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Quarterly Bulletin of the Vienna NGO Committee on the Family

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Vienna NGO Committee on the Family
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Dear Readers of Families International,

This is a special jubilee issue Nr. 100 of the Quarterly Bulletin, published online. It focuses, amongst others, on Involved Fatherhood, based on a presentation by Dr. Scott Benson and Nathan Robbins, at an Expert Group Meeting (EGM) on "Family policies and the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda" at the United Nations in New York. This jubilee issue also focuses on Family Poverty – Causes, Consequences, Solutions, and includes a presentation by Dr. Michaela Moser, Institute of Social Inclusion Research at the University of Applied Sciences in St. Poelten, Austria, during an International Forum organized by the Vienna NGO Committee on the Family at the United Nations Vienna International Centre on November 7th 2016.

This special issue also coincides with the recent election of Wolfgang Engelmaier, the Representative of Kolping International, as Chairperson of the Committee. Included is a statement from the new Chairperson, introducing himself to our readers, including representatives of member organizations of the Committee.

Further in this issue are texts from Member Organisations of the Committee, as well as a number of recent and upcoming events.

The Committee would like to express its appreciation to all those who have so far contributed texts to one or more of the 100 issues of Families International, which has a mailing list of over three hundred readers world-wide, who are informed when a new issue is available to download.

With kind regards,

Peter Crowley Ph.D.
Editor

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From the Vienna NGO Committee on the Family

From the Desk of the Chairperson

Dear Readers of Families International,

It is a great honor for me to introduce myself to you as the new Chairperson of the Vienna NGO Committee on the Family. My name is Wolfgang Engelmaier, I am 48 years of age. My own family consists of my wife Sabine and three children (Sophie, 20, Felix, 16, and Anna, 8). I work in the field of Social Management, currently as National Secretary of the Kolping Society in Austria. As a representative of Kolping International I joined the Vienna NGO Committee on the Family in 2008 and since then I´ve been able to witness the great work of its various member organisations for the benefit of families worldwide.

Our Committee understands itself as a Bridge Builder between families-oriented Civil-Society-Organisations and the United Nations, governments and academic institutions. I want to express my thanks to all the people who have contributed to building this bridge and maintaining it, especially to my predecessor, Dr. Michael Schwarz, and to our acting Secretary Dr. Peter Crowley, who is also responsible, as editor, for our Quarterly Bulletin 'Families International' as well as for the online networks of our Committee. I also wish to thank Ceja Gregor-Hu, who was elected to be our Treasurer for the next three years, for her continuing commitment to the endeavours of the Committee.

There are so many challenges and so many families without a voice in the world today and the organizations that join together in our Committee are the ones who can and do put emphasis on those needs and aspirations. Within our Family Committee we have people, we have knowledge, we have tools; of course we also have our limitations, but we can work on that as well I´m sure.

Joining forces is crucial in a world which is drifting apart in so many respects. Let me express my hope that our member organizations will continue their support and maybe even intensify their participation in the work of the Committee. With regard to that, let me draw your attention to our next Full Committee Meeting (FCM) on May 8th which will give us the opportunity, not only to observe the United Nations International Day of Families 2017, but also to share and define the path our Committee will take from where we stand now. If you are unable to participate in the FCM, you are welcome to forward your ideas and suggestions as a contribution to our deliberations, as soon as you please at your convenience.

"It takes a village to educate a child" and, as far as this Family Committee is concerned, it takes dedicated representatives, who commit their time and skills; who take part actively, share their ideas, think about how they can contribute to our common projects in a way that leaves an indelible mark.

Thank you for your kind consideration and best regards,

Wolfgang Engelmaier

Chairperson   contact@viennafamilycommittee.org

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VIENNA NGO COMMITTEE ON THE FAMILY

www.viennafamilycommittee.org
www.10yearsIYF.org
www.20yearsIYF.org
www.civilsocietynetworks.org

Email: contact@viennafamilycommittee.org

MAG. WOLFGANG ENGELMAIER

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DIE ARMUTSKONFERENZ.

Family Poverty
Causes, Consequences, Solutions

Michaela Moser -
November 2016
www.armutskonferenz.at

Member of www.eapn.eu

EAPN

What is EAPN?

- A network of 31 national anti‑poverty networks in EU member states and beyond (Norway, Iceland, Serbia, Macedonia) plus 18 European Organisations

EAPN's objectives are:

- To keep the fight against poverty and social exclusion on the EU Agenda

- To increase the effectiveness of anti – poverty strategies

- To strenghten the focus on a right's based a proach

- To fight for and with people experiencing poverty to make a social Europe a reality for all

- To ensure better participation of people experiencing poverty in deci‑sion making processes

DIE ARMUTSKONFERENZ.

Lobby derer, die keine Lobby haben

Lobby for those who have no lobby

active since 2005: 1st Austrian Poverty Conference

40+ member organisations

NATIONAL ACTIVE welfare organisations, social enterprises, educational and research organisations, small social NGOs, women's organisations, church and trade union organisations, initiatives of people experiencing poverty and social exclusion

3 regional networks

Oberösterreich, Salzburg, Kärnten

academic advisory board

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Lobby derer, die keine Lobby haben
Lobby for those who have no lobby

Main activities

Conferences on Poverty and Wealth

Awareness raising and information work

Political lobbying and monitoring

Media work

Networking : National and European wide with various stakeholders

Empowerment of people experiencing poverty

„Poor children don't grow on trees!"

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How can Europe be a ‚success story' if there are still so many inequalities?

Polite words stay meaningless if real changes are missing

Jobs seem to count more than people

Public opinion is often ve... negative.
Being accused to be just ... lazy to work is very humiliating

We don't want to have to repeat our stories agian and again and again...

Migrants are often excluded from access to social services

Many of us have no proper housing and cannt afford to pay for heating. And there are also loads of problems with regards to a Minimum Income.

10

„Listen to the voices of people in poverty!"
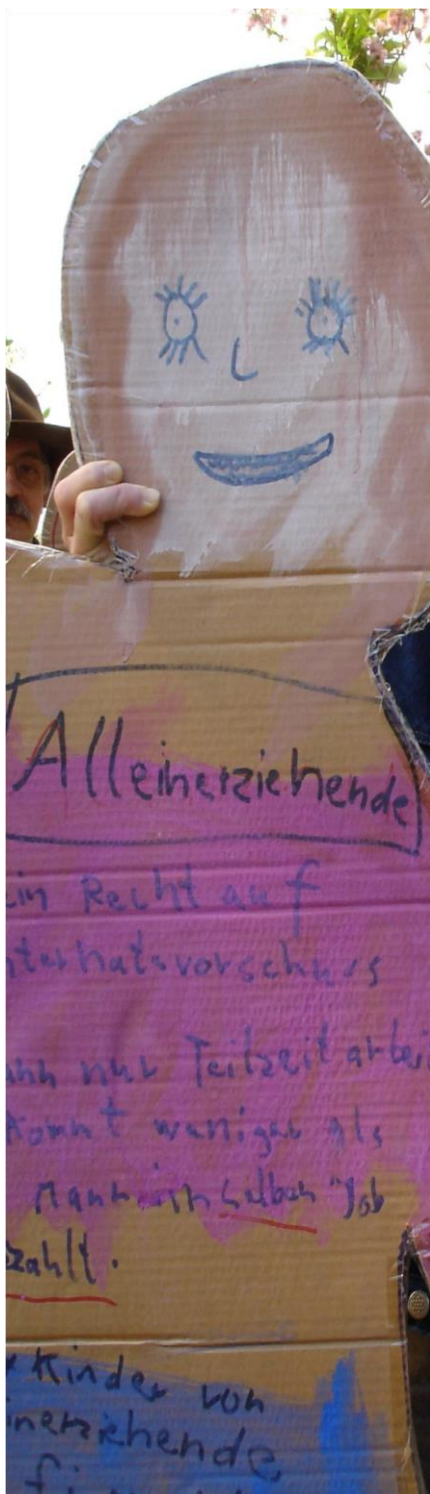
Definition of Poverty according to Eurostat
The At Risk Of Poverty or Social Exclusion
Composite Indicator (AROPE)

People are considered to be At Risk of Poverty or Exclusion if they are
at risk of relative monetary poverty (AROP indicator) = falling below 60% of median income
and/or severely materially deprived (SMD indicator)
 * and/or living in households with very low work intensity.

People are counted only once even if they fall under all of the three situations.

Sources and further information EU-SILC: http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/income-and-living-condi-tions/data/ database

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INTERNATIONAL
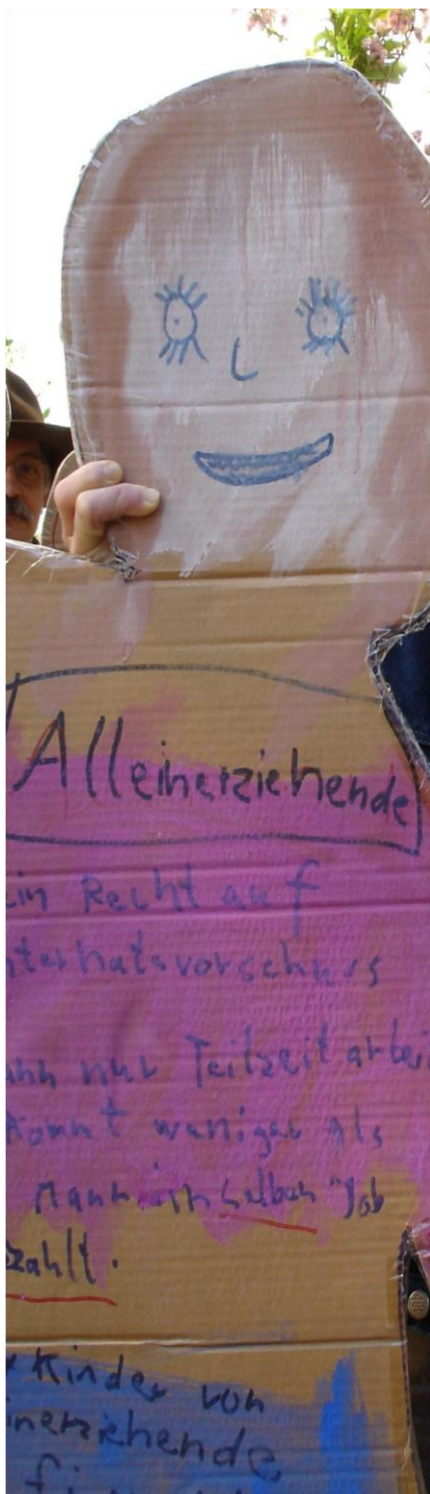
24,8% of the EU population = 124,5 million people, at risk of poverty or social exclusion.

16,9% of the population in the EU is at risk of relative income poverty

9,9% is severely materially deprived

10,5% is living in households with very low work intensity

1 out of 4 children in the EU faces poverty and social exclusion

Among the most vulnerable are:
- Children in Single – Parents - Households
- Children in Households with many children
- Children in Households of migrants or with minority ethnic background

Sources and further information EU-SILC: http://ec.europa.eu/eurstat/web/income-and-living-conditions/data/database Statistik Austria: www.statistik.at alliance4investinginchildren; www.eurochild.eu
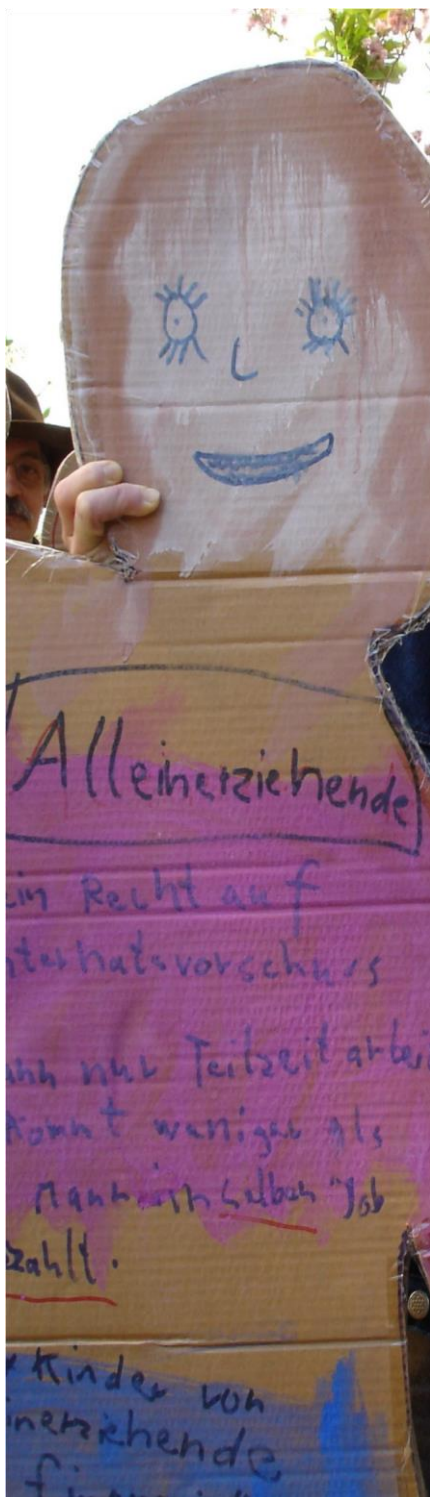
1 out of 4 children in the EU faces poverty and social exclusion.

Children (0-17) have a particularly high rate of poverty or social exclusion at 28%.

For single parents with dependent children the risk of monetary relative poverty is 34,5%.

The risk is also particularly high among young people (18-24) at 23,1%.

Women are globally more at risk of relative monetary poverty with a rate of 17,6%.

These figures do not include some of those in the most extreme situations such as some minority ethnic groups, especially the Roma, immigrants including undocumented migrants, the homeless, people living in or leaving institutions etc.

Sources and further information:
EU-SILC: http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/income-and-living-conditions/data/database
Statistik Austria: www.statistik.at
alliance4investinginchildren; www.eurochild.eu

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Child and Family Poverty in Austria

266.000 Children (from 1,5 Mio children under 17) grow up in households   facing income poverty

333.000 live in households that cannot afford to go on a holiday

40.000 live in households that lack the money to pay for heating

130.000 live in households that cannot afford to invite friends or family for dinner/at least once a month

70.000 Children live in households who depend on Mindestsicherung (Austrian Minimum Income Scheme)

Source: EU-SILC 2015 – www.statistik.at

NGO FAMILIES INTERNATIONAL

Child and Family Poverty in Austria

Risk of poverty + social exclusion in Austria 14%

Households with children 15%

One – parent families 31%

HH with one child 10%

HH with two children 13%

HH with three or more children 24%

Source: EU-SILC 2015 – www.statistik.at

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Living below the line
How children experience poverty

Isabel Prahl: Poverty tells many stories

**https://www.youtube.com/watch?
v=pSRMeiLljnw**

'Poor Children don't grow on trees'

Causes for Child and Family Poverty
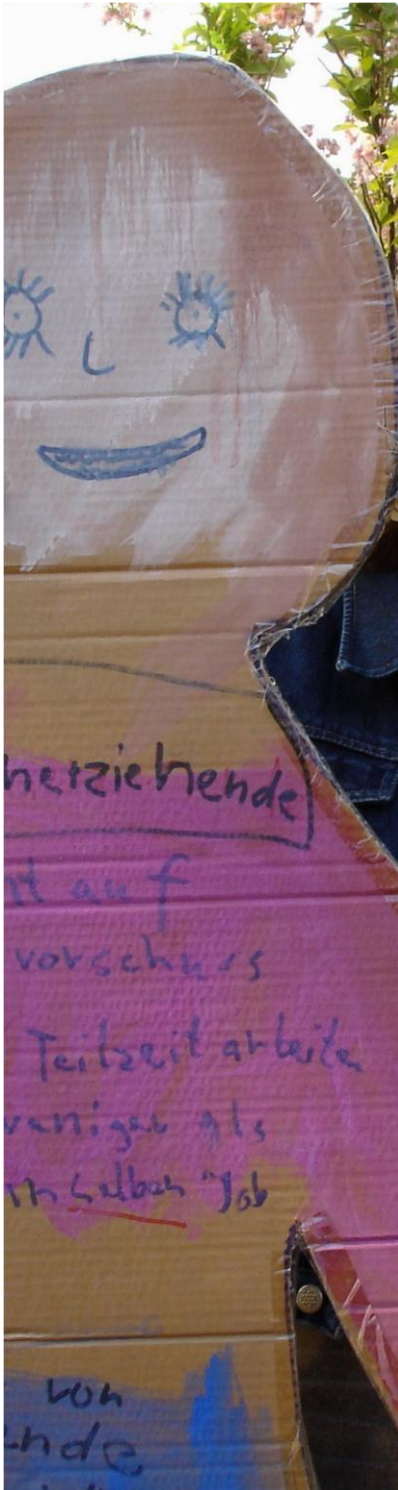
- Missing or low income of parents

  Missing or low social benefits for families

- Little or no access to the necessary high quality infrastructure: Child care, social housing, health prevention, public transport, high quality public schools

- Ignorance towards the value of care work

- Injust distribution of work, income, Wealth and time

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Growing inequalities ... and their negative effects on:
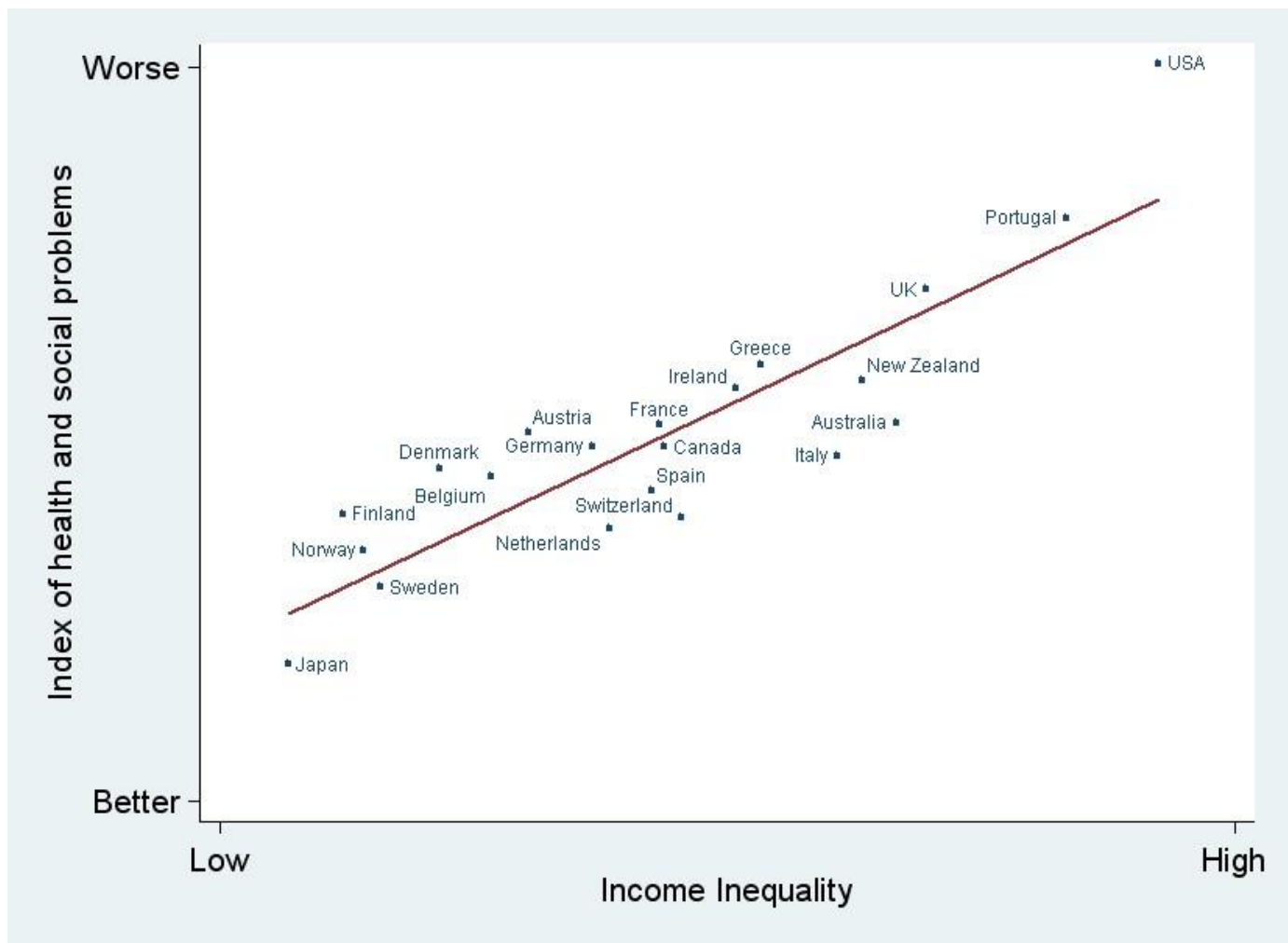
- Life expectancy
- Math & Literacy
- Infant mortality
- Homicides
- Imprisonment
- Teenage births
- Trust
- Obesity
- Mental illness – incl. drug & alcohol addiction
- Social mobility

The Equality Trust

Source: R. Wilkinson & K. Pickett, The Spirit Level (2009)

www.equalitytrust.org.uk

'Poor Children don't grow on trees'

Better policies to fight child and family poverty are needed
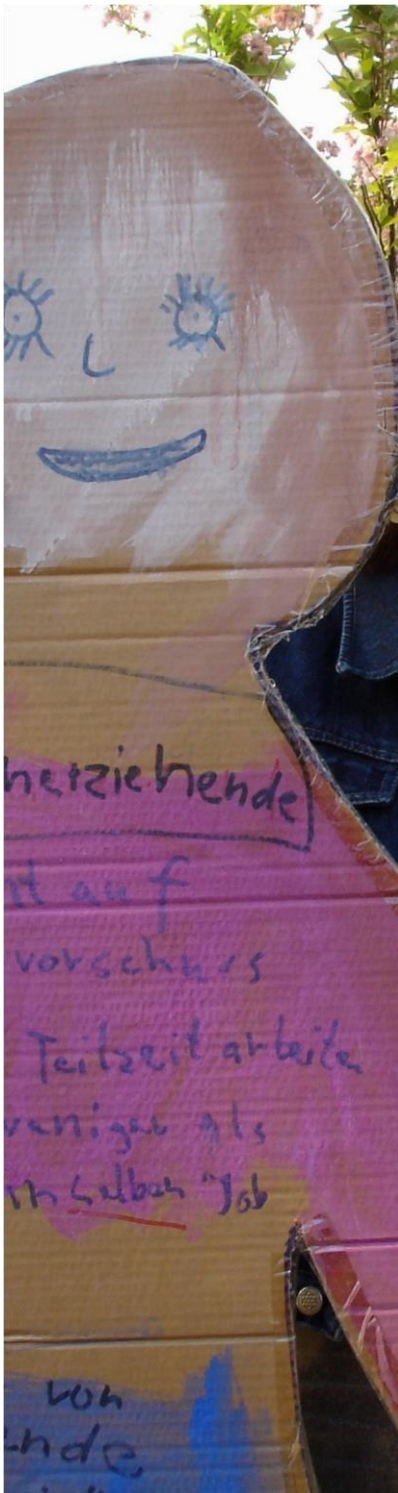
- Focus on individuals AND their environment

- Focus on children AND parents

- Universal AND specific meassures

- Investment in high quality social infrastructure:

- Child care

- Education

- Social housing

- Health Care

- Public Transport

- Counselling and support

'Poor Children don't grow on trees'

Better policies to fight child and family poverty are needed

- A more just distribution of work AND income
  Adequate wages
  Adequate minimum income
  A more just tax system

  Innovative labour market policies
  Meassures for better gender equality
  Better distribution of different forms of work

  Guaranteeing (children's) rights
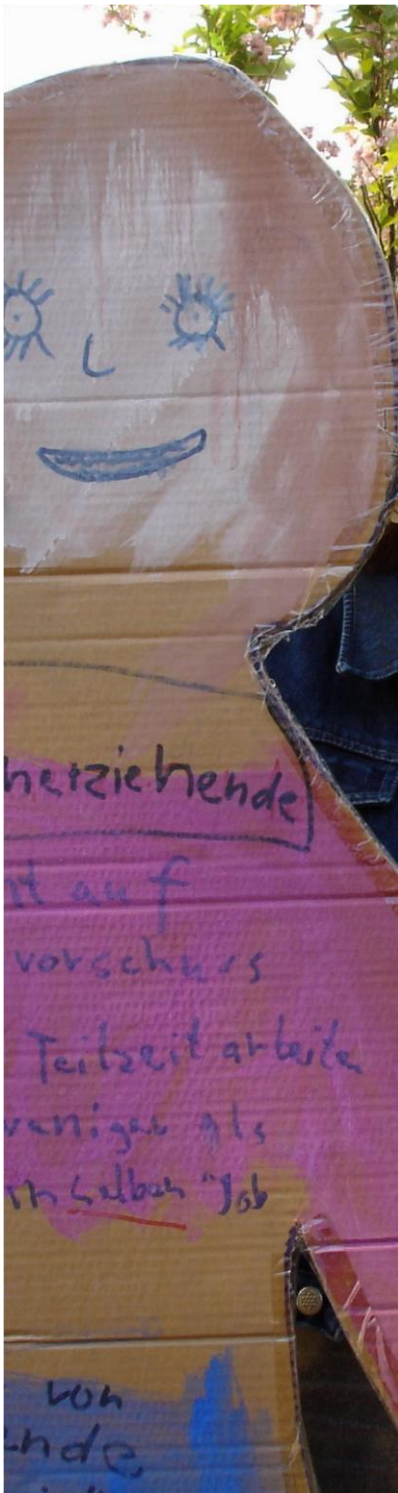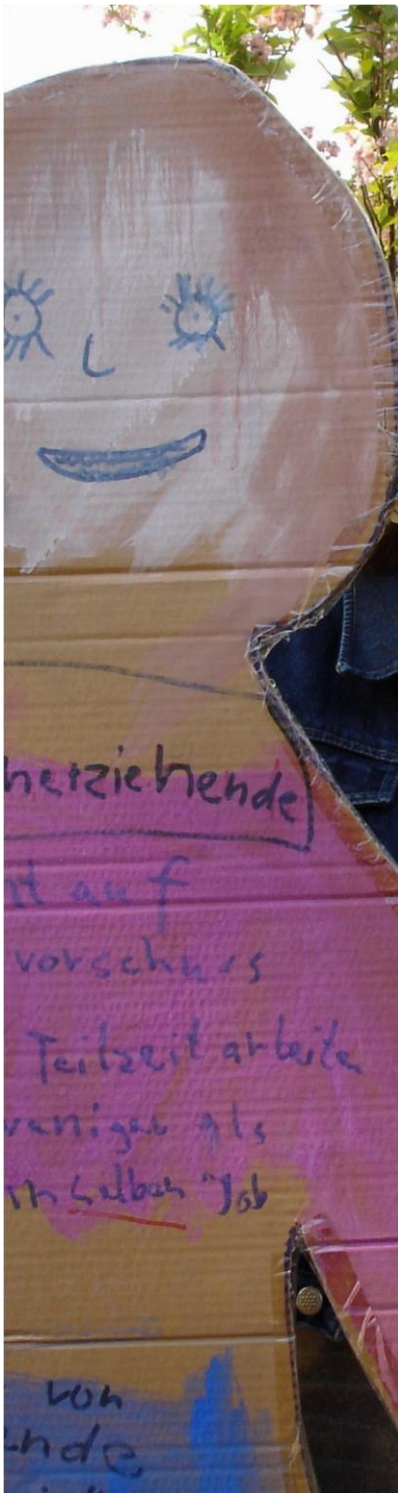
'Poor Children don't grow on trees'

Better policies to fight child and family poverty are needed

- Establish concrete poverty reduction objectives

- Establish tight monitoring processes

- Strengthen the focus on participation: innovative projects/participative democracy

- Strengthen anti-discrimination measures

- Strengthen projects valueing children's potential
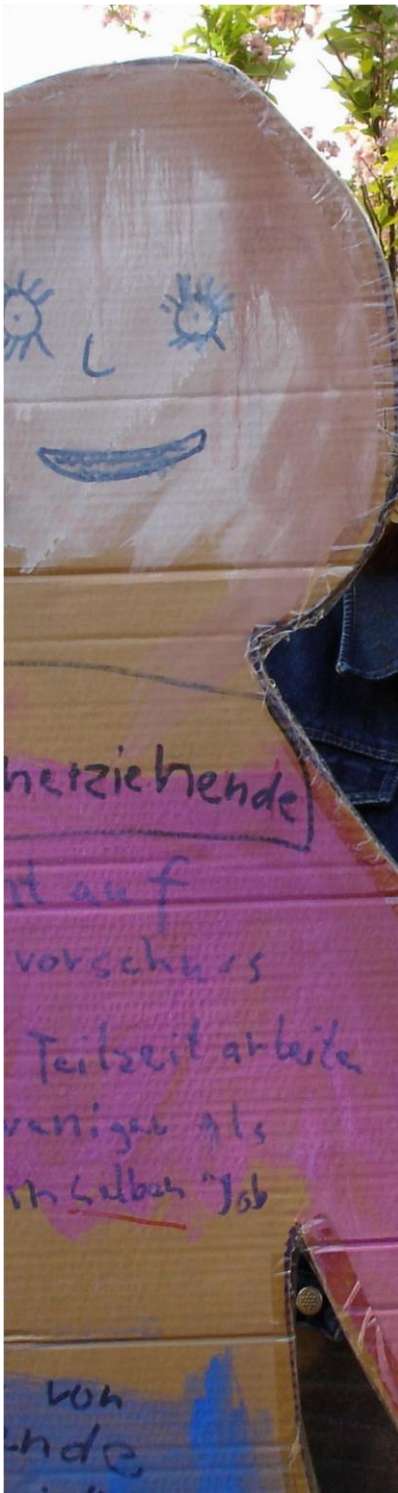
2016 Peer Review in Ireland: Prevention and early intervention services to address children at risk of poverty

Key learning points 1

- The pre-birth and 0-3 years are vital to a child's future development. Prevention and early intervention are a real long term investment.

- Political will is important to ensure adequate resources and a long term approach. This needs to be built and constantly reinforced

- A broad holistic policy mix is essential, as well as support for parental employment and adequate child and family benefits.

- Develop a system-wide approach that is multi-dimensional, strategic and integrated.

- Combine universal and targeted services as this will increase public support and help to improve the quality of services.
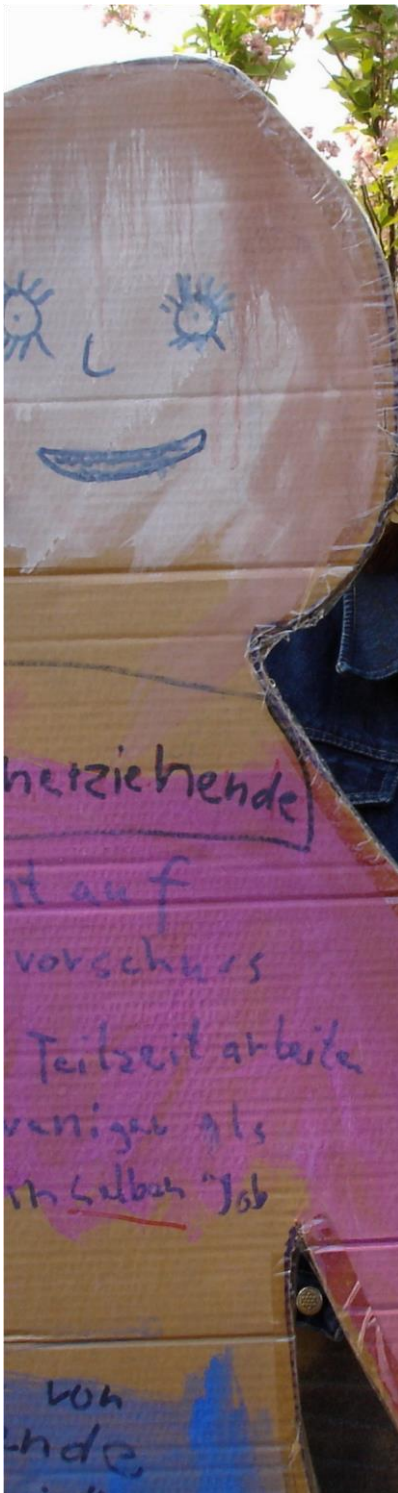
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2016 Peer Review in Ireland: Prevention and early intervention services to addresschildren at risk of poverty

Key learning points 2

- Focus on local level and coordination is important.

- Reach out to children and families most at risk.

- To ensure quality, invest in building capacity across agencies, including training and mentoring for professionals.

- Data and evaluation is important for evidence-based policy, as is involving stakeholders.

- Foster the participation of children, parents and communities, for better service delivery.

- Put children's rights at the heart of policy and programme development.
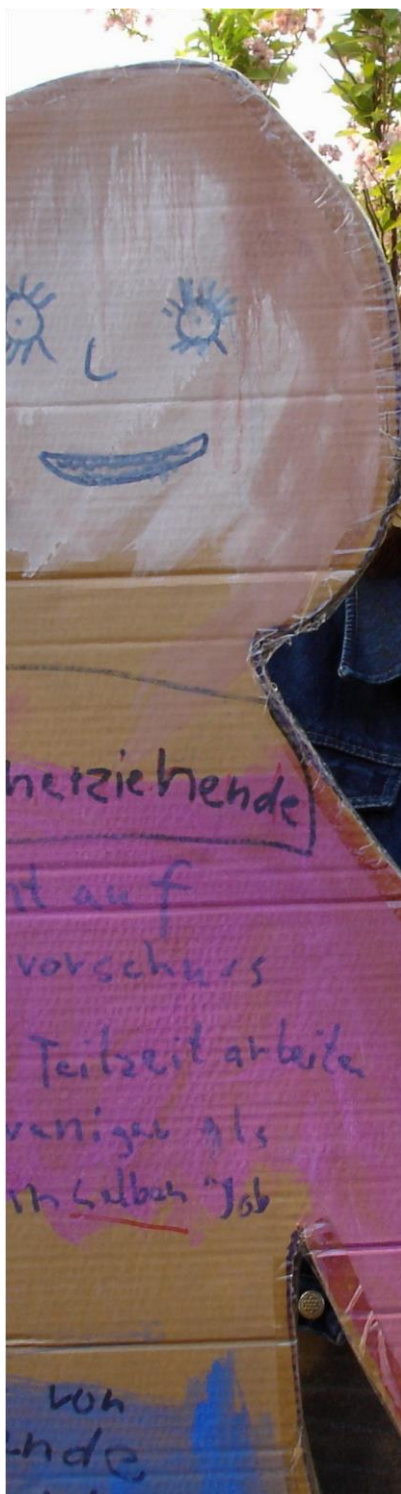
2016 Peer Review in Ireland: Prevention and early intervention services to address children at risk of poverty

Key learning points 3

- Working with families is vital but not a substitute for children's rights and services.

- The EU level can provide valuable support through, for example, benchmarking, monitoring and recommendations to Member States.

- It is necessary to strengthen the status of social policies vis-à-vis economic governance.

Source and further information:
http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?
catId=1024&langId=en&newsId=2328&furtherNews=yes

http://www.alliance4investinginchildren.eu/partners/

The Use of Reference Budgets

Reference budgets are priced baskets of goods and services that are needed for households in given countries, regions or cities to achieve a given standard of living.

These budgets are usually developed for a limited number of model families taking account of:

- The household composition and circumstances;

- Individual needs and characteristics such as the situation as regards housing, health and individual competences;

- Natural and institutional characteristics, especially the availability and accessibility of public goods and services.

- Reference budgets developed in various countries across Europe in the last few years are based on **survey or other statistical data, international regulations and guidelines, expert knowledge, focus groups** (i.e. a participatory approach) **or a combination of these**.

Austrian Reference Budgets – Some Figures

	2 P+1C (7)	2P+2C (7/14)	2P Budgets +3C(7,9,14)
EXPENDITURE	2.815	3.419	3.973
MINDESTSI-CHERUNG	1.407 + 178	1,558,- + 389,-	1.709,- + 624,
POVERTY LINE	2.093	2.675,-	3.024,--

Sources and further information: budgetberatung.at; referencebudgets.eu

The Europe we want!

Key messages developed by members of the EAPN

- Social Progress is possible – even in a time of crisis

- We need to stop stereotypes and discrimination and guarantee people's rights

- Better and more participative forms of democracy need to be developed.

- We need to ensure a fairer distribution of wealth, income and time

- Local and global action has to go hand in hand. The fight against poverty, social exclusion and inequalities is a fight for global justice.

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Ensuring a good life for all!

Life: Living one's life (not that of another) - Bodily Health: adequate nourishment and shelter... - Bodily Integrity: freedom of movement, opportunities of sexual satisfaction, reproductive choices - Senses, Imagination and Thought - Emotions: attachments to things and people, love, care, grieve, longing, gratitutde, anger ... Practical reason: forming a concpetion of the good, engaging in critical relfection about one's life - Affiliation: social interaction, self-respect, nonhumiliation, dignity, nondiscrimination - Living with other species - Play - Laughter - Control over one's environment: Political participation, property rights, meaningful work ...

Source: Martha Nussbaum: The Capabilities Approach

FROM MEMBER ORGANISATIONS OF THE VIENNA NGO COMMITTEE ON THE FAMILY

International Inner Wheel

Dr Kapila Gupta
Vice President - International Inner wheel

International Inner wheel is an NGO of women's voluntary service organizations, spread over 103 countries world-wide, with almost 4000 Clubs & around 100,000 members, all women, with Head Quarters in Manchester, where its first club was formed way back in 1924 by founder President Margarete Golding. Membership was open to spouses of Rotarians. In 1934 many clubs were formed in Great Britain (GB) and later in 1947 an Association of Inner Wheel clubs of GB was given that name. Many more clubs started in Norway, Holland, Canada, Australia & India.

On July 1st, 1967 the name was again changed to International Inner Wheel to give it a more global look. An International Executive body was formed. In the same year the National body of IW was also recognized in countries like, Norway, Australia, India, Denmark, Netherland, Sweden, and the Philippines.

In 1970 the first Convention was held at The Hague, which supported a Governing body of elected Officers at IIW & a Board Director from each country. In 1993 restructuring was again carried out, with an Elected Executive membership & 16 Board Directors from different countries. In 2012, at the Istanbul Convention it was decided to invite as members those who are neither related to IW or the Rotary family.

For futher information please visit: http://www.internationalinnerwheel.org/

Family Life in India: An Epitome of Culture and Tradition

Dr Kapila Gupta
Vice President - International Inner wheel

Family life in India is different from that in the western world. The former has tremendous cultural and ethnic diversity, which is why it is appreciated by a lot by people from all around the world.

Every region in India has its own characteristics and traditions, like the palm-leaf houses in the south are no way similar to the stone houses of the Himalayas or the houseboats of Kashmir. Every state has its own identity which is respected by people in India and also the world. Family life is equally varied in Indian states. India is a country with many states in which people from different cultures, religions, castes, etc., live. The language, clothing, customs, and traditions of people are influenced by the respective regions they reside in.

Most of the families in India are extended ones, wherein, every member has his/her own role. The family structure in India is typical.

Financial Support

If Indian children are unable to do something on their own, the parents are always there to support them in monetary terms It is just like the children taking care of their parents after they retire.

Poverty in India is a historical reality. From the late 19th century through the early 20th century, under British colonial rule, poverty in India intensified, peaking in 1920s. Famines and diseases killed millions each time. After India gained its independence in 1947, mass deaths from famines were prevented. Rapid economic growth since 1991, has led to sharp reductions in extreme poverty in India. However, those above the poverty line live a fragile economic life.

Poverty in India

60 years of fighting poverty in India

India's government is well aware that poverty is a giant barrier to overcome if it is to fully develop the nation. A wide range of anti-poverty policies have been introduced since the 1950s. Poverty went from 60% to 35% between the 1970s and the early 1990s. Globalization and liberalization policies have made this trend go backwards in the 90s.

In 2012 the Indian Government stated that 21.9% of the population is below the poverty limit or to say lived $ 1.25 per day on purchasing power parity.

Defining Poverty in India is different than in rest of world.

In India –It is an income based poverty definition & Consumption based statistics are used.
In 2007 India set its own limits--26 Rs for Rural areas & 32 Rs for urban areas to define poverty.

Causes -----Mainly it is Population Growth

While services & Industry have grown at double digit figures, Agriculture has dropped from 4.8% to 2%. 52 % is employed in Agricultural areas. The contribution of Agriculture to GDP is 18%.

For 40yrs of Independence, India used the Soviet System of Planning-- Nationalisation, Government Ownership of Industry. But Since-1991---Growth rates have increased & Poverty line is reduced.

Poverty in India - The Statistics

- 50% of Indians don't have proper shelter;
- 70% don't have access to decent toilets (which inspires a multitude of bacteria to host their own disease party);
- 35% of households don't have a nearby water source;
- 85% of villages don't have a secondary school (how can this be the same government claiming 9% annual growth?);
- Over 40% of these same villages don't have proper roads connecting them.

Considering the size of India, poverty differs greatly from one state to another, so poverty lines are defined differently in each state. This disproportionalises the economic growth in the country. The same goes for another tragedy that the country is infamous for child labor in India. Solving this issue requires completely different approaches whether you're tackling it in towns (factories) or in rural areas (agriculture).

Jobs and housing shortage

As with many developing countries, urban poverty in India is a direct effect of rural migrations fleeing poverty. This creates a massive unemployment and underemployment issue but also a disproportionate housing problem.

Slums & Cities - a Source of Instability?

The spectacular growth of cities has made poverty in India incomparably more visible and palpable through its famous slums. If, proportionally speaking, there are less urban poor nowadays, their sheer number has been increasing. They spend 80% of their income on food.

Agriculture, hunger and rural poverty

Since there are so many people working in agriculture and living in rural areas, the agricultural sector has (and should have) an unrivaled priority in policies aimed at poverty in India.

National Poverty alleviation Programmes by the Government of India----

It can be categorised on the basis of whether it's for Rural Areas or Urban Areas. Most of the programmes are targeted at rural Poverty, as it is more prevalent in rural areas.

Globalization's effects on Poverty in India

1991 is the year that India embraced globalization and started, like many countries, its market liberalization, coupled with privatization and deregulation, while ensuring macroeconomic stability. Where China has been one of the few countries that has successfully managed their transition to the global market, the picture is more mixed with India, with lots of ups & down.

Alleviation of Poverty in India -- Some Successes ---

On the bright side, when anti-poverty programs did work, they've had a great influence on the social structure and helped people move up the social ladder. The problem is mostly that reforms have been conservative and incomplete while something more direct and "beefy" was needed (no offense to vegetarians).

Programmes are grouped in four major categories ---

Wage Employment Programmes----

Self Employment Programmes--

Social Security Programmes-----

Urban Poverty Alleviation Programmes------

National Old Age Pension Scheme:

Effective since 1995---a small amount of money is given to old age persons, who could not fend for themselves or who did not have any means of support.

National Family Benefit Programmes also started in 1995, & restructured in 2003-05. They are operated at the state level & are mainly for families below the Poverty line -labeled as BPL Families.

National Maternity Benefit Scheme--- Is for poor pregnant mothers, given 1-2 weeks before the birth of the child.

Integrated Rural Development Programme---- Its role is to raise families of identified target groups above the poverty line by creation of sustainable opportunities for self employment in the rural sector, which may be farmers, labourers, artisans. 40% would be women & 6 % physically challenged.

In addition there are ---Rural Housing schemes and a Rural Employment generation act. Now the New Poverty line limit is --32 Rs in Villages & 47 Rs in Urban areas per day.

The poverty rate has reduced to 12.4%, by improved infrastructure, specifically rural electrification. "Rural electrification in India has caused changes in consumption and earnings, with increases in the labour supply of both men and women, and the promotion of girls' schooling by reallocating their time to tasks more conducive to school attendance," .

The Role of Inner Wheel (IW) Clubs in India:

With nearly 1500 IW Clubs all over India --targeting the community for service projects and almost cover all age groups to alleviate poverty by;

- Providing free education to children of labor class.
- Adult Education ---
- Providing toilets in schools for girls to come & get education.
- Micro financing for numerous vocational courses or helping in starting a self help programme to start earning money by doing small scale industry.
- Providing computer education/ skills for job probabilities.
- Starting cyber hubs by sponsoring computers and providing the opportunity to earn a living.
- Starting tailoring courses or providing sewing machines to girls and women to earn money through tailoring.
- Adopting senior citizen homes to provide - clothes, medicines, food etc for those who have no one to support.
- Adopting orphanages for support - in education, jobs, health care.
- Providing employment to unemployed either at home or in their family owned businesses.

- Sponsoring shelters for the homeless.
- Sponsoring vending machines of coffee making, and selling vegetables, etc to earn a living.
- Organising picnics, outings for children or for senior citizens staying at orphanage or old age homes.

Poverty in India is an important issue in India. With one of the fastest growing economies in the world, clocked at a growth rate of 7.6% in 2015, India is fast on its way to becoming a large and globally important consumer economy. According to Deutsche Bank Research

the estimates are nearly 300 million people for all Middle Class.[1] If current trends continue, India's share of world GDP will significantly increase from 7.3 in 2016 to 8.5 percent of the world share by 2020.[2] In 2011, less than 22 percent of Indians lived under the global poverty line, nearly a 10 percent reduction from 29.8 percent just two years prior in 2009.[3]

We have high hopes to acquire the status of a developed nation in the coming years.

References:---- www.buzle.com; en.wikipedia.org; www.poverties.org

MMM'S ACTIVITIES TO PROMOTE MOTHERS' RIGHTS

MM Statement highlights important role of mothers in countering radicalization and violent extremism

The MMM Statement underscores that "mothers often have significant insight and influence in families and communities. They are often the first to recognize fear, resignation, frustration, and anger in their adolescent children. They often have a unique access to their children's vulnerabilities that no institution can have. This factor must be integrated into a multi-level strategic approach that also includes action upstream at the family level."

Read the full statement here MMM Statement HRC33 Mothers and Violent Extremism 2016-09-16.pdf

Human Rights Council September 2016 session: MMM convenes panel on "Addressing Unpaid Care Work" at NGO Forum on Women's Economic Empowerment at the UN in Geneva

On 10 October 2016, four speakers discussed implementation and policy best practices to recognize and redistribute unpaid care work:

- Dr. Valeria Esquivel, Senior Advisor, Social Policy and Gender at the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), presented the work she did for the UNRISD flagship report launched on 17 October in the chapter on "Care Policies: realizing their transformative potential".
- Paola Panzeri, Senior Policy and Advocacy Officer for Employment, Gender Equality & Migration at COFACE – Families Europe, gave examples of best practices of work and family reconciliation policies in Europe, i.e. redistributive policies, based on the "European Recon-

ciliation Package" published by her organisation.

- Antoine de Gabrielli, Founder & CEO Companieros & mercredi-c-papa, made the link between sharing responsibilities both at work and at home by presenting the "Happy Men" networks he founded in France ("Happy men share more!").
- Dr. Zahrah Nesbitt-Ahmed, Research Fellow at the Institute for Development Studies (IDS), focused more on recognition, i.e. making unpaid care work visible in public policies, based on work that IDS conducted at national level in developing countries like Uganda, Nepal, Bangladesh and others.

The panel report is available on the MMM website.

MMM highlights importance of Early Parenting and Early Childhood Education and Care in answer to WHO consultation

In November 2016, MMM and OMAEP (Organisation Mondiale des Associations pour l'Éducation Prénatale, an MMM member) submitted a joint answer to a call for input of the High-Level Working Group on Health and Human Rights of Women, Children and Adolescents which was recently established by the World Health Organisation (WHO). MMM and OMAEP focussed their submission on Early Parenting and Early Childhood Care and Education.

Recent advances in neurosciences have confirmed that the earliest experiences shape a baby's brain development, and have a lifelong impact on their mental and emotional health, as well as their physical, intellectual and social development. In particular, adversity during a mother's pregnancy or during the early childhood years (such as violence or

neglect) can produce physiologic disruptions or biological memories that undermine a child's development and their potential for future productive participation in society.

Instead, providing security and safety, loving, responsive and nurturing caregiving, early stimulation and learning (i.e. "early parenting") are linked to positive brain development and function throughout the life course. This is especially true during the critical period between conception and age 3 when the brain develops at its fastest pace.

Educating, caring, helping, supporting and empowering mothers in their early parenting role and responsibility during this critical time window is key: in most cases, mothers are children's primary caregivers. This means that beyond nutrition and physical health, attention should also be placed on mothers' wellbeing and mental health, especially during pregnancy and the perinatal periods.

Read the full submission on the MMM website.

MMM at Human Rights in Childbirth Europe Summit 2016 in Strasbourg (France)

On 19 October 2016, Make Mothers Matter helped organise and was a speaker at the Human Rights in Childbirth Fourth European Summit. It took place in Strasbourg (France), seat of the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR). This Summit of mothers, birth professionals, lawyers and other stakeholders occurred in the framework of the conference "Birth is a Human Rights Issue," organized by Midwifery Today.

Leaders of national, consumer-led maternal health organizations from 12 countries across Europe presented reports on the status of women's human rights, in law and in reality, in each national maternity care system. It was highlighted that women do not lose their basic human rights once they become pregnant and they have the right to access the healthcare support that they, personally, need for a healthy birth.

As an outcome of the summit, it will be drafted and published the first comparative international report on human rights in maternal healthcare showing the reality in Europe.
For more information: MMM Europe Strasbourg Press Release 10-2016.pdf

MMM France engages with presidential candidates on family policies

In October 2016, MMM France decided to interview all the candidates for the primaries in preparation for the 2017 presidential elections. A questionnaire was elaborated in collaboration with SOS Les Mamans and Enfance sans Drogue asking candidates to present their proposals on 12 topics that concern mothers as women and parents, and more generally families. Topics ranged from reconciling work and family life, family policies including taxation, domestic violence, unpaid care work to child protection, etc.

First, center and right wing candidates received the questionnaire and four of them sent back detailed answers. The same questionnaire will be sent to all the left wing candidates for the primaries in January 2017. Please find their responses here: http://www.mmmfrance.org/ and follow the debate on twitter #QuestionsDeMeres.

About Make Mother Matter – MMM

Make Mothers Matter (MMM) is an international NGO created in 1947 to raise the awareness of policy makers and public opinion on the contribution of mothers to social, cultural and economic development. MMM has no political or religious affiliations, and thus transparently voices the concerns of mothers at international level with permanent MMM representatives at the United Nations (General Consultative Status), UNESCO and the European Union. MMM federates a network of about 40 grass-root organisations working across the world to advance the rights of women and children.

Compiled by Irina Pálffy-Daun-Seiler, MMM Representative to the United Nations in Vienna, with input from Valérie Bichelmeier, MMM Representative to the United Nations in Geneva, and Olalla Michelena, Secretary General of the European Delegation of MMM.

A Major European Challenge
The EU regional response to the demographic future
1. November 2016

The European Committee of the Regions states that demographic change is one of the major challenges facing the European Union — its factors include an ageing population, a decline in the number of young people, and a lowerbirth rate; considers that the demographic change that Europe is experiencing is on such a large scale that if it is to be tackled, strong vertical cooperation initiatives are also required, which back up action taken at regional and local level by means of measures designed at national and supranational level; indicates that cohesion policy should play a more vigorous role in tackling demographic challenges, in accordance with the explicit mandate of Article 174 TFEU and Article 175 TFEU; that their achievement must be supported by the Structural Funds, the EIB and other financial instruments. It adds that other specific actions might prove necessary; believes that the EU's response to demographic change should be broad, coordinated and inte-grated, as this is a cross-cutting issue; recom-mends that the Europe 2020 strategy should be more attentive to local and regional demographic challenges, by means of a flagship initiative on demographic issues; emphasises the link that must exist between demographic change and the European Semester, and stresses the fact that the latter must have a territorial dimension.

The Commission for Social Policy, Education, Employment and Culture of the European Committee of the Regions has adopted the opinion on 'The EU Response to the Demographic Challenge' extracted in this pages [CDR 40/2016].

According to its rapporteur, Juan Vicente Herrera Campo (President of the Regional Government of Castille and Leon in Spain), "key competences in areas like, employment, participation in society and independent living that should be used to develop appropriate responses. He regrets that despite the potential for many European policies to contribute to tackling demographic challenges, they do not contain specific measures to assist affected areas, such as transport, information society, employment and social policy, environment and climate, business."

European Committee of the Regions, 'The EU Response to the Demographic Challenge', June 2016 [Extract}.

The demographic challenges facing the EU
The European Committee of the Regions:
1. States that demographic change is one of the major challenges facing the European Union. Its factors include an ageing population, a decline in the number of young people, and a lower birth rate — this means that demographic growth largely depends on migration, which varies widely between different regions of the EU.
2. Considers, however, that the contribution made by migration is only a short-term solution and will not be enough to resolve the problem of the falling birth rate — while migration provides more labour in the immediate term, it also increases the adult section of the population present in the EU and does not resolve the problem of the falling birth rate and the general ageing of that population.
3. Points out that since 2000, Europe's population growth has been very modest in comparison to the preceding 50 years. The population of 12 Member States shrank in 2014, while it grew in 16. In particular, the overall pattern is that urban areas have

more growth than rural areas in most European countries. Remote rural areas right across the continent are facing demographic challenges. The recent economic crisis has aggravated these divergent trends at both European and national level, as well as the challenges of population loss at regional level.

4. The interplay of fertility, life expectancy and migration means that major shifts in the age structure of the EU population are to be expected. The ratio of the active to dependent population will move from 4 to 1 to around 2 to 1. Europe will not only be older in 2060; its population will also be very unequally distributed.

5. Draws attention to the enormous economic, social, fiscal and environmental impact – at national, regional and local level – of demographic change. It affects the sustainability of pension systems and health systems and dictates the evolution of the welfare state, most powerfully due to the pressure on health care systems and social care services for the elderly and dependent persons. It also affects the development of the various regions of the EU and the maintenance of traditional ecosystems and infrastructure.

6. Underlines that these factors should be examined in the context of worldwide demographic change. In this respect, it warmly commends the OECD's efforts to gather comparative population data at local and regional level, enabling the context of demographic challenges to be understood more broadly, beyond their European dimension.

Regions'and cities'responses

7. Notes the various ways in which regions and cities are responding to demographic challenges:
- measures to promote production and employment, essential to tackle both increases and falls in population;
- policies to support families as well as measures to balance work and family life, which can contribute to achieving higher birth rates;
- through policies aimed at maintaining educational establishments in rural areas that are isolated;
- actions to make it easier for young people to become autonomous and remain in their home region;
- launching initiatives for the return of emigrants and the recovery of talent;
- ensuring equal opportunities for women and men, and improving the integration of immigrants;
- adapting health and social services to an ageing

population, with particular focus on supporting independent living, on improving prevention and on coordination between services;
- adapting towns and cities to make them more liveable, particularly for the elderly and dependant people;
- adapting transport policies and further specific measures to ensure mobility and increase interconnectivity in and among all regions.

8. Encourages European regions and cities to continue to address these problems, and also to seize the opportunities associated with demographic change, such as those related to the 'silver economy' for businesses and entities that devise and provide innovative products and services for older people, especially as it is precisely this potential that is exploited in the areas most affected by demographic change. Challenges also provide an opportunity to boost investment in human capital, to make better use of local resources, to institute more effective and efficient public services, and to come up with new ways to improve everyone's quality of life. The aim is to improve quality of life but also well-being, intended as the three-dimensional state of physical, mental and social well-being.

9. Stresses the importance of the fact that the adjustments to service structures needed in regions with a shrinking population can be carried out in such a way that those who remain in these regions, who are often older people, have access to services in accordance with their basic rights.

10. Is committed to continuing to support the European Covenant for Demographic Change, initiative launched by AGE Platform Europe in close cooperation with WHO Europe and built on the AFE-IN-NOVNET project, a platform for local and regional authorities to promote the creation of environments designed for older people in areas such as health, social services, housing, information and communication technologies, and urban policy and mobility.

11. Underlines the importance of European municipalities and regions as key actors in the implementation of European policies tackling the demographic challenge, in particular in setting up initiatives that build on diversity and promote an intercultural society.

12. Highlights the importance of cross-cutting cooperation in relation to demographic change. Territorial cooperation programmes have occasionally been geared towards this objective, particularly in

response to ageing, the decline in rural areas, and (to a much lesser extent) aspects related to birth rates in connection with demographic change. The CoR welcomes frameworks for reflection and sharing best practices in this area, such as the Demographic Change Regions Network (DCRN).

13. Considers that the demographic change that Europe is experiencing is on such a large scale that if it is to be tackled, strong vertical cooperation initiatives are also required, which back up action taken at regional and local level.

The EU's current response

14. Notes that the EU's current response to demographic challenges is limited and is poorly developed. It is limited because it focuses almost exclusively on ageing, while insufficient attention has been paid to other aspects such as low birth rates or population loss due to socio-economic reasons, and to transport, mobility and emigration issues. It is poorly developed because many policies that could help address demographic challenges are not specifically geared to this end.

15. Points out that the majority of initiatives to manage demographic challenges – almost always focused on ageing – have been driven by innovation and research policies. The flagship Innovation Union initiative under the Europe 2020 strategy has given rise to the Europe an Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing. The third pillar of the Horizon 2020 programme considers demographic change as a societal challenge.

16. Emphasises that the "second pillar" of the common agricultural policy, which deals with rural development, helps to tackle demographic challenges. During the 2014 - 2020 programming period, efforts are being focused on encouraging "the development of services and infrastructure leading to social inclusion and reversing trends of social and economic decline and depopulation of rural areas".

17. Indicates that cohesion policy should play a more vigorous role in tackling demographic challenges, in accordance with the explicit mandate of Article 174 TFEU and Article 175 TFEU.

18. Regrets that many European policies that could contribute to tackling demographic challenges do not contain specific measures to assist areas affected by these challenges. This is true of policies relating to transport, the information society, employment and social policy, the environment and climate, business, etc.

19. Regrets that more attention is not paid to demographic problems under the European Semester, as it has hither to considered only the effects of ageing on the sustainability of Member States' budgets. In particular, more sensitivity is needed to local and regional concerns, both in terms of evaluation and when formulating recommendations for Member States.

A fitting EU response

20. Believes that the EU's response to demographic change should be broad, coordinated and integrated, as this is a cross-cutting issue. A European strategy on demographic change is needed, which will bring all policies – cohesion, innovation, transport, health, society and employment, ITC, rural development, emigration, etc. – more into tune w ith this issue. This strategy should have a firm basis in common EU values, equal treatment and human rights. A strategic approach should also involve cost-analysis and projections at national, regional and local level.

21. Recalls that the European Parliament, in its resolution of 9 September 2015 on the Report on the implementation, results and overall assessment of the 2012 European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations 1, called on the Commission "to adopt an EU Strategy on Demographic Change to coordinate EU action in various areas in order to ensure synergies and maximise their positive impact on Europe's citizens, economy and job creation, as well as protect the human rights of older persons in all EU policies".

22. Considers that such a strategy should prioritise the creation of life sustaining and creating opportunities to help to attract and retain young people in all regions and to foster balanced growth between densely populated areas, areas experiencing population loss and thinly populated areas, focusing on the provision of high quality public services for all citizens. It should also promote family-friendly policies, in particular measures to remove barriers that discourage parenthood; increase the birth rate; incorporate a gender-related perspective; encourage independent living for older people; increase healthy life expectancy and reduce dependency; combat the social exclusion faced by some of the population and promote renewed efforts to support the recognition of unpaid domestic work and the implementation of policies to balance work and family life.

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23. Indicates that a future European strategy should involve society as a whole and give due consideration to the role of regional and local government in combating demographic change, promote mutual exchange of best practice and encourage approaches based on prevention and early intervention.

24. Is committed to highlighting the importance of a response at European level to demographic challenges via the ESPAS system, a platform for political planning involving the various EU institutions and bodies.

25. Insists that all EU policies and measures should take demographic challenges into consideration and set out ways to deal with them. The EU should seek to mainstream demographic considerations across all policy areas.

26. Underlines that demographic change is affecting mobility in demographically challenged regions, particularly rural areas close to major urban areas experiencing a population influx, and reiterates its call for a Green Paper on the issue2.

27. Considers that the EU should support immigration policies in the Member States, mainly based on employment, which can temper the negative demographic trends mentioned above and points to the need for a long-term vision for the integration of migrants, thereby helping to develop an intercultural society that respects fundamental European values.

28. Points out that ageing demographics and combined public funding pressures mean that local authorities will have to prepare for an ageing workforce, plan for large numbers of people to retire over the next few years, and ensure that they can attract sufficient young, skilled professionals. The recruitment and retention of younger people and of returning emigrants and older people requires more attention at all levels of government.

29. Considers that cohesion policy should have a strong focus on tackling the demographic challenge. This is an issue that should be emphasised in discussions on the future of the "post - 2020 policy" and that should influence its scope, approach and future implementation mechanisms so as to enable the strengths of each region to be harnessed and barriers (including demographic barriers) to their balanced development to be overcome.

30. Considers that housing and planning services delivered by regional and local authorities must also take into account the housing needs of elderly people, respecting, as far as possible, their wish to remain in their familiar environment, and having a role in relation to modification or adaptation of existing accommodation, promoting the development of inclusive design in construction practice or carrying out social housing projects.

31. Calls on the European institutions to provide a precise definition of the term "severe and permanent demographic handicaps" in Article 174 TFEU. And also calls on the EU to develop statistical indicators at an appropriate level to back up this definition.

32. Recalls that the CoR opinion on "Indicators for territorial development–GDP and beyond" 3 notes that GDP is not an accurate measure of a society's ability to tackle issues that concern it, such as demographic change, and calls for the establishment of international, national, local and regional indices to measure progress beyond GDP.

33. Also calls for cohesion policy to provide specific instruments for areas that are most affected by demographic challenges, such as a higher weighting for demographic criteria in the method used for allocating funding or greater flexibility with regard to co-financing rates or choosing thematic objectives.

34. Stresses that the European Regional Development Fund can help areas with high levels of ageing, rurality and population outflow to improve their transport, telecommunications and tourism infrastructure, bridge the digital divide, and enjoy better public services and support the adaptation of housing and residential accommodation.

35. Considers that the European Social Fund can play a very important role in relation to training young people, stopping so many of them leaving, and making it easier for them to return to their place of origin. It can also help to promote women's employability, foster a better balance between work and family life, and combat the social exclusion of the elderly.

36. Considers it essential to enhance cooperation between on issues related to demographic change. It therefore suggests that the European territorial cooperation programme should include the option, at cross-border level as well as at transnational and inter-regional level.

37. Underlines, with regard to transport policy, the importance of not isolating demographically less active areas, as well as regions suffering from severe natural or demographic handicaps, so as to stop these areas – which are often rural, peripheral,

mountainous and remote – from being further excluded.

38. Notes that the Cor opinion on Mobility in geographically and demographically challenged regions 5 states that challenged regions fulfil essential tasks for the balanced development of the EU notably through access to raw materials, agriculture, fisheries, environmental protection, tourism, cross-border relations and leisure opportunities.

39. Stresses the key role that information and communication technologies and intelligent environments can play in improving living conditions in areas most affected by demographic challenges. In this respect, calls on the EU to consider the digital divide affecting many of these areas.

40. Urges the European institutions to acknowledge – in policies relating to the environment and the fight against climate change – the key role of many rural and sparsely populated areas, as well as areas with highly dispersed populations, in maintaining the rural environment, biodiversity and landscapes.

41. Encourages the CAP to continue to incorporate measures to foster generational renewal in rural areas, promote female employment and enhance economic diversification.

42. Calls on potential demographic effects to be included in the Better Regulation programme's impact assessments, undertaken prior to any legislative initiative.

43. Considers that the European Fund for Strategic Investments has the potential to be an important tool for promoting investment in EU priority areas such as energy, transport, intermodal logistics, tourism, culture, information and communication technology, research and innovation, SMEs, education, health, environmental efficiency, social infrastructure and the social and solidarity economy.

44. Recommends that the Europe 2020 strategy should be more attentive to local and regional demographic challenges, by means of a flagship initi-

ative on demographic issues. Is committed to including a specific mention of the approach to demographic issues in the Europe 2020 Monitoring Platform.

45. Emphasises the link that must exist between demographic change and the European Semester, and stresses the fact that the latter must have a territorial dimension. Local and regional authorities should be active participants in measures taken under the European Semester to tackle demographic challenges, and recommendations made to Member States to address these challenges should take local and regional authorities into account.

46. Considers that ageing, while undoubtedly a challenge, is also an achievement in the sense that advances of all kinds by European society are an opportunity for cohesion, employment and progress.

47. Concludes that as the EU moves towards a scenario as described above, it is essential to continue to raise awareness at all levels of the significance of demographic challenges and to take steps in the right direction on the basis of existing tools.

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From the United Nations

The Effects of Involved Fatherhood on Families, and How Fathers can be Supported both at the Workplace and in the Home

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Abstract

There is copious research supporting the notion that involved fatherhood is crucial for the development of healthy, well-functioning families. In this paper, we review the empirical research on (a) the effects of involved fatherhood on the well-being of children, women and families, (b) the predictors of and barriers to paternal involvement, and (c) how familysupportive public and employer-based policy can better support fathers so they can succeed both at the workplace and in their families. We conclude with suggestions for further research, public policy and business practice.

Introduction

Empirical evidence has made abundantly clear that involved and caring fathers are important to the optimal development of children. Whether it is biological, adoptive or stepfathers, living in or outside of the home, fathers impact their children at every stage of development, and their absence has long last repercussions. However, simply knowing that fathers are instrumental in their children's lives is not sufficient to guarantee such involvement: research has also brought attention to the many barriers to parenting that men experience, as well as key areas in which men need encouragement in order to be the type of involved and caring parent their children need. The purpose of this paper is to highlight the diverse outcomes of father involvement for both children and women, to discuss the barriers to involvement that exist, and to explore ways in which men can be encouraged to be more involved fathers.

The Impact of Father Involvement on Children

The diverse effects father involvement has on child development can be grouped together in four categories: behavioral, emotional/psychological, social and cognitive/academic. In regards to emotional and psychological development, Children with warm and emotionally responsive fathers are less emotionally reactive (Byrd-Craven, Auer, Granger, & Massey, 2012), have higher levels of overall well-being (Amato, 1994) and experience less depression (Culpin, Heron, Araya, Melotti, & Joinson, 2013) and mood and anxiety disorders (Goodwin & Styron, 2012). Involvement with children at age seven reduces risk of psychological maladjustment, and involvement at age sixteen predicts less psychological distress in adulthood (Flouri & Buchanan, 2003). Involvement benefits children socially, as children with warm fathers have been found to relate better with other children (Baker, Fenning, & Crnic, 2011) and to exhibit more prosocial behaviors towards others (Flouri, 2005). Behaviorally, father involvement impacts children by decreasing externalizing behavior (Day & Padilla-Walker, 2009), hyperactivity and dysregulation

(Flouri, 2008), and increasing behavioral self-regulation (Owen et al., 2013). In the area of cognitive function and academics, children with involved fathers have higher IQs on average (Yogman, Kindlon, & Earls, 1995), have increased executive function (Meuwissen & Carlson, 2015), improved school conduct (Forehand & Nousiainen, 1993) and scholastic selfconcept (DuBois, Eitel, & Felner, 1994).

The Impact of Father Involvement on Women

 Involved fathers' effect on children has been one major area of focus in the last three decades of fathering research, but their effect on women has only recently become a growing area of interest. Women whose partners are involved prenatally use more health services on average, experience lighter workloads, and have a lower risk of post-partum depression (Levtov, van der Gaag, Green, Kaufman, & Barker, 2015). The wage gap between genders has been wellestablished, with women earning significantly less than men in the majority of developed nations (Levtov et al, 2015). The wage gap becomes larger when men and women have children, with men's wages increasing after they have children, and women's wages decreasing (Kmec, 2011), but in countries where fathers hold more egalitarian views towards childrearing and non-paid care, the wage gap is smaller (Andringa, Nieuwenhuis, & van Gerven, 2015). Fathers who are more involved in the home also promote future generations of involvement and gender equality: their daughters are more likely to have higher career aspirations (Croft, Schmader, Block, & Baron, 2014) and their sons are more likely to engage in more gender equal behaviors in their own relationships (Levtov, et al 2015).

Other Impacts of Father Involvement

 One overlooked beneficiary of involved fatherhood are fathers themselves. In fact, research shows that involved fatherhood makes men happier and healthier (Levtov, et al 2015).

Meaningful involvement with their children is reported by fathers to be among their most important sources of well-being and happiness (Eggebeen & Knoester, 2001). Studies find that fathers who report close, non-violent connections with their children live longer, have fewer mental and physical health problems, are less likely to abuse drugs, are more productive at work, and report being happier than men who do not have this strong connection (e.g., Burgess, 2006). Further, men who are fathers are more likely to be involved in their neighborhoods, more likely to regularly attend religious service, and more likely to engage in community service (Eggebeen, Knoester, & McDaniel, 2013). Most fathers aspire to success not just as financial providers and in their careers, but also as involved, loving fathers (Behson, 2015b).

In addition, considering the aforementioned impact of father involvement of gender equity at work and on women's paid work participation rates, support for fathers has been seen as bringing economic benefits to a country. In fact, it is estimated that if women participated in the labor force at the same rate as men, it could lead to substantial increases to Gross Domestic Product, ranging from 5% in the US to 9% in Japan and 34% in Egypt (OECD, 2012). Finally, both men and women who report higher satisfaction with their work-family balance tend to be absent less and quit less often, as well as become more engaged and productive at work (Ladge, Humberd, Watkins, & Harrington, 2015). Employer support for working fathers, in terms of leave and flexibility, leads to better balance for both men and their working spouses, and therefore, can and have been linked to improved business results.

Predictors of Father Involvement

As a whole, men's involvement in parenting activities is susceptible to a wide amount of variation, due to a number of factors. The largest and most consistent predictors of involvement can be broken into two categories: employment, and the relationship with the mother, both of which are highly interrelated with gender roles and norms. Despite overall increasing gender equality, a survey of 20 countries found that both men and women named financial provision as the primary responsibility of fathers (Munoz Boudet, Petesch, Turk, & Thumala, 2013). In essence, this makes employment the minimum requirement for father involvement – which is particularly problematic for low-income men (see Nelson, 2004) – and in more traditional

settings, the only requirement. Several other predictors of a father's involvement stem from the relationship he has with the child's mother: maternal gatekeeping, or mothers acting in ways to discourage or promote father-child interactions (Allen & Hawkins, 1999; Schoppe-Sullivan, Brown, Cannon, Mangelsdorf, & Sokolowski, 2008), relationship satisfaction (Erel & Burman, 1995), coparenting (Hohmann-Marriott, 2009) and family structure (Hofferth, Pleck, Goldscheider, Curtin, & Hrapczynski, 2013).

Further, fathers who are not married to their child's mother, as well as divorced noncustodial fathers are often prevented from being as involved with their children as they would like to be, based on a pervasive post-divorce preference for awarding primary custody to mothers, and by policies that make paternal access to children dependent upon financial provision. For men with lower income potential or with barriers to employment, such as a past criminal record, these barriers may be insurmountable. Such obstacles are often at odds with the purported standard of "best interest of the child" when adjudicating post-divorce arrangements (Raub, Carson, Cook, Wyshak, & Hauser, 2013).

Both categories of predictors (employment and the maternal relationship) are highly related to societal norms regarding gender roles held by both men and women. Men with more traditional views of the provisional father role tend to work longer hours and experience greater amounts of work-family conflict (Huffman, Olson, O'Gara, & King, 2014), and mothers' work hours are more predictive of father involvement than fathers' work hours (Norman, Elliot, & Fagan, 2014), indicating that women's decision to work or stay home has a large influence on men's involvement as well. Parents' views on gender roles play a large part in how the maternal relationship impacts father involvement. Maternal gatekeeping might be viewed as, at least in part, a result of the belief that the woman is the primary caregiver and men have a more auxiliary role. Indeed, both mothers' (Maurer, Pleck, & Rane, 2001) and father's (Bonney, Kelley, & Levant, 1999) perceptions of the fathers' ability to parent have a large impact on whether he gets involved or not. Because role norms are often reinforced ubiquitously, and because of their inherent effect on men's involvement with their children, a multifaceted approach – both in the workplace and in the

home – is required to encourage greater participation from men with their children and families.

From a more global perspective, gender norms range from relatively egalitarian societies to societies that exhibit high gender differentiation, hierarchy, and masculine orientation. In the latter cultures, the roles of men and women are particularly separate, leading to wider division of household labor, lowered female labor force participation and lower father involvement in dayto-day parenting and household management (e.g. Fuwa, 2004)

Paternal Leave and Encouragement of Involvement in the Home

Recent research on the effects of paternal leave has depicted experiences unfolding similarly among young couples awaiting their first child. Even after establishing equal divisions of domestic work and intending these patterns of behavior to continue after the baby is born, parents slowly end up taking on more traditional roles of parenting (Miller, 2011). In the U.S., this is due to the fact that women typically have at least three weeks of unpaid maternity leave while the father may take a day or two off of work. The mother begins to establish new patterns of primary care for the child, while the father's attempts at care slowly wane when his performance is seen as not on par with mother's (Fagan & Barnett, 2003). Granting paternity leave has been proven to prevent this slide into gendered parenting and promote more equality in childrearing. Fathers who take any paternity leave at all are much more likely to change diapers, feed the baby, and get up in the night with the child than fathers who do not (Tanaka & Waldfogel, 2007).

Conversely, Tanaka and Waldfogel also found that fathers who work longer hours report a decrease in these activities. Rehel (2014) summed it up rather succinctly in her report on paternal leave, stating that "when the transition to parenthood is structured for fathers in ways comparable to mothers, fathers come to think about and enact parenting in ways that are similar to mothers" (p. 111). In other words, fathers are not simply engaging in more caretaking activities, they are embracing the attitudes and behaviors that come with being an equal partner in parenting. It should be noted that making paternity leave available to men is not in and of

itself sufficient. Although men who are offered paternity leave are five times more likely to take leave after childbirth than men to whom it is not available (Tanaka & Waldfogel, 2007), there are often larger factors at play. Even in households with equitable parenting and work attitudes between mothers and fathers, there are stigmas surrounding extended leave that perhaps influence men differently than women. One study found that for women, the main consideration for the length of leave was her level of family orientation and the centrality of her role as a mother. For men, however, the primary influence on leave duration was the economic impact it would have (Duvander, 2014). Put differently, the costs involved in parental leave may be much higher for men than women.

In a more global context, while there are only two OECD countries that do not provide for some amount of maternity leave, only 67 of the 167 countries studied by the International Labour Office (Addati, Cassirer, & Gilchrist, 2014) provide for some form of paternity leave, and only 16 provide for leaves greater than 16 days. However, there has been considerable progress in many countries in extending parental leave to fathers, either by including wage replacement, setting aside "use it or lose it": leave designated for fathers (as in Portugal), or by allocating certain amount of leave for a couple to divide between themselves for an arrangement that works best for them (as in Scandanavia). For example, the rates at which fathers utilized available paternity leave rose dramatically in Quebec, Canada and California, USA once there was a provision of partial wage replacement (Rehel, 2014). As mentioned earlier, paternity leave can increase father family involvement, and this involvement is associated with benefits for children, women, fathers, business, economies and societies (Behson, 2015a).

The Father-Friendly Work Environment

 Workplaces that enact policies to encourage father involvement provide mutually beneficial results to both parties involved. Companies benefit because involved fathers work harder (Astone, Dariotis, Sonenstein, Pleck, & Hynes, 2010), show more loyalty (Leschyshyn & Minnotte, 2014) and have higher job satisfaction and less work-family conflict (Ladge, Humberd, Watkins, & Harrington,

2015). Other benefits include advantages in recruiting talented employees and even a short-term increase in stock prices when leave policies are announced (Behson, 2015a). Fathers and their families benefit because they live more healthily (Astone & Peters, 2014), engage in less risky behaviors (Weitoft, Burström, & Rosén, 2004), behave more altruistically in social relationships (Eggebeen, Dew, & Knoester, 2010) and attain higher incomes (Keizer, Dykstra, & Poortman, 2010). Men with flexible schedules report higher levels of involvement with their children, which is true even for low-income and nonresident fathers (Castillo, Welch, & Sarver, 2012). Fathers with rigid schedules and low levels of workfamily balance report higher amounts of stress, which impacts the work-family balance of working mothers (Fagan & Press, 2008), further disrupting family well-being.

Despite the benefits of supportive workplaces to both businesses and families, there exist many stigmas which prevent companies from providing flexibility to working fathers. In a study comparing the acceptability between flextime and flexplace arrangements, the majority of respondents said that flextime was much more favorable. If flexplace opportunities were requested, respondents viewed fathers' requests most highly, followed by mothers and then men with not children (Singley & Hynes, 2005). These social norms are perpetuated outside of organizational settings as well: self-employed fathers were much more likely than self-employed mothers to work outside of the home (Craig, Powell, & Cortis, 2012). Additionally, both fathers and mothers alike are viewed as less agentic and less committed to employment than nonparents, though fathers are held to less strict standards than mothers and childless men (Fuegen, Biernat, Haines, & Deaux, 2004).

Recent research (Harrington, et al, 2011, 2014) demonstrate that when it is offered, US men are increasingly taking two paid weeks of paternity leave. It is further reported that 89% of US men consider paid paternity leave at least somewhat important when evaluating employers and potential employers. Despite these encouraging statistics, other research has found that. US men who use paternity leave or other workplace accommodations for family face considerable stigma at their employers (Behson, 2015b). Many are reluctant to use paternity leave for fear of being seen as uncommitted

and unmanly, which perceptions are linked to lower performance evaluations, increased risks of being demoted or downsized, and reduced pay and rewards (Rudman & Mescher, 2013). Men also fear potential career consequences (Vandello, Hettinger, Bosson, & Siddiqi, 2013): specifically, fathers who are seen by bosses and coworkers as engaging in higher than average levels of childcare are subject to more workplace harassment and more general mistreatment as compared to their low-caregiving or childless counterparts (Berdahl & Moon, 2013). Finally, men who interrupt their employment for family reasons earn significantly less after returning to work (Coltrane, Miller, DeHaan, & Stewart, 2013). Thus, even US employees who can take paternity leave often feel social pressure at work that dissuades them. And, in the US, the lack of federal policy on this matter means only about 14% of private-sector employees are offered paid paternity leave.

In some countries, workplace environments have made significant progress. In Germany, for example, men who took parental leave were rated as more likeable and suffered no decrease in respect or competence (Fleischmann & Sieverding, 2015), independent of whether they took 2-, 4-, or 12-month leaves. Other countries have made significant progress in some areas while lagging in others. For instance, in Sweden, flexible work arrangements and support of leave are much more acceptable in white-collar jobs than in working-class jobs (Haas & Hwang, 2009). There has been repeated calls for companies to move beyond policy and accelerate cultural change to truly support working fathers.

Recommendations for Research, Policy and Practice

Based on the extant research, we recommend the following in order to support fathers for maximum benefit to fathers, mothers, children, families, societies and employers.

Public Policy

• Increased provision of parental leave geared specifically to men which includes partial wage replacement
• Greater parity between the amount of parental leave provided to women and men
• Laws and precedent for equally-shared custody of children as the default position for divorcing couples
• Efforts to promote the role of fathers throughout pregnancy and early parenthood by including them in pre-natal medical visits, classes and education
• Federal programs and initiatives for encouraging gender equality at home and in the workplace

Business Practice

• Greater parity between the amount of parental leave provided to women and men
• Expanded use of workplace flexibility, alternate scheduling and other family-supportive practices for both female and male employees
• Changing workplace cultures and supervisory attitudes to reduce the flexibility stigma associated with men who prioritize family
• The promotion of women and of men who have faced work-family challenges to positions of leadership provide a more diverse and empathetic policy-making when it comes to matters of work-life balance.

Research

• Understanding of the factors that influence greater father attitudes and role centrality
• Evaluation of the effectiveness of father education in changing men's attitudes toward gender roles
• Case studies of the US companies who have begun offering leave and the effects it is having • Reports of economic impact and feasibility studies of the implementation of federally mandated leave policies in the US
• Better understanding of the men and families who benefit most from paternal leave.

http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/family/docs/egm16/BehsonRobbins.pdf

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Recent and Forthcoming events

2017

May 2017
- 8: Vienna NGO Committee on the Family, Full Committee Meeting, incorporating an International Forum on 'The Internet in Families', (United Nations, Vienna International Centre) http://www.viennafamilycommittee.org

June 2017
- 5-7: 7th World Congress on Family Law and Children's Rights (Dublin, Ireland) http://www.world-congress.co/dublin-2017/

July 2017
- 25-29: 16th ISFL World Conference: Family Law and Family Realities (Amsterdam, Netherlands) http://www.isflhome.org/conference?conference_id=16

September 2017
- 12-16: AAFP Family Medicine Experience (FMX) Meeting (San Antonio, USA) http://www.aafp.org/events/fmx/about/past-future.html

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