

# **Towards an adult worker model? Mothers' employment behaviour in Great Britain, eastern and western Germany**

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**Abstract:** The influence of welfare state policies on maternal employment decisions has been a well discussed topic. Welfare state researchers have postulated the shift towards an adult worker model, meaning a model in which all capable adults are regarded as potential earners during the last decade. Great Britain and Germany are interesting countries to analyse this topic since they have been labelled as male breadwinner regimes in the past and have partly changed their policies within the last years towards more individualising measures which support the employment of mothers. Due to their low labour market participation and high welfare dependency lone mothers had become a specific target in Great Britain. In contrast, western German lone mothers were not on the political agenda in the same way. Since lone mothers are earner and carer in one person they are an interesting group from a theoretical perspective with regard to the recognition of paid and unpaid labour and the question to what extent the welfare state should assume responsibility for families.

Based on pooled German microcensus data and data from the British Labour Force Survey multinomial logistic regressions are estimated to investigate, to what extent the introduction of activating labour market policies has changed eastern and western German as well as British mothers' employment participation. The focus is on the question which differences can be found regarding the partnership status and education. The results for Britain show that lone mothers increased their employment participation, in particular in long part-time and full-time employment after 1997. In western Germany one could observe an increase among married and lone mothers but not among cohabiting mothers after the implementation of unemployment benefit reform while in eastern Germany no change or even a decrease among married, cohabiting and lone mothers was found.

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## **1 Introduction**

The influence of welfare state policies on maternal employment decisions has been a well discussed topic. Within the European Employment Strategy women's employment is regarded as central to combating poverty and exclusion. Welfare state researchers have postulated the shift towards an adult worker model, meaning a model in which all capable adults are regarded as potential earners. With regard to this shift one can observe differences in social policy changes as well as differences regarding the change on the behavioural level within different welfare states. Great Britain and Germany are interesting countries to analyse this topic since they have been labelled as male breadwinner regimes in the past and have partly changed their policies within the last years towards more individualising measures which support the employment of mothers. Due to their low labour market participation and high welfare dependency lone mothers have become a specific target in the 1980s and 1990s in Great Britain. In contrast, western German lone mothers were not on the political agenda in the same way due to their higher employment participation in comparison to their married counterparts. The New Labour government introduced a couple of measures that were intended to increase lone mothers' employment soon after they came into office in 1997. In Germany, however, the introduction of a new unemployment benefit in 2005 was meant to activate long-term unemployed in general.

Since lone mothers are earner and carer in one person they are an interesting group from a theoretical perspective with regard to the recognition of paid and unpaid labour and the question to what extent the welfare state should assume responsibility for families. The question that arises is to what extent welfare states treat lone mothers as earners or as carers and to what extent this influences their behaviour.

The aim of this paper is to investigate how mothers' employment behaviour has been affected by labour market policy reforms in the two parts of Germany and Great Britain. The main focus is on how mothers are affected according to their partnership status and their education.

## **2 Theoretical considerations**

Welfare state approaches (Esping-Andersen (1990, 1999; Lewis and Ostner 1994; Sainsbury 1994) focus on the influence of different welfare regimes on the stratification and the distribution of tasks between individuals, the family, the market and the state. Esping-

Andersen (1990, 1999) in particular has argued that welfare regimes systematically shape the labour market through regulations for leave, the provision of services like childcare, the availability of part-time work and the design of the tax system. It has been argued that the different welfare regimes establish certain incentives or disincentives for specific models of the family and specific employment patterns of parents, particularly mothers, through these mechanisms. Feminist scholars (Orloff 1993, 1996; Lewis and Ostner 1994; Sainsbury 1994) have criticised mainstream welfare state research for not sufficiently incorporating the influence of the welfare state on gender relations into their analysis. A number of different typologies have been proposed along different dimensions to analyse different welfare state models and how they affect men's and women's roles in the society. All of them have their advantages and disadvantages. Most of them have not considered state-socialist countries before or after the transformation process, which is a drawback for the analysis of eastern Germany (Schmitt and Trappe 2010).

While welfare state researchers of the 1990s (Esping-Andersen 1990, 1999; Lewis 1992; Lewis and Ostner 1994; Sainsbury 1994) discussed different regime types and the strength of the male breadwinner model, over the past decade some scholars have debated whether there has been a shift towards an adult worker model in social policy (Lewis 2001; Daly 2011; Rling 2007; Leitner 2003). They have, for example, argued that there has been a change in social policy assumptions regarding the "ideal" family employment pattern. Whereas in the post-war welfare state, social policies assumed and supported the male breadwinner model; in both Great Britain and Germany, a policy shift towards the assumption that all capable adults will be active in the labour market has been observed over the past decade. The problem is that this shift towards the adult worker model is ambiguous, since there are still social policy fields that assume a male breadwinner model; e.g., the social benefit system in both Great Britain and Germany, as well as the German tax system. Critics of the adult worker model have argued that, while the question of whether a shift towards this model is occurring has not been settled, there has been a shift towards more individualising (or defamilialising) elements of social policy, and some familialising social policies have been introduced at the same time. Daly (2011) argued that these ambiguities are intended by the welfare state, as families are to be consolidated as a source of stability and social integration in times of social change, and as "new" social problems arise as a consequence of changing family forms (Daly 2011: 18).

Proponents of the cultural approach have argued that norms and values influence people's perceptions about the distribution and sharing of tasks between the genders, generations, the state and the market. They have criticised welfare state research for assuming that individual

behaviour is clearly determined by welfare state policies. They have also argued that culture has to be taken into account in the analysis of parents' employment behaviour, since it has an important impact on people's decisions, and might change the influence of welfare state policies on individuals and certain social groups (Pfau-Effinger 2005; Duncan and Edwards 1997; Duncan et al. 2003).

The question is how the incentives and disincentives established by the welfare state translate into individual behaviour. Strohmeier (2002, 2008), who concentrates on family policy and its influence on fertility, has argued that policies can be regarded as a frame for biographic options, but not as a clear determinant for decisions. However, since there is a difference between fertility and labour market decisions with regard to their reversibility, there might be also a difference with regard to their susceptibility to influence; meaning that labour market decisions might be easier to influence by policies than by fertility decisions.

One can draw on economic theory to investigate how welfare state measures are included in this explanatory framework. Becker's economic approach regards the individual human capital of each partner in a couple as important in determining the common decision on the employment attachment of the woman and the man (Becker 1993). In contrast to this approach, bargaining theories assume that employment decisions have to be negotiated because both partners would rather work in the labour market than in the household (Lundberg and Pollack 1994, 1996, 2003; Manser and Brown 1980; Ott 1992). From both theories it can be derived that the partner with the higher qualification will generally work in the labour market, although Becker assumes a higher biological commitment of women to the care of their children (Becker 1993).

With regard to the influence of the welfare state, economic theory has been applied to welfare state measures, such as the provision of childcare subsidies or maternity and parental leave, and their effects on women's labour supply. Scholars have argued that childcare subsidies or the provision of maternity leave rights and pay reduce people's opportunity costs and may increase their labour supply (Klerman and Leibowitz 1997; Waldfogel 1997; Heckman 1974; Connelly 1992; Blau and Robins 1988). However, in the field of childcare, a functioning market is assumed, which is not the case for either Germany or Great Britain.

It is clear that labour market decisions are quite complex, and are influenced by the human capital of each individual and of his or her partner, as well as by welfare state regulations. Culture and attitudes might shape the influence of the welfare state on certain social groups in different ways.

To answer the question of whether the British and the German welfare state policies have shifted from a male breadwinner model towards some form of an “individual” or “adult worker model”, but with some familialising elements, as Lewis (2001) and Daly (2011) have suggested, the institutional regulations have to be investigated.

### **3 Institutional context**

The foundations of the British and the German welfare state have long-standing roots in both countries. In Germany insurance-based benefits which are income-related and thus, protected status to a certain degree in the case of unemployment or sickness, have dominated for the decommodification of employed people. Those who were not employed had to rely on means-tested social assistance. The British welfare system has been characterised by a needs-based provision in which the emphasis is on poverty alleviation (Clasen 2005: 2; Daly 2000: 76). These basic principles were followed in the establishment of the welfare states in West Germany and Great Britain after World War II, and are reflected in the social policies that have been in place up to today.

#### ***Unemployment protection and active labour market policies***

The support provided to unemployed persons has been very different in the two welfare states (Clasen 2005). While in Germany the emphasis of unemployment support has been on status protection, even for long-term unemployed people; in Britain, only low levels of financial benefits have been provided.

Both welfare states have placed more emphasis on welfare-to-work policies in recent years. In Britain, this strategy was pursued after the election of New Labour in 1997, while in Germany, the Red-Green coalition led by Chancellor Schröder initiated labour market reforms that represented a major shift away from the old status protection system of the Bismarckian welfare state. In Germany, the most important change was the Hartz IV reform of 2005, which replaced the previous income-related unemployment assistance for the long-term unemployed with a flat-rate benefit that provides a minimum level of support (*unemployment benefit II*). Activation has been emphasised more strictly since then (Hassel 2010).

Due to their low employment rates, lone parents, mainly lone mothers, have been a special

target group during the welfare reform in Great Britain, and major emphasis was placed on their activation by a special labour market programme that was designed for them (*New Deal for Lone Parents*). In Germany, however, lone parents have not been regarded as such a problematic group, and thus they have not been on the agenda of this policy reform.

Furthermore, in-work benefits (*Working Families' Tax Credit* and *Working Tax Credit*) have played a major role in Britain, as a “making work pay” strategy that aims at establishing employment incentives for low-income earners to enter at least long part-time jobs of at least 16 hours per week by paying social benefits in addition to the wage (Gregg, Harkness and Smith 2009). Although in Germany an in-work benefit for families is paid as well, due to the quite complicated regulations and a lack of information, it is less popular than in Britain. It has been argued that both the German and the British in-work benefit systems create negative employment incentives for the second earner, who are often women. Regarding lone parents, the British in-work benefit system has created a strong positive incentive for them to enter employment (Brewer 2009). However, the labour market programme *New Deal for Lone Parents* has been only voluntary, and does not require lone parents to search for work until their youngest child reaches age 16. In contrast, the German regulations have been much stricter. In Germany, lone parents were obliged to search for work when their youngest child reached age three, even before the Hartz IV reform was implemented in 2005. In practice, however, parents were allowed to focus on caring for their children until the children reached school age, or even longer. The Hartz IV reform changed the situations of lone parents, as many of them who had previously received social assistance were moved to the new unemployment benefit II scheme, and were thus exposed to much higher activation measures than before. At the same time, their children were not longer given priority in terms of obtaining a childcare place (Achatz and Trappmann 2011).

For couples, the effect of the unemployment benefit II system is ambivalent. On the one hand, the benefit system adopts the adult worker model by requiring all adults to work, which is different from the means-tested unemployment assistance, in which the unemployment of the main (male) earner the partner did not get activated by the system. On the other hand, due to the exceptions that exist if people have care obligations (mostly women), the traditional male breadwinner model might be supported. Furthermore, there is no individual eligibility for benefits; partners are obliged to support each other financially. In Britain, this financial obligation is assumed as well, but the adult worker model is enforced less strictly in the benefit system, since the *New Deal for the Partner of the Unemployed* is only a voluntary programme.

### *Family policies*

Regarding family policies, the two welfare states have also differed greatly (Hantrais 1999; Ostner and Schmitt 2008). Whereas in Britain no explicit family policy existed until New Labour came into office in 1997, the German family policy system supported the male breadwinner model through a variety of measures until recently. Clear incentives for the male breadwinner family model within marriage in Germany were established by the joint taxation system, and by generous regulations that provided free health insurance for non-working spouses, maintenance after divorce, and widows' pensions (Leitner, Ostner and Schmitt 2008). This traditional family model has also been supported by a long parental leave entitlement coupled with low parental leave benefits, as well as the low level of provision of childcare in western Germany. In eastern Germany, however, childcare provision has been traditionally high, and has remained high after unification despite the reduction in childcare slots in response to the drastic decline in births. The policy goal since the mid-2000s has been to strongly increase the childcare provision, particularly for children under age three.

A major reform of the German family policy has been the introduction of a new, "Scandinavian style" income-related parental leave benefit system that replaced the old means-tested flat-rate benefit. It also included two "daddy months" designed to encourage fathers to increase their participation in childcare after birth. The income-related benefit was introduced in order to lower the opportunity costs of taking leave for both men and women, particularly for highly qualified parents with high incomes. Because the benefit replaces the parent's working income without any means test, it might reduce a woman's dependence on a male earner after childbearing, and increase the incentives among fathers to use leave, unlike the old system, which did not provide adequate income compensation. Therefore, the German reform of the parental leave benefit can be seen as a more individualising or defamilialising measure that is directed towards the adult worker model.

While in Germany the low benefit that was paid during leave led to a low take-up rate among fathers, in the British leave regulations, the idea that the woman was solely responsible for caring for babies was implemented from the outset. Thus, only paid maternity leave was available until 1999 in the UK, and fathers did not have the chance to take leave.

Childcare provision has differed considerably between Great Britain and eastern and western Germany. While in Britain the private market has been dominant in the provision of childcare, public provision has prevailed in both parts of Germany. However, whereas in eastern Germany childcare provision has traditionally been high and has mainly been full-time due to

the support of maternal employment in East Germany before unification; in the western part of Germany the main aims of childcare have been socialisation and education (Kreyenfeld and Krapf 2010). Thus, childcare provision, particularly for young children, was low and mainly on a part-time basis in western Germany. Both countries have changed their childcare policies towards an increase in public provision, Britain since the late 1990s and Germany since the mid 2000s (Land and Lewis 1998; Lewis 2009). Whereas in Britain this stronger provision was primarily a social investment strategy that was also intended to alleviate poverty through mothers' employment; in Germany, the primary goals of improved childcare provision were to increase mothers' employment, and to promote the early social integration of (mainly migrant) children.

***Has there been a shift toward an adult worker model assumption at the policy level in Great Britain and Germany?***

The reforms and changes in social policy that have taken place in Britain since New Labour came to power in 1997 and in Germany since the early 2000s have been discussed as representing a shift towards a more individualising model of the welfare state or an adult worker model. Indeed, most of the reforms clearly move in the direction of a more individualising social policy assumption, which includes a higher degree of defamilialisation of individuals. However, on the other hand, there are also policy measures that have a familialising character.

In Germany, the new parental leave benefit that was introduced in 2007 has a defamilialising character, since it is a benefit that is granted on the basis of individual income, and is not, like the previous flat-rate benefit, means-tested on the basis of household income. Additionally, it encourages mothers to return to the labour market earlier, since the benefit is granted for a shorter period. Furthermore, the new parental leave benefit increases the incentives for fathers to use leave, which improves the chances that women will return to work earlier, and thus promotes their defamilialisation. In connection with an increasing extension of childcare and the right to a place in childcare for one-year-old children from August 2013 onwards, the German welfare state shifts in the direction of a more individualising welfare state. However, in western Germany, the provision of childcare for children under the age of three is still limited, which hampers women's ability to participate in employment and to support themselves after their parental leave benefit has expired. Thus, they have to rely on a second income, usually their partner's. The still limited childcare infrastructure in western Germany



therefore continues to have a familialising effect. Familialisation and women's non-employment is further financially supported by the German tax system and the health insurance system.

The effects of the unemployment benefit II scheme that was introduced in 2005 are also ambivalent. On the one hand, it promotes the adult worker model through the requirement that all able-bodied adults in the household participate in the labour market. On the other hand, the benefit is not individualised, but is means-tested on the household income. This makes unemployed women financially dependent on their partners income if this is high enough and does not entitle them to support by the Job Centres.

In Great Britain, an ambivalence with regard to familialising and defamilialising social policy trends similar to that in Germany can be observed. The rights of parents to take leave after the birth of a child have been extended. However, the focus has been on the extension of paid maternity leave, while paternity leave is only granted for a very short time and parental leave is still unpaid. The maternity leave benefit is only income-related for a short time, and the rest is paid as a flat-rate benefit that does not provide an adequate income replacement and makes a second earner necessary. Therefore, the extension of leave has been defamilialising because it provides a longer job guarantee and increases women's attachment to the labour market, but, at the same time, it has also been familialising because of the low benefit, which makes women dependent on their partners during that time.

The commodification of lone parents in Britain has been supported through the establishment of higher work incentives through in-work benefits. The same policy measure has, however, created negative incentives for second (female) earners in families and thus, might have a familialising effect.

By launching the National Childcare Strategy, Britain has focused on the extension of childcare, mainly with a focus on early social investment. Although this is a step towards defamilialisation, prices have stayed quite high, since childcare is still mainly provided by the market. This represents an obstacle for those with lower incomes to use childcare and to become employed. The British unemployment benefit system has a familialising effect since it is means-tested. Due to separate taxation, the British tax system has a defamilialising effect.

In sum, there appears to be a trend towards individualisation in the British and the German policy systems. However, this has not been a clear shift towards the adult worker model. Instead, as Daly (2011) has argued, the effects have been ambivalent, as both defamilialising and familialising policy measures co-exist.

## 4 Hypotheses

### *The role of women's education and their partnership status*

Human capital theory predicts that mothers' engagement in the labour market increases with education due to higher opportunity costs. However, it is likely that the effect of a woman's partnership status on her employment behaviour will differ depending on her education, since the social policy incentives and disincentives that are related to the partnership status vary in their impact on less and highly educated women. On the one hand, we might expect to find for western Germany that among the less educated mothers married mothers are those for whom the social policy regulations created the biggest work disincentives, compared to mothers in non-marital unions or lone mothers. The low opportunity costs of staying out of the labour market and the financial incentives that are established by the state for male breadwinner marriages might support the decision of less educated married mothers not to work. Thus, we would expect to find that the difference between married mothers and mothers in non-marital unions and lone mothers is highest among the less educated.

On the other hand, the difference in the labour market participation of less educated mothers relative to medium and highly educated mothers might be not as big as expected since, in general, the labour market situation is difficult for *all* less educated women with children, regardless of whether they are married, cohabiting or single. For the medium and highly educated mothers, the opportunities on the labour market are greater than for less educated women with children. Thus, the opportunity costs of staying out of the labour market might be too high for highly educated non-married mothers, since they do not benefit from the subsidies that are granted to married couples. Given that many of the highly educated married western German mothers are married to equally highly educated partners with a high earning potential, it is likely that they benefit the most from the tax-splitting system. Therefore, we could also expect to find that the differences between married mothers and non-married mothers is highest among the more highly educated women. However, incentives have been created for marginal employment (*Minijobs*), especially among married women, because they are insured through their spouse and may not have to pay social insurance contributions or taxes. This is likely to have a positive effect on married mothers' short part-time employment among all educational groups. From this, it follows:

*In western Germany, I expect to find that among all educational groups married mothers are less likely to be in full-time or long part-time employment than cohabiting or lone mothers. However, the differences between married and other mothers are more pronounced among*

*medium and highly educated women than among the less educated. Married mothers of all educational groups are expected to be more likely to be in short-part time employment than cohabiting or lone mothers (Hypothesis 1a).*

I expect to find that in eastern Germany the social policy disincentives that apply to married mothers do not play the same role as in western Germany. Therefore, we can also assume that women's partnership status does not play the same role among the different educational groups as it does in western Germany. The eastern German labour market situation has been more difficult than in western Germany, especially for the less qualified. Because the lower wages and the equally insecure labour market situation of men does not make the male breadwinner model very attractive for less educated married mothers, I assume that they behave similarly to mothers in non-married unions. With regard to less educated lone mothers in eastern Germany, we could expect to find that they have a lower level of labour market participation compared to less educated mothers with a partner, since they do not benefit from the resources (e.g., help with childcare) that a partnership entails. Married mothers in eastern Germany are older than lone or cohabiting mothers and they have older children, which are more favourable conditions for employment.

*I expect to find that in eastern Germany, lone mothers are less likely to be employed than partnered mothers among the less educated, while the differences between mothers with different partnership statuses should be less pronounced among the highly educated (Hypothesis 1b).*

In Britain, where marriage is not as supported as it is in Germany, but where social benefits have established work disincentives for lone mothers in the past, I expect to find that among less educated women, the differences in labour market participation between partnered and lone mothers are greater than between medium and highly educated mothers. In addition, the childcare system is mainly privately organised and costs are quite high, which might represent an obstacle for low income earners, and especially for low-income earning lone mothers without a second income to rely on. Among the medium and highly educated mothers, we may expect to find that lone mothers are still less likely to be employed than partnered mothers with a similar educational level, but the differences might not be as large as among the less educated mothers, since having a higher level of education provides better labour market opportunities and higher wages, which in turn provide access to defamilialising measures such as childcare. Based on these considerations, the following hypothesis is formulated:

*In Britain, lone mothers are expected to be less likely to be employed than partnered mothers among all educational groups. However, the difference is expected to be more pronounced among the less educated mothers than among the medium and highly educated women with children (Hypothesis 1c).*

### ***The role of policy change according to partnership status***

In Britain, the New Labour government put considerable emphasis on the activation of lone mothers, who have been perceived as a major problem for the British welfare state due to their high inactivity rates, while partnered women with children have had much higher employment rates. The replacement of the in-work benefit *Family Credit* with the *Working Families' Tax Credit*, and the replacement of the *Working Tax Credit* aimed at providing stronger work incentives for low-income earners by substituting their wages. Since the prerequisite for receiving this in-work benefit was an employment contract of at least 16 hours per week, with an extra bonus paid to those who work 30 or more hours, we can expect to find that long part-time and full-time employment, but not short part-time employment increased among lone mothers between 1997 and 2008. Additionally, the British welfare state has tried to put more pressure on lone mothers to search for work in the first place by implementing the *New Deal for Lone Parents*, an active labour market programme that sought to bring lone mothers into work by compulsory meetings with job advisors.

In contrast, the regulations regarding the *Working Families' Tax Credit* and the *Working Tax Credit* established a potential negative work incentive for women with a partner, since a second earner is likely to earn an income that raises the household income above the threshold for the eligibility of the in-work benefit.

*Therefore, I expect to find that the likelihood of being in full-time and long part-time employment increased among lone mothers in Great Britain after 1997, while there was no such increase among mothers with a partner (Hypothesis 2a).*

The fourth Hartz Act (*Hartz IV*) that came into force in 2005 represented a shift away from a status-protecting passive welfare system towards the principle of activation through the replacement of unemployment assistance and social assistance with a means-tested basic income support. Unlike similar measures in Britain, the German unemployment benefit II regulations do not focus on a specific group of mothers in Germany. However, many non-working lone mothers received social assistance before 2005, and although they were also

supposed to be required to enter the labour market, in practice they were often allowed to remain in non-employment until their youngest child reached school age or even age 12 (Adema et al. 2003, Giddings et al. 2004). Thus, we can assume that non-working German lone mothers also experienced a higher degree of activation if they received the new unemployment benefit II. In general, this reform has expanded the pool of people who are considered “capable of working”, since formerly inactive mothers with partners who are dependent on the new income support are obliged to participate in the labour market as well, provided they do not have caring responsibilities for young children.

These new activation rules should have increased maternal employment participation among lone as well as among partnered mothers after 2004. We may expect to see that the activation of partnered mothers mainly occurred among western German mothers, since the male breadwinner model has been more prevalent in this part of the country than in eastern Germany. As has already been explained, in eastern Germany the dual earner model has been more common and more accepted. I do not expect to find a substantial change in the employment behaviour of partnered eastern German mothers due to the unemployment benefit II reform.

Research has shown that, because of case managers’ gender-specific assumptions about the division of labour within couples, lone mothers are more likely to be placed in labour market programmes than partnered mothers, and that this happens more often in western Germany than in eastern Germany (Zabel 2011). Therefore, we might assume that lone mothers are more likely to be activated in general than mothers with a partner. However, the *Hartz IV* reform eliminated priority access to childcare for lone mothers, which might have made employment more difficult for them after that time.

*Due to the new unemployment benefit II system, I expect to find in western Germany that there was an increase in the odds of being in employment among partnered as well as among lone mothers in 2008 compared to 2004. (Hypothesis 2b).*

*In eastern Germany, the introduction of unemployment benefit II should not have led to a substantial change in behaviour among different groups of mothers. I do not expect to find differences in the changes over time between married, cohabiting and lone mothers (Hypothesis 2c).*

## 5 Data & method, sample and variables

The data for eastern and western Germany come from the Scientific Use Files of the German microcensuses of the years 1996, 2000, 2004 and 2008. For the analyses on Great Britain, the Labour Force Survey Household datasets of the years 1997<sup>2</sup>, 2000, 2004 and 2008 are used. The datasets of the various years are pooled but the two parts of Germany and Great Britain are analysed separately.

I apply multinomial logistic regression models to investigate the determinants of maternal employment (Hosmer, Lemeshow and Sturdivant 2013). The dependent variable indicates the employment status of a mother. It mainly follows the ILO definition of employment, unemployment and inactivity (Husmanns 2007). People are regarded as employed if they work at least one hour per week for an employer, in self-employment or in a family business. I distinguish between full-time employment (at least 30 hours/week), long part-time employment (16-29 hours/week), short part-time employment (1-15 hours/week), unemployment and inactivity. The category “inactivity” is used as the reference category. Women on parental leave are excluded. The relative risk ratio is used to interpret the results.

The sample includes women between the ages 18 and 50 who live in private households at the family’s place of residence. They must be the head or partner of the head of a family and have at least one child between the ages 3-17 living with them. Women in same-sex partnerships are excluded.<sup>3</sup> In addition, I exclude women who are inactive and in education.

The following independent variables are used. For *education* I use different definitions in the British (CASMIN classification) and the German data. British women are classified as having a low level of education if they are group 1 of the CASMIN classification, group 2 have a medium level and group 3 have a high level of education (Brauns and Steinmann 1999). For the German classification, the vocational education is used as an indicator for low (no

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<sup>2</sup> The LFS household datasets from 1997 onwards have undergone a re-weighting procedure using the newest population estimates from 2007 with a change in the weighting methodology. While I was conducting these analyses only the datasets prior to 1997 were available, with the former weights using the 2003 population estimates. Since comparing estimates of datasets prior to 1997 with those from the datasets of 1997 and onwards is not recommended, for reasons of comparability I decided to use the LFS household dataset for the year 1997 instead of 1996.

<sup>3</sup> The reason for the exclusion of women in same-sex partnerships is twofold. On the one hand, the proportion is very small. On the other hand, if they are in civil partnerships they do not have the same advantages and rights as opposite-sex marriages in Germany. Since the major question of this work is to what extent social policies, in particular family policies influence the employment behaviour of mothers, women in same-sex partnerships are excluded since they do not benefit from these policies.

vocational degree), medium (vocational degree) or high education (college or university degree) levels of education.

*Calendar year* is another key covariate. For Great Britain, I use the years 1997, 2000, 2004 and 2008; while for Germany I distinguish between the years 1996, 2000, 2004 and 2008.

I further distinguish women according to their *partnership status* (married, cohabiting, never married lone mothers and divorced, separated or widowed women). It has been shown in the descriptive analyses that there are strong differences regarding the education and also the age of children, which make this detailed distinction useful.

The *number of children* (one, two or three and more) as well as the *age of the youngest child* (3-5 years, 6-9 years or 10-17 years) are expected to have an important effect on maternal employment participation. Furthermore, I consider *women's age*. I distinguish between the age groups 18-25 years, 26-30 years, 31-35 years and 36-40 and 41-50 years. While I control for *ethnicity* (white; black Caribbean, black African or other black; Asian or other ethnicity) in Great Britain, I use *nationality* of the mother (German, non-German) in the German models. Additionally, I control for the *size of place of residence* in Germany. I distinguish between communities with less than 20,000 inhabitants, cities with 20,000-499,999 inhabitants, and cities with 500,000 inhabitants or more. For Great Britain, the data do not contain such an indicator.

## 6 Results

In the following only the results of the interaction models are displayed. The first one included an interaction between woman's education and the partnership status. In a second step the calendar year and the partnership status are interacted.

### *Interaction – Woman's education and partnership status*

It has been shown that social policy regulations in Germany and in Britain established different incentives for mothers according to their partnership status. To better understand how these incentives affect women with different educational levels, these two variables are interacted in the models.

For western Germany, the hypothesis that married women of all educational groups are less likely to be full-time or part-time employed than cohabiting or lone mothers, but that the

gradient increases with education, has been put forward. In addition, it is assumed that since German social policies established considerable incentives for married mothers in particular to be in short part-time employment, they are more likely than lone or cohabiting mothers to be in this kind of employment.

The results (table 1) mainly support this hypothesis. There were differences between women with different partnership statuses, and married mothers in all educational groups were less likely to be in full-time or long part-time employment than lone or cohabiting mothers. The gradient increased with education, and the differences between married and non-married women were highest among women with a college or university degree. The reason for this increase in the difference with education could be related to the much higher opportunity costs non-married highly educated mothers face if they are not in the labour market compared to less educated mothers. Additionally, highly educated mothers are more likely to be married to equally highly educated husbands, and highly educated married couples benefit more than less educated married couples from the joint taxation system.

Regarding short-part time employment, the results did not fully support the hypothesis. Among less educated mothers, cohabiting and never-married lone mothers were significantly less likely to work up to 16 hours per week than married less educated mothers. Among the medium educated women, only never-married mothers were significantly less likely to be short part-time employed; cohabiting and divorced with a medium education mothers did not significantly differ from their married counterparts. Among the highly educated western German mothers, no differences between mothers with different partnership statuses were found. An explanation for this result could be that, because the earnings of short part-time employment tend to be low, highly educated married mothers (with highly educated husbands) were more encouraged than highly educated non-married mothers to work in such jobs.

For eastern Germany, the hypothesis was that among the less educated mothers, lone mothers were less likely to be in full-time or long part-time employment than less educated married mothers, while among the medium and highly educated eastern German mothers, no differences between mothers of different partnership statuses were expected. The results mainly supported the hypothesis on highly educated eastern German mothers. There were no significant differences among highly educated eastern German mothers women with different partnership statuses, apart from cohabiting mothers' slightly significant higher odds of being full-time employed compared to married mothers.



However, the results showed that there were no significant differences in the odds of being in full-time or short part-time employment between eastern German married, cohabiting and lone mothers with a low level of education (table 2). But less educated lone mothers were less likely to be in long part-time employment than married mothers, while cohabiting mothers did not differ from married women with children in this regard. In the group of medium educated eastern Germans, mothers with different partnership statuses varied significantly in their likelihood of being in full-time, long part-time and short part-time employment. Both groups of lone mothers with a medium education were less likely to be in full-time or long part-time employment, and were more likely to be in short part-time employed than married mothers. Cohabiting mothers, however, showed higher odds of being in full-time employment, and they are also slightly more likely to be in short part-time employment. But, similar to lone mothers, cohabiting eastern German mothers with a medium education were less likely to be in long part-time employment than medium educated married mothers.

In Britain, the hypothesis was that lone mothers of all educational groups were less likely to be working than mothers with a partner. It was expected that the difference would be highest among the less educated women with children. The results indeed showed that both groups of lone mothers were less likely to be in full-time, long part-time or short part-time employment, except for the group of highly educated divorced mothers, who could not be distinguished from highly educated married mothers (table 3). In line with the hypothesis, the difference between lone and married mothers was found to slightly decrease with education, although only for full-time employment. The differences between lone and married mothers in terms of their odds of being in long or short part-time employment were not very great between less, medium and highly educated mothers. Another deviant result was that cohabiting mothers differed in part from married mothers. The less educated mothers cohabiting mothers did not significantly differ in their full-time or long part-time employment from married mothers; they were however, less likely to be in short part-time employment. Medium educated mothers in non-marital unions were less likely to be in long or short part-time employment than medium educated married mothers, but neither groups differed significantly in their full-time employment behaviour. The highly educated mothers cohabiting mothers were more likely to be in full-time or long part-time employment than the highly educated married mothers, but they did not differ in their short part-time employment behaviour.

This suggests that the welfare benefits that were not tied to lone mothers' work search efforts and high prices for childcare established strong disincentives for lone mothers' employment in Britain, and that these disincentives could not be outweighed even by a higher education

and a higher earning potential. The disincentives have the highest influence on the less educated lone mothers.

Table 1: Multinomial logistic regression, interaction between partnership status and education, relative risk ratios, dependent variable: employment status, reference category: inactive, western Germany

	<b>Full-time</b>		
	<b>low</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>High</b>
married	1	1	1
cohabiting	2.89 ***	5.11 ***	5.45 ***
nev. marr. lone mother	2.20 ***	5.37 ***	6.55 ***
div./wid./sep. lone mother	1.94 ***	3.94 ***	3.04 ***
	<b>Long part-time</b>		
	<b>low</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>High</b>
married	1	1	1
cohabiting	1.66 ***	2.57 ***	3.17 ***
nev. marr. lone mother	1.13 n.s.	2.11 ***	3.24 ***
div./wid./sep. lone mother	1.35 ***	1.99 ***	1.83 ***
	<b>Short part-time</b>		
	<b>low</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>High</b>
married	1	1	1
cohabiting	0.80 **	0.96 n.s.	1.47 n.s.
nev. marr. lone mother	0.78 **	0.81 **	1.43 n.s.
div./wid./sep. lone mother	0.92 n.s.	1.04 n.s.	1.16 n.s.
	<b>Unemployed</b>		
	<b>low</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>High</b>
married	1	1	1
cohabiting	3.14 ***	3.46 ***	3.97 ***
nev. marr. lone mother	4.36 ***	5.89 ***	4.48 ***
div./wid./sep. lone mother	3.58 ***	4.75 ***	4.77 ***

(I). Sample B: The sample consists of women between 18 and 50 years who (1) live in private households at the family's place of residence in western Germany, and (2) are heads or partner of heads of a family and have at least 1 child between the ages 3-17 in the family. (3) Women in same-sex partnerships are excluded. (4) Women who are inactive and in education are excluded. (5) Controlled for missing values in the variable education. (II): Sources: SUFs of the German microcensus 1996, 2000, 2004, 2008. \* p<0.1; \*\* p<0.5; \*\*\* p<0.01; n.s. not significant

The results are standardised for the category "married".

Table 2: Multinomial logistic regression, interaction between partnership status and education, relative risk ratios, dependent variable: employment status, reference category: inactive, eastern Germany

<b>Full-time</b>			
	<b>low</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>High</b>
married	1	1	1
cohabiting	1.39 n.s.	1.23 **	2.13 *
nev. marr. lone mother	1.16 n.s.	0.76 **	1.08 n.s.
div./wid./sep. lone mother	0.78 n.s.	0.86 *	1.53 n.s.
<b>Long part-time</b>			
	<b>low</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>High</b>
married	1	1	1
cohabiting	1.05 n.s.	0.71 ***	1.69 n.s.
nev. marr. lone mother	0.48 **	0.55 ***	1.01 n.s.
div./wid./sep. lone mother	0.51 *	0.60 ***	0.95 n.s.
<b>Short part-time</b>			
	<b>low</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>High</b>
married	1	1	1
cohabiting	1.59 n.s.	1.02 ***	0.42 n.s.
nev. marr. lone mother	1.21 n.s.	1.16 ***	1.05 n.s.
div./wid./sep. lone mother	0.84 n.s.	1.04 ***	0.91 n.s.
<b>Unemployed</b>			
	<b>low</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>High</b>
married	1	1	1
cohabiting	1.70 **	1.63 ***	1.16 n.s.
nev. marr. lone mother	1.81 ***	1.97 ***	1.99 n.s.
div./wid./sep. lone mother	1.58 **	1.45 ***	2.42 n.s.

(I). Sample B: The sample consists of women between 18 and 50 years who (1) live in private households at the family's place of residence in eastern Germany, and (2) are heads or partner of heads of a family and have at least 1 child between the ages 3-17 in the family. (3) Women in same-sex partnerships are excluded. (4) Women who are inactive and in education are excluded. (5) Controlled for missing values in the variable education. (II): Sources: SUFs of the German microcensus 1996, 2000, 2004, 2008. \* p<0.1; \*\* p<0.05; \*\*\* p<0.01; n.s. not significant  
The results are standardised for the category "married".

Table 3: Multinomial logistic regression, interaction between partnership status and education, relative risk ratios, dependent variable: employment status, reference category: inactive, Great Britain

<b>Full-time</b>			
	<b>low</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>High</b>
married	1	1	1
cohabiting	0.95 n.s.	1.12 n.s.	2.31 ***
nev. marr. lone mother	0.21 ***	0.35 ***	0.69 **
div./wid./sep. lone mother	0.41 ***	0.75 ***	1.03 n.s.
<b>Long part-time</b>			
	<b>low</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>High</b>
married	1	1	1
cohabiting	0.89 n.s.	0.79 ***	1.58 **
nev. marr. lone mother	0.40 ***	0.44 ***	0.53 ***
div./wid./sep. lone mother	0.53 ***	0.67 ***	0.72 ***
<b>Short part-time</b>			
	<b>low</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>High</b>
married	1	1	1
cohabiting	0.58 ***	0.63 ***	0.95 n.s.
nev. marr. lone mother	0.23 ***	0.27 ***	0.35 ***
div./wid./sep. lone mother	0.36 ***	0.38 ***	0.34 ***
<b>Unemployed</b>			
	<b>low</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>High</b>
married	1	1	1
cohabiting	1.68 ***	1.50 ***	2.19 **
nev. marr. lone mother	1.81 ***	1.74 ***	3.11 ***
div./wid./sep. lone mother	1.99 ***	2.01 ***	2.29 ***

Notes: (I). Sample B: The sample consists of women between 18 and 50 years who (1) live in private households in Great Britain, and (2) are heads or partner of heads of a family and have at least 1 child between the ages 3-17 in the family. (3) Women without information on their employment status are excluded. (4) Women who are inactive and in education are excluded. (5) Women in same-sex partnerships are excluded. (5) Controlled for the category "other education" and missing values in the variables "education" and "ethnicity". (II). Sources: Labour Force Survey household datasets 1997 (SN 5459), 2000 (SN 6036), 2004 (SN 5464), 2008 (SN 6034). Own calculations. \* p<0.1; \*\* p<0.5; \*\*\* p<0.01; n.s. not significant. The results are standardised for the category "married".

### ***Interaction – Calendar year and partnership status***

To investigate how the change in the British and German social policies has influenced mothers with different partnership status, I estimated a model with an interaction between the calendar year and a woman's partnership status. The hypothesis that I put forward for Britain was that there should be an increase in full-time and long part-time employment among lone mothers after 1997, while there should be no increase among women with a partner. Although the odds of being in full-time employment in the year 2000 did not differ significantly from the year 1997, the results for the years 2004 and 2008 indeed showed that the odds of being in full-time employment increased among never-married and divorced lone mothers over time (table 4). The odds of being in long part-time employment also increased among both groups of lone mothers in Britain after 1997. Short part-time employment decreased among divorced

lone mothers and also among never-married lone mothers, although the results for the years 2000 and 2004 were not significant.

Table 4: Multinomial logistic regression, interaction between calendar year and partnership status, relative risk ratios, dependent variable: employment status, reference category: inactive, Great Britain

<b>Full-time</b>				
	<b>Married</b>	<b>Cohabiting</b>	<b>Nev. marr. lone mother</b>	<b>Div./wid./sep. lone mother</b>
1997	1	1	1	1
2000	1.12 **	1.02 n.s.	1.13 n.s.	1.17 n.s.
2004	1.06 n.s.	0.65 ***	1.55 ***	1.27 **
2008	1.00 n.s.	0.75 **	1.57 ***	1.56 ***
<b>Long part-time</b>				
	<b>Married</b>	<b>Cohabiting</b>	<b>Nev. marr. lone mother</b>	<b>Div./wid./sep. lone mother</b>
1997	1	1	1	1
2000	1.15 ***	1.31 *	1.67 ***	1.20 *
2004	1.15 ***	1.23 n.s.	1.76 ***	1.37 ***
2008	1.02 n.s.	1.13 n.s.	1.90 ***	1.64 ***
<b>Short part-time</b>				
	<b>Married</b>	<b>Cohabiting</b>	<b>Nev. marr. lone mother</b>	<b>Div./wid./sep. lone mother</b>
1997	1	1	1	1
2000	0.97 n.s.	0.90 n.s.	0.93 n.s.	1.07 n.s.
2004	0.86 ***	0.84 n.s.	0.94 n.s.	0.58 ***
2008	0.68 ***	0.75 n.s.	0.61 **	0.45 ***
<b>Unemployed</b>				
	<b>Married</b>	<b>Cohabiting</b>	<b>Nev. marr. lone mother</b>	<b>Div./wid./sep. lone mother</b>
1997	1	1	1	1
2000	0.88 n.s.	0.71 n.s.	1.05 n.s.	0.91 n.s.
2004	0.65 ***	0.90 n.s.	0.90 n.s.	0.74 **
2008	0.69 ***	0.75 n.s.	1.25 n.s.	0.96 n.s.

Notes: (I). Sample B: The sample consists of women between 18 and 50 years who (1) live in private households in Great Britain, and (2) are heads or partner of heads of a family and have at least 1 child between the ages 3-17 in the family. (3) Women without information on their employment status are excluded. (4) Women who are inactive and in education are excluded. (5) Women in same-sex partnerships are excluded. (5) Controlled for the category "other education" and missing values in the variables "education" and "ethnicity". (II). Sources: Labour Force Survey household datasets 1997 (SN 5459), 2000 (SN 6036), 2004 (SN 5464), 2008 (SN 6034). Own calculations. \* p<0.1; \*\* p<0.5; \*\*\* p<0.01; n.s. not significant. The results are standardised for the year 1997.

These results suggest that the *Working Families' Tax Credit* and the subsequent *Working Tax Credit* had an effect on lone mothers' employment behaviour in general, and also on the extent of their employment, since the in-work benefit only supports long part-time and full-time employment. No equivalent increase over time can be found among married or cohabiting mothers in Britain. For married mothers, I found only a slight increase in the odds of being in full-time employment in the year 2000, and a slight increase in the odds of being in long part-time employment in the years 2000 and 2004. The results for the others years were not significant. The likelihood of being in short part-time employment in the year 2000

was not significant from the year 1997, and it decreased for the subsequent years among British married mothers. The results for British mothers living in a non-marital union were similar to those for married mothers. However, unlike among married mothers, we can see a clear decrease in the odds of being in full-time employment in the years 2004 and 2008 among mothers in non-marital unions. Like for married mothers, there was a slight increase in the odds of being in long part-time employment in the year 2000. For the subsequent years, the results were not significantly different from those of the year 1997. Regarding their short part-time employment behaviour, cohabiting mothers in the years 2000, 2004 and 2008 did not differ significantly from those in the year 1997.

In Germany, the major unemployment benefit II reform took place in 2005, and therefore the reference category has been set to the year 2004. The hypothesis that was put forward for western Germany was that employment activity has increased among women with a partner and lone mothers since the introduction of the new unemployment benefit II system.

In western Germany, the odds of being in all types of employment increased among married mothers after 1996 (table 5). The strongest increase among married mothers over time can be seen in the odds of being in short part-time employment. For cohabiting western German mothers, no significant change in the odds of being in employment or unemployment could be observed between 2004 and 2008. I also anticipated that the introduction of unemployment benefit II would increase lone mothers' employment. The findings indicated that they indeed increased their labour market activity significantly. There have, of course, also been other factors apart from the major unemployment benefit reform that could have contributed to this development, such as the improvement in the general labour market situation, which obviously has an effect on labour market participation. However, the increase in the odds of being in short part-time employment over time was much stronger among never-married lone mothers than among married mothers, which can be explained by the very high level at which western German married mothers' short part-time employment started. There was also an increase in the odds of being in long part-time as well as full-time employment between 1996 and 2008 among never married. A similar development could be observed among the divorced lone mothers. However, their increase in short part-time employment was not as steep as it was among never-married lone mothers. Among western German cohabiting mothers, the odds of being in all types of employment increased after 1996, but there were no significant changes between 2004 and 2008. Therefore, hypothesis 5b has to be partially rejected. I could not find a significant increase in labour market activity among all partnered women, but only among married mothers in western Germany. Additionally, I also found an

increase in lone mothers' employment activity. The general improvement of the labour market situation is likely to have influenced the increase in employment participation, as well.

Table 5: Multinomial logistic regression, interaction between calendar year and partnership status, relative risk ratios, dependent variable: employment status, reference category: inactive, western Germany

<b>Full-time</b>				
	<b>Married</b>	<b>Cohabiting</b>	<b>Nev. marr. lone mother</b>	<b>Div./wid./sep. lone mother</b>
1996	0.98 n.s.	0.82 n.s.	0.79 *	0.85 **
2000	1.09 ***	0.95 n.s.	1.02 n.s.	0.95 n.s.
2004	1	1	1	1
2008	1.24 ***	1.13 n.s.	1.37 **	1.14 *
<b>Long part-time</b>				
	<b>Married</b>	<b>Cohabiting</b>	<b>Nev. marr. lone mother</b>	<b>Div./wid./sep. lone mother</b>
1996	0.71 ***	0.60 ***	0.51 ***	0.68 ***
2000	0.90 ***	0.89 n.s.	0.79 n.s.	0.81 ***
2004	1	1	1	1
2008	1.26 ***	1.12 n.s.	1.31 *	1.19 **
<b>Short part-time</b>				
	<b>Married</b>	<b>Cohabiting</b>	<b>Nev. marr. lone mother</b>	<b>Div./wid./sep. lone mother</b>
1996	0.49 ***	0.57 ***	0.39 ***	0.57 ***
2000	0.81 ***	0.80 n.s.	0.80 n.s.	0.72 ***
2004	1	1	1	1
2008	1.41 ***	1.11 n.s.	1.84 ***	1.29 ***
<b>Unemployed</b>				
	<b>Married</b>	<b>Cohabiting</b>	<b>Nev. marr. lone mother</b>	<b>Div./wid./sep. lone mother</b>
1996	0.57 ***	0.50 ***	0.46 ***	0.54 ***
2000	0.62 ***	0.55 ***	0.70 **	0.49 ***
2004	1	1	1	1
2008	0.99 n.s.	0.88 n.s.	1.37 **	1.01 n.s.

(I). Sample B: The sample consists of women between 18 and 50 years who (1) live in private households at the family's place of residence in western Germany, and (2) are heads or partner of heads of a family and have at least 1 child between the ages 3-17 in the family. (3) Women in same-sex partnerships are excluded. (4) Women who are inactive and in education are excluded. (5) Controlled for missing values in the variable education. (II): Sources: SUFs of the German microcensus 1996, 2000, 2004, 2008. \* p<0.1; \*\* p<0.5; \*\*\* p<0.01; n.s. not significant  
The results are standardised for the year 2004.

For eastern Germany, the assumption was that there should have been no substantial change in the employment levels of partnered and lone mothers between 2004 and 2008, since the need to be active in the labour market should not have changed within this time for the different groups of mothers. The results showed that there was an enormous increase in short part-time employment between 1996 and 2004 among all groups of eastern German mothers (table 6). The increase was strongest among the never-married lone mothers and mothers in non-marital unions. However, there was a significant decrease in short part-time employment among cohabiting and divorced lone mothers between 2004 and 2008, while there was no significant change among married and never-married lone mothers within this time. In contrast, full-time employment significantly decreased over time among eastern German

married and divorced mothers, while there were no significant changes in the odds of being in full-time employment among cohabiting and never-married lone mothers. The hypothesis could therefore only be partially supported. Unlike in western Germany, between 2004 and 2008 no increase in employment was found, but rather a decrease or no change.

Table 6: Multinomial logistic regression, interaction between calendar year and partnership status, relative risk ratios, dependent variable: employment status, reference category: inactive, eastern Germany

<b>Full-time</b>				
	<b>Married</b>	<b>Cohabiting</b>	<b>Nev. marr. lone mother</b>	<b>Div./wid./sep. lone mother</b>
1996	1.37 ***	0.78 n.s.	0.96 n.s.	1.18 n.s.
2000	1.07 n.s.	0.76 n.s.	0.72 n.s.	0.74 n.s.
2004	1	1	1	1
2008	0.81 **	0.96 n.s.	0.91 n.s.	0.58 **
<b>Long part-time</b>				
	<b>Married</b>	<b>Cohabiting</b>	<b>Nev. marr. lone mother</b>	<b>Div./wid./sep. lone mother</b>
1996	0.80 **	0.29 ***	0.65 n.s.	0.67 n.s.
2000	0.85 n.s.	0.55 n.s.	0.54 *	0.53 **
2004	1	1	1	1
2008	1.06 n.s.	1.05 n.s.	1.29 n.s.	0.91 n.s.
<b>Short part-time</b>				
	<b>Married</b>	<b>Cohabiting</b>	<b>Nev. marr. lone mother</b>	<b>Div./wid./sep. lone mother</b>
1996	0.33 ***	0.12 ***	0.15 ***	0.29 ***
2000	0.66 ***	0.21 ***	0.43 **	0.39 ***
2004	1	1	1	1
2008	0.96 n.s.	0.56 *	1.04 n.s.	0.61 *
<b>Unemployed</b>				
	<b>Married</b>	<b>Cohabiting</b>	<b>Nev. marr. lone mother</b>	<b>Div./wid./sep. lone mother</b>
1996	1.11 n.s.	0.72 n.s.	0.66 n.s.	0.77 n.s.
2000	0.94 n.s.	0.66 *	0.50 ***	0.54 ***
2004	1	1	1	1
2008	0.47 ***	0.52 **	0.55 **	0.41 ***

(I). Sample B: The sample consists of women between 18 and 50 years who (1) live in private households at the family's place of residence in eastern Germany, and (2) are heads or partner of heads of a family and have at least 1 child between the ages 3-17 in the family. (3) Women in same-sex partnerships are excluded. (4) Women who are inactive and in education are excluded. (5) Controlled for missing values in the variable education. (II): Sources: SUFs of the German microcensus 1996, 2000, 2004, 2008. \* p<0.1; \*\* p<0.05; \*\*\* p<0.01; n.s. not significant  
The results are standardised for the year 2004.

## 7 Summary

The aim of this paper was to analyse the change in mothers' employment behaviour in Great Britain, eastern and western Germany during the period of the late 1990s to the late 2000s. Emphasis was put on the role of education and partnership status. The main question was whether there has been a shift towards an adult worker model on the behavioural level.



Analysing the change in the employment engagement of lone mothers during the period under study revealed that they considerably increased their labour market participation after New Labour started to introduce welfare-to-work policies, which were directly aimed at bringing this group into the labour market. The influence of the in-work benefit, which supported employment of at least 16 hours, could be clearly seen in the rise in long-part time employment (16-29 hours per week) and in full-time employment (30 hours per week, for which an additional benefit was granted), in particular among never married and divorced lone mothers. Short part-time employment, which was not subsidised by in-work benefits, decreased during the period under study among all groups of mothers. Unlike lone mothers, British mothers with a partner did not experience a boost in their employment behaviour after the reform. This might be ascribed to the potential negative effects that in-work benefits have on second earners.

With regard to the major labour market reform in Germany, the introduction of the *unemployment benefit II*, it was found that employment increased among never married and divorced lone mothers in 2008 and among married mothers. However, the strongest increase was seen for the never-married lone mothers in western Germany.

The results for eastern German mothers, by contrast, did not show an increase after the reform was introduced. This might suggest that in eastern Germany the labour market situation which is characterised by higher unemployment than in western Germany makes it more difficult for mothers to find a job and that even stronger activation policies cannot increase employment. On the other hand, it is important to bear in mind that, compared to western Germany, engagement in the labour market among mothers in eastern Germany was already much higher. In other words, there was more potential for western than for eastern German mothers to increase their employment participation.

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