

Editorial

This year's RECOWE Integration Week, organised by the University of Utrecht last June, marked the middle of the network's life. The evolution of RECOWE activities could be summarized in one word: 'maturity'. After an initial period during which we got to know each other and mapped our fields of research, we entered into a period of intensive activity. The numerous meetings held by various working groups in Utrecht illustrate the network's maturity. The different phases of RECOWE activity are explained by Trudie Knijn in the 'Interview of the month' section in this issue.

Besides the research on tensions, which continues according to the schedule, we carry on promoting the EDACwowe data centre and organising all kinds of training activities. We also launched the RECOWE Working Paper series on the Reconciliation of Work and Welfare.

This newsletter evolves with the evolution of RECOWE activities: it contributes to the dissemination of the papers, articles, books and special issues that will be published during the next two years as a result of the research within RECOWE. Trudie Knijn and Barbara Hobson give a good foretaste of the publications in preparation within Strand 02.

This issue also presents the Centre for Social Policy Research at the University of Bremen, books, book chapters and articles recently published by RECOWE members and European news falling within the scope of the network's research areas.

Denis Bouget and Bruno Palier

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1 – INTERVIEW OF THE MONTH

Trudie KNIJN and Barbara HOBSON, STRAND 02 'Reconciling Family and Employment'

by Anna Safuta



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Trudie Knijn is Professor and Educational Director of the Department of Interdisciplinary Social Science at Utrecht University and senior member of the Amsterdam School for Social Science Research (ASSR). She was the organiser of this year's Integration Week.

Barbara Hobson is a Professor in Sociology at the University of Stockholm, with a Chair in Comparative Gender Studies. She is also editor and founder of the Oxford University Press journal *Social Politics: International Studies of Gender, State and Society*.

Together they coordinate the activities of RECOWE WP02 'Reconciling Family and Employment'.

Q1: What were the main differences between this year's Integration Week and the previous ones?

TK: The first two years were a time for finding partners and choosing research topics. In Utrecht we could see that research had now really started, as we discussed an impressive number of papers - those already delivered and those in preparation. The number of participants increased significantly (we were 165 participants this year) and that can be considered as a success, meaning that partners are now fully exploiting the potentialities of such a large-scale network: they are now more aware of the existence of the network and interested in taking part in its activities.

BH: The focus of this year's Integration Week was on dissemination activities. We held our first joint cross-strand seminar presentations with researchers from WP02 and WP03, which resulted from our activities over the last year. These

included the preparation of a 7th Framework Programme (FP) research proposal (QUALCAP, institutional coordinator Aleksandra Kanjuc-Mrcela) and a dissemination conference held in Ljubljana in February 2009. As a consequence of these integrative activities between WP02 and WP03, including our meetings in Utrecht, we submitted a proposal for a special issue of *Social Politics* last August: 'Tensions at the Interface of Work and Well-Being in Europe'.

Q2: Which WP02 projects have already been brought to an end and which ones are yet to be finalized?

TK: The strand adopted a multi-level approach. It investigates work life reconciliation policies at the micro (individual/household) level, meso (company) and the macro (local/regional /national and supranational) levels and comprises six main tasks. The deliverable led by Colette Fagan and Laura den Dulk explored the implementation of employment policies at the company level. Barbara Hobson and Susanne Fahlén adapted Amartya Sen's capabilities framework to empirical research by developing a survey helping to evaluate Swedish and Hungarian workers' agency and ability to reconcile work and family life (see RECOWE Working Paper REC-WP 03/09). Another task examined European employment policies and the Lisbon Strategy from a tensions perspective by analysing European level policies, National Action Plans (in the 25 Member States that had an English version of their NAP) and the implementation of those plans in 8 countries.

The results of another task investigating tensions related to care work in European welfare states led to the preparation of a book, and two new projects started last year: a study on fertility in Sweden, Hungary and Poland and another one on the ecology of life courses.

Q3: Barbara, tell us more about the public seminar in Ljubljana. It seems that it was a great success that could become good practice in terms of dissemination activities.

BH: The aim of this conference was to disseminate research results and knowledge about national and company level policy innovations enhancing individuals' capabilities to achieve the desired work family balance. With this conference, we managed to establish a dialogue between RECOWE members and business and trade union

representatives, policy makers and other interested stakeholders. This conference also allowed us to exchange with the participating stakeholders on the processes and mechanisms that constrain and inhibit individuals' utilisation of work family balance tools. It was a big success with 50 participants, an opening speech by the Slovenian Minister of Labour, Family and Social Affairs and the participation of a representative from the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions.

Q4: What do you think about the potential impacts of the crisis on work life reconciliation?

TK: We extensively discussed the potential consequences of the crisis during this year's Integration Week. Social science does not effectively anticipate future evolutions, it analyses past and present phenomena. What we can already see is that Member States develop differing policy answers to the crisis in pure 'path dependent' fashion. We can already observe that predominantly male sectors are more at risk (e.g. the automotive sector), as are fragile categories of workers (e.g. temporary agency workers). The crisis will also impact more strongly the countries in which liberal welfare state reforms have reduced social protection.

BH: Building upon our theoretical and empirical work in RECOWE, several researchers in WP02 and WP03 have begun developing a framework and analytical strategies for addressing the crises in our future research. It was front and centre in the above mentioned FP7 research proposal, *Quality of work and capabilities for quality of life in a period of economic change and uncertainty* (QUALCAP), which focuses on the capabilities and agency to make work life balance claims at the company level in light of the economic crisis. Those of us involved in work life balance research within WP02 are confronting the question: Will the crises put the breaks on new innovations for work family reconciliation and/or make it more difficult for women and men to take up the work life balance policies introduced at EU and national level (care leaves, flexible work options, reduced working times, time banks etc.)?

Q5: Trudie, you have recently published a working paper with Arnoud Smit on the relationship between family and work (see REC-WP 11/2009) that will be published as an article in *Social Politics*. What issues does this paper address?

TK: This paper aims at complementing the perspective traditionally adopted in the research on work family relationship as well as by EU institutions, focusing on the constraints imposed by family life on individuals' labour market participation. In this paper, we advocate a more complementary approach, analyzing both the constraints imposed by family life on individuals' labour market participation and the constraints that employment imposes on workers' family choices. We also underscore that, while most of social policies focus on families, young people tend to postpone marriage and family due to market uncertainty and to the increase in temporary jobs. This paper adopts an innovative, de-gendered approach of the family, arguing that family policies should be aimed at both women and men, without gendered distinctions.

Q6: Barbara, together with Susan Fahlén, you have just published a 'state of the art' RECOWE working paper applying Amartya Sen's capabilities framework to work family balance in Europe (REC-WP 03/09). What are the main issues addressed in this paper?

BH: This paper takes up the theoretical and empirical challenges that Sen's framework poses for welfare state research: How are the tensions and contradictions in national and supranational work family reconciliation policies reflected in individuals' agency inequalities? How do institutional settings shape not only individual practices but also mother's and father's perceptions of entitlement to make claims for work family balance in different sites (household, company and policy level)? The paper, with its conceptual models, lays the groundwork for an innovative survey instrument on capabilities and agency for work family balance implemented by two RECOWE partners (University of Stockholm and Hungarian Academy of Sciences). Our initial findings presented in Utrecht (*Tensions in Aspirations, Agency and Capabilities to Achieve a Work Family Balance: A comparison of Sweden and Hungary* by Hobson, Takács and Fahlén) highlight how the institutional context (quality of jobs and precariousness, working time regimes, flexible working time options, and gender equality discourses) shape individual mothers' and fathers' subjective experience of the tensions between family and work and the scenarios for change that they can imagine. The survey also allowed us to highlight the gender and class differences in which these subjective perceptions are embedded.



2 – NEWS FROM THE NETWORK

CONFERENCES/WORKSHOPS

For more information on all RECOWE events: <http://www.recwowe.eu/>

– PUDIAC Meeting

'Employers' Recruitment Decisions, Labour Market Disadvantage and Active Labour Market Policies'

Organiser: European Social Observatory (OSE), Brussels, Belgium, 9 November 2009

In the framework of the activities of the RECOWE Publication, Dissemination and Dialogue Centre (PUDIAC), the OSE organises a public debate with Professor **Giuliano Bonoli**, Swiss Graduate School of Public Administration (IDHEAP). Professor Bonoli will introduce the participants to the conclusions of the WP01 research 'Employers' Recruitment Decisions, Labour Market Disadvantage and Active Labour Market Policies'. The presentation will be discussed by Professor **Ides Nicaise**, Higher Institute of Labour Studies (HIVA), University of Leuven, Belgium.

For more information on this public debate: [OSE's website](#)

– International Conference

'The New Welfare State in Europe'

**Organisers: RECOWE, European University Institute of Florence (EUI), Swiss Graduate School of Public Administration (IDHEAP) and University of Bologna
Florence, Italy, 10-11 December 2009**

The aim of this conference is to bring together some of the researchers who, over the last ten years, have made key contributions to comparative welfare state research.

– RECOWE PhD Course

'Welfare – Concepts and Measurements'

**Organiser: the University of Aalborg and the University of Roskilde
Aalborg, Denmark, 20-22 January 2010**

– RECOWE Executive Short Course

'Pension Reforms in Europe: beyond Parametric Changes'

**Organiser: the Centre for European Studies at Sciences Po Paris
Paris, France, 21-22 January 2010**

– RECOWE Doctoral Workshop

'Multi-Level Approaches to the Analysis of Work, Care and Welfare – an Introductory Workshop to Theory, Data and Analyses'

**Organiser: the European Data Centre for Work and Welfare (EDACwowe)
Tilburg, the Netherlands, 22-25 February 2009**

This EDACwowe workshop aims at increasing the participants' understanding of multi-level approaches to the analysis of people's behaviour, attitudes and beliefs. Participants will also learn how to find and set up multi-level data sets using resources provided through the EDACwowe website. The deadline for applications is **30 October 2009**.

– Call for applications

RECOWE TAC 'Short Term Scientific Missions'

The RECOWE Training Activities Centre (RECOWE TAC) 5th call for **Short Term Scientific Missions** is now open. RECOWE can financially support up to four PhD researchers willing to visit another RECOWE partner institution in order to advance their doctoral project. Visits can take place between April 2010 and April 2011 and the deadline for applications is **28 November 2009**.

For more information on the Short Term Scientific Missions: [RECOWE TAC website](#)

– Call for papers

Closing ESF EUROCORES 'Inventing Europe' Conference & 4th 'Tensions of Europe' Plenary Conference

**Organisers: the European Science Foundation (ESF) and the Foundation for the History of Technology in the Netherlands
Sofia, Bulgaria, 17-20 June 2010**

The deadline for the submission of abstracts is **18 December 2009**.

MOST RECENT RECOWE WORKING PAPERS

Tepe, M., 2009. Public administration employment in 17 OECD nations from 1995 to 2005. *RECOWE Working Paper, REC-WP 12/09*

Downsizing and growing personnel costs have been acknowledged as two distinctive features of contemporary public employment in affluent democracies. This paper employs a new panel dataset on the size and costs of public administration employment to explore empirically those two common presumptions.

To read this working paper, click [here](#).

Bertozzi, F. and Bonoli, G., 2009. Measuring flexicurity at the macro level. *RECOWE Working Paper, REC-WP 10/09*

This paper provides a critical discussion of recent attempts at measuring the concept of flexicurity. Among other discussed issues, this paper points out the limits of quantitative approaches in accounting for complex phenomena like flexicurity, and encourages researchers to complement the knowledge produced by indicators with qualitative tools (e.g. typologies or fine grained accounts of policies).

To read this working paper, click [here](#).

Häusermann, S. and Schwander, H., 2009. Identifying outsiders across countries. *RECOWE Working Paper, REC-WP 09/09*

This paper develops a new conceptualisation and operationalisation of the outsider-status and shows empirically who the outsiders are across countries and across the three dimensions of social, economic and political exclusion. The empirical analysis shows similar, but not identical insiders and outsiders across EU-15, Switzerland and North America.

To read this working paper, click [here](#).

González, M. C., 2009. Workers' involvement at the workplace and job quality in Europe. *RECOWE Working Paper, REC-WP 08/09*

This paper focuses on workplace practices aimed at increasing workers' direct voice, one of the dimensions of job quality according to the European Employment Strategy. It offers an analysis of the theories, debate and research on the impact of workers' direct participation on job quality and quantity. The paper also reviews the main databases available and offers a meta-analysis on the extension of direct participation in a range of European countries.

To read this working paper, click [here](#).

For more RECOWE working papers: [PUDISCwowe website](#).

NETWORK MEMBERS' PUBLICATIONS IN THE AREA OF WORK AND WELFARE

Capano, G. and Howlett, M. eds., 2009. *European and North American policy change: drivers and dynamics*. Oxon: Routledge.

This edited book examines 'policy change' – its definitions as well as its national, supra- and international drivers. It features case studies on welfare state and pension systems reforms and includes contributions by two RECOWE members: University of Bologna lecturer and OSE's Scientific Coordinator David Natali contributed with a chapter on policy reforms in Italy and in the US, while Silja Häusermann, lecturer in political science at the University of Zurich, offered an account of European and American experiences in policy change.

For more information on this book: [The Publisher's website](#).

Pfau-Effinger, B., Flaquer, L. and Jensen, P.H. eds., 2009. *Formal and informal work in Europe. The hidden work regime*. Oxon: Routledge.

Edited by two RECWOWE members (Birgit Pfau-Effinger and Per H. Jensen, with Lluís Flaquer), this volume develops a conceptual framework for the analysis of informal work (family care, voluntary work and undeclared or unregulated work). The book analyses the relationship of informal and formal work in six European Union countries with differing welfare regimes, cultural values and gender arrangements (namely Denmark, Finland, Germany, Britain, Spain and Poland). Among other issues, this book examines the ways in which informal work possibly contributes to social integration and social cohesion.

**For more information on this book:
The Publisher's [website](#).**

Schubert, K. Hegelich, S. and Bazant, U. eds., 2009. *The handbook of European welfare systems*. Oxon: Routledge.

This publication comprises contributions on each of the 27 European Union welfare states as well as a chapter on European Union social and welfare policies and focuses on the interplay and limits between European and national social policies. Two RECWOWE members contributed with country case studies – Wim Van Oorschot on the Netherlands and David Natali on Italy. Additionally, the introductory chapter summarizes the actual debate about welfare states and welfare state regimes, gives an overview on current welfare state research and analyses the main developments in recent welfare state reform. Two concluding chapters provide a first comparative analysis of the 27 European welfare regimes.

**For more information on this book:
The Publisher's [website](#).**

Hobson, B. and Fahlén, S., 2009. *Competing scenarios for European fathers: applying Sen's capabilities and agency framework to work-family balance*. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 624(1), pp. 214-233.

European policy and discourse create crosscurrents for fathers: the promotion of work family balance and more involved fathering competes with the work-focused competitiveness and productivity goals of today's globalised economies. The authors apply the capability framework to comparative European data considering working times and desired working times, flexibility and autonomy in employment, as well as perceptions of economic security and job security. The authors find differences in fathers' capabilities and agency for work family balance across countries, representing different welfare regime configurations, most strikingly between old and new EU Member States. The majority of European fathers wanted to reduce working hours substantially despite possible reductions in pay, underscoring the value of the capabilities framework for understanding potential freedoms for achieving work family balance.

**For more information on this article:
The Annals [website](#).**

Natali, D., 2009. *The Lisbon strategy a decade on: a critical review of a multi-disciplinary literature*. *Transfer*, 15(1), pp. 111-137.

This literature review aims at shedding light on the changing attitudes of experts and academics towards the Lisbon strategy. The article focuses on three main aspects: the political and economic rationale of this strategy, the use of participation to increase EU democratic legitimacy, and the cognitive potential of the strategy through learning dynamics. This literature review has also been published in French in *La Revue de l'IRES*.

For more information on this article:

The ETUI [website](#).

The IRES [website](#).

**PRESENTATION OF THE CENTRE FOR
SOCIAL POLICY RESEARCH AT THE
UNIVERSITY OF BREMEN (UNIVERSITÄT
BREMEN), PARTNER 16**



The Centre for Social Policy Research (CeS) at the University of Bremen was founded in 1988 as the first interdisciplinary institute for social policy research in the Federal Republic of Germany, supported by a seed grant of the Volkswagen Foundation. Since then the Centre has been mostly financed by the university, but research carried out at the Centre throughout the last two decades obtained substantial grants from prestigious national and international funding institutions such as the German Science Foundation, the EU and the German Marshall Fund.

Unique in its interdisciplinary scope among German social policy research institutions, the Centre integrates political science, sociological, economic and public health perspectives to analyse the origins, development and impact of social policy in modern societies. The Centre's prime expertise domain is the German welfare state, while international comparative research on welfare state change is emphasized as well. The research profile of the Centre combines basic research with an applied orientation and aims at contributing both to the scientific and political debate on social life and well-being. The work of the Centre is supported and evaluated by an Advisory Board with national and international members, distinguished in social policy research and practice.

Established research areas of the CeS, organized in sections, include

- Theory and Constitution of the Welfare State
- Institutions and History of the Welfare State
- Economy of the Welfare State
- Health Economics and Policy
- Gender Policy in the Welfare State.

Currently more than 50 junior and senior researchers, including seven professors, engage in cutting edge research often in cooperation with international scholars and in larger collaborative research groups such as [the Collaborative Research Center 597 on the Transformations of the State \(TranState\)](#).

International cooperation is enhanced by guest professorships as well as by a Fellowship program in cooperation with the Hanse Institute for Advanced Study and the T.H. Marshall Fellowship Program on European Social Policy, funded by the Volkswagen Foundation. Members of the Centre are active in key national and international networks, committees and advisory boards involved in the promotion, elaboration and reform of social policy. The Centre publishes the scholarly Journal of Social Policy Reform (*Zeitschrift für Sozialreform*) and a social policy book series edited by the German publisher Campus. The Centre has also recently published a three volume Welfare State reader (edited by Stephan Leibfried and Steffen Mau and published by Edward Elgar, see RECOWE Newsletter 6).

The CeS also contributes to the research orientation and excellent reputation of the undergraduate and graduate programmes of the University of Bremen, including a Master of Social Policy and a Master of Political Science as well as an international doctoral training programme at [the Bremen International Graduate School of Social Sciences \(BIGSSS\)](#).

Currently, the following CeS members and affiliated members participate in the RECOWE Network: Karin Gottschall represents the Bremen group in RECOWE and, together with Markus Tepe, Daniela Kroos and Sylvia Hils, they are engaged in different tasks in Strand 4. Karl Hinrichs (task leader), Sigrid Betzelt (task leader), Silke Bothfeld (task leader) and Irene Dingeldey are involved in different tasks in Strand 1, while Johannes Huinink, Petra Buhr, Michael Feldhaus, Mandy Boehnke and Katharina Maul participate in Strand 2. Additionally, in July 2009, Karin Gottschall and Karl Hinrichs, in cooperation with Philine Weyrauch and Jan Heuer from BIGSSS, organized the RECOWE/ESPAnet Summer School that focused on 'Social Inclusion and Exclusion in a Changing Europe'.

[The website of the Centre for Social Policy Research at the University of Bremen \(CeS\)](#) .



3 – EUROPEAN NEWS

– José Manuel Barroso's social priorities

On 16 September, José Manuel Barroso has been reappointed for a second term as European Commission's President. Speaking before the European Parliament on 15 September, he explained that the current economic crisis calls for a much stronger focus on the social dimension in Europe at all levels of decision-making and announced several initiatives in the social domain that the Commission will pursue under his Presidency. He announced a new regulation aiming at helping Member States in the implementation of the Posted Workers Directive. He didn't exclude a possible revision of this directive, should the regulation be insufficient to clarify interpretation and enforcement issues. He underscored the fact that a regulation would offer more legal certainty than a revised version of the directive, the latter allowing for diverging national transposition. He also declared his commitment to fight social dumping across Europe. According to Barroso, social impact assessments are needed when taking initiatives in the social domain. He declared that the revision of the Working Time Directive will offer the first opportunity to test such impact assessments.

[José Manuel Barroso's speech.](#)

– Equal treatment for men and women in access to employment

Last July, the European Commission published a report on the implementation of the principle of equal treatment for men and women as regards access to employment, vocational training and promotion, and working conditions (in short implementation of Directive 2002/73/EC). Identifying the main problems and good practices, the report concludes that said implementation has generally been satisfactory, although not all countries have yet brought their legislations in line with EU requirements. The report's conclusions are based on Member States' answers to the Commission questionnaire from January 2009 on the directive's application, and on information gathered by the Commission when monitoring the directive's implementation. Other sources of information include European Parliament's resolutions and advice from the European social partners and the European Women's Lobby.

[Download the report.](#)

– Parental leave and childcare

On 18 June, the representatives of employers and workers at the European level signed a revised version of the framework agreement on parental leave from 1995, later adopted as a directive. The new agreement extends parental leave from 3 to 4 months for each parent following the birth or adoption of a child and until the child reaches the age of eight. The leave is available to all workers, whether on a fixed-term, temporary or part-time contract. This revision didn't however depart from the previous agreement, leaving the issue of remuneration during parental leave to the competence of the Member States. The Commission subsequently published a [directive proposal based on this revised agreement.](#)

The European Commission's Expert Group on Gender and Employment Issues (EGGE) published a review comparing the provision of childcare services in 30 European countries, edited by RECWOWE members Janneke Plantenga and Chantal Remery. The report includes assessments of the quality and affordability of childcare in the 30 countries in consideration, examines their national childcare policies and the extent to which demand is met.

[Download the report.](#)

– EU growth and jobs strategy

In September, the Social Protection Committee published a report on the post-2010 Lisbon strategy. This report argues that social cohesion objectives should be better embedded within the new EU growth and jobs strategy. The latter should pay more attention to child poverty and encourage social promotion and active inclusion programmes. The report points to the persistence of phenomena such as poor job quality, precarious forms of employment, labour market segmentation and in-work poverty.

[Download the report.](#)