Hannah Zagel

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ZeS Zentrum für Sozialpolitik

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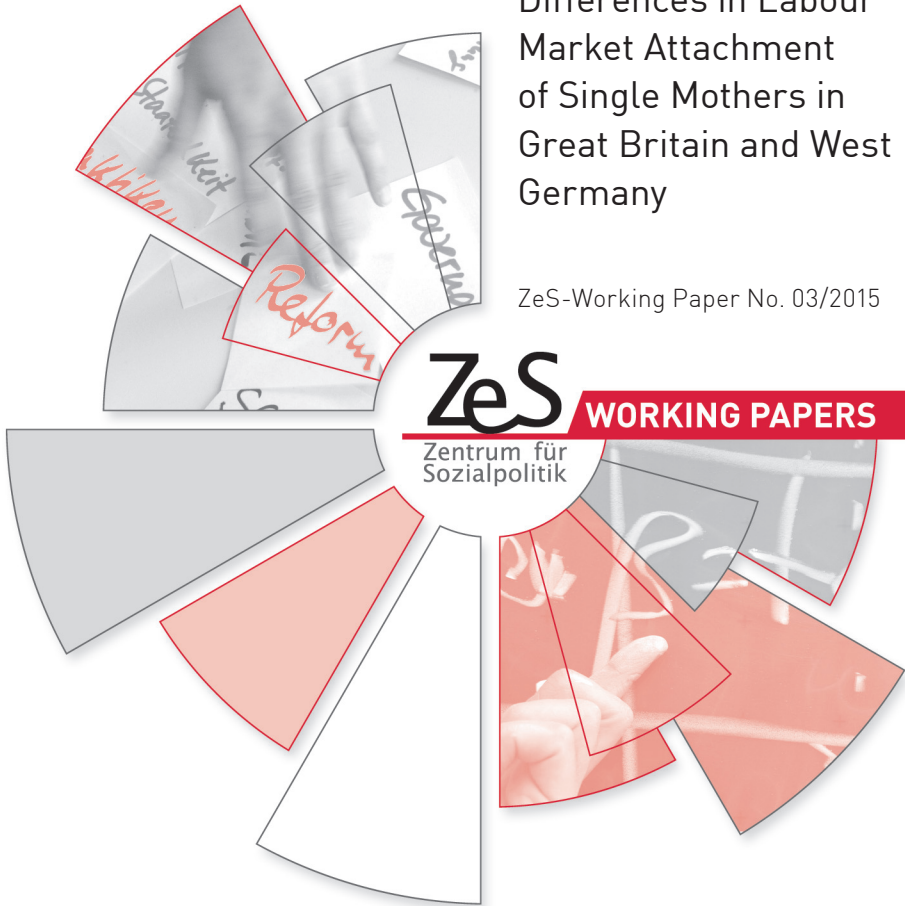U Universität Bremen

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SUMMARY

This paper investigates the relationships between single mothers' demographic and socio-economic circumstances and differences in their labour market attachment in Great Britain and West Germany. Single mothers' employment is a key issue in current policy debates in both countries, as well as in research on the major challenges of contemporary welfare states. The heterogeneity of the group of women who experience single motherhood poses a challenge to social policy. To complicate the matter, single motherhood is not static but a result of family life dynamics. This paper provides an empirical insight into differences in labour market attachment of single mothers, investigating the demographic and socio-economic factors that distinguish careers dominated by full-time, part-time or non-employment. Women in the British and German contexts are considered in order to explore potential differences between two welfare state settings. Data from the British Household Panel Survey (1991-2008) and the German Socio-Economic Panel (1991-2008) are used for regression analysis. The findings suggest that, in both countries, entering single motherhood at a young age is associated with longer periods of non-employment; vocational qualifications go together with careers dominated by part-time employment; and single motherhood with school-age children allows for full-time employment careers, which are also facilitated by high education attainments. The analyses also suggest that, compared to German mothers, part-time employment is a less common track for British single mothers.

Keywords: Single mothers, maternal employment, family-employment reconciliation, Great Britain, West Germany

Es ist in den letzten Jahren zu einem zentralen sozialpolitischen Thema geworden, wie alleinerziehende Mütter besser in den Arbeitsmarkt integriert werden können. Nicht nur die Heterogenität der Gruppe Alleinerziehender stellt dabei eine besondere Herausforderung dar, sondern auch, dass es sich beim Alleinerziehen häufig um einen Lebensabschnitt handelt, der den Dynamiken des Familienlebens unterstellt ist. Dieses Arbeitspapier untersucht in vergleichender Perspektive zwischen Großbritannien und Westdeutschland, inwiefern Unterschiede in den Graden der Arbeitsmarkteinbindung alleinerziehender Mütter mit ihrer sozio-demographischen Lage zusammenhängen. Unterscheidend zwischen Vollzeit-, Teilzeit- und Nicht-Erwerbstätigkeit werden Daten des British Household Panel Survey (1991-2008) und des Sozio-ökonomischen Panel (1991-2008) aus 10 bis 18 Jahren der Erwerbskarrieren alleinerziehender Mütter mit Regressionsverfahren ausgewertet (N= 678). Die Analysen deuten darauf hin, dass Frauen die in jungem Alter alleinerziehend sind, in beiden Länderkontexten längere Perioden der Nicht-Erwerbstätigkeit haben als ältere Alleinerziehende. Zudem scheinen Mütter, die zum Zeitpunkt des Alleinerziehens eine Berufsausbildung abgeschlossen hatten, eher zu Teilzeitkarrieren zu neigen, während höhere Bildungsqualifikationen mit längeren Episoden der Vollzeiterwerbstätigkeit einhergehen. Im Vergleich zu den britischen alleinerziehenden Müttern weisen die westdeutschen längere Perioden der Teilzeiterwerbstätigkeit auf.

Keywords: Alleinerziehende Mütter, Arbeitsmarkteinbindung alleinerziehender Mütter, Vereinbarkeit von Familie und Beruf, Großbritannien, West-Deutschland

CONTENT

1. Introduction*

Supporting the employment of single mothers has become a key issue in public and policy debates in many countries as changes in labour markets and family structures create new challenges for European welfare states (Bonoli 2005; Taylor-Gooby 2004). Strategies in Germany and the GB have included reforming unemployment assistance and welfare-to-work schemes with specific focus on single mothers as well as the expansion of rights to public childcare (Clasen 2011; Daly 2010; Knijn/Martin/Millar 2007; Lyonette/Kaufman/Crompton 2011). Such policy initiatives rely on empirical information of the phenomena they are addressing. Hence, it is crucial to understand what makes single mothers, who cannot share domestic and market work for maintaining their household with a co-resident partner, increase or reduce their labour market attachment. Previous research suggests that two issues could be central for supporting single mothers' family-employment reconciliation. The first issue concerns the often transitory status of single motherhood (Bastin 2012; Ott/Hancioglu/Hartmann 2012; Zagel 2014), and hence its character of a life course episode. Experienced at different stages in the life course and at different lengths, single motherhood may interfere to different degrees with reconciliation and further career development. For example, young single mothers would seem to face particular challenges to establishing a full-

time career. The second issue concerns the question of women's socio-economic or class background when entering single motherhood (Rowlingson/McKay 1998; McLanahan/Percheski 2008) because family-employment reconciliation is often better possible for middle or higher class mothers than for those with lower class background. Both issues point to the heterogeneity of the group of single mothers, and suggest that several dimensions of social inequality are relevant. Exploring the relationships between heterogeneity and employment, the present study investigates whether the demographic and socio-economic circumstances in which women experience single motherhood are associated with differences in subsequent labour market attachment. The paper's main focus is on the question which factors are associated with sustaining low, intermediate or high labour market attachment in the years after having entered single motherhood. The study looks at single mothers in the British and West German contexts in order to shed light on national particularities that have developed in the different policy settings. Longitudinal survey data from the British Household Panel Survey (1991-2008) and the German Socio-Economic Panel (1991-2008) are used in the analyses, which apply a regression approach for testing associations between single mothers' characteristics and labour market attachment. After introducing the conceptual perspective in the following second section, section three will build up to several hypotheses on the associations between single motherhood,

socio-economic circumstances and careers. Section four gives an overview of the two countries' policy contexts; section five discusses data, measures and methods. The findings are presented in section six; section seven closes with a discussion.

2. Conceptual Framework

2.1 DEFINING SINGLE MOTHERHOOD

Definitions of *the family* are tied to dominant normative conceptions couched in national historical pathways (Naumann 2011). West Germany is sometimes said to be particular in adhering strongly to the idea that married spouses are the basic dyad of a family (Konietzka/Kreyenfeld 2005). While in the GB the emphasis is set less on marriage, single motherhood is also seen as the *deviant* family form (Duncan/Edwards 1997). Empirically, family life is inherently dynamic (Huinink/Feldhaus 2009), with processes of growing up and ageing of family members, as well as events such as childbirth, separation, marriage and single motherhood scattered across individuals' life courses. From this perspective, single motherhood is an episode which can be entered (separation/divorce, death of partner, childbirth to a single woman) and exited (re-partnering/re-marriage, children growing out of dependency age) via different routes (Bastin 2012; Rowlingson/McKay 1998). Accordingly, a universal definition of single motherhood does not exist. However, in both administrative statistics and in re-search there is general agreement on using the youngest resident child's minority age as a defining criterion; often setting the cut-off age that defines single mothers below resident children's legal age (18 years in most countries) at 16 years. In policy, definitions of single motherhood are also tied to resident children's age thresholds. That is, children's age is used as an eligibility criterion for certain state transfers or services targeting single parents. Thresholds vary across countries and within countries across time (e.g. Haux 2012), which will be further discussed below. Apart from the age threshold of children and the common residence status of mother and child, the definition of single motherhood applied in this paper is kept open. This allows considering different demographic characteristics for acknowledging intra-group heterogeneity among single mothers.

2.2 FAMILY-EMPLOYMENT RECONCILIATION

Family-employment reconciliation can be defined as parents' success in combining employment that provides the financial

means to maintain their family's living on the one hand and with domestic work and care responsibilities for dependent children on the other hand (Meulders et al. 2005). This implies that reconciliation fails where parents remain non-employed, including periods when they receive social assistance benefits that secure their subsistence level. Single motherhood is understood as a family life episode in which family-employment reconciliation is particularly challenging. Previous research has often compared differences in reconciliation between the two parents in a couple or between parents in different family situations. Research on the differences within heterosexual couples suggests that the imbalance in women's and men's possibility to reconcile family responsibility and employment persists to the benefit of coupled fathers' time spent in their jobs rather than at home (Breen/Cooke 2005; Schober/Scott 2012). A common expectation in terms of differences between family settings is that reconciliation is even less possible for single parents than for (fathers and for) mothers in parent-couples. The assumption builds upon the fact that, where parents do not co-reside, economic and care responsibilities are concentrated on the parent with whom the child is staying, which is the mother in the vast majority of cases. Lacking a partner's earnings to the household income, both the immediate economic need and the long-term necessity to build pension entitlements (Drobnič 2000) are high for mothers who are single earners and carers. A basic expectation is hence that the majority of single mothers are employed part-time or full-time at some point during her career.

2.3 FAMILY DYNAMICS AND EMPLOYMENT

Taking into account that coupled mothers continue doing the bulk of the care work today (Sayer/Gornick 2012), the reconciliation advantage of coupled mothers over single mothers persists only where the couple shares domestic responsibilities. In addition, differences in employment rates between coupled and single mothers vary by the age of the youngest child (Department for Work and Pensions 2012; Destatis 2010). Accordingly, turning the focus to differences in the probability to be employed among women who experience single motherhood, empirical studies confirm that the age of the youngest child is crucial (e.g. Haux 2012; Ott/Hancioglu/Hartmann 2012; Schneider et al. 2001). This highlights how the possibility to reconcile family and employment can change for the same person over time. The need for children to be supervised full-time in their preschool years increases reconciliation issues for mothers during that time, while fewer problems exist with teenage children (Drobnič 2000). Alongside seeing their child grow out of full-time supervision dependency, another dimension for the intra-individual difference in employment probability could be variation in partnership volatility. Compared to having stable, longer-term relationships, moving in and out of partnerships is sometimes assumed reflecting a troubled life trajectory (e.g. Bachman/Coley/Carrano 2012).

Partnership instability could imply that care arrangements are also unsteady, and that this leads to greater family-employment reconciliation difficulties. Similarly, the duration at which a woman experiences single motherhood may be related to her ability to reconcile family and employment, because in shorter periods it may be less necessary to change employment patterns than during longer ones. However, these considerations rely on the assumption that being in a couple is inherently associated with more successful reconciliation, which was found being at least questionable above. Instead, the question of how women adapt employment behaviour could be whether they were used to a specific childcare arrangement before entering single motherhood.

For example, entering single motherhood from a traditional marriage arrangement, which assumed their partner to take on the breadwinner role and themselves to fulfil the care duty, family-employment reconciliation could be assumed to be difficult. On the other hand, the incentive to acquire income from employment may to the contrary be higher for women who had benefitted from a main (or a second) earner in the household than for those who entered single motherhood by having a child while being single (Schneider et al. 2001). Moreover, mothers who have never shared a household with the other parent may have lower reconciliation pressures compared to those experiencing separation, because they are used to managing household maintenance without a partner.

3. Family, Career and Social Class: Building Hypotheses

Besides these demographic characteristics of single motherhood, employment trajectories may vary according to the way the single motherhood experience intervenes in the *standard employment career*. Employment careers can be conceptualised as relatively standardised processes that are based on skill attainment and that follow a logic of progress over time (Drobnič 2003; Moen 2003; Rosenfeld 1992). Previous research has shown that employment trajectory patterns vary greatly among women who are sin-

gle mothers (Kull/Riedmüller 2007; Ott/Hancioglu/Hartmann 2012; Stewart 2009; Zagel 2014). Indeed, longitudinal studies show that some women reduce their work hours or exit from the labour market (Hancioglu/Hartmann 2013; Ott/Hancioglu/Hartmann 2012; Stewart 2009), which suggests an immediate impact of single motherhood on family-employment reconciliation. However, the studies also suggest that a large proportion of women in single motherhood do not experience change in their employment intensity (Ott/

Hancioglu/Hartmann 2012; Zagel 2014). This could mean that, for some women, there is no direct effect of single motherhood on their employment trajectory but that careers are relatively predetermined. Assuming that single motherhood does impact on family-employment reconciliation, at least for some, the gravity of its effect can be considered to vary. Considering the life course perspective, timing of single motherhood in the standard employment career could matter. Early experiences of single motherhood could go along with constraints on skill attainment with negative consequences for the employment career. Later experiences on the other hand would potentially imply difficulties in maintaining the same degree of labour market attachment but with less visible negative consequences. One expectation would hence be that the younger women are at experiencing single motherhood the risk of low labour market attachment increases (*Hypothesis 1*). In line with this expectation, previous research indicates that, as any career, employment trajectories of women in single motherhood are associated with their education levels (Kull/Riedmüller 2007; Ott/Hancioglu/Hartmann 2012; Stewart 2009). Stable full-time trajectories are often associated with tertiary degrees. However, Ott et al. (2012: 37) find women with vocational qualifications are more likely to be continuously full-time employed than having a part-time, non-employment or instable trajectory in West Germany. Findings from the UK also point to an association between steady employment and high levels of education. Stewart (2009) finds that post-secondary qualifications increase the likelihood of having a stable full-time employment trajectory compared to continuous non-employment; vocational qualifications also showed a positive but weaker association. The associations between education and employment probability can also be seen as an indicator for class differences. Social class sets additional constraints at family-employment reconciliation (Crompton 2006). To some extent this is indicated by differences in women's working hours by occupational class. For example, women in *routine and manual* and *intermediate* occupations are more likely to work part-time than professional and managerial women (Crompton/Lyonette 2008). Among single mothers, too, social class will play a role for employment careers, not least because they particularly depend on financial resources for outsourcing childcare. For lower-class women outsourcing childcare to a formal provider is economically particularly unattractive (Crompton 2006). This leads to the expectation that single motherhood may be more difficult to combine with a full-time career in routine and manual occupations than in professional and managerial occupations (*Hypothesis 2*). It seems also more likely for single mothers in the services than for those in professional and managerial occupations to build part-time careers (*Hypothesis 3*) because service occupations often allow for more flexibility in working hours. Single mothers in lower occupational classes, on the other hand, would have to be expected to have long periods of non-employment (*Hypothesis 4*) because opportunity costs of outsourcing childcare are highest in low-paying jobs. Ultimately, family-employment reconcilia-

tion will be mediated by the child's need for care. Any chance of developing labour market attachment will be improved when children grow out of their baby years (0-2) (*Hypothesis 5*).

4. Policies Supporting Family-Employment Reconciliation

Above and beyond individual demographic characteristics, socio-economic profile and life course timing, contextual factors such as policy arrangements set the framework for single mothers' family-employment reconciliation. Countries vary in their strategies to support families in carrying the direct costs (higher costs of living) and indirect costs (opportunity costs of reduced income and career prospects) of child-rearing (Blome 2011). Providing distinct sets of policies directed at families' work/care arrangements, West Germany and Great Britain are examples of two different ideal-typical family policy models (Leitner 2003; Saraceno/Keck 2010). Although some similarities exist (Daly 2011), the countries use relatively different strategies to address families in general and single parent families in particular (Lewis 1999). Following Lewis (2009: 83), policies in the field of *work-family balance* encompass those regulating, financing or providing: time (working time/time for care), money (cash for carers/expenditures on services), and services (child and elder care). It is difficult to define the effects of family policy on family-employment reconciliation, espe-cially considering that particular policy instruments have varying outcomes when combined with certain other policies. The most straightforward and widely-accepted effect on reconciliation is that of available and affordable publicly provided or financed childcare (Blome 2011). Here, too, the combination between time, money and services is crucial in determining potential outcomes. For example, the right to a basic amount of free formal childcare such as the 2.5 hours per child per day in the UK may lead to better reconciliation only if the financial resources for extending these hours to a normal working day are also available. The effects of parental leave, too, are complex. They can be assumed to vary not only by the duration of leave granted (right to return to job), but also by the level of earnings replacement. Long leave periods tend to delay women's labour market return, while short leave risks causing women's labour market exit if alternatives to childcare are lacking. Similarly, with low replacement rates women with high earnings will have a small incentive to take long leaves. Cash transfers, on the other hand, tend to foster home care and hence are considered

a counter incentive to mothers' employment, although some transfer payments have a more ambiguous role. For example, childcare tax credits can enable women to outsource childcare to other providers and consequently support maternal employment. Whether this guarantees a level of economic security comparable to that gained through transfers depends on attainable income and the costs for childcare. In addition, these transfers are often means-tested and/or made conditional to parents' employment.

The effects of policy on family-employment reconciliation can also be considered in terms of the point and duration of their intervention in individuals' life courses (McDaniel/Bernard 2011). The links between policies, single motherhood and employment are tied to the life course logic. For example, at the point of single motherhood entry eligibility criteria regulate women's entitlement to policy services. Here, the age of the youngest child plays an important role, but also whether single motherhood began with childbirth. For example, parental leave policies are only relevant to those whose single motherhood episode falls into the period after childbirth for which leave rights are defined. Previous labour market attachment is also important because leave can only be granted to those employed, and payment generosity often depends on previous income. Childcare services are explicitly limited to children of certain ages, with highest coverage generally for children between three years and school age. Social assistance transfers on grounds of being an unemployed single parent also

have clear child age thresholds that vary between countries.

Childcare regulations cover all three areas of reconciliation policies: time, money and services. Although in comparison with East German states the West German ones can hardly be said to have featured generous childcare provision throughout the 1990s and beyond (Kreyenfeld/Hank 2000), the comparison with Britain shows that mothers in West Germany can at least rely on half-day childcare when children are between three and six years old. Childcare provision in West Germany has to be understood mostly as a support for mothers' part-time employment (Jaehrling et al. 2012). The British system, on the other hand, has granted affordable childcare for less than ten hours per week for most of this period and only for children aged three and four years (see Lyonette/Kaufman/Crompton 2011). In comparison, childcare is more costly in Britain than in West Germany (Blome 2011). There has been a trend to expand childcare provision for children between zero and three years in both Germany and Britain over the past twenty years (Daly 2011), which could mean that reconciliation is better possible for younger cohorts of single mothers.

Leave regulations span the time and money categories of reconciliation policies. Parental leave policies are overall less generous in Britain, with wage replacement at an intermediate level but for comparatively short length (Moss 2012). Germany had granted leave between 18 and 24 months during the 1990s and early 2000s. In 2007, it was eventually set at 14 months for single mothers (12+2 for

couples). It should therefore now be better possible to keep up high labour market attachment for single mothers with babies in West Germany than in Britain. Previously, however, it would be reasonable to assume that both, long periods in Germany and very short periods in Britain, have not overall provided a central policy instrument for solving single mothers' reconciliation challenge.

Several other instruments are crucial for the money dimension of reconciliation policies. Child maintenance regulations, for example, define whether single mothers can rely on regular payments from the non-resident parent. Germany has a comparatively more generous child maintenance system in that the state steps in for non-paying parents until the child's twelfth birthday, but there are no default entitlements to mothers after separation in the UK (Jaehrling et al. 2012: 114). Child benefit, another central instrument to support families with cash payments, is neither means-tested in Germany nor in Britain. It is paid at a higher rate (as proportion of average income) in Germany than in Britain and for a longer period (BMFSFJ 2008; Bundesagentur für Arbeit 2012; IFS 2012). Overall, rather than paying for the families' living, these cash payments are at best supplements to household income. They can alter a single mother's opportunity costs by lowering the payoffs from employment, which seems to be more the case for West Germany than for Britain.

In contrast to these policies directly targeting individuals on the grounds of being a parent, the British system has a stronger tradition in supporting single mothers through labour market policies. Here, since the 1980s, single mothers have been an explicit policy target of unemployment policy. The duration of payment to single mothers covered the period to the youngest child's 16th birthday until 2008 (three years in Germany). Since the late 1990s the British government increasingly targeted single mothers on social assistance benefits with welfare-to-work programmes (Gregg/Harkness/Smith 2009). The two strongest elements of British policy for single mothers are hence closely related to each other in that the one (activation) was developed partly as a response to the consequences of the other (social assistance transfers). The latter has meant that women with low income prospects found income support an important alternative to work in the labour market. Although welfare-to-work measures have generally been shown to increase the employment of single mothers (Blundell/Brewer/Shephard 2005; Francesconi/van der Klaauw 2007), continuity or job retention seems to be an issue (Evans/Harkness/Ortiz 2004). While Germany has also seen a trend towards more *activation* and workfare policies (Clasen 2011), single mothers are still less targeted than in Britain.

5. Data and Methods

The data for analysing the career trajectories of women with single motherhood experience are drawn from the British Household Panel Survey (BHPS) from 1991 to 2008 (Taylor et al. 2010) and the German Socio-Economic Panel (SOEP) from 1991 to 2008 (Wagner/Frick/Schupp 2007). The BHPS survey is based on a probability sample of households in Great Britain in 1991. It was developed in approximation to the SOEP design, which facilitates comparability. The SOEP started in 1984 with a probability sample of the West German population. The East German population was regarded in an extension sample in 1989, and in 1998, 2000 and 2006 refreshment probability samples were added. The present analysis does not use the East German extension sample and subsamples of the surveys oversampling regions (BHPS: Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales) or groups of special interest (SOEP: migrants, high earners). Both datasets have been used for longitudinal analysis of single motherhood and employment in previous studies (Ermisch/Francesconi 2000, 2001; Hancioglu/Hartmann 2013; Ott/Hancioglu/Hartmann 2012; Skew 2009), indicating their use for such an approach. Importantly, the surveys contain annual individual information on partnership and employment as well as on other areas relevant to this study.

5.1 SAMPLE

The following analysis uses a sample of individuals comprising British and West German women aged 16 to 55 in any survey wave of the BHPS or SOEP between and including 1991 and 2008. The women were included if they were observed in single motherhood at least in one survey wave. Single motherhood is defined as a situation in which the household is shared only by the mother and an under-16-years old child. Data from the BHPS included biological, adopted and stepchildren. Because information on German women is derived from mothers' birth history only those with biological children are included in the SOEP. Observations of single motherhood in the surveys are excluded if they had ended before 1991. A further criterion for inclusion in the sample was that the women were observed for at least 10 and at most 18 consecutive waves from their first observation of single motherhood in order to capture long periods of subsequent employment careers. Women with multiple single motherhood observations were counted only once. The data are left-censored where information on labour market behaviour before the first observation of single motherhood is cut off. Careers are right-censored after the last survey wave or if respondents left the panel before that. Together with the other selection criteria, the threshold of a minimum of ten waves makes the sample a highly selective one. Thus, results of the analysis cannot be generalised to the re-

spective national populations. Mean durations for experiencing single motherhood is just over five survey waves for British women and just under five survey waves for German women.

5.2 OUTCOME MEASURES

Labour market attachment in single mothers' career trajectories is operationalised as sequences of employment statuses with each wave in which the employment status is observed extending the sequence by one element. Employment status is defined as: (1) full-time employment (30 or more hours regularly worked per week) including self-employment; (2) part-time (less than 30 hours regularly worked per week), non-permanent and non-regular employment; and (3) non-employment, including unemployment, maternity leave, full-time education, long-term sick/disabled, retired, other non-working (BHPS and SOEP) and family care (BHPS). For the regression analysis, the information on employment statuses is collapsed into three outcome variables, each describing single mothers' labour market attachment as the share of a particular employment status element in each trajectory, namely full-time employment (ft), part-time employment (pt) and non-employment (non). The indicators measure the number of episodes of the particular employment status (ft, pt, non) in each observed sequence as a share of its overall sequence length and range between 0 and 1.

5.3 INPUT MEASURES

Although the analyses do not aim at making causal statements, input variables were measured before the beginning of the observed employment trajectory where possible in order to avoid interpreting associations in causally reversed logics. Several variables included in the analysis describe the demographic circumstances of the single motherhood situation. Number of children in the household and age of the youngest child are measured at first observation of single motherhood, as is the mother's own age. The number of children ranges between 1 and 3 in the sample and is included as dummy variables (0/1), using one child as the reference category. Age of the youngest child is divided into four dummies (0/1): ages 0-2, 3-5, 6-11 and 12-16, taking the youngest age group as the reference category. Mother's age at first single motherhood is included as a continuous variable (bounded by 16 and 55 years). Entry into single motherhood is operationalized as three dummy variables (0/1): whether the women were (a) divorced/separated, (b) widowed or (c) never married at the first observed wave. The never married category is likely to include some formerly cohabiting women but it was not possible to separate out this information. Divorced/separated is used as the reference category. Two variables further defining the single motherhood experience, duration (count, 0-18) and number of single motherhood observations (count, > 1 but < 18), are measured simultaneously to the employment trajectory. This means they show possible

interrelations of the processes in family and employment spheres but cannot be interpreted as determinants of the course of careers. Educational attainments are measured as CASMIN levels (1a inadequately completed, 1b general elementary school, 1c basic vocational qualification, 2b intermediate general qualification, 2a intermediate vocational, 2c_gen general maturity certificate, 2c_voc vocational maturity certificate, 3a lower tertiary education, 3b higher tertiary education) at the first observation of single motherhood and are introduced as dummy variables. Tertiary education is taken as the reference category. Occupational information based on the ISCO-88 classification (ILO 2004), and divided into four occupational groups: elementary/no occupation, crafts, services, professional/managerial occupation, which are introduced as dummies (0/1). Housing status (whether owner-occupier or not), migration history (whether born abroad or not) and birth cohort (born 1970-81, 1960-69, 1950-59 or 1940-49 (ref)) are regarded as control variables (0/1). Being British (0/1) is introduced as a control variable for country context so as to see whether the patterns of the results change when introducing the variable.

5.4 METHOD

Ideally, single mothers' careers would be analysed by considering entire employment trajectories from entry into the labour market until retirement. Due to the lack of suitable data for realising this ideal scenario the present study focuses on employment trajectories during and after the first observed single motherhood period. Comparative design and concept definitions of this paper pose high demands on the data and drive much of the choice of methods. Because each of the dependent variables' distribution is bounded between zero and one (0 and 100 percent), and right-skewed with many observations on the zero value, zero-inflated poisson regression models (Cameron/Trivedi 2009; Tutz 2010) were estimated. These are originally for count data, which the shares of employment statuses strictly speaking are not. However, in addition to their over-dispersion, assuming a continuous metric scale that can take negative values is also not ideal in the present case, which is why it was refrained from using simple linear regression. Zero-inflated poisson regression is used to model count data with an excess of observations in the zero category. Poisson regression models the expected counts of the (log-transformed) dependent variable, given the controlled covariates. The assumption behind the zero-inflated model is that the zero values are generated by a separate process from that generating the count values, and that both processes may be modelled separately. Zero-inflated poisson models hence have two parts, a poisson count model and a logit model for predicting the zeros. Theoretically, this means that for each dependent variable the models assume not being observed in the respective employment status at all follows a different logic from being observed in it somewhat or a lot. As poisson regression uses log-linear transformation, regression coefficients can be interpreted as follows:

for continuous input variables, a coefficient value above zero, e.g. .05, means that the expected increase in log count (of the dependent variable) for an increase of the input variable by one unit is .05. In the present case this would mean an increased share of the respective employment status. For categorical variables entered as a set of dummies, the coefficients indicate the expected differences in log count between the included dummy and the reference category. Coefficients below zero indicate a reduced impact; zero values indicate no impact and values above zero mean positive impacts of covariates on the dependent variable. The use of this method implies that the longitudinal potential of the panel data was used merely to construct labour market attachment indicators as dependent variables covering a long stretch of the observed careers but are applied in a cross-sectional design. Robust standard errors were used to take account of the clustered structure of the data (multiple measurements per individual), correcting for violating the assumption of randomly distributed error terms. Other methods which make better use of the panel data would be desirable for future research. With the current approach, rather than considering transitions, order and sequence of career episodes, careers are treated as strings of employment statuses with varying levels of labour market attachment.

6. Findings

6.1 SAMPLE DESCRIPTION

Descriptive statistics for dependent and independent variables are given by country context in *Table 1*. The table shows that, with 35 percent (BHPS) and 35 percent (SOEP) full-time employment episodes of observed career trajectories, full-time careers are equally represented among German and British single mothers in the sample, while part-time careers are more observed in the German trajectories of the sample (29 % vs. 25 % for British ones). British trajectories, on the other hand, feature overall higher shares of non-employment (39 % vs. 34 % in the SOEP sample). On average, the British women in the sample experience more transitions between employment statuses (4.30) than the German ones (3.66).

The route into single motherhood was different for the majority of British and German women in the samples with most of the British women getting divorced or separating (> 60 %) and most of the German women having never been married. This partly reflects that cohabiting couples are less easily differentiated in the German data. Mean age at the first single motherhood observation among

Table 1: Descriptive statistics

	BHPS				SOEP			
	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Labour market attachment								
Share of FT-employment spells	0,35	0,35	0	1	0,35	0,38	0	1
Share of PT-employment spells	0,25	0,27	0	1	0,29	0,32	0	1
Share of non-employment spells	0,39	0,35	0	1	0,34	0,37	0	1
Number of employment transitions	4,30	2,61	1	13	3,66	2,56	1	12
Entry into single motherhood								
Divorced/separated	0,62	0,49	0	1	0,36	0,48	0	1
Widowed	0,05	0,21	0	1	0,04	0,20	0	1
Never married	0,33	0,47	0	1	0,60	0,49	0	1
Single motherhood								
Age at first single motherhood	30,73	7,77	16	46	35,86	6,12	18	46
Duration of single motherhood	6,96	4,34	1	17	5,82	3,49	1	17
No. single motherhood episodes	1,43	0,72	1	5	1,10	0,33	1	3
Children								
Number of children	1,56	0,71	1	3	1,69	0,75	1	3
Age of youngest child	6,49	4,59	0	15	11,85	3,74	0	16
Youngest child age 0-2	0,26	0,44	0	1	0,02	0,14	0	1
Youngest child age 3-5	0,21	0,41	0	1	0,06	0,24	0	1
Youngest child age 6-11	0,35	0,48	0	1	0,30	0,46	0	1
Youngest child age 12-16	0,18	0,39	0	1	0,62	0,48	0	1
Educational attainment (CASMIN)								
1a inadequately completed	0,21	0,41	0	1	0,17	0,37	0	1
1b general elementary school	0,09	0,29	0	1	0,24	0,43	0	1
1c basic vocational qual.	0,09	0,29	0	1	0,27	0,44	0	1
2b intermediate general qual.	0,21	0,41	0	1	0,03	0,18	0	1
2a intermediate vocational	0,08	0,28	0	1	0,17	0,37	0	1
2c_gen general maturity cert.	0,07	0,26	0	1	0,01	0,09	0	1
2c_voc vocational maturity cert.	0,01	0,10	0	1	0,06	0,24	0	1
3a: lower tertiary education	0,17	0,38	0	1	0,01	0,12	0	1
3b: higher tertiary education	0,06	0,24	0	1	0,04	0,20	0	1
Occupational classification								
ISCO: Elementary & none	0,25	0,43	0	1	0,29	0,45	0	1
ISCO: Craft/manual	0,06	0,24	0	1	0,18	0,39	0	1
ISCO: Services	0,48	0,50	0	1	0,29	0,45	0	1
ISCO: Professional/managerial	0,22	0,41	0	1	0,24	0,43	0	1
Controls								
Born abroad	0,07	0,25	0	1	0,52	0,50	0	1
Owner-occupier	0,03	0,18	0	1	0,01	0,11	0	1
Born 1940-49	0,06	0,25	0	1	0,13	0,33	0	1
Born 1950-59	0,30	0,46	0	1	0,48	0,50	0	1
Born 1960-69	0,44	0,50	0	1	0,32	0,47	0	1
Born 1970-81	0,20	0,40	0	1	0,08	0,26	0	1

Source: BHPS 1991-2008; SOEP 1991-2008. Single mothers age 16-55 years, observed for 10-18 survey waves

women in the British sample is about 31 years, and 36 years in the German sample. The mean duration of single motherhood was just under seven survey waves in the British sample and just under six waves in the German sample. As for the number of single motherhood episodes, British women in the sample show a slightly higher mobility (1.42 vs. 1.10 episodes for the German women). Women in both country samples have between one and two dependent children living in their household. The mean age of children of the British women in the sample, however, is considerably lower (6.49 years) than that of German women's children (11.85 years). This is reflected in the distribution of children's age groups, which shows that children aged 0-2 are overrepresented in the British sample compared to the German one, where children aged 12-16 are overrepresented. The differences in age of the youngest child at first single motherhood between British and German women in the sample are statistically significant (p < .001) according to the result of a Wilcoxon-Mann-Whitney ranksum test, as are differences in age at first single motherhood (p < .001).

The distribution of qualifications looks rather different for women in the two country samples based on the CAS-MIN scale. German women in the sample are much more likely to have acquired a basic or intermediate vocational qualification at their first observation of single motherhood than their British counterparts. The British women are, on the other hand, more likely not to have completed any qualifications at this point, but also to have acquired intermediate general

or lower tertiary qualifications than the German women in the sample. As for the occupational rank acquired at first single motherhood the distributions do not look too different, although a higher share of the British sample held a service occupation and comparatively more women in the German sample were working in the crafts.

6.2 FINDINGS FROM REGRESSION ANALYSIS

The results are presented separately for each of the dependent variables measuring mothers' degree of labour market attachment (share of non-employment, share of part-time employment and share of full-time employment). Although the outcome measures can be considered to be elements of the same concept, labour market attachment, the analyses illustrate that different factors are associated with career patterns dominated by full-, part-time or non-employment during and after single motherhood. In each step, three models are estimated, introducing blocks of variables thematically, controlling for a set of background variables throughout. The first model introduces a block of variables describing the single mothers' family situation, including number of children, age of youngest child, mother's age at first single motherhood observation, route into single motherhood, duration of single motherhood spell and number of single motherhood episodes in the observation window. The second model introduces variables of single mothers' educational and occupational background,

characterising their class position. This model includes educational attainment and occupational group variables. In the last model, a dummy variable for being British or German is introduced in order to see whether the effects change when controlling for the country context. Control variables are: birth cohorts, owner-occupier status, and whether the woman was born abroad.

6.2.1 LOW LABOUR MARKET ATTACHMENT (NON-EMPLOYMENT)

Results of the analysis on single mothers' low labour market attachment are given in *Table 2*. Model 1 suggests that several family characteristics, such as mother's age at first single motherhood observation, number and age of children are associated with higher shares of non-employment following single motherhood. Having three children is associated with more non-employment (higher expected log count) compared to having one in this model. As was expected with Hypothesis 5, having children aged three or older is associated with less non-employment than having babies aged 0-2 at first single motherhood. Model 1 also supports the expectation of Hypothesis 1, confirming a negative association between mothers' age at first single motherhood and subsequent non-employment (reducing the expected log count). This association is maintained on a statistically significant level ($p < .05$) throughout the three models. However, Model 2 suggests that the effect of the number of children is perhaps in fact a class issue since the effect

from Model 1 is no longer statistically significant when education and occupation variables are introduced. The second model further shows that mothers' level of educational attainment at single motherhood does not explain low labour market attachment careers in the present sample. Being in the group of elementary or no occupation, on the other hand, is strongly positively associated with low labour market attachment for single mothers in this sample compared to those in the managerial and professional group (expected difference in log count is 1.07), which supports Hypothesis 4. This association could mean that women in the lowest occupational category had not yet acquired occupational belonging when they entered single motherhood. Model 3 confirms the associations even when it is controlled for the country context. In sum, the effects of mothers' age at single motherhood, age of children and occupational group point to issues of life course timi ng, reconciliation and social class.

6.2.2 INTERMEDIATE LABOUR MARKET ATTACHMENT (PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT)

Results for intermediate labour market attachment, displayed in *Table 3*, tell a slightly different story. In Model 1, besides a positive association with age at first single motherhood (increase in expected log count by .04 for each additional year of age), part-time employment careers seem to be positively related to the duration of the single motherhood spell. This association is however no

Table 2: Zero-inflated poisson regression analysis of shares of non-employment

	M1 Family	M2 Class	M3 Country
Entry into single motherhood			
Widowed	-0.05	-0.19	-0.18
Never married	0.15	0.13	0.14
Single motherhood			
Age at first single motherhood	-0.05 ***	-0.03 **	-0.03 *
Duration of single motherhood	0.00	-0.01	-0.01
No. single motherhood episodes	0.05	0.03	0.03
Number of children (ref: 1 child)			
Two children	0.06	-0.09	-0.09
Three children	0.43 ***	0.18	0.17
Age of youngest child (ref.: 0-2)			
Age 3-5	-0.24 *	-0.12	-0.11
Age 6-11	-0.46 ***	-0.26 *	-0.25 *
Age 12-16	-0.47 **	-0.41 **	-0.39 **
Educational attainment (CASMIN) (ref: higher educ)			
1a inadequately completed		0.20	0.20
1b general elementary school		0.00	0.02
1c basic vocational qual.		-0.04	-0.02
2b intermediate general qual.		0.08	0.07
2a intermediate vocational		-0.08	-0.06
2c_gen general maturity cert.		0.24	0.24
2c_voc vocational maturity cert.		-0.39	-0.36
Occupational group (ref: professional/managerial)			
ISCO: Elementary & none		1.07 ***	1.06 ***
ISCO: Craft/manual		0.15	0.15
ISCO: Services		0.32 **	0.32 *
British (ref: German)			0.05
Controls			
Born abroad	0.05	-0.09	-0.07
Owner-occupier	-0.35 ***	-0.18 *	-0.19 *
Cohort (ref: born 1940-49)			
Born 1950-59	-0.48 **	-0.21	-0.20
Born 1960-69	-0.97 ***	-0.55 **	-0.53 *
Born 1970-81	-1.18 ***	-0.73	-0.69 *
Constant	1.48	-0.02	-0.13
Constant (inflated zeros)	-23.58	-0.02	-0.13
N	691	678	678

Notes: ***p< .001, **p< .01, *p< .05; CASMIN 1a inadequately completed; CASMIN 1b general elementary school; CASMIN 1c basic vocational qualification; CASMIN 2b intermediate general qualification; CASMIN 2a intermediate vocational; CASMIN 2c_gen general maturity certificate; CASMIN 2c_voc vocational maturity certificate.

Sources: BHPS, 1991-2008; SOEP, 1991-2008. Single mothers age 16-55 yrs., observed for 10-18 survey waves.

Table 3: Zero-inflated poisson regression analysis of shares of part-time employment

	M1 Family	M2 Class	M3 Country
Entry into single motherhood			
Widowed	0.16	0.24	0.21
Never married	-0.04	0.03	-0.02
Single motherhood			
Age at first single motherhood	0.04 **	0.03 *	0.02
Duration of single motherhood	0.03 *	0.02	0.01
No. single motherhood episodes	-0.09	-0.06	-0.04
Number of children (ref: 1 child)			
Two children	0.05	0.09	0.10
Three children	0.00	0.14	0.17
Age of youngest child (ref.: 0-2)			
Age 3-5	0.13	0.04	-0.01
Age 6-11	0.10	-0.01	-0.11
Age 12-16	-0.07	-0.16	-0.31
Educational attainment (CASMIN) **(ref: higher educ)**			
1a inadequately completed		-0.12	-0.15
1b general elementary school		0.26	0.16
1c basic vocational qual.		0.54 ***	0.41 **
2b intermediate general qual.		0.18	0.19
2a intermediate vocational		0.32	0.21
2c_gen general maturity cert.		0.18	0.19
2c_voc vocational maturity cert.		0.65 ***	0.51 **
Occupational group **(ref: professional/managerial)**			
ISCO: Elementary & none		-0.29 *	-0.26
ISCO: Craft/manual		-0.42 *	-0.40 *
ISCO: Services		0.19	0.24 *
British (ref: German)			-0.33 **
Controls			
Born abroad	-0.18	0.00	-0.08
Owner-occupier	0.07	0.12	0.21 *
Cohort (ref: born 1940-49)			
Born 1950-59	0.21	0.12	0.04
Born 1960-69	0.54 **	0.36	0.22
Born 1970-81	0.82 **	0.52	0.32
Constant	-3.09	-2.78	-2.11
Constant (inflated zeros)	-26.21	-23.38	-23.38
N	691	678	678

Notes: ***p< .001, **p< .01, *p< .05; CASMIN 1a inadequately completed; CASMIN 1b general elementary school; CASMIN 1c basic vocational qualification; CASMIN 2b intermediate general qualification; CASMIN 2a intermediate vocational; CASMIN 2c_gen general maturity certificate; CASMIN 2c_voc vocational maturity certificate.

Sources: BHPS, 1991-2008; SOEP, 1991-2008. Single mothers age 16-55 yrs., observed for 10-18 survey waves.

longer statistically significant in Model 2, suggesting class and single motherhood duration may be correlated. In this model, CASMIN levels do provide some insight as to what fosters part-time careers, showing positive associations with basic and advanced level vocational degrees. As for the occupational groups, single mothers in the elementary and none as well as in the crafts and manual categories are less likely to develop intermediate labour market attachment compared to those in the managerial and professional group. Introducing the country dummy in Model 3 shows that the British women are less likely part-timers than the German women in this sample (expected difference in log count is -.33). This model further supports Hypothesis 3, suggesting a positive association of working in the services with part-time employment compared to being in the professional and managerial group, which persists when controlling for country context. Hence, building intermediate labour market attachment with high shares of part-time employment appears qualitatively different from low labour market attachment trajectories.

6.2.3 HIGH LABOUR MARKET ATTACHMENT (FULL-TIME EMPLOYMENT)

As shown in *Table 4*, the analysis of single mothers' high labour market attachment careers reveals yet another set of insights. As in the previous analyses, differences in the routes into single motherhood do not predict high labour market attachment in Model 1 (nor in the following), but neither seems mothers' age at entry into single motherhood nor the duration of it to be important. That reconciliation is a major factor for full-time employment is mirrored in the fact that having three children compared to one appears as a detrimental factor (expected difference in log count is -.57), and that having children older than six years shows a positive association with high labour market attachment, supporting Hypothesis 5. Model 2 suggests that vocational degrees are negatively associated with high labour market attachment, compared to higher education degrees. And that compared to being in the professional and managerial occupational group, single mothers in the elementary and none as well as in the services categories have a lower expected log counts of full-time employment. These associations persist in Model 3 after introducing the country context dummy. Single mothers in the British sample appear to have higher log counts of full-time employment compared to the German ones (by .34). But number and age of children as well as basic vocational qualifications maintain their statistically significant relationship with high labour market attachment when country context is controlled for. Further, Hypothesis 2 can only partly be confirmed as it is elementary and no occupation on the one hand, and service occupations on the other which appeared to have lower log counts of full-time employment compared to managers and professionals, rather than manual occupations.

Table 4: Zero-inflated poisson regression analysis of shares of full-time employment

	M1 Family	M2 Class	M3 Country
Entry into single motherhood			
Widowed	-0.09	-0.10	-0.07
Never married	-0.13	-0.14	-0.08
Single motherhood			
Age at first single motherhood	0.01	0.00	0.01
Duration of single motherhood	-0.01	-0.01	0.00
No. single motherhood episodes	0.00	-0.01	-0.03
Number of children (ref: 1 child)			
Two children	-0.08	0.00	0.00
Three children	-0.57 ***	-0.37 **	-0.37 **
Age of youngest child (ref.: 0-2)			
Age 3-5	0.34	0.30	0.32
Age 6-11	0.54 **	0.45 **	0.53 ***
Age 12-16	0.67 ***	0.69 ***	0.82 ***
Educational attainment (CASMIN) (ref: higher educ)			
1a inadequately completed		-0.26	-0.23
1b general elementary school		-0.20	-0.09
1c basic vocational qual.		-0.41 **	-0.28 *
2b intermediate general qual.		-0.13	-0.13
2a intermediate vocational		-0.24	-0.10
2c_gen general maturity cert.		-0.32	-0.33
2c_voc vocational maturity cert.		-0.48 *	-0.32
Occupational group (ref: professional/managerial)			
ISCO: Elementary & none		-1.22 ***	-1.26 ***
ISCO: Craft/manual		0.15	0.13
ISCO: Services		-0.25 **	-0.31 **
British (ref: German)			0.34 **
Controls			
Born abroad	0.10	0.14	0.23 *
Owner-occupier	0.28 **	0.11	0.02
Cohort (ref: born 1940-49)			
Born 1950-59	0.22	0.06	0.14
Born 1960-69	0.35	0.13	0.27
Born 1970-81	0.23	0.05	0.25
Constant	-2.06	-1.08	-1.78
Constant (inflated zeros)	-31.15	-31.25	-31.25
N	691	678	678

Notes: ***p< .001, **p< .01, *p< .05; CASMIN 1a inadequately completed; CASMIN 1b general elementary school; CASMIN 1c basic vocational qualification; CASMIN 2b intermediate general qualification; CASMIN 2a intermediate vocational; CASMIN 2c_gen general maturity certificate; CASMIN 2c_voc vocational maturity certificate.

Sources: BHPS, 1991-2008; SOEP, 1991-2008. Single mothers age 16-55 yrs., observed for 10-18 survey waves.

7. Discussion

The increased attention that policy makers in European countries direct at single mothers is geared to the overall aim of boosting women's employment (Lewis/Giullari 2005). It is well understood that the level of single mothers' employment varies across countries (e.g. Millar/Rowlingson 2001), but to date little research looks at the heterogeneity among single mothers and within employment careers across time. This perspective is important because single motherhood is a dynamic situation, and different circumstances of the family context are likely to interact with women's ability to reconcile family life and employment. Moreover, previous research has pointed to issues of social class in respect of who experiences single motherhood on the one hand, and concerning family-employment reconciliation on the other. In the present study these issues are pulled together, asking whether the demographic and socio-economic circumstances in which women experience single motherhood are associated with differences in subsequent labour market attachment. Using data on British and West German women between 1991 and 2008, the analyses investigated the relationships between characteristics of single mothers' family situation as well as their class position with chances to develop part-time or full-time careers, or risking an employment trajectory with low labour market attachment in two country contexts.

Findings from the analyses supported the expectations that, among single mothers, different factors were important in determining the level of labour market attachment in their employment careers. For women who experience single motherhood at a young age, the risk of stretches of non-employment is high. This risk is fostered by the fact that young mothers have rarely built occupational affiliation. But single mothers with professional and managerial occupations showed to be best prevented from low labour market attachment. While the family-employment reconciliation issue around younger children's increased need for supervision featured strongly for predicting low labour market attachment, it was not found to be the most central factor for understanding why single mothers are part-time employed. In the analysis, working part-time appeared to be most obviously related to working in the services, but also to be associated with vocational qualifications. Family context showed to be of more relevance in terms of full-time employment careers. In order for high labour market attachment to develop, single mothers were found to be better off with fewer (< 3) and older children (> age 5). Basic vocational qualifications were found being detrimental to full-time employment careers, as were elementary and no occupations, as well as services, compared to professional and managerial ones.

Two key conclusions may be drawn regarding the debate around policy support for single mothers' employment. Firstly, the analyses highlight that support for the employment of single moth-

ers might have to look at different factors depending on what level of labour market integration is aspired. In order to facilitate that women have and maintain full-time employment during single motherhood reconciliation policies such as childcare provision or leave regulations may go some way. In addition, the association between timing of single motherhood and non-employment points to young single mothers' particular struggles. For part-time employment, however, reconciliation seems to be a smaller issue. This leads to the second main insight, namely, that socio-economic position is indeed a relevant factor for deciding about single mothers' labour market attachment. Differences in occupational background at first single motherhood showed to be closely related to differences in subsequent labour market attachment, often trumping obstacles in family context. It would hence be well-advised to keep in mind that any policy tailored to middle-class mothers may be ill-designed for lower-class women. As for the comparison between British and German mothers, the analyses suggested that for British single mothers part-time employment is not a common track, but other country differences are not striking. Lastly, the study's limitations should not be overlooked. Importantly, the results are hardly transferable to the larger populations of single mothers in Great Britain and West Germany, because the samples are highly selective. Moreover, selection into particular career trajectories cannot be ruled out, and hence methods accounting for selection bias (e.g. fixed effects or Heckman correction) should ideally be considered in future research.

8. References

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Krisen und Krisenbewältigung im deutschen Sozialstaat: Von der Ölkrise zur Finanzkrise von 2008

ZeS-Working Paper No. 02/2015.

This working paper analyses the German social policy reactions to the 2008 Financial Crisis in light of the historical development and findings of comparative welfare state research. Four subsequent fiscal stimulus packages contained several important social policy elements, most importantly short-time work. By international standards, Germany's social policy response to the crisis was not uncommon, given its economic performance and existing welfare state institutions. What was surprising was the important role trade unions and employers had in formulating these policies. Representatives of the German export-oriented sectors, in particular, were able to leave their mark in 2008/09.

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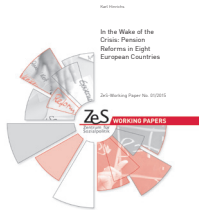
In the Wake of the Crisis: Pension Reforms in Eight European Countries

Die Finanzmarktkrise von 2008 und in deren Gefolge die Große Rezession sowie Staatsschuldenkrisen in verschiedenen EU-Ländern haben einschneidende Reformen der Alterssicherungssysteme ausgelöst, welche die Finanzierung der Renten kurz- und langfristig sicherstellen und/oder Vorstellungen von Generationengerechtigkeit realisierensollen. Dringlicher war es jedoch, den fiskalischen Manövrierspielraum wieder zu erweitern und Kredithilfen von internationalen Geldgebern (IWF, EU) zu erlangen. Diese Rentenreformen unterschieden sich von früheren im Hinblick auf den Umfang und den politischen Prozess. (1) Sie waren groß, zeitigten demzufolge eine signifikante und unmittelbare Wirkung auf die Lebensbedingungen der jetzigen und künftigen Rentenbezieher, und manchmal wurde auch die bis dahin verfolgte Politikausrichtung verändert. (2) Die nach 2008 erfolgten Reformen passierten rasch den Gesetzgebungsprozess und wurden ohne lange Übergangsfristen umgesetzt. In diesem Papier werden die Rentenreformen in acht krisengeschüttelten EU-Ländern betrachtet, nämlich Griechenland, Irland, Italien, Lettland, Portugal, Rumänien, Spanien und Ungarn. Dabei geht es um die Inhalte dieser Reformen und die Umstände, die jeweils zu diesen Veränderungen geführt bzw. sie ermöglicht haben. Gezeigt wird, dass die Herausforderungen, mit denen diese Länder konfrontiert waren (oder sind), einschneidende Veränderungen erlaubten bzw. erzwangen, die ansonsten kaum durchsetzbar gewesen oder in Anbetracht der politischen Konsequenzen von den jeweiligen Regierungen so nicht in Angriff genommen worden wären. Weiterhin werden im Ländervergleich die Gemeinsamkeiten und Unterschiede beleuchtet sowie nach den bislang erkennbaren sozialen Konsequenzen gefragt.