attitudes of men and women.

The author of this thesis has contributed to the theoretical, methodological and practical aspects of research as follows:

1) *The Theoretical and Methodological Contribution of the Thesis*

This study is innovative for using the Identity Structural Analysis (ISA) method for the first time to investigate family policy aspects. The selected ISA method enabled the analysis of the identity structure of an individual within the value system of that particular individual. In the study the value system was determined from data in terms of significant others.

The ISA method has been used in earlier empirical studies by several researchers and the mentioned studies have produced new and meaningful empirical material. This thesis offers a new investigation instrument, created by the author, for studying family policy issues.

2) *The Practical Contribution of the Thesis*

The in-depth investigation into the topic of family matters using a new investigation instrument created by the author revealed parents’ conflicted themes in family matters,

which can be a starting point for further in-depth research. However, the critique of ISA, alternative investigation methods and advocacy towards the scale-type methods, should be taken into account (Chapter 2.4.). The respondents' value system 'models' for family matters were produced based on empirical research data. The constructed value systems enable us to follow 'solved' issues as well as those issues that still need to be solved for the respondents. Despite the small sample of this micro-data based study, the methodology used enables the identification of major problem areas in combining work and family life in the compared countries through in-depth investigation. Based on the study results (papers 1, 2, 3 and 4, Chapter 3 of this thesis), the following policy recommendations can be made:

- In Estonia, it is important to pay attention to 1) the attitudes of employers towards the needs of employees to combine work and family life, 2) financial security of mothers over a longer period than the 1,5 years of maternity leave, and 3) implementing media and social campaigns to deepen a more positive attitude towards the 'newcoming/caring father' image.
- In Sweden, it is important to deal with gender equality in the home. While men in Sweden are very strongly encouraged to take prolonged paternity leaves, Esping-Andersen (2009) and Leira (2010) argue that this choice is associated with the financial independence of the wife. The pay gap may have its role in dividing childcare and other domestic responsibilities (in Sweden and also in Finland), while being, however, smaller than in Estonia.
- In Finland, it is important to support women as they re-enter the labour market as well as the parents of small children as they attempt to combine work and family life. This is especially important considering that Finnish women have experienced gender based attitudes towards family matters from employers.

The current thesis leaves a remarkable number of family policy issues untouched, e.g. the defamilisation aspects of such policies, the inter-relationships between global labour market trends (new social risks) and family policies in small open economies, the role of the market (vs state institutions) in providing care etc. However, the expanding literature reveals increasing numbers of contributions in the field, moreover, family policy has also been more openly discussed in Estonia after certain policy studies (i.e. Leetmaa et al. 2012, Biin et al. 2013). Thus, the author sees the contribution of family policy studies, including the current thesis, to institutional and policy design as an increasing phenomenon in Estonia.

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**Appendix 1. „Employment of Mothers and Fathers: A Comparison of Welfare States in Scandinavia and Estonia”**



# Employment of Mothers and Fathers: A Comparison of Welfare States in Scandinavia and Estonia

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**Abstract:** *This paper analyzes the different stages in the development of EU Member States as they have to solve the problem of the increasing need for employees in the context of the ageing European society. It is important to take actions in two aspects: the need for labour force (in order to maintain economic stability) and supporting of birth rate (to relieve the demographic situation). Two possible models are pointed out for the EU Member States—full employment and combination of work and family life. The article discusses the participation of women and men in family life and at paid work in EU Member States such as Denmark, Sweden, Finland and Estonia.*

*The article's subtopics reveal that the EU's social model—full employment, equal possibilities (above all, equality of men and women), combining of work and family life—is the concern of the Member States. The Member States are active supporters of the 'shared roles model' and while women and men seem to have positive attitudes towards the 'shared roles model', the real everyday life situation is more similar to the early version of a dual-earner family model.*

*After the Second World War there was a need for complementary labour force, so women found themselves actively engaged outside of home, and measures to support women's participation in work on the state level had to follow. At the third place there were changes in the attitudes towards the roles of women and men. Nowadays, women are more and more participating in work, governments support women's activities even before problems in time-sharing between home and work emerge, but the changes in these attitudes still occupy the third place.*

**Keywords:** *combining work and family life, full employment, gender equality, welfare state*

## Introduction

The EU Member States have to solve the problem of how to manage and survive in the context of an ageing society. It is important to take action in two aspects: the need for complementary labour force (to maintain economic stability) and supporting of birth rate (to relieve the demographic situation). Two possible models are pointed out for the EU Member States—full employment and combination of work and family life.

The need for additional labour force and problems with low birth rate are not new in Europe, which has faced the same problems since the end of the Second World War. A solution to these was found in the full-time engagement of women in the labour market, and part-time engagement of mothers with young children. Up to the 1970s, European policies mention only participation in the labour market, whereas from the 1970s onward, legislation in Europe already highlights both fathers and mothers as employees, for example, in connection with allowing them absence from work to carry out childcare responsibilities (Leira, 2010, pp. 11–12). Since the 1990s, the possibilities to combine work and family life through changing gender stereotypes have become a reality.

In the situation of the increasing need for employees and low birth rate, the EU Member States had to make a choice as to which models of work and family to support. In her very famous book *Working Parents and the Welfare State: Family Change and Policy Reform in Scandinavia*, Professor Arnlaug Leira (2010) offers three models of family which can be adopted as a basis for political measures:

- 1) a specialization of the roles of the mother and the father (model family of industrialism), in which combining of work and family life are clear roles—“naturally” mothers are homemakers and carers, and fathers are economic providers;
- 2) the sequential employment of mothers—the domestication of women is denaturalized by the process of mothers taking more of the economic provider responsibilities during periods when paid work did not conflict with motherly duties, which is an early version of a dual-earner family model;
- 3) ‘shared roles model’—both mothers and fathers are employees and take care of children, which is dual-earner, care-sharing family (Leira, 2010, pp. 4–6).

The article will cover the participation of women and men in the EU Member States of Denmark, Sweden, Finland and Estonia. In the mentioned states the third of the family models proposed by Leira—the dual-earner, or the care

sharing model—predominates. There may be some discrepancies between different ethnicities in these countries, but these will not be discussed in this article. The basic questions are—how do mothers and fathers manage the double roles of combining work and family life and which are attitudes of the women and the men and employers towards the double roles in the increasing changes in the equality and stereotypes. There are four basic themes in the article discussing the employment of mothers and fathers:

- 1) the equality of women and men in combining work and family life in the EU as a political process;
- 2) the new motherhood and fatherhood conception in Scandinavia;
- 3) women and men at work in Scandinavia and Estonia;
- 4) employers' attitudes towards women and men at work in Scandinavia and Estonia.

### **EU's political aims and position towards the equality between women and men in combining working and family life**

Through its strategies, the EU has become aware of the problems to solve to be sustainable in the future. In EU documents the topics of gender equality include:

- 1) equal pay for equal work. Already since 1957 it has been a general principle in the Treaty of Rome, the basic EU treaty (Calers, 2008). Article 2 of the Treaty of Amsterdam (which entered into force in May 1999), pointed out that ensuring equality of women and men will be one of the principle aims of the EU (including the principle of equal pay for equal work or work of equal value) (Treaty of Amsterdam, 1997, pp. 18–30). The subject of equal wage was brought up again in March 2006 in EC roadmap for equality between women and men (EC, 2006).

Since 2000, the EU documents indicate concern about the demographic and economic situation (*Employment, Economic Reform...*, 2000) and point out new keywords:

- 2) full employment as the social model of EU;
- 3) economic growth through the participation of women in the labour market (the same theme as in EC, 2011);
- 4) deeper social connection and social solidarity;
- 5) possibilities to combine work and family life (including the improvement of child caring services) (see also EC, 2000; 2006, pp. 3–7);

- 6) changing gender stereotypes—equal possibilities (above all equality between men and women) (see also EC, 2006, pp. 3–7; Consolidated versions..., 2008, Art. 8, pp. 153, 157; EC, 2011b).

The Member States have to introduce measures for reconciling working and family life, and this points to the importance of policies on career breaks, parental leave and part-time work, for both men and women, as well as flexible working arrangements which serve the interests of both employers and employees, while maintaining the necessary balance between flexibility and safety (EC, 2000). Second, strategies (Europe 2020, 2010; EC, 2006; 2010) but responsibilities lay on Member States. Third—commissions (for example, NCEO, 2010). Fourth—pacts, for example Pact of Gender Equality in Europe (2006). Fifth—institutes, for example, the European Institute for Gender Equality (founded in December 2006, located in Vilnius).

Equality between women and men is a theme of European legislative texts—various treaty provisions and directives are concerned with equal access to employment, pay, as well as maternity protection, parental leave, social security and occupational social security, the burden of proof in discrimination cases, and self-employment (EC, 2011a). Strategies and aims on gender equality at the EU level are definitely a sign of good intentions, but, so far, they cannot reach the level of changes in family and labour market.

## **A new motherhood and fatherhood conception in Scandinavia**

Leira (2002, pp. 9–10) describes three interconnected processes to propose changes in relationships between welfare states, labour market and family—modernization of motherhood, collectivization of childcare (different forms of childcare) and familization of fatherhood (the working father's right to care for children). The childcare forms will not be discussed here, and the focus is more on the changes in motherhood/fatherhood and gender equality at work place.

Family life is a partnership in which two people are in an interdependent relationship and the decision to have a first or additional child is a collaborative one. The traditional interdependency of partners in family life, and relationships between women and men are in a process of regeneration. Changes in labour force needs and the growing number of women at paid work are one of the reasons behind the change in the meaning of traditional interdependency. It

is thus a case of forced equality in the sense that economic necessity is an instrument to achieve more job-orientation.

Since the mid-1990s, and especially at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, there has developed, in addition to the model of father as a breadwinner, the model of a caring father in the Western world. The formation of the latter has been influenced by feminism, fathers' claims that they can manage raising children just as well as women, also various political powers, family sociologists and pedagogical researchers insisting that family welfare depends on the relationship between a father and a child. "Newcomer" fathers have become more active and take on more responsibilities in family life and caring for children.

On the other hand, female labour market participation is on the rise. Despite those two components women have not been freed from the so-called 'double burden' of household work and labour market participation (Mind the gap..., 2008, p. 7; OECD, 2011, p. 14; *Second European Quality of Life Survey*, 2009, pp. 26–30; Leira, 2010, p. 55).

In Estonia, the double role of a woman (especially the one of a married woman) as a breadwinner and caretaker has its roots in the Soviet period, when the primary duty of an adult was to participate in paid work. It was approved that both women and men had to participate in paid work, children were cared for in collective child care centres and household and childcare at home were women's responsibilities: the roles of men and women as mothers and fathers—caretakers—remained intact (Marling, 2010, p. 7; Maydell *et al.*, 2006; Lück & Hofäcker, 2003, pp. 11–14).

Even today, household and caring responsibilities in Estonia are still mostly the duty of employed women and it appears that in families with children, 64 per cent of women feel that they are overburdened with household duties (reported by 13 per cent of interviewed male respondents) and 16 per cent of women have never felt that taking care of household is too much of a burden (the same answer was given by 70 per cent of interviewed male respondents) (Järviste, 2006, pp. 4–5).

Stereotypical gender roles are the main hindrance to changes and are mostly preferred by men and individuals with lower education. Attitudes about participation in working and family life depend on social class, education, age of parents, the age and the number of children in the family, because children of different age need different care and devotion. In addition, these attitudes are affected by the model of the family of origin, type of residence (town, countryside) and the prevailing attitudes in the society towards the roles of women and men. At this point is interesting to note that according to Malle Järve

(2004, pp. 96–100) and Leeni Hansson (2001, pp. 35–53), in Estonia mothers do not want to lose the right to be at home with young children themselves, because it is customary and also a highly accepted part of motherhood, but this attitude is more common among the older generation than among the young people. The same is pointed out in “Dads aren’t Demons. Mums aren’t Madonnas...” by Ana Jordan (2009, pp. 419–433) about mothers in general throughout Europe.

For increasing inequality and supporting the changes in stereotypical roles—first, for them who have caring responsibilities—there are two separate measures that can be adopted: First, tying the child-caring process with insurance systems by equalizing it with paid work and the equality of women and men in paid and in unpaid work.

Second, individualizing social rights; guaranteeing equal rights for pension; and eliminating disincentives against women’s participation in working and social life, such as, for example, common taxation and social benefits to women who do not work but have caring responsibilities (*Assessment of the results...*, 2010, pp. 8–9).

Changes in traditional family model, the rising importance of dual-breadwinning model and the growing female participation in the labour market require changes in employment, family and poverty prevention policies. For example, through measures for supporting fatherhood it is possible to influence birth rate, gender equality, employment, welfare and the health of men and thus also the sustainability of population and economic growth. Family is a social system and so they look at their shared life-course with changing shared needs, duties, and chances.

In her *Working Parents and the Welfare State*, Leira (2010, pp. 67–68) argues that policy reforms which include fathers’ quota represent a remarkable attempt to “familize” fathers. Inequality in sharing home–work assignments and concentrating on success in social life and work is not “healthy” for men, either. First, they must be highly concerned with success at work, and second, they need rest and commitment in family life. Men’s “soft” needs are not satisfied, for that reason men are more adventuresome and in danger of early death (Marling, 2010, p. 8). For the men, these choices also affect the attitudes of their partners, as well as of their friends, colleagues and employer towards fatherhood and masculinity (Järviste, 2010, pp. 19–20). Besides, an important question is whether women are really ready to share equally their “natural” role.

The EU Member States contextualized in the article have taken action to implement some measures for breaking through the stereotypes in family life and for recognizing motherhood and fatherhood, for example paternity leave:

- In Denmark, fathers can take a paternity leave of 2 weeks within 14 weeks, after that both parents share a 32-week leave, which can be split up or postponed, but must be used before the child's 9<sup>th</sup> birthday.
- In Finland, fathers can take a leave for 18 weekdays; if the father uses at least 12 days of the parents' allowance then they are entitled to an additional 1–12 days.
- In Sweden, 10 days of leave can be used by fathers during the first 90 days after the child's birth and simultaneously with the mother.
- In Estonia, 10 days of leave can be used by fathers during the maternity leave or within two months after the birth of child (Brantner, 2010, pp. 4–5).

In real life, balancing work and family life is an important indicator of the quality of life for men and women, because most people in employment spend a considerable number of hours at work. Opportunities and being prepared, as well as resources of time and energy, are important moments in taking parental responsibilities. Absolute equality seems utopian: above all, it is the question of the quality of life and family values.

Scandinavian countries have been the “flagship” of full employment in the EU (even before the EU aims and strategies were called into existence), so they have also managed to break the gender stereotypes at work and introduce changes in sharing childcare responsibilities (Leira, 2010, pp. 11–12). In the Nordic countries (since the 1950s in Finland, and since the 1960s in other Nordic countries) marriage and family have become less important as economic provider institutions for women (Leira, 2010, pp. 22–23). In Estonia women's participation in the labour market has been high since the end of the Second World War, but the traditional attitudes towards motherhood/fatherhood are somewhat more stable than in the Nordic countries.

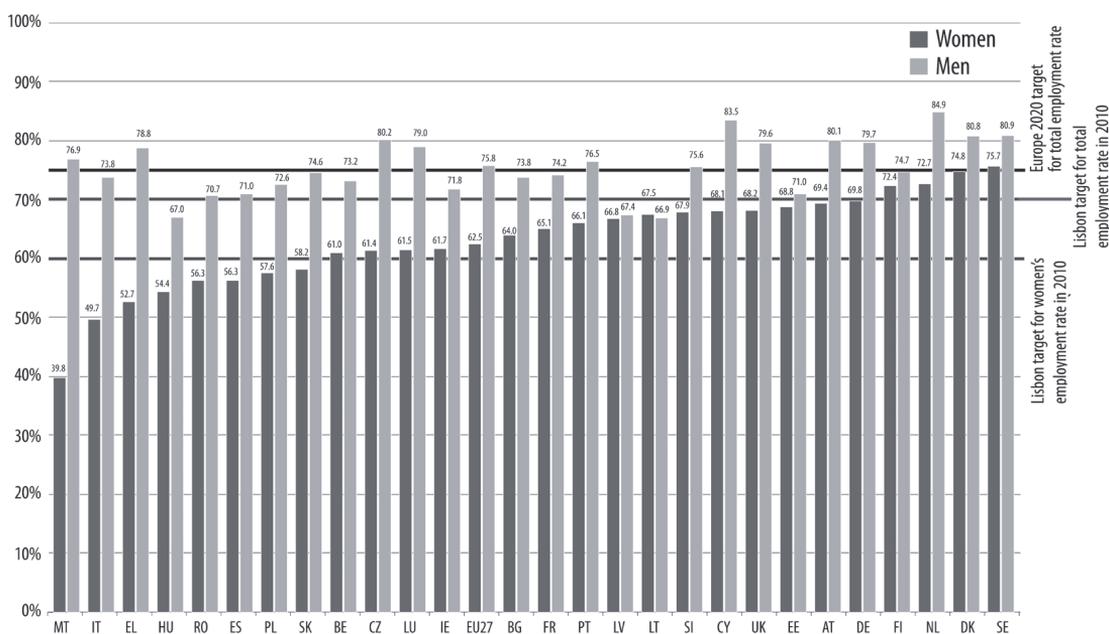
In the Nordic countries there are situations in which women can cope with childcare by themselves, with the help of the welfare state; Leira's (2010, pp. 23–36) keywords about the Nordic countries are “women-friendly; caring state; state feminism; people-friendly”). But in Estonia it is commonly held that women have more difficulties in coping with childcare without the supporting partnership.

Thus, in Scandinavia the welfare states strongly support the new conception of motherhood, according to which mothers are not the only carers of children, while fathers are too focused to participate in the childcare process; and fathers are not the only providers, but so are women with children, even with very young ones (under the age of 3).

## Women and men at work in Scandinavia and Estonia

The EU Member States form their family policy on their own account, at the level of EU, which suggests the aims and principles in policies rhetorically. The aims of the ageing societies are to regenerate human capital and at the same time retain high employment rate (Kutsar & Trumm, 2011). Interestingly, fertility rates are the highest in those countries where the proportion of women in the workforce is also the highest—in Denmark, Finland and Sweden—because public policies play a supporting and activating role (Thevenon, 2008, p. 166). In 2006, the rate of female employment in the EU was 57.1 per cent, compared against 64.3 per cent for the total population. The situation varied between the Member States—in 2009, the employment rate of women was the highest in Sweden (76 per cent) and in Denmark (75 per cent), then came Finland with 72 per cent and Estonia with 69 per cent (see Fig. 1; EC, 2010).

Figure 1. Employment rates (women and men aged 20–64) in EU Member States in 2009



Source: Eurostat, Labour Force Survey (LFS), annual averages, EC (2011b)

The equality in the participation of women and men in the labour market is connected with problems of wages, forms of working time, leaves, organization

of childcare and social guarantees. Laws and the general public opinion can help to balance work and family life, and also support and enable the competition of women and men with children in the labour market. The rate of women employment is connected with family values and attitudes in the society.

In the EU, the situation in the labour market is changing to ensure better education for women, women's participation in working life through the process of diversifying, increasing mobility and choosing more demanding work positions, globalization and minimizing the number of regulations in the field of working life. These changes in the labour market, especially within ordinary and traditional line of work and the decreasing number of steady job positions, influence the traditional breadwinners—men—the most. But despite women's accruing numbers at work and shifting gender balance of employment, the labour market as a social institution is still gendered (Leira, 2010, p. 51).

Among men in Europe (especially in poor and transitional societies, and less commonly in Western-European societies) the concept of working overtime, a distinctive phenomenon of the modern labour market, has become quite widespread. It is associated with companies and organizations trying to harness their employees to the maximum. Jobs demanding overtime hours are high-paid, while part-time jobs result in a lower salary. In Estonia, a full-time job and working overtime is often the only way to ensure an income that provides subsistence. (Järviste, 2008, pp. 16–17)

On the average, part-time workers in the EU Member States are women (OECD, 2011, p. 16), constituting 30 per cent (the share of men is 7 per cent). In Denmark 45 per cent of women and 9 per cent of men work as part-time workers, in Sweden the shares are 39 per cent and 10 per cent, respectively, in Finland—18 per cent and 7 per cent, respectively, and in Estonia—11 per cent and 4 per cent, respectively. Deborah Smeaton and Alan Marsh (2006, pp. 55–56) in their research “Maternity and Paternity...” pointed out that mothers make changes in their working lives upon returning to work after childbirth: in the first place they prefer to work for fewer hours, then—to work for fewer days, to work from home and choose a freelancing position.

But the male workers in Scandinavia, too, demand part-time work and equality in family life to balance working and family life, whilst the average number of weekly working hours is lower in Denmark and higher in the former communist countries (*Second European Quality of Life Survey*, 2010, pp. 41–42).

Implementing positive and endowing measures are necessary to support the return of men and women to their jobs after a period of raising children—the

policy of re-entering the labour market must be promoted in order to enable men and women regain financial independence. Leira (2010, pp. 34–36) mentions economic independence in the situation when, mostly in the case of divorce, a child/children stays with the mother. In the situation of economic independence a parent can carve out her own household, benefit from childcare services and participate in the labour market, so a single parent has a low risk of poverty (Child poverty..., 2010, p. 7).

## **Employers' attitudes towards women and men at work in Scandinavia and Estonia**

Europeans are encouraged to take a greater part in paid work, and as work takes up a considerable part of their life, the good quality of work is very important, and so is the balance between working and time for family. The changing organization of family life prompts employers to offer different contributing measures and possibilities.

The form of work (full-time, part-time or other forms) chosen by women and men participating in the labour market is connected with the attitude of the employers. Family and the labour market are constantly changing institutions, but changes at work are slow—thus women and men have had to make decisions that do not satisfy them (Järviste, 2008, p. 5).

A new career model in EU adapts “flexicurity” and could provide an individual’s designing career path with a better balance between flexibility and security, but this concept is polarised along gender lines. Men continue to have secure career pathways, women are overrepresented in labour market categories that are considered “flexible”; in such categories, flexibility is as likely to mean “marginal”, “non-standard”, “atypical” as it is to have any more positive meaning relating to control or choice over working time. (Mind the gap..., 2008, p. 5)

However, stereotypes can be changed very quickly, especially in some sectors. A good example here is the participation of Estonian women, compared to women in the other EU Member States and especially in Scandinavia, in fields of science. In Estonia women’s participation in fields of science in 2009 was 60 per cent and it has remained at the same level for several years (Eurostat, 2009, p. 44). For example, in 2005 the participation of women and men in fields of research and development was 47 per cent and 53 per cent, respectively. In 2009, the levels were 48 per cent and 52 per cent, respectively. During these

four years feminization of social and humanitarian sciences has taken place. While in 2005 there were 41 per cent of women in the fields mentioned above (641 scientists and engineers in total), then in 2009 the percentage of women in these fields was already 59 per cent (1,162 scientists and engineers in total, indicating a growth by half). This means that there has been a big turn in how stereotypes have evolved, because in Estonia women in the social sciences and the humanities have become leading scholars in their field. There has also been an increase in women's participation in medicine—in these years a sudden decrease (from 63 per cent to 33 per cent) in the participation of men has taken place, while women's participation grew just as suddenly (from 37 per cent to 66 per cent) (*Eesti statistika...*, 2006, p. 91; 2010, p. 351).

At the same time, if employees have children, there emerges a problem with a parent staying at home because of children (parental leave, added or sick leave). Employers appear to be more favourable towards mothers staying home with ill children than to fathers doing the same.

According to the 2010 fiscal year report of the Estonian Health Insurance Fund, the amount of care lists taken by fathers is 26 per cent. The instances of fathers staying home with children has increased by 5 per cent during both years of the report and the amount of care lists is predicted to increase. The average cost of a care day will increase, since care lists are used more by parents with higher income. This is especially true for men, whose average caring period's/day's income is nearly twice as high as that of a female caretaker (*Eesti Haigekassa...*, 2009, p. 64; 2011, p. 62).

In Sweden, too, most often it is women who take a leave from work when children are ill (Wehner & Abrahamson 2004, p. 16; Leira, 2010, p. 92). The problem is particularly topical in the private sector, whereas in the public sector, fathers are more likely to use leaves or absence because of children (Leira, 2010, pp. 92, 100).

One possible alternative to balance working and family life is distance working. The best example of distant working are teleworkers (Broughton, 2007), but it can be arranged for other kinds of jobs. It presupposes, of course, gradual changes in the attitudes of the employer—a good worker cannot perform efficient work only at a work place where he or she is closely attended to. Employees do not work hard only when watched by somebody. Also, the employers must have more trust in their employees.

Different forms of working and flexibility at work are more common in countries where the western-type of democracy (the highest number of workers at home, from the countries discussed in the article, are Denmark and Finland) has had

a chance to develop, but is not very welcomed by employers in the Eastern EU countries (Broughton, 2007).

In Sweden, the common practice (not a governmental policy program) is to allow working a few hours in the morning and/or in the afternoon; parents usually use their flexible schedule to shorten their children's days in childcare (Björnberg & Dahlgren, 2003, p. 16).

Furthermore, every company can develop their own practices, for example:

- The Danish company Novozymes offers its employees longer maternity leave than is required by the Danish legislation; the company has a flexible working hours' scheme (EWCO, 2005a, p. 5);
- In Finland, for example, there is a new autonomy model (Finnish municipal hospital Jorvi): work shifts are planned together with all employees and taking into account individual needs of different working times (EWCO, 2005c, p. 14);
- In Estonia the magazine *Pere ja Kodu* has been elected since 2001 the most family-friendly company with the following criteria: flexibility of working time as well as possibility to work partly at home; more than the legislative minimum should be paid to workers on childcare leave with children younger than 12 years old; parties are organized for children and families; other gatherings and occasions for workers and their families. One of the candidates for a family-friendly enterprise is also, for example, the company *AS Eesti Post* (EWCO, 2005b, p. 10).

## Conclusions

In order to determine the relation between the duties, responsibilities, rights and opportunities of mothers and fathers, it is necessary to have an overview of the quantitative indicators—working, relation between family and work life, difference in wages and usage of time.

The European Union's social and family policy which defines gender equality, or at least equal chances and equal participation in the labour market, has to be moderate and patient. For example, there are still many women who prefer the traditional division of labour and men who prefer to work for the most time at a paid job, rather than participate in family life. Thus, very slowly, the women's part in housework is changing. Women's participation in the labour market has increased the women's burden, while the men's duties have mainly remained

outside the family. Women work on lower-paying jobs, and on shortened time or part-time. The data varies from country to country, but they still further cement the “natural” opinion of the mother staying at home and the father working. The nature of motherhood and fatherhood is slowly changing.

Therefore, it is important to understand

- why the traditional stances on women (motherhood) and men (fatherhood) have stayed more or less the same throughout time, and what they are based on. The good examples of the shared time for caring and educating of children are Estonia and Sweden; Swedish media campaigns to support the new type of fatherhood; educating of parents (*vanemaharidus* in Estonia) and receiving support and assistance in case of family problems.
- the employers’ attitudes towards employees with small children (in cases of hiring, sick and care lists and additional leaves), part-time workers, shortened time workers and distance workers.
- that, in order to make changes in sharing time between home and work, declarations of aims is not enough, the aims must be implemented (paid paternal leave being the biggest change in this respect).
- that after the childbirth the quality of life of the family must stay on a stable level. A fine example is the paternity leave and cash payment (*vanemahüvitis*) arrangement in Estonia.

Changes in the society are interconnected: in their labour market behaviour, citizens are closely related with needs of the state. The aims of the EU are based on future concerns—namely, demographic situation and competitiveness (sustainability). But changes on the level of the people will take place in the following order:

- 1) The need for women to participate in the labour market.
- 2) Adaption of policy measures to the changes in the labour market.
- 3) Changes on the level of the people (by adding employers) which is the tardiest process of the named ones.

It is hard, even impossible, for the state to intervene in family arrangements, but the state can lay the ground and create an environment that would be propitious for the changes in family arrangements.

For Estonia and several other EU Member States, the Swedish and Scandinavian experience about family and demographic policies are definitely important. In his speech in Hamburg, the Swedish Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt (2011) said that there is no one-size-fits-all remedy, each country has its own history

and preconditions that require special attention and measures, but the measures adopted by Sweden are a good example of how to ensure women and men equal opportunities.

Therefore, the aims of the EU regarding women's/men's participation in labour market are clear: full employment to support economic development, but at the same time supporting the family to go on. It is difficult to realize, especially at the time of the economic crisis and coming out of the crisis—but not really utopian. The EU is faced with a much more crucial problem—gender equality and balance in working and in family life because through equality the aims of the EU do not appear utopian. It is not only a question of laws and directives, this is also a problem with each individual's attitude. But the changes in balancing family life and working, and gender equality, are not only the problems of women any more, but of men as well. The changes in the society should not be the concern of men only, because of their fear of losing their power and privileges: the structural inequality between men and women is a democratic deficit that not only strikes women but men as well.

It can thus be concluded that, in their attitudes and strategies, the EU Member States are active supporters of the third model of Leira's family models—'the shared roles model', even though their strength and realization of policy measures vary among the states. Women and men in their labour market behaviour are shifting closer to the third model, but behaviour on the level of the family life indicates that the real situation resembles the second family type—the early version of a dual-earner family model. Leira (2010, pp. 66–67) argues that in the Nordic countries the third, 'dual-earner'/'shared roles model' is the predominant family form among the younger generation, but the 'familization' of fathers has had a slow effect, since even mothers have become more equal to fathers as providers. Gender equality has stopped at the families' front door (Leira, 2010, p. 94) and it possibly applies even better to the real-life situation in Estonia.

What the countries have in common is that choosing between work and family is still a feminine dilemma (Leira, 2010, pp. 72–74), especially in Estonia. However, among the younger generation in Estonia, too, changes in the stereotypical roles are taking place.

So, women, especially the younger generation (with the Nordic countries' strong support), had started the revolution (Esping-Andersen, 2009), but it is not over, mostly because men are now starting their own revolution.

Men are the slower party in the mentioned processes of change. Social equality exists in the legislations of the EU Member States and in the aims of strategies.

The attitudes towards motherhood and fatherhood are changing, especially among the younger generation. In real-life situations traditional gender roles still exist and it may be one of the reasons for the low birth rate, the ‘double burden’ of women and women’s wishes to make a secure career without destructive breaks, as men do.

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**Appendix 2. „Nation-State’s ‘Political Ineptitude’ in Citizen’s Identity Processes: A Case Study Using Identity Structure Analysis”**



# Nation-State's 'Political Ineptitude' in Citizen's Identity Processes: A Case Study Using Identity Structure Analysis

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**Abstract:** *The conceptual and methodological tools of Identity Structure Analysis (ISA) are applied to a particular instance of an individual at variance with dominant societal norms in order to demonstrate the efficacy of ISA for elucidating complex identity processes in socio-historical and biographical context. The empirical results presented in this article indicate that the interrelationship between societal constraints and individual values and beliefs are shown to be effectively detailed using ISA.*

**Keywords:** *adult, attitudes, identity, Identity Structure Analysis, values, young people*

## 1. Introduction: development in the context of Estonia of a customized ISA identity instrument

The paper reports an investigation into the efficacy of using the conceptual and methodological tools of Identity Structure Analysis (ISA) to elucidate the identity processes of an individual when constrained by the state in relation to those personal beliefs that are the core dimensions of identity and others that are conflicted dimensions. The state in question is contemporary Estonia and the constraints of concern have to do with issues of work culture, family support, birth rate, and ageing persons in respect of gender norms and stereotyping.

## 2. Issues of society and identity in contemporary Estonia

Estonian society is simultaneously seen as 'open' and 'closed'. The best example of openness in Estonia is the ability of citizens to have open discussions (both through media and analytic statistics-based reports) on actual problems to help find solutions. The trait of a closed, oppressive society towards the individual is perpetrated by collective values in Estonia, whereby each person is seen as a fulfiller of a certain function and a predetermined role (for example, to form the right kind of family with the right number of children to repopulate the country). Forced politicization is also common for a closed (corporate) society. In this context emerges self-censorship, holding oneself back and the aim, at least on the outside, to belong to the "correct" group or circle. Another example of Estonia as a closed society is that people feel that their voice is not heard "in places, where things are actually decided" (*Võtmevalik: ühiskonna väärtussüsteem*, 2010).

In an international comparison, Estonia occupies the 33<sup>rd</sup>–34<sup>th</sup> position among 187/142 countries (*Eesti inimarengu aruanne 2012/2013*, 2013, p. 9; *The 2012 Legatum Prosperity Index*, 2012, p. 12), but Estonians are self-critical to the degree that their subjective evaluation of different areas of life in their country is much lower than would be suggested by objective indicators. One reason for this could be that people perceive unwarranted inequalities in their society.

The system of reference plays a huge role in self-perception: being a member of the EU, being compared to wealthy neighbours (mainly Scandinavian countries) (Lauristin, 2011). Of the Baltic countries, Estonia has been the most successful, but fast and continuing changes have often ignored social sensitivity (Norkus, 2011; Lauristin & Vihalemm, 1998). The older generation in Estonia has memories of the Soviet era, the visually uniform, modest lifestyle; nowadays, however, big social contrasts can be seen (Lauristin & Vihalemm, 2010). Among the older generation, expectations imposed on men—to provide security for one's family, especially financially, which is a constant high pressure (Marling, 2010), the concept of working overtime is widely spread (Eurofound, 2002)—a full-time job and working overtime is often the only chance to ensure an income that provides subsistence (Järviste, 2008). The double role of a woman as a breadwinner and a caretaker has its roots in the Soviet period when the government, public and private opinion emphasized that both women and men had to participate in paid employment, but the roles of men and women as mothers and fathers, that is caretakers, remained intact (Marling, 2010; Maydell *et al.*, 2006; Lück & Hofäcker, 2003).

In post-Soviet Estonia, changes in the distribution of household and caring responsibilities are taking place, but slowly (*Sooline ebavõrdsus...*, 2006). In their attitudes women in Estonia are prepared to represent a 'shared roles model', but in real-life situations they represent an early version of a dual-earner family model (Leira's model in Leira, [2002]2010; on junior provider model see Ellingsaeter, 1998). Men in Estonia, in their attitudes, are in the early version of a dual-earner family model (Leira, [2002]2010), but still consider the role of mother to be natural to women, and do not mind being the family's main economic provider. Women in Estonia believe that employers in Estonia differentiate between the sexes and, therefore, returning to the labour market after giving birth and maternity leave is difficult (Põdder, 2012).

In Estonia, women and men (especially the latter) expect the state to offer supportive measures that would help combine work and family life. Women in Estonia, in their attitudes, are more easily affected by the roles suggested by the media and are more prone to adapt to common attitudes in the society. The choices of Estonian men, on the other hand, are affected by the attitudes of socio-biographical context—mother, partner, friends and, surprisingly, the wider socio-cultural domain—of women in Estonia (Põdder, 2012).

Young people in Estonia value most the honesty and comradeship of their companions, material possessions, security, equality in the eyes of the law, honesty, justice, privacy, freedom of expression, personal responsibility and loyalty towards their country/friends, but also sexuality, fun/enjoyment, new beautiful things, expensive/famous brands, and they like doing several things at a time, taking on new challenges/experiences and risks (*Maailma noorsugu*, 2011). A growing problem for young people in Estonia is following the standards of success imposed by the social environment (family, society as a whole). Incompetence in finding working strategies of coping and signals coming from agents affecting adolescents (idolized media celebrities, everyday parental problems) cause a danger of depression and low self-esteem, also a fear of ageing, of the future and responsibility. Many young people do not want children, because of the expense, and plan to start a life abroad (better income, a more interesting life). Young people in Estonia find it important to make a better life than their parents' and believe in their ability to change society through their choices and actions. For the young the most important agents affecting values are family and friends, the media, school and the Internet (*Maailma noorsugu*, 2011).

### **3. An empirical in-depth case-study of an individual's identity processes**

#### **3.1. Aims and objectives**

In the context of contemporary Estonian society, the present study uses a theoretical framework, Identity Structure Analysis, as an efficient method to explore person's individual values and beliefs. The aims of the investigation are: (1) to apply the ISA conceptual framework, operationalized by the Ipseus software, to assess the identity processes of Estonian individuals in respect of the interrelationship between the contemporary Estonian state's norms and the person's values and beliefs about work and family as dimensions of identity; (2) to ascertain the psychological consequences for individuals of disjunctions between state norms and individual values and beliefs; and (3) to demonstrate the efficacy of ISA for elucidating the complex identity processes of the person in relation to the perceived 'imperatives' of the state as these are judged by that person. Specific objectives are: (1) to gauge the extents of the individual's aspirational and empathetic identification with salient societal agencies (the state's government and opposition parties) and people of personal significance (typical young Estonian females and males, family, and co-students); (2) to assess the extent to which identification with these entities is conflicted; (3) to provide evidence of developmental processes in identification with others (change or resistance to change); (4) to establish the core and conflicted values of the individual in respect of work, family, gender and ageing; (5) to determine the individual's appraisal (construal and evaluation) of Estonian society; and (6) to review the consequences of the person's appraisal of Estonian society for self-evaluation and identity diffusion.

#### **3.2. Synopsis of the conceptual and methodological tools of Identity Structure Analysis (ISA)**

Identity Structure Analysis (ISA) is an open-ended conceptual framework, which theoretical underpinnings are a series of self and identity conceptualizations, aspects of which are integrated within ISA: the psychodynamic approaches (mainly by E. H. Erikson), symbolic interactionism and social constructionism, personal construct psychology, appraisal theory, and cognitive–affective consistency principles (mainly G. A. Kelly's Personal Construct Theory) (Weinreich, 2003). The integration of a series of theoretical concepts requires formulating explicit definitions in the ISA context. The definitions in the ISA context, which are relevant to the aforementioned aims and objectives, follow.

ISA sees identity as a continuous process, emerged partly from identifications with others in the socio-biographical context throughout childhood and beyond to processes of identity development and redefinition of identity. People appraise the world in which they live and themselves in it through the identifications they have made with others (Weinreich, 2003).

A key principle of the ISA approach is: *“A person’s appraisal of the social world and its significance is an expression of his or her identity”* (Weinreich, 2003): *“appraisal and the current expression of identity”* and *“identification and the formation and development of identity”* are the two main arenas of interrelated processes that guide the presentation of the ISA conceptual framework. Identity in the ISA context is defined as one’s self-construal process from the past to the future: *“A person’s identity is defined as the totality of one’s self-construal, in which how one construes oneself in the present expresses the continuity between how one construes oneself as one was in the past and how one construes oneself as one aspires to be in the future”* (Weinreich, 2003).

Person’s appraisal is necessary for psychological survival and it is the central process by which people assess the circumstances for the potential fulfilment of their identity aspirations during the current period of their lifecycle. Appraisal as a process offers and records experiences of life situations and events, each new experience engenders the potential for both a reappraisal of earlier values and beliefs and an elaboration of identity. People’s propensity to appraise the social world in a manner biased strongly towards the positive, that is, a positivity bias predominates in which people are preferably accorded more positive than negative qualities (Weinreich, 2003).

The definition of one’s appraisal in ISA context is: *“[a] person’s appraisal of a specific situation is made by way of construing, or attributing meaning to, agents and events in context, within the limitations of one’s constructs as cued by the situation, and evaluating or judging this construal in relation to one’s aspirations”* (Weinreich, 2003). A person’s appraisal of a situation consists of a self-appraisal and the appraisal of other agents and agencies. Identification with others—positively or negatively—is important in a person’s identity from the ISA standpoint. ‘Others’ are the individual’s closest social environment as well as social agents on the whole. The definition of one’s evaluation of another is: *“one’s evaluation of another is defined as one’s overall assessment of the other in terms of the positive and negative evaluative connotations of the attributes one construes in that other, in accordance with one’s value system”* (Weinreich, 2003).

Identification—a feature of the other as interpreted and understood by the person, some “others” stances—can, depending on a person, be unexplained/not understood or understood as a threat. To avoid negative emotions a person may wish to dissociate from such kind of ‘others’ (Weinreich, 2003). ISA reifies it as contra-identification with another or group: “*The extent of one’s contra-identification with another is defined as the similarity between the qualities one attributes to the other and those from which one would wish to dissociate*” (Weinreich, 2003).

The situation where the dispersion of conflicted identifications with others—where the greater the magnitude of identification conflicts and the more extensive their dispersion across others, the more severe the diffusion—is considered to be an identity diffusion, in the context of the ISA: “*The degree of one’s identity diffusion is defined as the overall dispersion and magnitude of one’s identification conflicts with others*” (Weinreich, 2003).

With some ‘others’ people feel themselves close and share/want to share their stances (whether ‘good’ or ‘bad’); in the ISA context this is self’s empathetic identification with another, which will modulate from one context to another, being closer in some contexts and more distant in others: “*The extent of one’s current empathetic identification with another is defined as the degree of similarity between the qualities one attributes to the other, whether ‘good’ or ‘bad’, and those of one’s current self-image*” (Weinreich, 2003).

From the standpoint of the ISA method it is important, in the studying of an individual’s identity, to view compatibilities and incompatibilities with entities of the current study—here a particular construct is used in the appraisal of self and others, which in the ISA method is defined as ‘structural pressure’: “*The structural pressure on a person’s construct is defined as the overall strength of the excess of compatibilities over incompatibilities between the evaluative connotations of attributions one makes to each entity by way of the one construct and one’s overall evaluation of each entity*” (Weinreich, 2003).

High ‘structural pressure’ on a construct means that it is used consistently to evaluate self and others, thus representing a core value for the individual (most strongly the core dimensions of identity). The most conflicted dimensions of identity are the constructs with net low structural pressures. The construct is without strong evaluative connotations when the net structural pressure on a construct is low as a result of weak positive and negative pressures (Weinreich, 2003).

### 3.3. Method

ISA's conceptual tool was aided by the accessible Identity Exploration (IDEX) computer software, a methodological resource (Weinreich, 2003; Weinreich & Ewart, 2007). The Ipeus software was used to create a customized identity instrument, present the instrument on screen for completion by participants, and compute the parameters of identity as defined within the ISA conceptual framework while foregrounding the qualitative features of the person's core and conflicted dimensions of identity (values and beliefs).

### 3.4. The ISA Identity Instrument: the themes and domains

Themes (and constructs), domains (and entities) for this current study are derived from the chapter 'Issues of society and identity in contemporary Estonia' presented above. Themes in the current study are: work and family life; gender stereotypes and ageing. The ISA method enables, in the current case, to determine person's values, identifications with others and self-evaluation type through 17 bipolar constructs (Table 1) and 3 domains with 14 entities. Identity instruments—entities (situated self in various contexts, individuals, groups, institutions) and bipolar constructs (*"bipolarity of constructs enables assessment of people's favoured and disfavoured elements, as these may vary from person to person"*)—are constructed for the individual participating in the study. The domains and entities in the current study are:

- 'Political and public representatives' domain, which includes entities 'Present government of Estonia', 'Opposition to the legislative council', 'The media';
- 'Young Estonian people by gender and co-students' domain, which includes entities 'Young women in Estonia', 'Young men in Estonia', 'My co-students';
- 'Family' domain, which includes entities: 'My mother', 'My father', 'My partner'.

**Participant J.** In Tallinn, a case was sampled in order to illustrate ISA as an efficient method to investigate respondents' identification and values. Earlier in this paper, Estonian society was characterized as a society of major changes; in this part of paper follows an idiographic analysis of the Tallinn case respondent, J's, results. Respondent J is female, age 48, married, a mother of two, with higher education, university lecturer by occupation, Estonian.

*Table 1. The bipolar constructs*

	Left	Right
1	...believes that the normal situation is for women to stay at home and men to have the role of a bread-winner	...believes that both parents have to be engaged in paid work
2	...believes that women and men are equal in both instances of fulfilling responsibilities at home and having paid work	...believes that in family life women are responsible for functional combining of work and family life
3	...believes that staying home in the case of need (young children, child sickness, etc.) can't depend on a parent's gender	...believes that staying home in the case of need (young children, child sickness, etc.) is a biological responsibility of women
4	...believes that both parents are responsible for raising a child	...believes that when raising a child most of the responsibility is with the mother
5	...knows that for each adult, regardless of gender, economic independency is important	...recognizes that it is natural for women to be economically dependent on their partner
6	...views women as having the greater responsibility at home	...views men as having the greater responsibility at home
7	...believes that in Estonia women and men are respected as parents	...believes that in Estonia women and men are not respected as parents
8	...believes that for Estonian society it is important to find a solution to the problem of population ageing	...believes that for Estonian society it is not important to find a solution to the problem of population ageing
9	...believes that birth rate is positively affected by women actively participating in the job market	...believes that birth rate is negatively affected by women actively participating in the job market
10	...thinks that birth rate is higher in countries where fatherhood is supported by the state (by way of father's quota and other measures that support the participation of fathers in raising children)	...thinks that for raising birth rate it is unimportant to pay attention to fathers, but important to make sure that mothers are insured by the state (by way of maternity leave, help when returning to the job market and so on)
11	...believes that Estonian employers are strongly affected by gender stereotypes (for example: they are more understanding when female employees are at home with sick children)	...believes that Estonian employers do not consider gender important (for example: they are also understanding when male employees stay at home with sick children)
12	...thinks that working overtime is not a normal part of the modern working culture	...thinks that women working overtime is a normal part of the modern working culture
13	...thinks that working overtime is not a normal part of the modern working culture	...thinks that men working overtime is a normal part of the modern working culture
14	...believes that families with children should not expect help from the state, they should manage on their own	...believes that the state should support parenthood through shaping values and legislation, providing different services and financial means
15	...believes that a family is a family when there are children	...believes that to be a family it is not compulsory to have children
16	...believes that young people in Estonia want to have children	...believes that young people in Estonia are afraid to have children
17	...believes that young people in Estonia want to connect their future with Estonia	...believes that young people in Estonia do not want to connect their future with Estonia

## 4. ISA results

The assessment of J's identity processes are here presented in terms of her identification processes with and within society. This is followed by the assessment of her values and beliefs as these function as a core or conflicted dimensions of her identity. Her concomitant evaluations of the Estonian government and the legislative opposition, the media, young females and males, her co-students and her family are then presented. Evidence of her appraisal (that is, construal and evaluation) of the salient societal agencies of government and opposition is given, together with her self-appraisal. Then follows summary evidence of the ramifications of her identification processes for her state of identity as a member of that society.

### Objective 1: Extent of the individual's aspirational and empathetic identifications

Table 2 presents the evidence of J's modes of identification with societal and personal agents in the domains of political and public representatives, young Estonians by gender, co-students, and family.

Table 2. *Aspirational, empathetic and conflicted identifications*

Domain	Entity	Positive aspirational identification (idealistic identification)	Negative aspirational identification (contra-identification)	Empathetic identification with respect to current self (Me, as I am now)	Conflicted identification with respect to current self (Me, as I am now)
Political & public representatives	Present government of Estonia	0.47	0.35	0.33	0.34
	Opposition to the legislative council	0.29	0.53	0.76	0.59
	The media	0.24	0.24	0.27	0.25
Young Estonians by gender & co-students	Young women in Estonia	0.53	0.41	0.80	0.57
	Young men in Estonia	0.47	0.41	0.53	0.47
	My co-students	0.35	0.29	0.47	0.37
Family	My mother	0.41	0.53	0.73	0.62
	My father	0.29	0.53	0.73	0.62
	My partner	0.24	0.71	0.80	0.75

\* Scale range 0.00 to 1.00

The primary identification processes are the aspirational mode in the longer term and the empathetic mode in the immediate here and now. The aspirational mode has both positive and negative aspects, that is, in terms of desiring to emulate the other (*idealistic identification*) and to implement self's values and beliefs on the one hand, and wishing to dissociate from unpalatable characteristics and behaviours of the other (*contra-identification*) and from these when they might be manifested by self. The empathetic mode occurs with respect to the social contexts that are salient in the individual's appraisal of oneself and the other in a present time perspective.

In Table 2, the important distinction between aspirational and empathetic identification with others is immediately apparent, whereby the evidence indicates that in J's case they differ substantially. Her most positive aspirational identifications are with young women in Estonia (0.53), the present government of Estonia (0.47) and young men in Estonia (0.47); however, these are all of low extent.

For J, the general circumstances of society as she appraises them have minimal attributes to which she aspires. Her empathetic identifications differ from her aspirational identifications. She empathetically identifies most closely with family, that is, with her partner (0.80), her mother (0.73) and her father (0.73), and also with opposition to the legislative council (0.76). Of concern is the evidence that she simultaneously wishes to substantially dissociate from their attributes (negative aspirational identification), desiring not to be like her partner (0.71), her mother (0.53), her father (0.53) and opposition to the legislative council (0.53).

### **Objective 2: The extent to which the individual's identifications are conflicted**

Empathetically identifying with the other while simultaneously contra-identifying with that other is a conflicted identification of being as the other in certain respects but wishing to dissociate from the other in particular ways. In J's case (see Table 2), her conflicts in identification are substantial, the highest being with her partner (0.75), her mother (0.62), her father (0.62), opposition to the legislative council (0.59) and young women in Estonia (0.57). In practice, she is alienated from a society to which she belongs (the Estonian nation-state); she attributes to herself and those with whom she closely empathetically identifies characteristics that represent their undesired place in the society, about which she (together with them) feels she cannot alter.

**Objective 3: The individual's socio-developmental and biographical processes (change or resistance to change)**

The evidence presented in Table 3 indicates that J's closest past empathetic identifications are with her partner (0.80), opposition to the legislative council (0.76), her mother (0.73) and her father (0.73) based on her current appraisal of her past self (this is not as she might have actually appraised herself when she was a child). In this instance, her current empathetic identifications are the same. She appraises herself in the past as she is currently, that is, without a changing sense of self from past to present.

In general, ISA assessments reveal that people experience a sense of change as a result of their biographical development, though this varies considerably from person to person. In a cross-cultural investigation of 'primordialist' sentiment compared with 'situationalist' perspective about national/ethnic identity, situationalists had a greater sense of developmental change than did primordialists (Weinreich, Bacova & Rougier, 2012).

*Table 3. The individual's socio-developmental and biographical processes*

Domain	Entity	Empathetic identification with respect to past self (Me, when I was a child)	Empathetic identification with respect to current self (Me, as I am now)
Political & public representatives	Present government of Estonia	0.33	0.33
	Opposition to the legislative council	0.76	0.76
	The media	0.27	0.27
Young Estonians by gender & co-students	Young women in Estonia	0.80	0.80
	Young men in Estonia	0.53	0.53
	My co-students	0.47	0.47
Family	My mother	0.73	0.73
	My father	0.73	0.73
	My partner	0.80	0.80

\* Scale range 0.00 to 1.00

**Objective 4: The individual's core and conflicted values and beliefs as dimensions of identity**

Table 4 provides evidence on how J experiences herself within the context of Estonian society as represented by the aforementioned domains in terms of the values and beliefs about work, family, gender and ageing to which she subscribes.

Table 4. Core dimensions of identity: high structural pressures on constructs

Strongest core dimensions of identity: constructs with high structural pressures	
Participant J	
Construct no (polarity*, structural pressure**)	Text of endorsed aspiration
07 (-1, 82.59)	...in Estonia, women and men are respected as parents
17 (-1, 82.44)	...young people in Estonia want to connect their future with Estonia
16 (-1, 78.73)	...young people in Estonia want to have children
11 ( 1, 72.78)	...Estonian employers are strongly affected by gender stereotypes
14 (-1, 71.46)	...families with children should not expect help from the state

\* Polarity is -1 when the left-hand pole of the construct is the endorsed aspiration, 1 when this is the right-hand pole. The endorsed aspiration is given here (which may be that one aspires to accept an unpalatable 'reality')

\*\* Scale range -100 to +100

Her core dimensions of her identity in recognition of Estonian societal realities as she perceives them are these (structural pressure in brackets): *...in Estonia, women and men are (to be) respected as parents (83); ...young people in Estonia want to connect their future with Estonia (82); ...young people in Estonia want to have children (79); ...Estonian employers are (in fact) strongly affected by gender stereotypes (73); ...families with children should not expect help from the state (71).*

The problematic value and belief arenas for her (Table 5), the ones that pose dilemmas for her (conflicted dimensions of identity) given her appraisal of the society she lives in, are: *...both parents have to be engaged in paid work (-24); ...family is a family, when there are children (-23);...for Estonian society it is important to find a solution to the problem of population ageing (4);...for each*

*adult, regardless of gender, economic independency is important (18);...both parents are responsible in raising a child (18).* While each belief or value is ostensibly endorsed, her societal circumstances as she appraises them result in cognitive-affective incompatibilities between the societal stances and her own aspirations. Under such circumstances she is likely to behave at times in ways contrary to her positive aspirations, vacillating between expressing contrary positions.

Table 5. *Conflicted dimensions of identity: low (net) structural pressures on constructs*

Most conflicted dimensions of identity: constructs with net low structural pressures	
Participant J	
Construct no (polarity*, structural pressure**)	Text of endorsed aspiration
01 ( 1, -24.00)	...both parents have to be engaged in paid work
15 (-1, -22.54)	...family is a family, when there are children
08 (-1, 4.20)	...for Estonian society it is important to find a solution to the problem of population ageing
05 (-1, 17.51)	...for each adult, regardless of gender, economic independence is important
04 (-1, 18.10)	...both parents are responsible in raising a child

\* *Polarity is -1 when the left-hand pole of the construct is the endorsed aspiration, 1 when this is the right-hand pole. The endorsed aspiration is given here (which may be that one aspires to accept an unpalatable 'reality') – see the Table of Constructs for both poles.*

\*\* *Scale range -100 to +100*

### **Objective 5: The individual's appraisal (construal and evaluation) of society**

J's overall evaluation of the society is most unfavourable and extends to her close family (Table 6). She has a poor opinion of the government and opposition, of young females and males in general, her co-students; her parents and her partner. The reason for this is that she attributes to the societal agencies significant propensities that are antithetical to what she would like the society to be about.

In relation to young people, her parents and her partner, she views them as having mainly to acquiesce to everyday norms and behaviours that are contrary to what she holds as being progressive values and beliefs. Her conflicted dimensions of identity are those that represent her own stances that are prone to contradictory

behaviour.

*Table 6. The individual's evaluation of the society*

Domain	Entity	Evaluation
Political & public representatives	Present government of Estonia	0.13
	Opposition to the legislative council	-0.07
	The media	0.03
Young Estonians by gender & co-students	Young women in Estonia	0.08
	Young men in Estonia	-0.03
	My co-students	0.07
Family	My mother	-0.13
	My father	-0.20
	My partner	-0.33

\* Scale -1.00 to +1.00

The elements of J's attribution of negative characteristics to the foremost societal agencies, the government and the opposition to the legislative council are clearly seen in Table 7. J assigns importance to the active participation of both parents in the labour market, and thus the economic independence of each grown individual. On the other hand, J finds that family values and solving the aging problem in Estonia is also important. J clearly feels that the government and opposition do little to support the combining of work and family life, or she does not simply understand their stance.

The negative attributions she makes to herself (Table 7, see next p.) illustrate the manner by which she feels constrained by the society in which she lives. J is currently not happy with herself in situations where there is a strong role-based division between work and/or family life. She feels that this is a situation, where a woman has more responsibilities at home, but the stereotypical stance of employers and their tendency to think that working overtime is normal do not support this role. Thus, for her the following situation—every adult's full participation in the labour market and managing as a parent— is conflicted.

Table 7. *Appraisal (construal and evaluation) of government and opposition; appraisal of self*

Construct (the most core/ conflicted)	J's appraisal of:		
	The government of Estonia	Opposition to legislative council	Current self (Me, as I am now)
01 conflicted	...both parents have to be engaged in paid work (+4) <sup>1</sup>	...both parents have to be engaged in paid work (+3)	...both parents have to be engaged in paid work (+4)
02	...in family life women are responsible for functional combining of work and family life (-3) <sup>2</sup>	...in family life women are responsible for functional combining of work and family life (-3)	...in family life women are responsible for functional combining of work and family life (-2)
03	...staying home in the case of need is a biological responsibility of women (-3)	...staying home in the case of need is a biological responsibility of women (-3)	...staying home in the case of need is a biological responsibility of women (-2)
04 conflicted	Void	Void	...both parents are responsible for raising a child (+2)
05 conflicted	Void	Void	...for each adult, regardless of gender, economic independence is important (+1)
06	Void	Void	...women have more responsibilities at home (-4)
07 core	...in Estonia, women and men are respected as parents (+4)	...in Estonia, women and men are not respected as parents (-1)	...in Estonia, women and men are not respected as parents (-4)
08 conflicted	...to the Estonian society it is not important to find a solution to the problem of population ageing (-4)	...to the Estonian society it is important to find a solution to the problem of population ageing (+2)	...to the Estonian society it is important to find a solution to the problem of population ageing (+1)
09	...birth rate is positively affected by women actively participating in the job market (+4)	...birth rate is positively affected by women actively participating in the job market (+2)	Void
10	...birth rate is higher in countries where fatherhood is acknowledged at the state level (+1)	...birth rate is higher in countries where fatherhood is acknowledged at the state level (+1)	Void
11 core	...Estonian employers do not consider gender important (+4)	...Estonian employers are strongly affected by gender stereotypes (-1)	...Estonian employers are strongly affected by gender stereotypes (-4)
12	...women working overtime is a normal part of the modern working culture (-4)	...women working overtime is a normal part of the modern working culture (-2)	...women working overtime is a normal part of the modern working culture (-4)
13	...men working overtime is a normal part of the modern working culture (-4)	...men working overtime is a normal part of the modern working culture (-1)	...men working overtime is a normal part of the modern working culture (-4)
14 core	...families with children should not expect help from the state (+4)	...families with children should not expect help from the state (+3)	...the state should support parenthood through (various means) (-4)

### **Objective 6: Consequences of the individual's appraisal of society for self-evaluation and identity diffusion**

Evidently, given the extent and magnitude of J's conflicted identification with Estonian society and her family, together with the nature of her core and conflicted dimensions of identity that constitute her value and belief system, such socio-psychological conflicts are likely to be stressful, and her ISA identity variant classification is one of crisis (negative self-evaluation at -0.41 and high identity diffusion at 0.53). She lives in a society that is at odds with her own existential self. Nevertheless, given her state of identity diffusion and low self-evaluation, she is likely to attempt personal and societal action to remedy this state of affairs by campaigning for change within the Estonian society.

## **5. Conclusion**

The empirical investigation reported here applied the ISA conceptual framework, operationalized by the Ipseus software, to assess the identity processes of an Estonian individual in respect of the interrelationship between the contemporary Estonia's state norms and the person's values and beliefs about work and family as dimensions of identity. It ascertained the psychological consequences for the individual of disjunctions between state norms and individual values and beliefs. The case study is illustrative of the efficacy of the conceptual and methodological tools of ISA. No generalization is intended about Estonia and

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<sup>1</sup> (+ve) refers to the person's endorsed pole of the construct (scores +1 to +4). J's endorsed poles are: 01...both parents have to be engaged in paid work; 02...women and men are equal in both cases: fulfilling responsibilities at home and being engaged in paid work; 03...staying home in the case of need (young children, child sickness, etc.) cannot depend on parent's gender; 04...both parents are responsible for raising a child; 05...for each adult, regardless of gender, economic independence is important; 06...for each adult, regardless of gender, economical independency is important; 07...in Estonia, women and men are respected as parents; 08...to the Estonian society it is important to find a solution to the problem of population aging; 09...birth rate is positively affected by women actively participating in the job market; 10...birth rate is higher in countries where fatherhood is acknowledged at the state level; 11...Estonian employers do not consider gender important; 12...women working overtime is not a normal part of the modern working culture; 13...men working overtime is not a normal part of the modern working culture; 14...families with children should not expect help from the state; 15...family is a family, when there are children; 16...young people in Estonia want to have children; 17...young people in Estonia want to connect their future with Estonia.

<sup>2</sup> (-ve) references the person's contrast pole of the construct (scores -1 to -4) – font in italics.

its citizens other than that the ISA approach can be applied with any number of cases when different results for individual identity processes would be expected. The Ipeus software incorporates nomothetic procedures that assess commonalities across specified groupings, such as gender, ethnic heritage and cultural subgroups (see Weinreich & Saunderson, 2003/12, for several group level studies).

The presented case study demonstrates that the person's identity processes proceed as a nexus of the individual and society that is an inextricably interrelated individual. There is no identity separate from society. The ISA conceptual framework provides the genuine integration of the qualitative with the quantitative features of the individual identity processes (exemplified by Table 7 above, but also as a result of the ethnographic input to the generation of the customized ISA identity instrument). In the case of J's identity processes, given her biographical experience, in the Estonian societal context at a particular historical moment, the ramifications for herself are stress, anxiety and demoralization. Is this the nation-state's 'political ineptitude' as revealed in a citizen's identity processes? From her point of view, and in accordance with her aspirations and biographical experiences, this is her appraisal of the contemporary state of affairs. Others will differ, their identity processes being open to investigation using ISA and Ipeus as presented above.

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### **Appendix 3. „Combining Work and Parenthood in Estonia, Sweden and Finland”**



## COMBINING WORK AND PARENTHOOD IN ESTONIA, SWEDEN AND FINLAND

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*The article is based on a study which analysed the participation of women and men in the labour market and birth rate in the current situation of population ageing in the EU. The article dissects the following subthemes: possibilities for women and men to balance work–life situations; women’s and men’s willingness to balance work–life; agents affecting the stances of women and men, and various strategies for combining work and family life.*

*Study results allege that: women’s active participation in the labour market does not have a negative effect on birth rate if the government provides mothers with social security support for the future; the contentment of Swedish and Finnish respondents’ with their present governments’ family supporting measures affirm that Nordic countries have been successful forerunners in adopting family policy measures to back up mothers.*

**Keywords:** *changing parenthood (motherhood, fatherhood), combining work and family, labour market, ageing society, affecting agents.*

### Introduction

A significant number of women who prefer the traditional division of labour, and men who prefer to spend most of their time in paid work without significant participation in family life has been evidenced in article ‘*Mothers and Fathers in Employment in Comparison of Welfare States in Scandinavia and Estonia*’ (Pödder, 2011). In this article, Estonia is compared with two Nordic countries that serve as a model of welfare society. The so-called Scandinavian (or, primarily, Swedish) welfare model encourages societies all over the world to aspire towards it.

Traditional gender roles still exist in real-life situations. Available data varies from country to country, but the nature of motherhood and fatherhood is changing slowly and men and employers are slow to accept the changes. Arnlaug Leira in her book *Working Parents and the Welfare State* (2002) asked a question in point of the changing labour market conditions – i.e. more and more mothers become engaged in paid work: Which family models should welfare states facilitate, if any? In the same book, Leira (2002) offered three models of family which can be adopted as a basis for political measures:

1. specialisation of the roles of mother and father (model family of industrialism) – “naturally”, mothers are homemakers and carers, while fathers are economic providers (for father as sole provider see Ellingsæter, 1998);
2. the sequential employment of mothers – mothers taking over the responsibilities of the economic provider during periods when paid work does not conflict with motherly duties. This is an early version of a dual-earner family model (for mother as junior providers see Ellingsæter, 1998);

3. ‘shared roles model’ – both mothers and fathers are employees and take care of children (for equal providers see Ellingsæter, 1998).

At the government’s level, Sweden, Finland and Estonia are active supporters of Leira’s third family model (2002). The labour market behaviour of women and men tends toward the third model, but their behaviour on the level of family life, the real situation, belongs to the second family type (Pödder, 2011).

This study addressed the attitudes and wishes of men and women towards balancing work and family and sought to identify the actual operational modes of the combinations in real-life situations. Answers were sought for the following key questions: (1) How does Estonian society compare with the new Scandinavian concept of motherhood and fatherhood in the Scandinavian context?; (2) Which are the main conflicted themes and core values for mothers and fathers in Scandinavia and in Estonia?; (3) Whether, and if so, in which dimensions can the equality of women and men in combining work and family life be viewed as a problem?; (4) Which are the main factors affecting women and men in their choices in family matters?; and (5) How strongly are the attitudes of women and men in Scandinavia and Estonia influenced by their employers.

### Men and women: combining work and family life

The EU Member States have to solve the problem of how to manage and survive in the situation of their ageing societies. It is important to take action in two aspects: the need for complementary labour force (to maintain economic stability) and the need to support the birth rate (to relieve

the demographic situation). Two possible models have been proposed for the EU Member States – full employment and a combination of work and family life.

Nordic countries have been successful forerunners in developing family policy measures to back up mothers' active participation in the labour market and to reduce the fathers' assigned role as sole breadwinners, and through this the welfare states in Scandinavia strongly support the new concept of parenthood (Leira, 2002; Ronsen & Skrede, 2010). It turned out that nowadays fertility rates are the highest in those countries where the percentage of women in the workforce is also the highest – in Denmark, Finland and Sweden – because public policies play a supporting and activating role (Thevenon, 2008). Estonia is also included in this group as it is similar to the Nordic countries, although the supportive role of public policies (e.g., child care services) is not so effective there.

The employment rate of women in Estonia (69% in 2012) is one of the highest in the European Union (68%), but it is lower than that of Sweden (77%) and Finland (72%). According to the Eurostat data (Teichgraber, 2013), the employment rate of Estonian women aged 20–64 has been higher than the EU average during the entire past decade, including the years 2009 and 2010, when the employment rate of women in Estonia dropped much faster than the EU average. In 2011, the employment of women increased in Estonia as well as in the EU but the growth was more significant in Estonia (*Eesti statistika aastaraamat*, 2012).

In real life, the phenomenon of combining work and family life has many aspects as:

1. it is an important indicator of the quality of life for men and women;
2. it provides parents a chance to invest time in children, which is a major factor of their wellbeing (Stevens, de Bergeyck & de Liedekerke, 2011), and through this they are encouraged to have more children;
3. it reduces income poverty risks (Schoon et al., 2005; Huerta et al., 2011) and enhances economic independence for each adult (Leira, 2002; *Child poverty and child wellbeing in the European Union*, 2010);
4. paid work offers mothers and fathers an opportunity of self-realisation and a change in daily routine (Hansson, Tillemann & Derman, 2004);
5. it reduces insecurities of, mostly, women regarding their position in the labour market (Hansson, 2000; Hansson, et al., 2004).

At the level of EU organisations (e.g., the European Commission) the family policy was not an issue before the 1980s. However, in Sweden the equality of both women and men in work and family life emerged as an issue in family policy in the 1960s (Björnberg, 2002).

The situation in Estonia resembles that of Scandinavian countries in the 1990s with its changing gender stereotypes and devoting special attention to fatherhood in parenthood policies. Kaie Kerem and Kaire Pöder in their article 'Welfare State' in *Estonian Human Development Report 2012/2013* (2013) have pointed out that Estonia's position in terms of contentment and social security expenses is similar to most of the new EU countries who are characterised by a lower contentment and social security expense level than Western

European countries. In Estonia the same changes are taking place as in Central Europe, albeit with dilatory effect, being delayed for 10-15 years.

Women and men in Nordic countries and in Estonia are eager to participate in paid work. However, in combining work and family life while having paid work, mothers are faced with three problems – working time, alternative forms of working, and conditions for re-entering the labour market after periods of childcare.

A new career model in the EU adapts 'flexicurity' and could provide an individual designing career path with a better balance between flexibility and security. However, this concept is polarised along gender lines, since men continue to have secure career pathways (Jurczak, Hurley, 2008).

Data has shown (Stevens, de Bergeyck & de Liedekerke, 2011) that up to 80% of women (including childless women) prefer to combine paid employment with family care, only up to 30% of women prefer to be only caretakers or only work in paid work. Authors of the survey have pointed out that the key issue is that the preferences of women who are mothers – to be at home as caretakers or combine work and family life – are influenced by their children's age.

The report *Realities of Mothers in Europe* (Stevens, de Bergeyck & de Liedekerke, 2011) clearly demonstrates the need to have a choice of working part-time – 92% of mothers admitted that having working hours coincide with school hours was of high importance, and a large majority of the interviewed mothers expressed their preference for part-time paid employment until the child is 18 years or older. The results of the study *Fewer Mothers Prefer Full-Time Work* (2007) showed that mothers who work full time are hardest on themselves and give themselves low marks as a good mothers (Stevens, de Bergeyck & de Liedekerke, 2011). Full-time mothers' low assessment of themselves as mothers can be related to fatigue; K. Nilsson (2010), for example, has argued that tiredness is an important factor in determining birth rate.

Studies show that among Swedish women's part-time employment exceeds EU-average significantly and of Estonian women's part time employment about three times and of Finnish women about two times (OECD, 2011).

The participation of women and men in the labour market is related to the attitude of employers (Järviste, 2008), who can adjust working time schedules and working conditions to help their employees combine work and family life. Employers appeared to view more favourably mothers staying home with ill children than fathers doing the same (Pödder, 2011). Also, it has been revealed that in Scandinavia and Estonia the most family-friendly working places are state and municipality institutions (Hansson, 2001; Ronsen & Skrede, 2010).

Wim van Lancker and Joris Ghysels (2012) have argued in their article that childcare acts are a precondition for parents to engage in employment. In Europe, two countries – Sweden and the Belgian region of Flanders – are the forerunners regarding public childcare for young children (Lancker & Ghysels, 2012). Childcare acts remain out of the scope of this paper, but the abovementioned fact offers some background information – in Sweden, childcare is a current and topical question. According to Mattias Strandh and Mikael Nordenmark (2006), one reason why childcare is a topical issue is that Swedish couples experience the highest degree of work–family conflict in Europe, but the availability and cost

of childcare are a problem for Estonian parents, too (Roosalu, 2012), so it may be assumed that this conflict is also high in Estonia.

Anu Narusk (1999) and Leeni Hansson (2000) have pointed out that women in Estonia are less satisfied with their footing in the family context than men. Women's lower satisfaction with family life is understandable – gender equality is more visible in the labour market than it is in family life (Olah, Bernardt & Goldscheider, 2002).

Stereotypical gender roles are the main hindrance to changes, as they are determined by the social status, education, the age of parents, the age and the number of children in the family; the model of the family of origin, type of residence (town, countryside) and the prevailing attitudes towards gender roles in the society.

Opportunities and being prepared, as well as investing time and energy, are important moments in taking on parental responsibilities. Absolute gender equality seems utopian: above all, it is the question of the quality of life and family values, which influence the child wellbeing in the same way.

### Methodology and field research

#### Methods

For the current study, a comprehensive research method called Identity Structure Analysis (ISA), created and developed by Professor Peter Weinreich in 1989, was adopted.

The theoretical underpinnings of Identity Structure Analysis (ISA) are a series of conceptualisations of self and identity, the aspects of which are integrated within ISA: the psychodynamic approaches (mainly by E. H. Erikson), symbolic interactionism and social constructionism, personal construct psychology, appraisal theory, and cognitive-affective consistency principles (mainly G. A. Kelly's Personal Construct Theory) (Weinreich, 2003). Two main arenas of interrelated processes guide the presentation of the ISA conceptual framework: 'A person's appraisal of the social world and its significance is an expression of one's identity'; 'appraisal and the current expression of identity' and 'identification and the formation and development of identity' (Weinreich, 2003, p. 21).

Within the framework of the current study the features of ISA enable us to determine similarities and differences in the attitudes of women and men towards combining work and family life which are expressed by the degree to which they identify themselves with 18 instrument agents. Identity instruments – entities (situated selves in various contexts, individuals, groups, institutions) (see Table 1 for domains and entities) and bipolar constructs (see Table 2 (in Appendix)); '*bipolarity of constructs enables assessment of people's favoured and disfavoured elements, as these may vary from person to person*' (Weinreich, 2003, p. 25-26) – were constructed for individuals participating in the study. The constructs represent values and beliefs related to the problem issues which were covered in the first part of this article. The constructed identity instrument is unique and used only in this research, whereas the list of entities and bipolar constructs are designed in the course of research.

**Table 1. Domains and entities of the research instrument**

Domains	Entities
Political and public representatives	Present government of Estonia/Sweden/Finland
	The opposition to the legislative council
	The media
Wider socio-biographical context	Estonian/Sweden/Finnish people by gender and colleagues at work, friends, neighbours, employer
Family	My mother
	My father
	My partner
	My partner's mother
	My partner's father

#### The sample

The field research was carried out in the period from February 2012 to June 2013 in Estonia, Sweden and Finland. The subject group included 15 women and 15 men from each country (altogether 90 respondents), who met the following study criteria:

- Must have custody of at least one child under the age of 16;
- Must be in a two-way relationship/partnership;
- Must be currently living in the area.

The age of female respondents varied from 23 to 50, the age of male respondents from 28 to 52; and the number of children varied from 1 to 5. The collected data was analysed with Identity Exploration computer software Ipseus (Weinreich & Ewart, 2007). As a result of data processing, qualitative features of identity were expressed in the form of quantitative estimates of identity parameters.

Data about women and men is shown in parallel with each other in the analysis section of the study. The women's groups (15 from each country) are marked in the study as EW (Estonia), SW (Sweden), and FW (Finland); the men's group (15 from each country) as EM (Estonia), SM (Sweden), and FM (Finland).

#### Results

Analysis of the data was carried out at both group and individual levels. The data from the six groups of respondents is shown in comparison tables.

Person's appraisal is the central process by which people assess the circumstances of the potential fulfilment of their identity aspirations during any period of their life cycle. Appraisal as a process offers and records experiences of life situations and events, each new experience engenders the potential for both a reappraisal of earlier values and beliefs and an elaboration of identity, which respondents can evaluate through the themes contained in the study instrument's bipolar constructs and entities. The definition of one's appraisal is:

A person's appraisal of a specific situation is made by way of construing, or attributing meaning to, agents and events in context, within the limitations of one's constructs as cued by the situation, and evaluating or judging this construal in relation to one's aspirations (Weinreich, 2003, p. 20-21).

### ***The main affecting agents to women and men in their choices in family matters***

Here are presented the respondents' appraisal of different domains (entities).

*Patterns of identifications: positive role models – idealistic identification with others; negative role models – contra-identifications with others.*

The definition of idealistic identification with others is 'one's idealistic identification with another – the similarity between the qualities one attributes to the other and those one would like to possess as part of one's ideal self-image' (Weinreich, 2003, p. 97).

Table 3 shows the entities which had the highest *idealistic identification* value. As far as respondents of this study are concerned, the influence of the media is present with both women and men. The partner's father being among the three first is a common trait of both women and men in Finland. This is also true for men in Sweden (where it occupies the fourth place). A common trait for women and men in Sweden is the fact that the employer is among the first three.

For men in Estonia, neighbours occupy the fourth place, but unlike women in Finland they do not acknowledge the importance of social network in family matters. The first three entities of the groups of respondents who had the highest *contra-identification* value, are shown in Table 4. The definition of contra-identifications with others is 'one's contra-identification with another—the similarity between the qualities one attributes to the other and those from which one would wish to dissociate' (Weinreich, 2003, p. 97).

Groups EW/EM have the most conflicted identifications with the opposition, groups SW/SM and FW/FM with the government. However, groups SW/SM and FW/FM are the most pleased with government activities during the time of supporting a family. This variance could be explained by the fact, as has been pointed out by Wim van Oorschot and Bart Meuleman (2010), that the social legitimacy of the welfare state is multidimensional—individuals who emphatically endorsed a substantial role for government in the provision of welfare could be, at the same time, critical about specific aspects of such provision.

For Estonian women, government ranks sixth, for Estonian men, ninth. For Finnish men their employer occupies the second place on *contra-identification*, while for Finnish women the employer has one of the lowest values. For all groups of respondents the mother is in the first three, for Swedish men the entity 'mother' ranks fourth.

For all respondents, 'My partner' is among the three first constructs, which seems to conform to the unresolved problem of finding balance in work–family life.

### ***Conflicted identification***

Conflicted identification in ISA context does not reflect as much opposition with the entities as it does with agents in the society (in the current instrument), whose values are not known or shared.

Conflicted identification is defined as: 'one's current self-image the extent of one's identification conflict with another—a multiplicative function of one's current empathetic identification and contra-identification with that 'other'' (Weinreich, 2003, p. 100).

For the given data values above 0.60 are considered high and values below 0.40 low. A maximum of three high-value *conflicted identifications* are given in Table 5.

Government occupying the first place for groups SW/FW/SM/FM is a logical outcome; according to Table 5, the data shows that groups SW/SM/FW/FM have the most conflicted identifications with the government.

### ***Evaluation of self in different contexts***

Below it is outlined how respondents feel about themselves in different contexts of entities, where *ego-involvement* measures their level of engagement with this particular entity:

- a) *Evaluation of the respondent's socio-biographical context:* data about current entities is shown in Table 6. In a socio-biographical context, ego-involvement for groups EW/EM is the strongest with the partner, the last entity of value is the partner's father. The partner occupying the first place for Estonian respondents may be explained with a stronger inclination towards traditional partnership compared to respondents from Finland or Sweden. For groups SW/SM and FW/FM the strongest ego-involvement is with their father, the last entity of value is the partner's mother.
- b) *The wider socio-cultural domain: data about current entities is shown in Table 7*  
In terms of current entities, groups EW/EM identify themselves most strongly with women in Estonia, while opposition is the last entity. Groups SW/SM and FW/FM identify themselves most with the government, which confirms Wim van Oorschot's and Bart Meuleman's (2010) notion that the social legitimacy of a welfare state is multidimensional, not simple. SW identifies least with other men in Sweden and SM least with the opposition. Group FW identifies themselves least with employer, FM least with opposition.
- c) *The respondent's socio-developmental and biographical processes (change or resistance to change)*

Data on the respondents' socio-developmental and biographical processes is shown in Table 8. All respondent groups identify empathetically more closely with 'Political and public representatives', with the Swedish and Finnish respondents' empathetic identification being especially high with entity 'government' in past/current and future self. This confirms their satisfaction with past/current and future life and the situation in their country.

Estonian respondents identify themselves empathetically more with opposition, under 'Political and public representative', which seems to demonstrate their slight dissatisfaction with their life situation. Estonian respondents are also characterised by the closest empathetic identification with the media.

All women respondents identified empathetically with other people, which confirms that women are more connected with their social context. Of the wider socio-biographical domains, nearly all respondents empathetically identify themselves with colleagues rather than with friends, which is understandable in the light that all respondents were

employed, except for three housewives in Estonia, and that most employed people spend a considerable number of hours at work.

Inside the domain ‘family’, Estonian respondents identify themselves empathetically more closely than other respondents, and they are therefore considered in this research context to be *primordialists* – their attitudes are obviously more strongly influenced by the older generation than those of Swedish and Finnish respondents, who were in this research context considered to be *situationalists*. *Primordialism* and *situationalism* could be defined as follows: Primordialism – a sentiment, or affect-laden set of beliefs and discourses, about a perceived essential continuity from group ancestry to progeny (perceived kith and kin), located symbolically in a specific territory or place (which may or may not be the current place of the people concerned) (Weinreich, Bacova & Rougier, 1997/2003, p. 119). Situationalism – a set of beliefs or discourses about the instrumental and socially constructed nature of the group, in which interpretations and reinterpretations of history provide rationales justifying the legitimacy of a peoplehood (Weinreich, Bacova & Rougier, 1997/2003, p. 119).

#### **The main conflicted themes and core values for respondents**

In the process of evaluating entities and bipolar constructs (‘structural pressure’, measure of the compelling and constraining influence of a particular construct, which ranges from -100 to 100), Estonian respondents were much more cautious than respondents from Sweden and Finland, and women in average showed lower rates than men. Therefore, three constructs of the highest value are compared for respondents of each group.

The definition of structural pressure is the overall strength of the excess of compatibilities over incompatibilities between the evaluative connotations of attributions one makes to each entity by way of the one construct and one’s overall evaluation of each entity (Weinreich, 2003, p. 103).

#### **The most ‘conflicted evaluative dimension’ of person’s identity (main conflicted themes for respondents)**

For Estonian women (EW) the most ‘conflicted evaluative dimension’ of person’s identity was *employer’s attitudes towards employee’s gender* (-26, 02); they seem to be convinced that Estonian employers have gender-based attitudes towards employees.

As to Estonian men (EM), employers’ gender-based attitudes towards employees is also conflicted, although with it has a lower value.

Combining of work and family life is a conflicted theme for EW, while for EM combining of work and family life is a *core value*.

For EM, the source of *the highest conflict* (for EW it is a moderately conflicted identity dimension) is the ageing society – both groups obviously know that population ageing is a problem in the Estonian society and while they seem to feel some responsibility, their willingness to back up to solve this problem is influenced by a high level of concern about coping with real-life situations.

EM aged over 40 with more than three children in the family reported higher conflict in the impossibility of equality of women and men combining work and family life and

through this also to the construct *‘I think that in family life women are responsible for functional combining of work and family life’*.

EM living in the city with at least two children reported higher conflict about the construct *‘both parents have to work in paid work’*.

In this context it is understandable that EM reported a conflict about the idea that family should be managed only by the nuclear family.

It became evident that EM are ready to be the main breadwinners in the family, also that they believe that in family life women are responsible for functional combining of work and family life, which at the same time has *high conflict* for them (for EW this construct also has a high conflict, but with a lower numerical value: women currently being housewives tend to show higher values). In this context it is understandable that for EM evaluative dimension identity is also *highly conflicted* in the construct *‘I think that it’s important that as many people would work’* (-12, 33). For EW being engaged in paid work is important (but not a core value), they are not very satisfied only with the role of housewife.

For SM the *most conflicted* evaluative dimension identity in a construct was *‘I think that when raising a child, most of the responsibility is on the mother’* (-64, 79) (SM with higher education have higher conflict) and *‘combining work and family life isn’t possible’* (-38, 88).

The study revealed that SM with secondary education have conflict in the construct *‘the equality of women/men in combining work and family life isn’t possible’* and *‘ageing isn’t a problem that needs to be solved’*.

For SW the *conflict* of how to manage childcare responsibilities (all SW respondents were working mothers) came first, followed by problems with combining work and family life. For SW the construct of the *conflict ‘having children isn’t compulsory’* (-25, 81) ranked third (for SM it occupied the fifth place).

It was revealed that SW with higher education/living in a city/working part-time have higher conflicts with the following themes: *family should be managed with nuclear resources, the combining of work and family life isn’t possible, and women or men working overtime is a normal situation*.

For FW the *most conflicted* evaluative identity dimension in a construct was re-entering the labour market following periods of childcare. In addition, besides the above-mentioned conflicts, FW support the opinion that the attitudes of Finnish employers towards employees are gender-based.

FM agreed (higher conflict in men living in the countryside and having three children) with FW that it is hard for women to take career breaks, but their *most conflicted* issue was *‘a person who can’t combine work and family life isn’t a good parent/partner’* (-52, 83). It may be assumed that Finnish men are eager to support their children’s mothers, they believe that *‘staying home with children is a women’s responsibility’* (-39, 81), but at the same time the belief was the second *conflicted* theme for them.

It could be pointed out that FW with higher education and men living in the countryside and having three children have higher conflict with the theme *‘the role of fathers in the growth of birth rate isn’t important’*. For women in Finland, the notion of gender equality is clearly understandable – Finnish women have been and still are pioneers in women’s rights, and this

makes Finnish men's conflict about their traditional view towards childcare responsibilities understandable. It should be pointed out, though, that FW and FM are not really being game for the pari-mutuel 'sharing in the name of sharing'.

#### **Respondents' 'core evaluative dimension' of identity (core values for respondents)**

For EW and EM the first 'core evaluative dimension' of identity was '*growth in the state's support towards parenthood is considered important*' (EW + 29.07; EM + 38.81). For the group EW this was followed by '*both parents working, women have more responsibilities at home*'. For the group EM this was followed by '*the role of fathers is not important in the growth of birth rate*' (29, 75), and '*the state should put in action more measures to support parenthood*' (29, 53).

For women in the group EW with secondary education/secondary specialised education the important problems were population ageing and the more highly rated issues of raising a child is the responsibility of both parents and women have more responsibilities at home. The three housewives in the group found that in Estonia women and men are not respected as parents.

For EM with secondary education/secondary specialised education the 'core evaluative dimensions' of identity were '*women are responsible for functional combining of work and family life*'; '*women working overtime is a normal situation*'; '*taking care of children shouldn't be equalled with paid work*'; '*it is important that as many people as possible would work*'; and '*employers are strongly influenced by gender stereotypes*'.

EW and EM have high hopes towards supporting government acts, both financially and through shaping values, but they are not only waiting for support from the state. EW and EM are prepared to work in paid work and fathers are expected to be the main breadwinners, not stay-at-home fathers. EW group are fairly satisfied with their responsibilities at home. It was revealed that Estonian men in the sphere of paid work have a more modern attitude than those in non-paid work, whilst Estonian women are more eager to share responsibilities at home.

For SW the 'core evaluative dimensions' of identity were '*both parents share the responsibility of raising children*' (88.11), '*staying home with children cannot depend on parent's gender*' (84.45), '*the importance of each adult's economic independence*' (81.29) (for group SM it comes second + 84.46, all SM rated it highly). For SM came first '*the maximum number of people participating in the labour market*' (94.54, it is more important to men with higher education and/or for men living in the city and for men with two to four children), and '*both parents working*' (77.94) occupied the third place. For SM men with two to four children the 'core evaluative dimension' of identity was '*a good parent/partner can manage combining work and family life*'.

In sum, SW regard highly equality between genders and their independence and individual freedom (which also involves working in paid work), and so do SM. While SW are worried about coping with combining work and family life, meanwhile SM are sharing childcaring responsibilities in a more traditional manner. This study showed that men with more than two children are willing to manage combining work and family life, so it may be assumed that they feel and accept their responsibilities at home.

For FW the 'core evaluative dimension' of identity was '*respectability of parents*' (46.53, more highly rated by women with higher education), '*a good parent is capable of combining work and family life*' (42.03), '*it's normal to depend on the social network to combine work and family life*' (40.07). Women with higher education also rated highly both parents' shared responsibility in raising a child and working; economic independence; help from an extended circle of friends/family in combining work and family life is considered normal. Women with more than three children rated highly the view '*staying home with children is a biological responsibility of women*'.

For FM the 'core evaluative dimension' of identity included '*the importance of each adult's economic independence*' (67.70); '*both parents share responsibility in raising a child*' (62.86) and '*the maximum number of people participating in the labour market*' (61.59). For FM, the age factor can be clearly seen in the 'core evaluative dimension' of identity: (1) younger men (under 42 years of age) are convinced that '*equality of women/men in combining work and family life is possible*' and (2) older men (over 40) evaluate the view that '*both parents share responsibility in raising a child*'.

#### **Conclusions**

The study revealed that women were more concerned about coping with combining work and family life than men, which could be evidence of men's more traditional views towards working in non-paid work (i.e. at home). Fathers wish to play an important role in the labour market, but are less satisfied with being 'walking money bags', which clearly demonstrate the changed attitudes in work and family matters. Still, mothers are in this point slightly more 'modern' than fathers.

The group SW holds the most negative view towards working overtime, while SM regard working overtime positively. Swedish women find combining family and children with career strongly problematic. This situation adds stress to men as well. K. Nilsson (2010) showed in her research that women are more likely to feel fatigue than men in Sweden, and she saw tiredness as a large factor in determining birth rate. SM saw mothers as the main caretakers of children (other groups of respondents found that both parents are responsible for raising children and it is one of the core values), but at the same time it was the highest source of conflict for them. So, they want to be "new", modern fathers, but combining work and life is difficult because of work overload in paid job (as it is for FM). Swedish respondents are trying combine work and family life in the situation in which paid work and economic and social independence are highly respected. And both groups find that birth rate is negatively affected by women's active participation in the job market.

The group EM valued their role as a provider, being positively minded about working overtime. While they found that women should also work as long as it does not interfere with being mothers, for EM their wish that women worked as well is highly conflicted.

Groups SW/FM/EM/SM believed that a family has to get by with its own resources and SW/FW/FM agreed that having children is not compulsory. Of all the respondents, FW seem to regard most highly social networks to help combine work

and family life (reliance on social network was lightly valued also by EW).

Women returning to the labour market after career breaks is problematic for groups FW/FM/EW; for groups FW and EW gender stereotypes imposed by employers proved a problem. Employers' gender-based attitudes concern women with two or more children more than others, which makes sense since more children demand more attention and devotion at home, but so do employers in paid work. For mothers in Estonia it seems to be an unresolved problem; at the same time, all female respondents reported working in state or municipality institutions which, as stated above, are regarded by researchers as being more family-friendly than working places in the private sector.

The group EW does not see that their role as a parent is valued, while other groups of respondents are satisfied with their position as a parent as viewed in the society.

Equalling taking care of a child with paid work is important for men in Estonia (who acknowledge taking care of a child at home); all respondent groups find that the government should support motherhood. The majority of the respondents feel that supporting fatherhood is not very relevant in raising birth rate.

While the group EM does not feel that solving the problem of population ageing is very important, groups EW/SW/FM feel strongly that it is important, and also groups SW/FW find that population ageing is a problem in the society.

The attitudes of respondents were affected by gender differences and the following aspects – to some extent education, the number of children in the family, the respondents' place of residence, the level of participation in the labour market, and age.

In terms of the wider socio-cultural domain, Estonian respondents were more affected by other women in Estonia, respondents from Sweden and Finland by the government and employer.

All respondent groups identify themselves empathetically quite closely, which means that employers with their attitudes are one of the *critical agents* in managing everyday life.

Based on the results of the study it can be said that the media plays a major role in the respondents' *idealistic identification* for both men and women.

Estonian respondents identify themselves empathetically more closely with family than other respondents and their attitudes are obviously more strongly affected by the older generation than is the case with Swedish and Finnish respondents – this could be the reason why birth rate in Estonia is similar to those in Scandinavian countries, while the country's general welfare is not yet on the Nordic level.

The study allows us to make the following arguments:

1. In their attitudes all female respondents are prepared to represent a 'shared roles model', but in real-life situations they represent an early version of a 'dual-earner family model' (Leira, 2002; Ellingsæter, 1998, junior provider).
2. Men in their attitudes are in the early version of a 'dual-earner family model' (Leira, 2002), as one of their core values was both parents working, while they still consider motherhood as the natural role of women in caring situations.

3. In sharing family responsibilities, women and men in Estonia are operating in a more traditional way.
4. In Estonia women and men (especially the latter) expect the state to offer supportive measures that would help combining work and family life. Women and men in Sweden and Finland were satisfied with the current situation about supportive measures.

These inferences help to answer the question about the changing labour market conditions – which family models should welfare states facilitate (Leira, 2010)? Women are out of home and are content with the situation, so this process is irreversible in the countries under observation.

On the basis of current research it can be suggested that with the changing values of work and family life, the media could be employed to make changes by strengthening women's and men's core values. At the state level it would be a good idea to support coping with work and career by trying to offer solutions to the conflicted issues identified for women and men.

The study, unfortunately, does not allow drawing generalisations about all mothers and fathers in Estonia, Sweden and Finland. It was possible, however, to identify major problem areas in combining work and family life in the compared countries. Further study of this issue with a larger sample could provide a basis for planning concrete social acts.

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## Appendix

**Table 2. The bipolar constructs**

	<b>Left</b>	<b>Right</b>
1	...believes that the normal situation is for women to stay at home and men to have the role of a breadwinner	...believes that both parents have to be in paid work
2	...believes that women and men are equal in both instances of fulfilling responsibilities at home and having paid work	...believes that in family-life women are responsible for functional combining of work and family life
3	...believes that staying home in the case of need (young children, child sickness, etc.) can't depend on parent's gender	...believes that staying home in the case of need (young children, child sickness, etc.) is a biological responsibility of women
4	...believes that both parents are responsible for raising a child	...believes that when raising a child most of the responsibility is with the mother
5	...knows that for each adult, regardless of gender, economic independence is important	...recognises that it is natural for women to be economically dependent on their partner
6	...believes that the equality of women and men in combining work and family life is possible	...believes that the equality of women and men in combining work and family life is impossible
7	...views women as having greater responsibility at home	...views men as having greater responsibility at home
8	...believes that in Estonia/Swedish/Finland women and men are respected as parents	...believes that in Estonia/Swedish/Finland women and men are not respected as parents
9	...believes that a good partner and parent can manage with combining work and family life	...believes that a person who can't combine work and family life is not a good partner/parent
10	...believes that for Estonian/Sweden/Finnish society it is important to find a solution to the problem of population ageing	...believes that for Estonian/Sweden/Finnish society it is not important to find a solution to the problem of population ageing
11	...believes that it is important to Estonia that as many people of working age as possible are working, regardless of their gender	...believes that women of working age shouldn't necessarily work, at least not full time. It is more important for women to focus on raising children
12	...believes that birth rate is positively affected by women actively participating in the job market	...believes that birth rate is negatively affected by women actively participating in the job market
13	...thinks that the birth rate is higher in countries where fatherhood is benefited by the State (by way of father's quota and other measures that support the participation of fathers in raising children)	...thinks that for raising the birth rate it is not important to pay attention to fathers, but it is important to make sure that mothers are insured by the state (by way of maternity leave, help when returning to the job market and so on)
14	...believes that Estonian/Swedish/Finnish employers are strongly affected by gender stereotypes (e.g. they are more understanding when female employees are at home with sick children)	...believes that Estonian/Swedish/Finnish employers do not consider gender important (e.g. they are also understanding when male employees stay at home with sick children)
15	...believes that when it doesn't interfere with the role of being a mother, it is normal that women take the role of a breadwinner along with men	...believes that it is hard for women to stay on parental leave because after the period of leave it is difficult for them to re-enter the labour market – thus they have to work constantly
16	...thinks that working overtime is not a normal part of the modern working culture	...thinks that women working overtime is a normal part of the modern working culture
17	...thinks that working overtime is not a normal part of the modern working culture	...thinks that men working overtime is a normal part of the modern working culture
18	...thinks that the state should take more supportive measures (financial support + different services) towards families with children	...thinks that the state is already taking enough supportive measures towards families with children
19	...believes that families with children should not expect help from the state, they should manage on their own	...believes that the state should support parenthood through shaping values and legislation, providing different services and financial means
20	...believes that it is normal that an extended circle of friends and family also takes part in combining work and family life	...believes that different chores in work and family life should be managed only by the nuclear family itself
21	...believes that taking care of children should be equalled with paid work because women can't participate in paid work at every life period (the birth of a child, taking care of the infant)	...believes that having children is not compulsory, therefore taking care of children shouldn't be equalled with paid work
22	...believes that work and family life could be better combined by more efficient division of time and chores in family	...believes that combining work and family life isn't possible because of the big workload in paid job

**Table 3. Respondent's idealistic identification with others**

No.	Groups of respondents					
	EW	SW	FW	EM	SM	FM
1	Media (0.71)	Media (0.59)	Media (0.70)	Media (0.67)	Media (0.80)	Media (0.87)
2	Friends; Other women in Estonia (0.61)	My father; Friends (0.58)	Other women in Finland (0.63)	Other men in Estonia (0.59)	Employer (0.75)	Partner's father (0.74)
3	My partner (0.58)	Employer (0.54)	Partner's father (0.61)	Women in Estonia (0.57)	My mother; Friends (0.74)	Friends (0.70)
4	Men in Estonia (0.56)	My mother (0.52)	My mother (0.60)	Neighbours (0.54)	Partner's father (0.70)	My mother (0.69)
5	Colleges (0.55)	Partner's father (0.48)	My Friends; Neighbours (0.58)	Friends; Partner's mother (0.52)	Other men in Sweden; Colleges (0.69)	Colleges (0.64)
6	My mother (0.54)	Other women in Sweden (0.47)	My partner; Colleagues at work (0.54)	Colleagues (0.51)	My father (0.68)	My father (0.59)

Note: The range of values for person's idealistic identification is from 0.00 to 1.00.

**Table 4. Respondent's contra-identification with others**

No.	Groups of respondents					
	EW	SW	FW	EM	SM	FM
1	My partner (0.40)	Government (0.53)	Government (0.47)	My partner (0.41)	Government (0.55)	Government (0.58)
2	My mother (0.36)	My partner; Father (0.27)	My father (0.30)	Friends (0.39)	My partner (0.23)	My partner; Employer (0.33)
3	Friends (0.34)	My mother (0.24)	My partner (0.24)	My mother (0.37)	Women in Sweden (0.22)	My mother (0.30)

Note: The range of values for person's contra-identification is from 0.00 to 1.00.

**Table 5. Respondents conflicted identification**

No.	Groups of respondents					
	EW	SW	FW	EM	SM	FM
1	Opposition (0.73)	Government (0.90)	Government (0.88)	Opposition (0.71)	Government (0.84)	Government (0.84)
2	Government (0.69)	Partner's mother (0.63)	Partner's mother (0.67)	Government (0.65)		
3	Partner's father (0.66)		Employer (0.62)	Media (0.62)		

Note: The range of values for a person's conflict in identification with another is from 0.00 to 1.00.

**Table 6. Evaluation of the socio-biographical context for groups of respondents**

Entity	Groups of respondents					
	EW	SW	FW	EM	SM	FM
Partner	4.04	3.38	3.19	4.45	3.15	3.15
Mother	3.42	3.77	3.37	3.90	3.88	3.24
Father	2.36	4.69	4.02	3.43	4.19	4.28
Friends	3.58	3.02	2.62	3.66	3.27	3.00
Colleagues at work	3.08	3.00	2.42	3.58	3.47	3.10
Partner's mother	3.06	2.16	2.21	3.58	2.89	2.84
Partner's father	2.29	2.67	3.10	2.98	3.40	3.44
Neighbours	2.60	3.24	3.43	3.17	3.38	2.87

Note: The range of values for a person's evaluation of self in socio-biographical context is from 0.00 to 5.00.

Table 7. Evaluation of the wider socio-cultural domain for groups of respondents.

Entity	Groups of respondents					
	EW	SW	FW	EM	SM	FM
Government	2.98	4.30	4.23	3.00	4.82	4.94
Employer	2.51	2.98	1.83	2.65	3.53	2.66
Opposition	1.88	2.45	2.67	2.08	2.64	2.62
Other women	3.62	2.39	2.82	4.16	2.89	2.70
Other men	3.09	1.90	2.00	3.82	3.20	2.24
Neighbours	2.60	3.24	3.43	3.17	3.38	2.87
Media	2.50	2.48	2.47	2.48	3.14	2.78

Table 8. The respondent's socio-developmental and biographical processes.

Domain	Entity	Empathetic identification with respect to past self (Me, before I came parent)	Empathetic identification with respect to current self (Me, as I am now)	Empathetic identification with respect to future self (Me, as I would like to be)
		Respondent's groups		
		EW/SW/FW EM/SM/FM	EW/SW/FW EM/SM/FM	EW/SW/FW EM/SM/FM
Political and public representatives	Present government	0.70/0.87/0.89 0.71/0.81/0.78	0.69/0.90/0.88 0.65/0.84/0.84	0.73/0.90/0.88 0.66/0.83/0.88
	The opposition	0.73/0.55/0.55 0.73/0.34/0.44	0.73/0.57/0.57 0.71/0.35/0.48	0.74/0.56/0.58 0.76/0.40/0.54
	Media	0.60/0.52/0.44 0.60/0.45/0.51	0.61/0.53/0.44 0.62/0.40/0.46	0.67/0.54/0.50 0.63/0.43/0.49
Wider socio-biographic domains	Other women	0.51/0.51/0.43 0.47/0.36/0.42	0.41/0.51/0.43 0.40/0.33/0.44	0.65/0.55/0.47 0.45/0.35/0.48
	Other men	0.63/0.62/0.55 0.46/0.34/0.54	0.55/0.58/0.56 0.34/0.33/0.59	0.70/0.63/0.58 0.46/0.33/0.62
	Colleagues	0.58/0.41/0.49 0.49/0.41/0.61	0.42/0.45/0.50 0.22/0.30/0.52	0.56/0.47/0.51 0.38/0.28/0.51
	Friends	0.48/0.41/0.50 0.46/0.46/0.62	0.29/0.44/0.50 0.19/0.33/0.54	0.43/0.47/0.52 0.37/0.33/0.52
	Neighbours	0.54/0.42/0.39 0.46/0.29/0.46	0.44/0.40/0.39 0.39/0.35/0.49	0.57/0.41/0.41 0.51/0.33/0.41
Employer	0.67/0.48/0.64 0.62/0.55/0.66	0.62/0.48/0.62 0.50/0.47/0.58	0.69/0.51/0.65 0.57/0.48/0.69	

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**Appendix 4. “The Societal Context of Significant Others: Comparative Perceptions of Mother- and Fatherhood in Sweden, Finland and Estonia”**



# THE SOCIETAL CONTEXT OF SIGNIFICANT OTHERS: COMPARATIVE PERCEPTIONS OF MOTHER- AND FATHERHOOD IN SWEDEN, FINLAND AND ESTONIA

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## Abstract

The article focuses on the attitudes of the parents of three different countries—Sweden, Finland, and Estonia—towards the balance between work and family life in a particular environment of the welfare state through their evaluation of the social context. The aim of this analysis is to determine the extent to which family policies have successfully met the expectations of parents. We have found differences in the expectations of parents towards supportive measures offered by the state that would help combine work and family life in the countries studied, and in the respondents' evaluations of the social environment they live in. On the basis of this analysis it is possible to argue that the participating Swedish and Finnish parents are highly satisfied with their position in the context of their respective countries, while Estonian parents feel insecure.

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**Keywords:** Attitude, Identity Structure Analysis (ISA), family policy, parenthood (motherhood and fatherhood), welfare state, work-family life

## Introduction and topics

The European social model is based on the welfare state model, where emphasis is put on equality and redistribution, including the provision of public goods and collective insurance against risk for individuals (COM, 2005, p. 3). However, as Esping-Andersen (1999) has stated, welfare types may change in time. These changes have multiple causes: ageing societies, changing economies and family types. In the context of the aforementioned changes new social risks have arisen (Esping-Andersen, 1999; Kitschelt & Rehm, 2006; Bonoli, 2005). These new social risks partly depend on factors that differ from the drivers of traditional social risks and individuals face

risks in their attempts to enter the labour market and reconcile work and family life (WDR, 2003; 2002; Bonoli, 2005). As a well-known saying confirms, a good policy is a context-specific policy. Following the aforementioned, it is important to point out that family policy is closely connected with the other policies of any particular welfare state (e.g., labour market policy, social protection policy, gender equality policy) and with the quality and availability of public services. However, close connections between the above-listed policies are a relatively new trend in the policy making processes of welfare states. Up to the 1970s, European policies mention only participation in the labour market, whereas from the 1970s onward, legislation in Europe already highlights both fathers and mothers as employees (Leira, 2010, pp. 11–12).

Literature on policy and the welfare state has revealed that the welfare state is studied firstly through its policy-making process, problem-facing practices, the position of the state in providing social protection and the level of the interventions at the individual level (e.g., Esping-Andersen, 1990; 1999; Björnberg, 2002; Parvikko, 2003; Schoon, Hansson & Salmela-Aro, 2005; Duvander, 2008; Leira, 2010; Ebbinghaus, 2012; Himmelstrand, 2013); and secondly through domestic equality and the distribution of housework/paid work and child care responsibilities (e.g., Bittman, 1999; Van Dongen, 2009; Orloff, 2009; Leira, 2010; OECD, 2007; OECD, 2011a; OECD, 2011b). The current paper reports findings from a study that employed Peter Weinreich's Identity Structure Analysis (hereafter ISA) as a research tool. It was customized to provide a method of measuring the attitudes of parents towards family policies in the context of balance between work and family life through their evaluation of a particular social context (significant others).

The selected approach is justified by De Lange, Agneessens and Waege (2004, p. 352) who pointed out that social relations, formal as well as informal, and their influence on people's life decisions have become an important explanatory attribute in social science research. As stated by several authors, gender is a social relationship (e.g., Scott, 1988; Connell, 2002; Orloff, 2009), and family is socially constructed (Newman, 2009) – they are a matter of collective definition and human agreement, they are historically varying and cross individual subjectivities, institutions, culture and language. According to Strack and Schwarz (2007, pp. 225–226), the use of specially designed instruments has an important role in social sciences because some characteristics of persons (e.g., their attitudes or motives) cannot be directly perceived and studied (as opposed to those that can be directly assessed – e.g., gender or age).

The attitudinal aspects concerning family policies are compared in three cultural settings: Sweden, Finland, and Estonia. Many authors (e.g.,

Ferrarini & Duvander 2009; Himmelstrand 2013) suggest that Sweden is a central example for comparative gender and family policy analysts, being greatly admired for its work on equality (including gender equality), and since aspects of Sweden's policies have become a point of reference for policy makers in other advanced welfare states. Therefore, being an example of success in the field of family policy, Sweden was chosen as one of the welfare state models for comparison. Finland was chosen for its family policy that differs from Sweden, accentuating a flexible mix of childcare which allows families to decide their level of defamilisation; Finland is also a model with its feminist attitudes towards equality, having accepted these attitudes on the level of welfare state social policy measures (Parvikko 2003) it. The third comparison case - Estonia, a state of young democracy, has chosen the Nordic way of progression, and by doing so, is also providing social security for its citizens (Lauristin, Vihalemm, Norkus, Terk, Reid 2011; Roots, Ainsaar, Aidukaite, Eamets, Realo, Dobewall 2011). The systems of reference for Estonia are the EU Member States, mainly the wealthy neighbours (Scandinavian countries) (Lauristin 2011, 10; Puur, Sakkeus, Tammaru 2013, 24). However, even though at first glance our three case countries, due to the post-communist outlier Estonia, seem to follow neither principle of difference nor similarity, we wish to indicate that policy diffusion and learning especially in areas of education and family policies gives comparative study more ground. Estonia is an interesting case where many path-dependent institutional choices have ensured the dual-earner and state (instead of market) provided childcare model without explicit emphasis on gender aspects in family policies. Thus, we consider the welfare regimes of the three studied countries similar in many aspects; however, the rhetoric behind the institutional choices is different.

The main questions in this article are: 1) through evaluating themselves in their particular social environment, how do individuals see themselves as parents, 2) how do they evaluate the state-offered supportive measures that help combine work and family life, and 3) based on the respondents' reported core values and conflicted themes in the context of family matters, to evaluate - how successful have the family policies been in meeting the expectations of parents? Based on literature, including previous empirical studies, we expect that Swedish and Finnish parents are quite satisfied with their position as parents in their particular social environment, including state-offered supportive measures that help combine work and family life. On the other hand, we expect the Estonian parents not to be satisfied with their position as parents in their particular social environment.

Our research agenda, in which actual empirical strategy is based on microdata concerning parents' attitudes and values, is framed by literature on the welfare state. There are many factors that affect women's ability and

willingness to work, such as parental leave, tax/child benefits, childcare availability and costs, flexible employment opportunities, preferences regarding separation from the child, societal attitudes, labour market opportunities, and gender discrimination. All these political dimensions vary between our case countries, so we are trying to open up a “black box” of family life without making any causal statements or investigating the origin of the attitudes and values.

We continue as follows: the first section of the literature review is aimed at providing a framework for the attitudes of parents on a certain systematic level and gives an overview of the policy context in the three countries. The second section is dedicated to the method of ISA used in the study for data collection. In the third section, the empirical results are presented and, finally, the results are discussed within the frames of social policies.

### **From welfare state to attitudes**

As pointed out by the OECD report (2007), countries with policies that facilitate female employment with more family-friendly approaches are those with the highest fertility rates (Employment rate, 2013; Eurostat, 2012). However, women participating in paid work have brought to light several issues, both on the individual and the societal level. Firstly, changes in the labour market cause changes in the roles of women and men not only as workers, but also as parents. Secondly, there is a question concerning gender equality in having double roles for parents. Whilst since the mid-1990s the model of a caring father has been developed in the Western world in addition to the model of the father as a breadwinner, the new model of fatherhood has not been very successful in reducing the workload of mothers at home (Esping-Andersen, Gallie, Hemerijck & Myles, 2002; Esping-Andersen, 2009; Leira, 2010). Esping-Andersen (1990; 1999; 2009) tightly connected the future of a welfare state with the altered position of women in its society. According to several authors (e.g. Esping-Andersen et al., 2002; Esping-Andersen, 2009), in Europe “women have experienced a ‘masculinisation’ of their life course preferences”. However, according to Esping-Andersen (2009), the women’s revolution has not yet been met with an adequate policy response (e.g. job security of mothers, ways to “feminise” the male life course, and the adjustment of institutions that support the balancing of work and family life), and this is the reason for low fertility, not the citizens’ unwillingness to have children. The postponement of first births is a logical response to a lack of change in social policy in the context of parenthood (De Graaf & Sprangers, 1999; Olah, Bernardt & Goldscheider, 2002; Gustafsson & Kenjoh, 2004; OECD, 2011a).

Subsequently, it is important to discuss new problems that appear alongside women's changing position in society, both on the micro and macro levels. Firstly, on the micro level, trends such as women's tendency to have fewer children and/or postpone family formation affects macro indicators such as long-term population stability and growth, and also brings along increased marital instability and the proliferation of "atypical" families. The latter, without institutional change, contributes to the increasing material vulnerability of women and children. Secondly, macro effects, such as the new division of labour caused by large numbers of women working outside the home, redistribute labour by creating more social and elderly care jobs. Thus the central question for society to address when developing new policy measures is how such measures would help balance work and family life, as has been pointed out by several authors (De Graaf & Sprangers, 1999; Esping-Andersen, 2009; Ainsaar & Maripuu, 2008).

Two possible models have been proposed for solving the problems caused by changes in the labour market and in parents' roles in EU Member States: full employment and a combination of work and family life (Leira, 2010), accompanied by changing gender stereotypes (EC, 2006; Consolidated versions, 2008, Art. 8; EC, 2011a, b). It is worth highlighting that current welfare states face difficulties in providing equality for men and women as fathers and mothers because of "intra-family inequalities which pose a major roadblock towards a superior equilibrium" (Esping-Andersen & Myles, 2008; Leira, 2010).

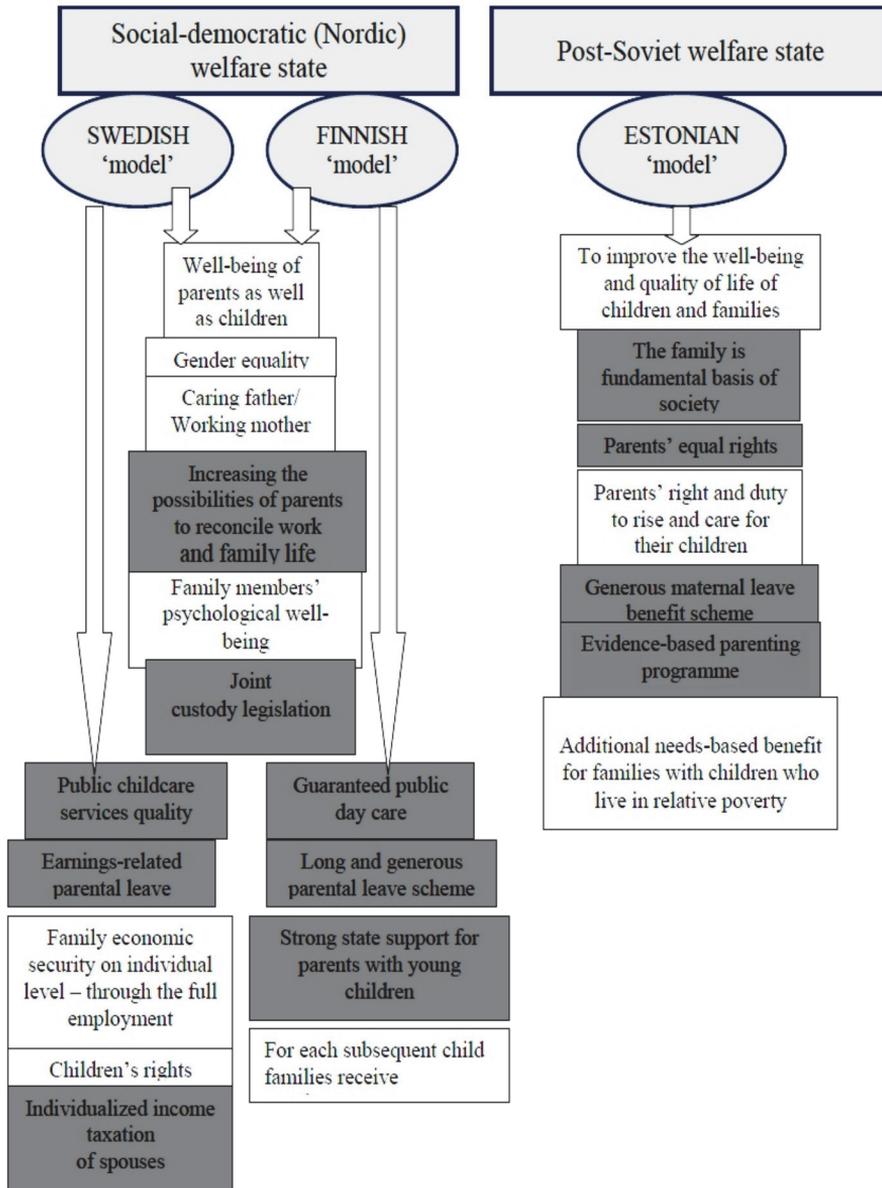
As Newman (2009) and Seccombe (2012) have argued, family in the modern world continues to change and EU Member States face a choice as to which models of work and family to support. Families are changing in accordance with the changes in the structure of the labour force, but the change also presupposes parents' adapting to new roles inside and outside of the family. Many researchers have focused on the changes that have led from traditional segregated roles towards more joint forms of relationships, housework/domestic responsibilities, and paid work balance in a partnership (e.g., Young & Wilmott, 1973; Oakley, 1974; Aldous, 1982; Giddens, 1992; Duncombe & Marsden, 1995; Hobson, 2002; Lammi-Taskula, 2006; Strandh & Nordenmark, 2006; Thevenon, 2008; Forsberg, 2009; Jordan, 2009). All the aforementioned authors have found that individuals are not very eager to adopt new roles, which means that the imbalance between work and family life still exists, and that it is important to find new flexible measures to support families within the framework of social policy measures. From the empirical perspective in commemorative studies (Maron & Meulders, 2007; Ainsaar & Paaajanen, 2009; Rønsen & Skrede, 2010) and single case studies (Ainsaar & Oras, 2000; Hoem, 2000), the main finding was that the most

problematic topic is the double burden of women. Duncombe and Marsden (1995) have even argued about the women's 'triple shift' of obligations: paid work, housework, and emotional work.

According to Goffmann (1977, p. 301), in the context of work and family time balance, the term *arrangement between the sexes*, i.e. the need to find new forms of family, labour market and the welfare state, was taken into use. Based on the reconceptualising of parenthood in Scandinavian policies in the 1970s, the 'shared roles model', according to which women and men do not meet obligations by gender, was formulated by Liljeström (1978). In this context Van Dongen's (2009) 'Complete Combination model', which gives both men and women more freedom to decide the level of equality on the individual level as a necessary aspect in a democratic society, is one of the possible solutions in balancing work and family life.

Gough (2008, p. 39) has argued that comparing the social policies of different welfare states can offer two types of lessons: models of social policy action to follow or avoid, and forms of social policy analysis that help address emerging social problems. Thus our comparative illustration (Figure 1) based on the authors' synthesis of the secondary literature indicates policy dimensions vital for developing a better understanding of individual perceptions of family life. White and grey boxes together indicate the ingredients in the family policy, whereas dark grey boxes indicate the pillars (pointed out as pillars in the referred literature) of family policy in each country. All three countries and their family policies support the dual or one-and-a-half-earner model, but they implement their support in slightly different ways.

Figure 1. Swedish, Finnish and Estonian family policy ‘models’. Constructed by the authors.



Sources: Esping-Andersen (2007); Ferrarini & Duvander (2009); Leira (2010); Rønsen & Skrede (2010); Finland: Towards a healthy balance between work and family life (2012); CM—Finland 2012 (2012); Child and Family Policy in Finland (2013); CFB-Estonia (2012); Vanemahüvitise seadus, RT I, 16.05.2013, 43.

The Swedish family policy model may be called an individual-centred model, while the Finnish family policy model may be called a family-centred model in which the policy measures are based on the mother and father as the common basis for the family. Latterd differ by the defamilisation aspects of policies. Estonian family policy model may be called an effect-based model, which has targeted mostly fertility without much consideration on gender aspects related to (female) caregivers' undervalued contributions.

It could be concluded that the family policies of the three welfare states under study share both similarities and differences. All in all, each of the states has formed their own unique package of measures to support families and the combining of work and family life on the basis of the specific needs of the country, parents and cultural background.

## **Empirical strategy and results**

### **Methodology and sample**

The investigation method used in this study was Peter Weinreich's ISA, the conceptual framework of which was developed by Weinreich in 1989 (Weinreich & Saunderson, 2003). While ISA has been used in several studies, it has not been used before as an investigative method in the context of parenthood in aging European societies. ISA is an open-ended conceptual framework, in which theoretical underpinnings are a series of self and identity conceptualisations, aspects of which are integrated within ISA: the psychodynamic approaches (mainly Erikson's), symbolic interactionism and social constructionism, personal construct psychology, appraisal theory, and cognitive-affective consistency principles (mainly Kelly's Personal Construct Theory) (Weinreich, 2003, Part I). ISA sees identity as a continuous process (based on a modification of Erikson's basic concepts) arising from partial identifications with others in the socio-biographical context, deriving from one's life experiences and relations with other social entities. ISA enables to explore an individual's identity structure within the value system of that particular individual and can be used to observe individual or group identities within particular socio-cultural and historical contexts.

Each respondent rates a series of entities (i.e. facets of self, significant others/institutions) against a set of bipolar constructs (i.e. opposing beliefs/values/statements), selected to reflect the socio-cultural context in which identity construal takes place. Then specialised computer software computes individual/group identity indices on the basis of specific parameters (e.g., self-evaluation/evaluation of others). Identity indices are rooted in the individual's own value-system, derived from ratings of the ego-ideal and of a disliked person within particular socio-cultural and historical

contexts. The individual uses significant others as either positive examples of qualities she or he wishes to emulate (i.e. idealistic identification) or as negative representations of those examples/qualities from which the individual wishes to dissociate (i.e. contra-identification) (Weinreich, 2003, Part II).

An ISA-s attribute structural pressure (SP) allows dealing with a person's 'core evaluative dimension' of the identity and 'conflicted evaluative dimension' of a person's identity—through the pressures that arise from the structures of cognitive–affective consonances and dissonances associated with the use of the construct (Weinreich, 2003, p. 103). High SP indicates discourses that represent core evaluative dimensions of identity. Low or negative SP indicates ambivalent or conflicted dimensions, when vacillation or distress is implicated through the undermining of positive – stabilising, pressures by negative – destabilising, ones (Weinreich, 2003, 126). The numerical values of SP in respondent groups are given in Table 2 (on figure 2 and in tables 1 and 2 with Swedish women marked as SW, Swedish men marked as SM; Finnish women marked as FW, Finnish men marked as FM; Estonian women marked as EW, Estonian men marked as EM).

The ISA identity instrument used in this study was specifically designed for research on the attitudes of the inhabitants of the three welfare states towards the work and family life balance in the environment of a particular welfare state. The attitudinal aspects concerning family policies were studied in the context of three cultural settings—Sweden, Finland, and Estonia—following Esping-Andersen's (1990; 1999) classification of three distinct regimes of the modern welfare state. The core values and conflicted themes in the context of family matters are revealed as a result, and based on these it is possible to evaluate how successful the family policies of the three studied welfare states have been in meeting the expectations of parents.

The ISA instrument consists of entities: self-image, other people, and social institutions by means of bipolar constructs (Weinreich, 2003, Part I and II) (for bipolar constructs see Appendix 1). In the ISA instrument developed for this study, the targets of appraisal were customised to include a wide range of entities (see Table 1).

The fieldwork was carried out in three countries: Estonia, Sweden, and Finland. From each country 15 women and 15 men (a total of 90 respondents) were questioned. The age of the female respondents varied from 23 to 50, the age of the male respondents varied from 28 to 52; the number of children the respondents had varied from 1 to 5. Fieldwork was carried out from February 2012 to June 2013. Each participant had to respond to 396 queries.

The sampling criteria were as follows:

- Must be in custody of at least one child under the age of 16.
- Must be in a two-way relationship/partnership.
- Must be currently living in the area (resident of Estonia, Sweden or Finland).
- Must be participating on the labour market.

## Results

We discuss four subthemes of the respondents' attitudes: combining work and family life; the roles of parents; experiences of the respondents with employers' attitudes towards combining work and family life; and respondents' expectations towards the state to offer supportive measures that would help combine work and family life. As a fifth subtheme, the respondents' evaluations of the social world they live in will be analysed as a key point to determine the factors that might influence their attitudes towards family matters. The numerical values of SP, on which the analysis of the current four subthemes is based, in respondents' groups are given in Table 2 (Appendix 1).

The first subset was the attitudes of mothers and fathers towards combining work and family life. Study results revealed that all Swedish and Finnish respondents highly valued financial independence and found that both parents have to work. Estonian mothers are highly positively oriented towards participating in the labour market, even though Estonian fathers are not so highly positively oriented in this issue. At the same time, all respondents believe that women's active participation in the job market affects the birth rate negatively. All respondent groups believe that women of working age should not necessarily work, at least not full time, and it is more important for women to focus on raising children. The highest belief in that was seen in the groups of Swedish men and women, and Finnish men. At the same time, Finnish and Estonian women were not so convinced on this point. For Estonian men, it is a conflicted theme—they agree that it is more important for women to focus on raising children, but this belief may veil a concern about the family's financial subsistence.

All female respondents were more concerned than men about coping with combining work and family life, which could be the evidence of men's more traditional views towards working in non-paid work (i.e. at home), independently from the social context. Swedish and Estonian women found combining family and children with a career problematic and believed that combining work and family life is not possible because of the considerable workload at a paid job. At the same time, Finnish women had a more positive and optimistic attitude towards the possibility of integrating work and family life—they believed that it could be better combined through more efficient division of time and chores in the family. Most of the respondents

treasure their social network but only Finnish women saw it as a helping factor in combining work and family life. The current study shows, however, that, independent from their cultural and social background, all men are oriented towards managing family matters only within the nuclear family itself without social support from outside the family.

Estonian men reported a conflict in the impossibility of equality between men and women in the integration of work and family life. They also considered women to be responsible for the functional combining of work and family life, while at the same time showing conflict about the issue.

The second subset was the respondents' ideas about responsibilities of a parent. The results of the study show that Estonian women do not see that their role as a parent is valued, while other groups of respondents are satisfied with their position as a parent as seen by society.

For the majority of the respondents the argument that women have greater responsibility at home holds true, whilst Swedish women reported a conflict in this argument and seem to wish that men would take more responsibility at home. While male respondents believe that staying home with children is a woman's responsibility, female respondents are not so convinced. Swedish men saw mothers as the primary caretakers of children (other groups of respondents found that both parents are equally responsible for raising children and it is one of the core values), but at the same time it was the highest source of conflict for them. Swedish women believed that raising children is the responsibility of both parents.

Finnish respondents and Estonian women reported to be worried about re-entering into the labour market after periods of childcare. This is further emphasised by the aforementioned conflict regarding the gender-based attitudes that employers hold towards employees. Finnish men "agree" with Finnish women in that it is hard for women to take breaks from their careers, and their most conflicted view was that a person who cannot combine work and family life is not a good parent/partner. It can be assumed that Finnish men are eager to support the mothers of their children, but at the same time they believe that staying home with children is a woman's responsibility. This is also the second conflicted theme for this group. Women in Finland are very clear about their notions about gender equality as they traditionally have been and continue to be forerunners in women's rights, and through this the Finnish men's conflict about their traditional standpoint about childcare responsibilities is understandable. Also, the responses suggest that Finnish women and men do not really care about sharing responsibilities because of social expectations.

The third subset was the respondents' experiences with employers' attitudes towards combining work and family life. The study revealed that

Swedish men were strongly convinced, and Finnish men and Swedish women were convinced that employers do not consider gender important. However, Estonian and Finnish women and Estonian men believed that employers are affected by gender stereotypes. For Estonian women it was the most conflicted theme. A woman's return to the labour market after a career break was seen as a problematic situation for the Finnish respondents and Estonian women. For groups of Finnish and Estonian women, gender stereotypes imposed by employers proved to be a problem. Employers' gender-based attitudes concerned Estonian women with two or more children more than others, which makes sense since more children demand more attention and devotion at home, but so do employers in paid work.

The group of Swedish men held the most negative view towards working overtime, while Swedish women regarded working overtime positively, but it is at the same time a conflicted value. Finnish women and men found that working overtime is not a normal part of modern working culture. Estonian respondents saw working overtime as a normal part of modern working culture; at the same time, for Estonian men, women's working overtime was a slightly conflicted issue. It could be, once again, proof that the group of Estonian men valued their role as a provider, being positively minded about working overtime, but are worried about managing the family's financial budget on their own.

The fourth subset discussed the respondents' expectations towards the state to offer supportive measures that would help combine work and family life. While Estonian men do not feel that solving the problem of population aging is very important (despite that fact that it has the highest conflict for them), Estonian and Swedish women and Finnish men feel strongly that it is important. Swedish men and Finnish women find that population ageing is a problem in society.

All respondent groups find that the government should first and foremost support motherhood. Swedish and Finnish respondents believed that having children is not compulsory, therefore taking care of children should not be equalled with paid work, but obviously they really wanted to have children and be parents—they found it to be a decision on an individual level, not depending on the state's financial support. Finnish respondents thought that more supportive measures from the state are welcome, but in the light of previously presented data it is possible to assume that they expect more non-financial supportive measures in helping combine work and family life, especially after women's breaks from participating in the labour market. Swedish respondents were satisfied with the current supportive family policy measures, but not very highly, which can be seen from their worries about combining work and family life. While Estonian respondents had high expectations towards government support both financially and through

shaping family values, they were not waiting for only support from the state. They believed that taking care of children should be equalled with paid work because women cannot participate in the paid labour market during certain life periods, which could be instrumental in economic survival. An interesting feature occurs—Estonian men have a more “modern” attitude in the context of the labour market than in that of non-paid work. Arguably, the stances of Estonian respondents are understandable because the ‘European model’ is relatively new in Estonia; more traditional attitudes towards women’s and men’s gender-based roles prevail on a societal level and there is less social and financial security.

The fifth subset was the respondents’ appraisal of the social world. In compliance with the results of the evaluation of the society and significant others inside the particular society, it is possible to conclude which agents have strong influence on the respondents’ attitudes towards family matters. On the other hand, the mentioned evaluation demonstrates the respondents’ satisfaction with the work and family life situation through the context of the particular society. Social contexts construed by respondents (society and significant others inside a particular society) are represented in Table 1.

Table 1. Evaluation of the socio-biographical and the wider socio-cultural domain context for groups of respondents.

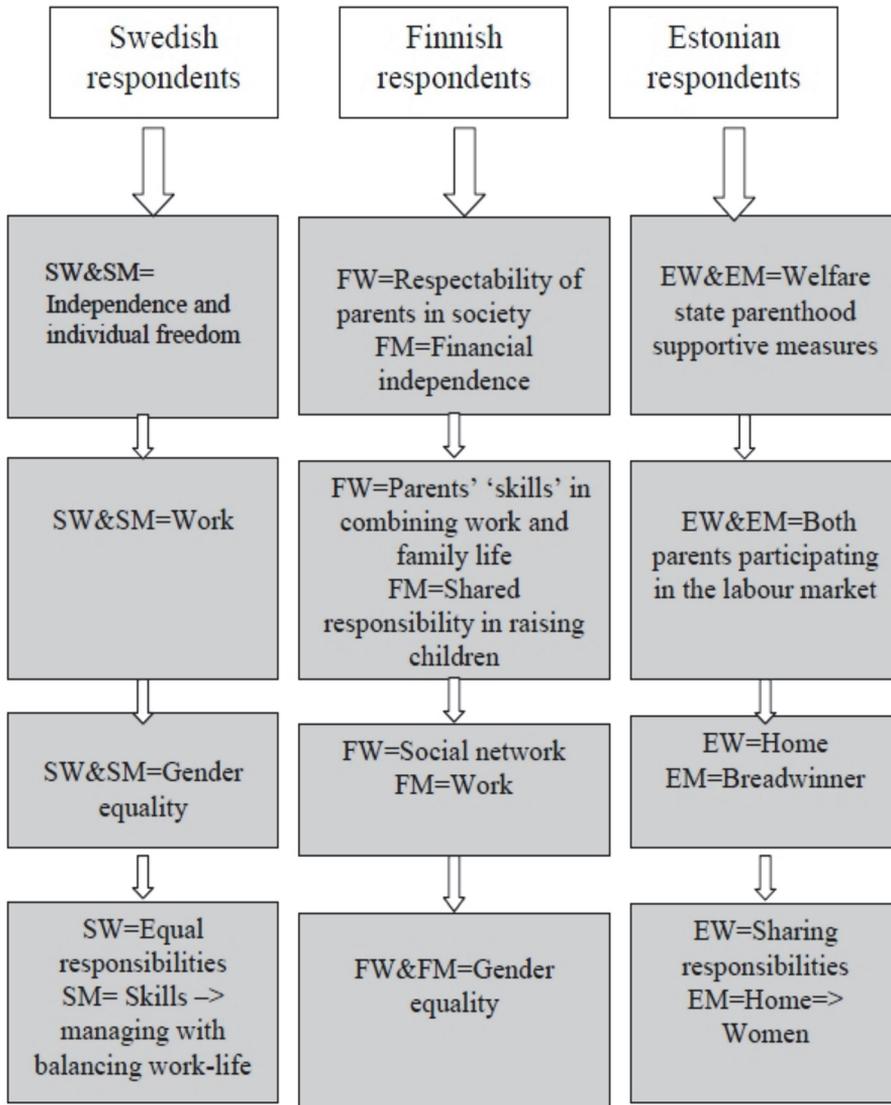
Entity(socio-biographical context)	Groups of respondents					
	EW	SW	FW	EM	SM	FM
Partner	4.04	3.38	3.19	4.45	3.15	3.15
Mother	3.42	3.77	3.37	3.90	3.88	3.24
Father	2.36	4.69	4.02	3.43	4.19	4.28
Friends	3.58	3.02	2.62	3.66	3.27	3.00
Colleagues at work	3.08	3.00	2.42	3.58	3.47	3.10
Partner’s mother	3.06	2.16	2.21	3.58	2.89	2.84
Partner’s father	2.29	2.67	3.10	2.98	3.40	3.44
Neighbours	2.60	3.24	3.43	3.17	3.38	2.87
Entity(wider socio-cultural domain)	Groups of respondents					
	EW	SW	FW	EM	SM	FM
Government	2.98	4.30	4.23	3.00	4.82	4.94
Employer	2.51	2.98	1.83	2.65	3.53	2.66
Opposition	1.88	2.45	2.67	2.08	2.64	2.62
Other women	3.62	2.39	2.82	4.16	2.89	2.70
Other men	3.09	1.90	2.00	3.82	3.20	2.24
Neighbours	2.60	3.24	3.43	3.17	3.38	2.87
Media	2.50	2.48	2.47	2.48	3.14	2.78

*Note:* The range of values for a *person’s evaluation of self in wider socio-cultural context* is from zero (0.00) to maximum (5.00) ego-involvement with the entities included in the identity instrument.

Based on the data, it was possible to construct the models of core values of the interviewed mothers and fathers (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Swedish, Finnish and Estonian respondents' core values models.

Figure constructed as core value levels for respondents where the first is most important and the following are less important.



Comparing the results based on the data of the respondents' self-evaluations in different contexts, it can be assumed that Estonian respondents show their similar unfulfilled expectations of the welfare state and their

similar understanding of the roles of parents in society. Inside the family Estonian respondents demonstrate a strong commitment to the family and support for the partner. It can be presumed that through relying on a partner, Estonian parents compensate for their insecurity towards the welfare state. Swedish and Finnish respondents, on the other hand, strongly demonstrate their satisfaction with the measures taken by the welfare state. However, it can be assumed that Swedish respondents are not satisfied with their roles as parents at home. It was revealed that Finnish respondents are quite satisfied with the situation inside the family.

Comparing the Estonian family policy model (Figure 1) and the attitudes of Estonian respondents towards family matters, it can be argued that, for example, two of the pillars of the Estonian family policy—a generous parental leave benefit scheme and additional needs-based benefits for families with children who live in relative poverty—are not as important as general financial aid to families.

In a comparison of the Swedish family policy model (Figure 1) and the attitudes of the Swedish respondents towards family matters, gender equality is not one of the pillars, but it seems to be an important issue for Swedish parents, and therefore additional measures may be needed to address this.

Comparing the Finnish family policy model (Figure 1) and the attitudes of the Finnish respondents' towards family matters, it can be said that gender equality is not one of the pillars, but it is still an important issue in family policy, as in the Swedish model. However, in both Sweden and Finland, gender equality is reflected in one of the pillars of the family policies: increasing the possibilities of parents to reconcile work and family life. The results of the study show that the aims of the Finnish welfare state and the attitudes of the interviewed respondents are similar in terms of gender balance and financial independence (Figure 2).

## **Conclusion**

Esping-Andersen (1999; 2009) sees the welfare state as an important institution for parents who are temporarily unable to participate in the labour market because of care responsibilities and/or market failure and/or family “failure”. In light of the current study we bring up three main arguments.

Firstly, Estonian respondents have high hopes towards supportive measures by the government; they are supporters of paid work, despite trying to manage with parenthood by themselves, similarly to one-and-half breadwinner ideal type. It is possible to say that through the hopes for supportive measures from the state they rather demonstrate their uncertainty about coping financially. It stands out clearly that Estonian men feel strong pressure from their traditional understanding of gender roles. While Swedish

and Finnish respondents feel the pressure of acting as “newcoming” fathers and are concerned about successfully balancing family and work time, they seem to feel secure in the knowledge that they are supported in parenthood by the welfare state and their employers. Latter indicates that so called “Nordic utopia” or ideal type of family policy recognised as “universal caregiver”, is not achieved. It can be argued that the reason why equalling childcare with paid work is important for men in Estonia is the “unbalanced” state which reproduces traditional gender roles (Estonian men feel financially insecure when women are paid little during childcare). On the other hand, the strongly entrenched traditional gender roles inside the family and in the labour market accompanied by poverty produce a traditional family model. However, the more traditional attitudes towards family matters can be one of the causes of Estonia’s similar fertility indicators to Sweden and Finland.

Secondly, a comparison between the family policy models, the core values of the respondents, and the main conflicted themes for them, makes it possible to construct the respondents’ value systems towards family matters. The constructed value systems allow to trace the issues that are viewed as “solved” by the respondents and the issues that still need to be solved. It is revealed that for Swedish respondents, the solved issues are independence, individual freedom, and respectability of parents in society, work life, and the welfare state’s role as a security provider, indicating to defamilisation. For Finnish respondents, the solved issues are respectability of parents in society, financial independence, both parents’ responsibility in raising children by skilful combining of work and family life, and the welfare state’s role as a security provider in family matters, indicating more to defamilisation. For Estonian respondents, the solved issues are both parents’ participating in the labour market. Estonian respondents were observed to be following a traditional division of gender roles within the family when combining work and family life. Latter indicates that care is neither valued (offered by cheap (state or market) labour) nor gender balanced.

Thirdly, following Esping-Andersen’s (1990; 1999) classification of three distinct regimes of the modern welfare state, it is possible to conclude that for the specific Swedish and Finnish respondents the “social-democratic” welfare state has “worked out”, with the exception of gender equality inside the family. On the other hand, in the case of Estonia it is possible to argue (in the context of the results of the current study) that Estonia is still a ‘post-Soviet welfare state’ with its transitional values and low living standards. Based on the data presented in this study, it is possible to argue that Swedish and Finnish welfare states have responded in accordance with the expectations of the residents. However, each analysed country has its own clear problems within the population, which they

continue to face. Surprisingly, the data shows that even though Estonian respondents feel insecure, the Estonian fertility rate is nearly similar to the fertility rates of Sweden and Finland. Based on the current study, it is possible to argue that the similar fertility rate is influenced by a more traditional understanding of gender roles and by its close correlation with the socio-biological context.

The current study revealed the parents' points of concern and satisfaction in the context of family policies. The current analysis does not allow drawing conclusions about whether certain elements of the system create attitudes, or whether attitudes effect policy choices; however, welfare regimes have differences even inside a single type. The study was based on a small sample, which remains insufficient for policy recommendations, but is adequate enough to point out the problems that parents face in combining work and family life. Further studies of these issues with a larger sample and alternative studies with other methods could provide a basis for recommendations in planning specific social measures.

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**Appendix 1**  
**Table 2**

Table 2. Respondents rated the ‘ideal self’ against bipolar constructs (structural pressure in numerical values - SP).

No	Bipolar constructs (Left)	Structural Pressure (SP)						Bipolar constructs (Right)
		SW	SM	FW	FM	EW	EM	
1	...believes that the normal situation is for women to stay at home and men to have the role of a breadwinner	74. 89	77. 94	35. 69	46. 29	25. 92	11.12	...believes that both parents have to be in paid work
2	...believes that women and men are equal in both instances of fulfilling responsibilities at home and having paid work	71. 48	57. 72	11. 17	57. 84	- 9.6 1	- 18.15	...believes that in family life women are responsible for functional combining of work and family life
3	...believes that staying home in the case of need (young children, child sickness, etc.) can't depend on parent's gender	84. 46	67. 68	6.2 6	- 39. 81	- 2.3 2	21.38	...believes that staying home in the case of need (young children, child sickness, etc.) is a biological responsibility of women
4	...believes that both parents are responsible for raising a child	88. 11	- 64. 79	39. 92	62. 86	15. 26	24 .0 0	...believes that when raising a child most of the responsibility is with the mother
5	...knows that for each adult, regardless of	81. 29	84. 46	34. 93	67. 70	16. 07	13 .3 3	...recognises that it is natural for women to be economically

No	Bipolar constructs (Left)	Structural Pressure (SP)						Bipolar constructs (Right)
		SW	SM	FW	FM	EW	EM	
	gender, economic independence is important							dependent on their partner
6	...believes that the equality of women and men in combining work and family life is possible	65.40	75.75	34.42	60.53	12.12	-9.52	...believes that the equality of women and men in combining work and family life is impossible
7	...views women as having greater responsibility at home	-8.41	26.51	22.10	7.54	23.42	15.17	...views men as having greater responsibility at home
8	...believes that in Estonia/Sweden/Finland women and men are respected as parents	47.03	68.87	46.53	57.09	22.03	28.21	...believes that in Estonia/Sweden/Finland women and men are not respected as parents
9	...believes that a good partner and parent can manage with combining work and family life	25.57	72.34	42.03	-52.82	-22.83	28.88	...believes that a person who can't combine work and family life is not a good partner/parent
10	...believes that for Estonian/Swedish/Finnish society it is important to find a solution to the problem of population ageing	39.40	55.40	34.72	52.67	7.32	-18.59	...believes that for Estonian/Swedish/Finnish society it is not important to find a solution to the problem of population ageing
11	...believes that it is important for Estonia/Sweden/Finland that as many people of working age as possible are working, regardless of their gender	60.87	95.54	27.21	61.59	11.08	-12.33	...believes that women of working age shouldn't necessarily work, at least not full time. It is more important for women to focus on raising children
12	...believes that the birth rate is positively affected by women actively participating in the job market	-22.94	-13.27	-6.15	4.40	5.16	20.65	...believes that the birth rate is negatively affected by women actively participating in the job market
13	...thinks that the birth rate is higher in countries where fatherhood is benefited by the State (by way of	-7.38	36.59	-2.25	5.71	-4.00	29.75	...thinks that for raising the birth rate it is not important to pay attention to fathers, but it is important to make sure that mothers are

No	Bipolar constructs (Left)	Structural Pressure (SP)						Bipolar constructs (Right)
		SW	SM	FW	FM	EW	EM	
	fathers' quota and other measures that support the participation of fathers in raising children)							insured by the state (by way of maternity leave, help when returning to the job market and so on)
14	...believes that Estonian/Swedish/Finnish employers are strongly affected by gender stereotypes (e.g., they are more understanding when female employees are at home with sick children)	9.14	73.64	-12.30	27.51	-26.02	-4.73	...believes that Estonian/Swedish/Finnish employers do not consider gender important (e.g., they are also understanding when male employees stay at home with sick children)
15	...believes that when it doesn't interfere with the role of being a mother, it is normal that women take the role of a breadwinner along with men	58.89	64.43	-19.70	-31.37	-6.89	19.71	...believes that it is hard for women to stay on parental leave because after the period of leave it is difficult for them to re-enter the labour market – thus they have to work constantly
16	...thinks that working overtime is not a normal part of the modern working culture	-7.23	42.48	4.66	10.28	10.54	-1.87	...thinks that women working overtime is a normal part of the modern working culture
17	...thinks that working overtime is not a normal part of the modern working culture	-25.56	56.14	18.52	21.86	9.49	19.33	...thinks that men working overtime is a normal part of the modern working culture
18	...thinks that the state should take more supportive measures (financial support + different services) towards families with children	16.44	29.58	15.81	24.36	29.07	29.53	...thinks that the state is already taking enough supportive measures towards families with children
19	...believes that families with children should not expect help from the state, they should manage on their	68.15	19.12	22.03	27.13	19.71	38.81	...believes that the state should support parenthood through shaping values and legislation, providing different services and financial means

No	Bipolar constructs (Left)	Structural Pressure (SP)						Bipolar constructs (Right)
		SW	SM	FW	FM	EW	EM	
	own							
20	...believes that it is normal that an extended circle of friends and family also takes part in combining work and family life	-33.36	-16.12	40.07	-26.66	-22.46	-16.87	...believes that different chores in work and family life should be managed only by the nuclear family itself
21	...believes that taking care of children should be equalled with paid work because women can't participate in paid work at every life period (the birth of a child, taking care of the infant)	-25.81	1.21	-19.15	-12.86	21.87	35.74	...believes that having children is not compulsory, therefore taking care of children shouldn't be equalled with paid work
22	...believes that work and family life could be better combined by a more efficient division of time and chores in the family	-26.13	-38.88	25.47	-25.07	-13.19	5.54	...believes that combining work and family life isn't possible because of the big workload in paid job

*Notes: Structural pressure is a measure of the compelling and constraining influence of a particular construct. SP ranges from -100 to 100.*

*Numerical value for a particular bipolar construct is presented in the left or right column for both groups of respondents according to their placement in the Table (on the left if the respondents chose the left construct and on the right if they chose the construct on the right).*

**Appendix 5. Tables 6-8: Respondents' rated the 'ideal self' against a bipolar constructs. Produced by the author**



Table 6. Swedish women (SW) and Swedish men (SM) rated the 'ideal self' against a bipolar constructs (structural pressure in numerical values - SP)

	<b>Bipolar constructs (Left)</b>	<b>SW (SP)</b>	<b>SM (SP)</b>	<b>Bipolar constructs (Right)</b>
1	...believes that the normal situation is for women to stay at home and men to have the	74,89	77,94	...believes that both parents have to be in paid work
2	...believes that women and men are equal in both instances of fulfilling responsibilities at	71,48	57,72	...believes that in family life women are responsible for functional combining of work
3	...believes that staying home in the case of need (young children, child sickness, etc.) can't depend on parent's gender	84,46	67,68	...believes that staying home in the case of need (young children, child sickness, etc.) is a biological responsibility of women
4	...believes that both parents are responsible for raising a child	88,11	-64,79	...believes that when raising a child most of the responsibility is with the mother
5	...knows that for each adult, regardless of gender, economic independence is important	81,29	84,46	...recognises that it is natural for women to be economically dependent on their partner
6	...believes that the equality of women and men in combining work and family life is	65,40	75,75	...believes that the equality of women and men in combining work and family life is impossible
7	...views women as having greater responsibility at home	-8,41	26,51	...views men as having greater responsibility at home
8	...believes that in Estonia/Sweden/Finland women and men are respected as parents	47,03	68,87	...believes that in Estonia/Sweden/Finland women and men are not respected as parents
9	...believes that a good partner and parent can manage with combining work and family life	25,57	72,34	...believes that a person who can't combine work and family life is not a good partner/parent
10	...believes that for Estonian/Swedish/Finnish society it is important to find a solution to the problem of population ageing	39,40	55,40	...believes that for Estonian/Swedish/Finnish society it is not important to find a solution to the problem of population ageing
11	...believes that it is important to Estonia/Sweden/Finland that as many people of working age as possible are working, regardless of their gender	60,87	95,54	...believes that women of working age shouldn't necessarily work, at least not full time. It is more important for women to focus on raising children
1	...believes that birth rate is positively affected by women actively participating in	-22,94	-13,27	...believes that the birth rate is negatively affected by women actively participating in the

	<b>Bipolar constructs (Left)</b>	<b>SW (SP)</b>	<b>SM (SP)</b>	<b>Bipolar constructs (Right)</b>
2	the job market			job market
1	...thinks that birth rate is higher in countries where fatherhood is benefited by the State (by way of father's quota and other measures that support the participation of fathers in raising children)	-7,38		...thinks that for raising the birth rate it is not important to pay attention to fathers, but it is important to make sure that mothers are insured by the state (by way of maternity leave, help when returning to the job market and so on)
3			36,59	
1	...believes that Estonian/Swedish/Finnish employers are strongly affected by gender stereotypes (e.g., they are more understanding when female employees are at home with sick children)	9,14		...believes that Estonian/Swedish/Finnish employers do not consider gender important (e.g., they are also understanding when male employees stay at home with sick children)
4			73,64	
1	...believes that when it doesn't interfere with the role of being a mother, it is normal that women take the role of a breadwinner along with men	58,89	64,43	...believes that it is hard for women to stay on parental leave because after the period of leave it is difficult for them to re-enter the labour market – thus they have to work constantly
5				...thinks that women working overtime is a normal part of the modern working culture
1	...thinks that working overtime is not a normal part of the modern working culture	-7,23	42,48	...thinks that men working overtime is a normal part of the modern working culture
6				...thinks that men working overtime is a normal part of the modern working culture
1	...thinks that working overtime is not a normal part of the modern working culture	-25,56	56,14	...thinks that men working overtime is a normal part of the modern working culture
7				...thinks that men working overtime is a normal part of the modern working culture
1	...thinks that the state should take more supportive measures (financial support + different services) towards families with children	16,44		...thinks that the state is already taking enough supportive measures towards families with children
8			29,58	
1	...believes that families with children should not expect help from the state, they should manage on their own	68,15		...believes that the state should support parenthood through shaping values and legislation, providing different services and financial means
9			19,12	
1	...believes that it is normal that an extended circle of friends and family also takes part in	-33,36		...believes that different chores in work and family life should be managed only by the
2			-16,12	

	<b>Bipolar constructs (Left)</b>	<b>SW (SP)</b>	<b>SM (SP)</b>	<b>Bipolar constructs (Right)</b>
0	combining work and family life			nuclear family itself
2 1	...believes that taking care of children should be equalled with paid work because women can't participate in paid work at every life period (the birth of a child, taking care of the infant)	-25,81	1,21	...believes that having children is not compulsory, therefore taking care of children shouldn't be equalled with paid work
2 2	...believes that work and family life could be better combined by more efficient division of time and chores in family	-26,13	-38,88	...believes that combining work and family life isn't possible because of the big workload in paid job

*Notes: Structural pressure is a measure of the compelling and constraining influence of a particular construct. SP ranges from -100 to 100. Numerical value for a particular bipolar construct are presented in the left or the right column for both groups of respondents according to their placement in the table (on the left if the respondents chose the left construct and on the right if they chose the construct on the right).*

Table 7. Finnish women (FW) and Finnish men (FM) rated the 'ideal self' against a bipolar constructs (structural pressure in numerical values - SP)

	<b>Bipolar constructs (Left)</b>	<b>FW (SP)</b>	<b>FM (SP)</b>	<b>Bipolar constructs (Right)</b>
1	...believes that the normal situation is for women to stay at home and men to have the	35,69	46,29	...believes that both parents have to be in paid work
2	...believes that women and men are equal in both instances of fulfilling responsibilities at	11,17	57,84	...believes that in family life women are responsible for functional combining of work
3	...believes that staying home in the case of need (young children, child sickness, etc.) can't depend on parent's gender	6,26	-39,81	...believes that staying home in the case of need (young children, child sickness, etc.) is a biological responsibility of women
4	...believes that both parents are responsible for raising a child	39,92	62,86	...believes that when raising a child most of the responsibility is with the mother
5	...knows that for each adult, regardless of gender, economic independence is important	34,93	67,70	...recognises that it is natural for women to be economically dependent on their partner
6	...believes that the equality of women and men in combining work and family life is	34,42	60,53	...believes that the equality of women and men in combining work and family life is
7	...views women as having greater responsibility at home	22,10	7,54	...views men as having greater responsibility at home
8	...believes that in Estonia/Sweden/Finland women and men are respected as parents	46,53	57,09	...believes that in Estonia/Sweden/Finland women and men are not respected as parents
9	...believes that a good partner and parent can manage with combining work and family life	42,03	-52,82	...believes that a person who can't combine work and family life is not a good partner/parent
10	...believes that for Estonian/Swedish/Finland society it is important to find a solution to the problem of population ageing	34,72	52,67	...believes that for Estonian/Swedish/Finland society it is not important to find a solution to the problem of population ageing
11	...believes that it is important to Estonia/Sweden/Finland that as many people of working age as possible are working, regardless of their gender	27,21	61,59	...believes that women of working age shouldn't necessarily work, at least not full time. It is more important for women to focus on raising children
11	...believes that birth rate is positively affected by women actively participating in	-6,15	4,40	...believes that the birth rate is negatively affected by women actively participating in the

	<b>Bipolar constructs (Left)</b>	<b>FW (SP)</b>	<b>FM (SP)</b>	<b>Bipolar constructs (Right)</b>
2	the job market			job market
1	...thinks that birth rate is higher in countries where fatherhood is benefited by the State (by way of father's quota and other measures that support the participation of fathers in raising children)	-2,25		...thinks that for raising the birth rate it is not important to pay attention to fathers, but it is important to make sure that mothers are insured by the state (by way of maternity leave, help when returning to the job market and so on)
3			5,71	
1	...believes that Estonian/Swedish/Finnish employers are strongly affected by gender stereotypes (e.g., they are more understanding when female employees are at home with sick children)	-12,30		...believes that Estonian/Swedish/Finnish employers do not consider gender important (e.g., they are also understanding when male employees stay at home with sick children)
4			27,51	
1	...believes that when it doesn't interfere with the role of being a mother, it is normal that women take the role of a breadwinner along with men	-19,70		...believes that it is hard for women to stay on parental leave because after the period of leave it is difficult for them to re-enter the labour market – thus they have to work constantly
5			-31,37	
1	...thinks that working overtime is not a normal part of the modern working culture	4,66	10,28	...thinks that women working overtime is a normal part of the modern working culture
1	...thinks that working overtime is not a normal part of the modern working culture	18,52	21,86	...thinks that men working overtime is a normal part of the modern working culture
1	...thinks that the state should take more supportive measures (financial support + different services) towards families with children	15,81	24,36	...thinks that the state is already taking enough supportive measures towards families with children
8				
1	...believes that families with children should not expect help from the state, they should manage on their own	22,03		...believes that the state should support parenthood through shaping values and legislation, providing different services and financial means
9			27,13	
2	...believes that it is normal that an extended circle of friends and family also takes part in combining work and family life	40,07		...believes that different chores in work and family life should be managed only by the
0			-26,66	

	<b>Bipolar constructs (Left)</b>	<b>FW (SP)</b>	<b>FM (SP)</b>	<b>Bipolar constructs (Right)</b>
2 1	...believes that taking care of children should be equalled with paid work because women can't participate in paid work at every life period (the birth of a child, taking care of the infant)	-19,15	-12,86	nuclear family itself ...believes that having children is not compulsory, therefore taking care of children shouldn't be equalled with paid work
2 2	...believes that work and family life could be better combined by more efficient division of time and chores in family	25,47	-25,07	...believes that combining work and family life isn't possible because of the big workload in paid job

*Notes: Structural pressure is a measure of the compelling and constraining influence of a particular construct. SP ranges from -100 to 100. Numerical value for a particular bipolar construct are presented in the left or the right column for both groups of respondents according to their placement in the table (on the left if the respondents chose the left construct and on the right if they chose the construct on the right).*

Table 8. Estonian women (EW) and Estonian men (EM) rated the 'ideal self' against a bipolar constructs (structural pressure in numerical values - SP)

	Bipolar constructs (Left)	EW (SP)	EM (SP)	Bipolar constructs (Right)
1	...believes that the normal situation is for women to stay at home and men to have the	25,92	11,12	...believes that both parents have to be in paid work
2	...believes that women and men are equal in both instances of fulfilling responsibilities at	-9,61	-18,15	...believes that in family life women are responsible for functional combining of work
3	...believes that staying home in the case of need (young children, child sickness, etc.) can't depend on parent's gender	-2,32	21,38	...believes that staying home in the case of need (young children, child sickness, etc.) is a biological responsibility of women
4	...believes that both parents are responsible for raising a child	15,26	24,00	...believes that when raising a child most of the responsibility is with the mother
5	...knows that for each adult, regardless of gender, economic independence is important	16,07	13,33	...recognises that it is natural for women to be economically dependent on their partner
6	...believes that the equality of women and men in combining work and family life is	12,12	-9,52	...believes that the equality of women and men in combining work and family life is
7	...views women as having greater responsibility at home	23,42	15,17	...views men as having greater responsibility at home
8	...believes that in Estonia/Sweden/Finland women and men are respected as parents	22,03	28,21	...believes that in Estonia/Sweden/Finland women and men are not respected as parents
9	...believes that a good partner and parent can manage with combining work and family life	-22,83	28,88	...believes that a person who can't combine work and family life is not a good partner/parent
10	...believes that for Estonian/Swedish/Finnish society it is important to find a solution to the problem of population ageing	7,32	-18,59	...believes that for Estonian/Swedish/Finnish society it is not important to find a solution to the problem of population ageing
11	...believes that it is important to Estonia/Sweden/Finland that as many people of working age as possible are working, regardless of their gender	11,08	-12,33	...believes that women of working age shouldn't necessarily work, at least not full time. It is more important for women to focus on raising children
11	...believes that birth rate is positively affected by women actively participating in	5,16	20,65	...believes that the birth rate is negatively affected by women actively participating in the

	<b>Bipolar constructs (Left)</b>	<b>EW (SP)</b>		<b>EM (SP)</b>		<b>Bipolar constructs (Right)</b>
2	the job market					job market
1	...thinks that birth rate is higher in countries where fatherhood is benefited by the State (by way of father's quota and other measures that support the participation of fathers in raising children)		-4,00		29,75	...thinks that for raising the birth rate it is not important to pay attention to fathers, but it is important to make sure that mothers are insured by the state (by way of maternity leave, help when returning to the job market and so on)
1	...believes that Estonian/Swedish/Finnish employers are strongly affected by gender stereotypes (e.g., they are more understanding when female employees are at home with sick children)		-26,02		-4,73	...believes that Estonian/Swedish/Finnish employers do not consider gender important (e.g., they are also understanding when male employees stay at home with sick children)
1	...believes that when it doesn't interfere with the role of being a mother, it is normal that women take the role of a breadwinner along with men		-6,89	19,71		...believes that it is hard for women to stay on parental leave because after the period of leave it is difficult for them to re-enter the labour market – thus they have to work constantly
1	...thinks that working overtime is not a normal part of the modern working culture		10,54		-1,87	...thinks that women working overtime is a normal part of the modern working culture
1	...thinks that working overtime is not a normal part of the modern working culture		9,49		19,33	...thinks that men working overtime is a normal part of the modern working culture
1	...thinks that the state should take more supportive measures (financial support + different services) towards families with children	29,07		29,53		...thinks that the state is already taking enough supportive measures towards families with children
1	...believes that families with children should not expect help from the state, they should manage on their own		19,71		38,81	...believes that the state should support parenthood through shaping values and legislation, providing different services and financial means
2	...believes that it is normal that an extended circle of friends and family also takes part in combining work and family life		-22,46		-16,87	...believes that different chores in work and family life should be managed only by the

	<b>Bipolar constructs (Left)</b>	<b>EW (SP)</b>	<b>EM (SP)</b>	<b>Bipolar constructs (Right)</b>
2 1	...believes that taking care of children should be equalled with paid work because women can't participate in paid work at every life period (the birth of a child, taking care of the infant)	21,87	35,74	nuclear family itself ...believes that having children is not compulsory, therefore taking care of children shouldn't be equalled with paid work
2 2	...believes that work and family life could be better combined by more efficient division of time and chores in family	-13,19	5,54	...believes that combining work and family life isn't possible because of the big workload in paid job

*Notes: Structural pressure is a measure of the compelling and constraining influence of a particular construct. SP ranges from -100 to 100. Numerical value for a particular bipolar construct are presented in the left or the right column for both groups of respondents according to their placement in the table (on the left if the respondents chose the left construct and on the right if they chose the construct on the right).*

## Appendix 6.

### ELULOOKIRJELDUS

1. Isikuandmed  
Ees- ja perekonnanimi Helbe Pödder  
Sünniaeg ja -koht 31.12.1964 Tartu  
Kodakondsus Eesti
2. Kontaktandmed  
Aadress Räägu 49, Tallinn, 11311, Eesti  
Telefon +372 6391761  
E-posti aadress [helbe.podder@tlu.ee](mailto:helbe.podder@tlu.ee)
3. Hariduskäik

Õppeasutus (nimetus lõpetamise ajal)	Lõpetamise aeg	Haridus (eriala/kraad)
Tallinna Pedagoogikaülikool	2003	Sotsiaaltöö/ magistrikraad
Tartu Riiklik Ülikool	1989	Ajalugu/ kõrgharidus
Tartu 8. Keskkool	1983	Keskharidus (eesti keele ja kirjanduse eriklass, ajakirjanduse lisaõppega)

4. Keelteoskus (alg-, kesk-, või kõrgtase)

Keel	Tase
Eesti	Kõrgtase
Vene	Kõrgtase
Soome	Kesktase
Inglise	Kesktase

## 5. Täiendusõpe

Õppimise aeg	Täiendusõppe teema ja õppe korraldaja
2005-2006	Social and Health Care College, Taani, ESF projekti mentorite ja koolitajate koolitus
09.2000-06.2001	Helsingi Diakoonia Rakenduskõrgkool, kutsepedagoogiline koolitus
1993 sügis	Eetika ja kutse-eetika teooria, praktika juhendamine sotsiaalala asutustes (Lahden Ammatikorkeakoulu)

## 6. Teenistuskäik

Töötamise aeg	Tööandja nimetus	Ametikoht
2008-...	Tallinna Pedagoogiline Seminar/Tallinna Ülikooli Pedagoogiline Seminar/Tallinna Sotsiaaltöö Keskus	Lapsehoidja kutseandmise hindamiskomisjoni liige
2006-...	Tallinna Meditsiinikool/Tallinna Tervishoiu Kõrgkool	Õpetaja
1989-...	Tallinna Pedagoogiline Seminar/Tallinna Ülikooli Pedagoogiline Seminar	Lektor

## 7. Teadustegevus

### Publikatsioonid:

Pödder, H. (2006). 9. ja 12. klasside õpilaste tulevikuga seotud hirmud ja mured Märjamaa gümnaasiumi näitel (21-46). Tallinna Pedagoogilise Seminari Toimetised 2.

Kogumikus ilmunud üliõpilasar artiklite juhendaja/kaasautor (2008). Tallinna Pedagoogilise Seminari Toimetised 4: Artikleid sotsiaaltöö eriala üliõpilastelt ja õppejõududelt (66-115; 125-137).

Pödder, H. (2010). Rahvastikupoliitika alustes 2009-2013 käsitletud laste- ja perepoliitika peegeldumine XI Riigikogu Sotsiaalkomisjoni poolt juhtivkomisjonina algatatud või tööprotsessi läbinud eelnõudes perioodil aprill 2007 – juuni 2010 (14-22). Tallinna Pedagoogilise Seminari Toimetised 6, samas kogumikus ilmunud üliõpilasar artiklite juhendaja/kaasautor (60-65; 101-108).

Põdder, H. (2011). Employment of Mothers and Fathers: A Comparison of Welfare States in Scandinavia and Estonia (85-102). *Baltic Journal of European Studies*, Vol.1, No.2 (10) September 2011.

Põdder, H. (2012). Combining Work and Family Life: Attitudes and Their Implementation. Part I: Mothers and Fathers in Estonia (41-80). Tallinna Ülikooli Pedagoogilise Seminari Toimetised 7: artikkel, samas kogumikus ilmunud üliõpilasar artiklite juhendaja.

Põdder, H. (2013). Nation-state 'political ineptitude' revealed in a citizen's identity processes? A case study using Identity Structure Analysis. *Baltic Journal of European Studies*, Vol. 3, No 1 (13).

Põdder, H. (2013). Combining work and family life: attitudes and their implementation - mothers and fathers in Estonia, Sweden and Finland. *European Integration Studies*. 2013. No.7.

Põdder, H., Põder, K. (2014). The Societal Context of Significant others: Comparative Perceptions of Mother- and Fatherhood in Sweden, Finland and Estonia. In: *European Scientific Journal* (vol.11, No.10, No.11 and No.12; April 2015 edition).

## 8. Kaitstud lõputööd

### **Magistritöö:**

Helbe Põdder. 9. ja 12. klasside õpilaste tulevikuga seotud hirmud ja mured Märjamaa gümnaasiumi näitel. Juhendaja dots. Anne Tiko. Tallinna Pedagoogikaülikool, 2003.

### **Diplomitöö:**

Helbe Põdder. Ajaloo-alane klassiväline töö Tartu koolides 1980-ndatel aastatel. Juhendaja dots. Allan Liim. Tartu Riikliku Ülikooli ajaloo teaduskond, 1989.

## 9. Teadustöö põhisuunad

Töö- ja pereelu kombineerimine  
Lastekaitse rakendumine

## 10. Teised uurimisprojektid

Arendusprojekt „Algajast oskajaks” Tallinna Ülikooli Pedagoogilise Seminari Sotsiaaltöö ja täiendusõppe kursustele ST-11/12 (2012 sügis-2013 kevad), projekti juht (sotsiaaltöö õppekava arendus).

ELDEM (projekt INTERREG IV A project SFE33. Toetav ja turvaline keskkond mäluhäiretega inimestele) raames läbi viidud rakendusuringus fookusgrupi juht (2011-2013).

ESF projekt „Kutseõppeasutuste õppekavade arendus“ (projekti nr. 1.0101-0176) 2005-2006, lapsehoidja õppekava töörühma esimees.

ESF meetme 1.1 projekt “Kutseõpetajate väljaõppe ja täienduskoolituse süsteemi arendamine” (projekti nr.1.0101-0280) 2006, sotsiaaltöö ja nõustamise töörühma liige.

## Appendix 7.

### CURRICULUM VITAE

#### 1. Personal information

Name Helbe Põdder  
Date and place of birth 31.12.1964, Tartu  
Citizenship Estonia

#### 2. Contact information

Address Räägu 49, Tallinn, 11311, Estonia  
Phone +372 6391761  
E-mail [helbe.podder@tlu.ee](mailto:helbe.podder@tlu.ee)

#### 3. Education

Educational institution	Graduation year	Education (field of study/degree)
Tallinn Pedagogical University	2003	Social work/MSW degree
Tartu State University	1989	History/ Higher education
Tartu High School No. 8	1983	Secondary education (Specialized class of Estonian and literature, with added journalism classes)

#### 4. Language competence/skills (fluent, average, basic skills)

Language	Level
Estonian	fluent
Russian	fluent
Finnish	average
English	average

## 5. Special Courses

Period	Educational or other organisation
2005-2006	Social and Health Care College, Denmark, ESF training of trainers and mentors
09.2000-06.2001	Diakonia-University of Applied Sciences, Professional training
1993 autumn	Ethics and professional ethics: Theory and Mentor skills (Lahti University of Applied Sciences)

## 6. Employment

Period	Organisation	Position
2008-...	Tallinn Pedagogical College/Tallinn University Pedagogical College/Tallinn Social Work Center	Member of the nursemaid occupational qualification committee
2006-...	Tallinn Health Care College	Teacher
1989-...	Tallinn Pedagogical College/Tallinn University Pedagogical College	Lecturer

## 7. Scientific work

### **Publications:**

Põdder, H. (2006). The fears and worries of students in the 9<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> forms, concerning the future, in the example of the Märjamaa High School (21-46). Tallinna Pedagoogilise Seminari Toimetised 2, supervisor of student articles published in the same compilation.

Supervisor/co-author of student articles published in the following compilation (2008): Tallinna Pedagoogilise Seminari Toimetised 4: Articles from students studying in the field of social work and lecturers of the same field (66-115; 125-137).

Põdder, H. (2010). The reflection of child and family policies addressed in “The basis of the population policy in 2009-2013” in the initialized drafts or those that passed the work process in the XI Parliament’s Social Affair Committee’s leading commission in the period from April 2007 to June 2010 (14-22). Tallinna Pedagoogilise Seminari Toimetised 6, supervisor of student articles published in said compilation (60-65; 101-108).

Põdder, H. (2011). Employment of Mothers and Fathers: A Comparison of Welfare States in Scandinavia and Estonia (85-102). *Baltic Journal of European Studies*, Vol.1, No.2 (10) September 2011.

Põdder, H. (2012). Combining Work and Family Life: Attitudes and Their Implementation. Part I: Mothers and Fathers in Estonia (41-80). Tallinna Ülikooli Pedagoogilise Seminari Toimetised 7 article, supervisor/co-author of student articles published in said compilation.

Põdder, H. (2013). Nation-state 'political ineptitude' revealed in a citizen's identity processes? A case study using Identity Structure Analysis. *Baltic Journal of European Studies*, Vol. 3, No 1 (13).

Põdder, H. (2013). Combining work and family life: attitudes and their implementation - mothers and fathers in Estonia, Sweden and Finland. *European Integration Studies*. 2013. No.7.

Põdder, H., Põder, K. (2014). The Societal Context of Significant others: Comparative Perceptions of Mother- and Fatherhood in Sweden, Finland and Estonia. In: *European Scientific Journal* (vol.11, No.10, No.11 and No.12; April 2015 edition).

#### 8. Defended theses

##### **Master's degree:**

Helbe Põdder. The fears and worries of students in the 9<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> forms, concerning the future, in the example of the Märjamaa High School. Supervisor Anne Tiko. Tallinn Pedagogical University, 2003.

##### **Diploma theses:**

Helbe Põdder. Extracurricular activity in the field of History in the schools of Tartu in the 1980s. Supervisor Allan Liim. Tartu State University, Department of History, 1989.

#### 9. Main areas of scientific work/Current research topics

Combining work and family life  
Implementation of child welfare

#### 10. Other research projects

Development project "From beginner to specialist" for the students of social work of the Tallinn University Pedagogical College (2012 autumn-2013 spring), leader of the project (advancement of the social work curriculum).

Project „Creating Healthy and Secure Environment for the Elderly with Dementia” (ELDEM) (INTERREG IV A project SFE 33, Creating Healthy and Secure Environment for the Elderly with Dementia), leader of the focus group (2011-2013).

ESF project „Kutseõppeasutuste õppekavade arendus“ (project nr. 1.0101-0176) 2005-2006, chairman of the work group of the curriculum of the childminders.

ESF measure 1.1 project “Kutseõpetajate väljaõppe ja täienduskoolituse süsteemi arendamine” (project nr.1.0101-0280) 2006, member of the work group of social work and counselling.

## **Acknowledgements**

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Thanks to all my respondents who so kindly agreed to be participants for the study from Estonia, Sweden and Finland. Special thanks to Mannerheimin Lastensuojeluliitto (Finland), the International Relations Office of Tallinn University of Technology, Jõgeva County (Estonia), Rille Villems (Embassy of Sweden in Tallinn), Alar Tamm (the Estonian Union for Child Welfare), Mati Sinisaar (Bethel's Centre of Pastoral Care), Kirke Maar (InterAct), Raigo Liiman (Espoon Seurakunta), the Salvation Army in Estonia, Kait Tamm, Triinu Lepp and Mona Hakomaa (proofreading), the colleges and students of the Department of Social Work from Tallinn University Pedagogical College and my friends.

I am deeply grateful to my former chief in Tallinn University Pedagogical College MA Maiu Kauber for understanding, motivating and supporting my studies through all the years.

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## KOKKUVÕTE

### Töö- ja pereelu ühitamise rollide muutustest lastevanematel Eesti, Soome ja Rootsi võrdluses

Käesolevas doktoritöös uuriti kolme riigi – Rootsi, Soome ja Eesti – elanike hoiakuid töö- ja pereelu ühitamise osas konkreetse riigi sotsiaalses kontekstis. Töö tulemused koosnevad järgnevast: 1) autori poolt läbiviidud empiirilise uurimuse tulemused, mille läbiviimisel rakendati Peter Weinreich'i poolt väljatöötatud teaduslikku uurimismeetodit – Identity Structure Analysis (ISA) (=identiteedi struktuurne analüüs); 2) autori poolt läbiviidud empiirilise uurimuse tulemuste ja teemakohase kirjanduse võrdlev analüüs. Nimetatud meetodit on kasutanud mitmed uurijad erinevates uurimisvaldkondades, pereuringute kontekstis Euroopa ühiskondades (antud töös Rootsi, Soome ja Eesti) ei ole ISA-d varem kasutatud.

Uurimaks emade ja isade hoiakuid töö- ja pereelu ühitamise küsimustes, töötati respondentidele autori poolt välja unikaalne identiteedi instrument, mis koosneb entiteetidest (situatsiooniline 'mina' erinevates kontekstides, indiviidid, grupid, institutsioonid) ja bipolaarsetest konstruktidest. Uurimisinstrument oli respondentidele Rootsist, Soomest ja Eestist kättesaadav nende emakeeles ajavahemikus veebruar 2012 kuni juuni 2013. Igast nimetatud riigist osales uurimuses 15 naist ja meest (kokku 90 respondentit). Iga respondent pidi instrumenti täites vastama 396-le bipolaarsele väitele.

Antud töö eesmärgiks oli luua küsitletud kolme riigi lapsevanemate empiirilistel andmetel baseeruvad põhiväärtuste ja konfliktsete teemade mudelid pereküsimustes; ja loodud mudelite alusel tuua välja, kui retsiprooksed on olnud uuritud maade perepoliitika suhetes lapsevanematega. Antud töös oli püstitatud viis uurimisküsimust:

- Millised hoiakud on lapsevanematel töö- ja pereelu ühitamise suhtes?
- Millistena näevad lapsevanemad naise ja mehe rolle perekonna siseselt?
- Millised hoiakud on lapsevanematel laste olemasolu suhtes peres?
- Milliseid meetmeid ootavad lapsevanemad riigilt töö- ja pereelu ühitamise toetamisel?
- Milliseid hoiakuid on lapsevanemad kogunud tööandjatelt töö- ja pereelu ühitamise osas?

Dokoritöö uurimuse tulemused on avaldatud neljas teaduslikus uurimusartiklis.

Antud teema kontekstualisatsioon põhineb: a) vanemlusel healuriigi kontekstis; b) ajas muutuvatel peremudelitel; c) Rootsi, Soome ja Eesti perepoliitika võtmetrendidel ja spetsiifilistel tunnusjoontel; d) perepoliitika efektidel konkreetsetes sotsiaalses kontekstis. Uurimuses lähtuti küsimustest 'mis' ja 'kuidas', mille tulemusena oli võimalik teada saada, millised teemad pereküsimustes on respondentide jaoks 'lahendatud' ja millised neist vajavad lahendamist.

Uurimuse tulemused näitavad, et igal uuritud maal on omad selgelt esiletulevad probleemid, millega tuleb silmitsi seista. Üllatavalt selgus, et kuigi Eesti respondendid

tunnevad end ebaturvaliselt, on sündivuse näitajad üsna sarnased Rootsi ja Soomele. Antud uurimuse tulemustele toetudes võib oletada, et sarnased sündivuse näitajad on mõjutatud traditsioonilisematest hoiakutest ja tugevast seotusest sotsio-biograafilise kontekstiga.

Selgus, et kuigi Rootsi ja Soome mehed tunnevad tugevat survet vastamaks uuele hoolivale isatüübile ning on mures töö- ja pereelu ühitamise pärast, tunnevad nad seejuures tugevat toetust vanemlusele nii heaoluriigi kui tööandjate poolt. Mehed Eestis on jätkuvalt materiaalse turvalisuse loojad oma peredele, kuid nad on sellega toimetuleku pärast mures. Võib eeldada, et läbi partneri tugeva toetuse kompenseerivad Eesti lapsevanemad riigipoolse turvalisuse vähesust. Samas ei oota Eesti naised ja mehed abi ainult riigilt, vaid on agarad tööturul osalemise toetajad, et tulla oma eluga iseseisvalt toime.

Uurimuse tulemused näitavad, et Eesti naised ei tunne end lapsevanemadena väärtustatuna, samas kui kõik teised respondentide grupid on rahul enda kui lapsevanema positsiooniga konkreetses ühiskonnas. Kõik respondendid olid kindlal seisukohal, et valitsus peab eelkõige toetama emadust. Enamik antud uurimuses osalenud respondentidest olid veendunud, et isaduse toetamine ei oma kuigi suurt rolli sündivuse tõusus. Selgus, et isad on põhimõtteliselt nõus olema uut tüüpi hoolivad isad, kuid soopõhised rollid on siiski veel kindlalt juurdunud, eriti Eesti respondentide puhul.

Vaatamata valimi väiksusele, võimaldab uurimuses kasutatud metodoloogia identifitseerida probleemid uuritud valdkonnas tänu süvitsi minevale eripärale. Lähtudes uurimuse tulemustest, saab teha järgmised poliitikasoovitused: 1) Eesti kontekstis on oluline pöörata tähelepanu tööandjate hoiakutele töötajate töö- ja pereelu toetamise vajaduste osas; emadele materiaalse turvalisuse pakkumisele pikemaks perioodiks kui 1,5 aastat emapalka ning läbi meedia ja sotsiaalkampaaniate süvendada uue hooliva isa kuvandit; 2) Rootsi ja Soome kontekstis on oluline mõelda sooliste stereotüüpide vähendamise võimalustele perekonna kontekstis, kuigi soolised stereotüübid on ühed madalamate näitajatega kogu maailma näitajate kontekstis.

## ABSTRACT

### **Combining Work and Family Life – A Comparative Perspective on Changes in Parental Roles in Estonia, Finland and Sweden**

This thesis examined the attitudes of the inhabitants of three states - Sweden, Finland, and Estonia - towards the work-life balance in a particular environment (social context) of the specific state. The thesis reported on: 1) findings from an empirical study carried out by the author that employed Peter Weinreich's Identity Structure Analysis (ISA) as a research tool; and 2) a comparative analysis of the empirical results and contextual literature, also carried out by the author. ISA has been used in several empirical studies but not as a field investigation method in the context of parenthood in ageing European societies (Sweden, Finland and Estonia in this thesis).

The unique identity instrument to explore the attitudes of mothers and fathers towards combining work and family life, entities (the situated self in various contexts, individuals, groups, institutions) and bipolar constructs were constructed for the individuals participating in the study. The study instrument was available to respondents from Sweden, Finland and Estonia in the participants' native language from February 2012 to June 2013. From each country 15 women and 15 men (together 90 respondents) were examined. Each participant had to respond to 396 queries.

**The aim of this doctoral thesis** was to create an empirical research based model of the core values and conflicted themes of the interviewed parents of three countries in the context of family matters; and in light of these construed models to bring forth how successful the family policies of the three studied states have been in meeting the expectations of the parents. The five research questions of this thesis were:

- What kinds of attitudes do parents have towards balancing work and family life?
- How do parents see the roles of women and men within a family?
- What kinds of attitudes do parents have towards having children?
- What measures do parents expect the state to offer to support the combining of work and family life?
- What kinds of attitudes towards combining work and family life have respondents experienced from employers?

To achieve the objective set forth in this doctoral thesis the research questions and main results were addressed in four papers completed for the study.

The contextualisation of the theme emphasizes a) parenthood in the context of a welfare state; b) family models as changing institutions over time; c) the Swedish, Finnish and Estonian family policy key trends and specific features; and d) the effects of the family policy measures in question in a particular social context. By answering "which" and "how" type, questions the respondents' value system related to family matters was constructed, which enabled to determine the issues considered 'solved' or still in need of solving for the respondents.

The study revealed that each investigated country has its own clear problems which it continues to face. Surprisingly, even though the Estonian respondents feel 'unsafe, the fertility rate is nearly similar to those of Sweden and Finland. Based on the current study it can be assumed that the similar fertility rate is influenced by the more traditional view of gender roles and by a close correlation with the socio-biographical context.

While Swedish and Finnish men feel the pressure of having to be newcoming fathers and are concerned about balancing family and work time, they nevertheless seem to feel secure in the knowledge that they are supported in parenthood by the welfare state and their employers.

Men in Estonia are seen as material security providers and Estonian men, aware of their role, are concerned about their economic survival. It can be presumed that through relying on a partner Estonian parents compensate for the lack of safety from the state. However, in light of the results of the study it is possible to argue that even though Estonian women and men have high expectations of governmental support, they also support paid work and try to manage with parenthood by themselves. It can be assumed that through their hopes towards the government for supporting acts they demonstrate uncertainty over coping financially.

The study revealed Estonian women's concern that their role as a parent is not appreciated, while other groups of respondents are satisfied with their position as a parent as viewed by society. In particular, all the respondent groups found that the government should support motherhood. The majority of the respondents of the current study believed that supporting fatherhood is not very relevant in raising the birth rate. The study results confirm that fathers are, in principle, ready to be newcoming fathers, but the gender-based roles are still deeply rooted, especially in Estonian respondents.

Despite the small sample of this micro-data based study, the methodology used enables the identification of major problem areas in combining work and family life in the compared countries through in-depth investigation. Based on the study results, the following policy recommendations can be made: 1) in Estonia, it is important to pay attention to: the attitudes of employers towards the needs of employees to combine work and family life; financial security of mothers over a longer period than the 1,5 years of maternity leave, and to the implementing media and social campaigns to deepen a more positive attitude towards the 'newcoming/caring father' image; 2) in Sweden and in Finland it is important to deepen gender equality at home, although it is one of the best-performing in the world at all.

**DISSERTATIONS DEFENDED AT  
TALLINN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY ON  
*ECONOMICS AND BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION***

1. **August Aarma.** Segmented Analysis of Bank Customers and Banking Information: Estonian Case. 2001.
2. **Enn Listra.** The Development and Structure of Banking Sector: Retail Banking in Estonia. 2001.
3. **Tatyana Põlajeva.** The Comparative Analysis of Market's Attractiveness. 2001.
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