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Literature Review on the Impact of Family Breakdown on Children

A report to the European Commission by Simon Roberts, Bruce Stafford, Deirdre Duffy, Julia Ross and Judith Unell

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European Commission
Directorate-General "Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities"
Unit E1 - Social and Demographic Analysis

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Abbreviations

BHPS	British Household Panel Survey
CCE	Central and Eastern European countries
CBCL	Child Behaviour Checklist
EC	European Commission
ESPAD	European School Survey Project on Alcohol and other Drugs
EU	European Union
EUROPOP	European Programme of Population Risks and Pregnancy Outcomes
FFS	Fertility and Family Surveys
GHQ	General Health Questionnaire
GHS	General Household Survey
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ISCED	International Standard Classification of Education
IVF	*In vitro* fertilisation
LAT	Living apart together
NCDS	National Child Development Study
NDLP	New Deal for Lone Parents
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OECD PISA	OECD Programme for International Student Assessment
PBI	Parker Parental Bonding Instrument
PSE	Present State Examination
PSF	Psychiatric Symptom Frequency Scale
SDQ	Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire
SIDS	Sudden Infant Death Syndrome
TIMSS	Third International Mathematics and Science Study

UK	United Kingdom
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
WHO	World Health Organisation

Eurostat country abbreviations used in graphs and tables:

at	Austria
be	Belgium
bg	Bulgaria
cz	Czech Republic
dk	Denmark
de	Germany
ee	Estonia
ie	Ireland
gr	Greece
es	Spain
fr	France
it	Italy
cy	Cyprus
lv	Latvia
lt	Lithuania
lu	Luxembourg
hu	Hungary
mt	Malta
nl	Netherlands
pl	Poland
pt	Portugal
ro	Romania
si	Slovenia
sk	Slovakia
fi	Finland
se	Sweden
uk	United Kingdom

Summary

Increasing rates of divorce, cohabitation and single parenthood mean that the well-being of families throughout the European Union has generated considerable interest from policy makers. This report presents an overview of the available knowledge that is published in the English language on the way that family change affects children.

Across the EU, family structure, formation, dissolution and policy vary considerably. The review considered selected outcomes for children in 12 countries: Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Spain, Sweden and the UK. These countries have been selected to represent different approaches to family policy.

The outcomes considered are poverty and social exclusion, educational achievement, health and well-being, and housing. The review shows that the increased risk of poverty among children in single parent families is reinforced by disadvantage at school and poorer health and housing outcomes. Children from non-intact families are more likely than those living with both their parents to be exposed to risks which represent barriers to educational achievement. Educational outcomes are of particular concern as they are crucial to the future life-prospects of children and young people. There is also a negative relationship between single parenthood and health outcomes for children. Moreover, family breakdown can have substantial, long-lasting adverse repercussions for the housing situations and living arrangements of children of single parent families. A fall in household income, market pressures and the lack of affordable housing can push post-breakdown households into poor quality or inappropriate housing.

While the general thrust of the literature is that family breakdown is associated with poorer outcomes for children, there is debate about the nature of this link. Some researchers have argued that the association has been overstated and that background features of family life, which often go unmeasured, may exercise a greater influence on children's outcomes than family structure *per se*. Others believe that there are specific risk factors associated with growing up within a non-intact family which exercise a real effect upon outcomes. A third type of explanatory framework considers the extent to which differing family policy environments across countries mediate the link between family structure and children's outcomes.

As a review of English language publications, many of the sources used come from the Nordic countries and the UK. There are fewer studies reported here for CCE and Southern European countries. While care must be taken not to 'over-generalise' the findings, the review nonetheless highlights the importance of providing a policy framework that provides single parents with a 'life-work' balance, decent family income, and support services delivered by professionals and agencies sensitive to the risk of poorer outcomes for children due to family breakdown. The review finds that some EU countries perform better than others in delivering policies for children in general and children of single parents in particular which provides learning opportunities for countries facing the challenge of guaranteeing equal opportunities for all children.

1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Across the European Union (EU25) there is, with significant country variations, nearly one divorce for every two marriages (Eurostat, 2006). Increasing rates of divorce, cohabitation and single parenthood means that around a third of all babies born in the EU25 are now born outside marriage (Eurostat, 2006). Given this demographic change (Billari, 2005), the well-being of families throughout the European Union (EU) has generated strong interest from policy makers.

The European Commission's commitment to developing EU policy to support family life takes account of demographic ageing, growing diversity and the promotion of equal rights for women, men, parents, non-parents and children. The modernization of family support policies in the EU also promotes children's rights and this is a critical element of support for families. For example, the European Commission's *Joint Report on Social Protection and Social Inclusion* (2008b:20, 23) advances an *'active inclusion'* strategy to tackling child poverty. This is an integrated approach which combines: a) *income support for families* (such as family benefits) at a level sufficient for people to live in dignity; and b) policies enhancing the *labour market integration* of parents.

This report presents an overview of the available knowledge that is published in the English language on the way that family change (involving separation of a parental couple in both married and cohabiting relationships) affects both the social situation and prospects of children, and identifies policy measures that have a positive effect in mitigating any negative impacts for children of family breakdown. Family dissolution (that is, divorce and cohabitation breakdown) is only one route into single parenthood. Other paths include single, never married mothers and widowhood. Studies reviewed in this report rarely distinguish between the various pathways into single parenthood, and for this reason the review is (of necessity) based on single parents as a whole.

1.2 Aims of review

The aims of the research are:

- To provide an overview of the current impact of family instability on the social situation of, and prospects for, children in Europe.
- To examine policy measures that may mitigate against the negative impacts on children of family instability. These measures include policies to support parents in paid work; support for care giving (including childcare provision), and support for parenting.

The review identifies the extent and impact of family relationship breakdown on children in the EU focusing on 12 selected Member States (see below). While it is recognised that there is a wealth of literature published in languages other than English, the scope of the study is confined to publications in English.

The report provides a thematic and comparative study of the research questions within European institutional, social, demographic and policy contexts. The review identifies and evaluates policy measures in each of the selected EU Member States, and identifies key policy lessons. Specifically, it examines:

- The social situation of children (such as the risk of poverty and social exclusion and poor housing conditions).
- Short and longer term impacts on children (especially for educational achievement and physical and psychological health).
- The demographic context.

1.3 Research design and methods

The review is comparative and draws on a range of quantitative and descriptive data to both identify institutional, social, demographic and policy contexts and compare data on family breakdown in all 27 EU Member States - these data are reported in Chapter 2.

The review uses 'traditional' or purposive review methodologies, and not systematic approaches (Gough, 2007). As such *'informed'*, extensive sweeps rather than systematic searches were conducted. This review includes single-country and comparative studies which address the nature of the relationship between family structure and child outcomes in 12 case study countries (see below) and more broadly where appropriate. In some cases there is an imbalance of available literature in English and caution must therefore be exercised in generalising findings to societies with very different policy environments. The comparative cross-national studies included in the review introduce evidence from a broader sweep of countries but may be reliant on more limited outcome measures.

1.4 Selection of the twelve countries for in-depth study

Across the EU, family structure, formation, dissolution and policy vary considerably. There are, however, clusters of counties that share similar characteristics regarding the relationship between family, state, market and civil society (Esping-Andersen, 1990; Ferrera, 1996; Hantrais, 2004; Pascall and Manning, 2000; Arts and Gellissen, 2002; Berthoud and Iacovou, 2007). Twelve countries were carefully chosen to illustrate different approaches to family policy (Hantrais, 2004:199). The case study countries are: Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Spain, Sweden and the UK. The selection of the countries is based on Hantrais' typology of family policy in the EU.

Hantrais' typology of family policy in the EU groups countries into categories based on the degree of 'defamilialisation' in family policy and family form. Defamilialised policies are those which offer generous state support for families as opposed to placing undue reliance on family support in order to secure a

socially acceptable standard of living (Hantrais, 2004:199). A further aspect of defamilialisation entails the deinstitutionalisation of family forms. The increasing diversity in family forms and the movement away from the *'male breadwinner model'* are markers of family deinstitutionalisation. This has been seen demographically in rising divorce rates, increasing levels of unmarried cohabitation in some EU countries, greater proportions of extramarital births, higher levels of single parenthood, and decreasing numbers of multigenerational households (Hantrais, 2004:63). In short, defamilialisation refers to a movement away from traditional family forms and extended family support to state support to ensure family well-being.

Hantrais' typology of family policy groups EU Member States into four categories: defamilialised, partially defamilialised, familialised, and refamilialised (see Table 1.1). The countries within each grouping share a similar design and structure of family policy and a similar level of commitment to state support for family life (Hantrais, 2004:199-200). However, it should be noted that variations within clusters exist, such as differences in funding mechanisms, methods of delivery, the target population and the impact of family policy overall. Furthermore, the groups, in some cases, have fuzzy boundaries and countries may shift from one group to another depending on the criteria applied (Hantrais, 2004:199-200).

The defamilialised countries include the Nordic States – Denmark, Finland and Sweden - France, Luxembourg and Belgium, all of which are seen as having explicit, coherent family policies, which are legitimised, coordinated and supportive of working parents. With the exception of Belgium these policies are based on citizenship/residence. However, there is a distinction made in this group between the tax funded, individualised and service based policies of the Nordic countries and the mixed funded, family centred and institutional policies of Belgium, Luxembourg and France. In both cases public administration is supportive of family life to the extent that *'the responsibility for family matters can be said to be defamilialised, and the state can be described as family and women friendly'* (Hantrais, 2004:200-201). Offering high standards of benefits and services, the strong ideological commitment to redistributive policies rests on notions of social solidarity and collective responsibility. Designed to maximise personal choice and flexibility, the development of alternative family forms has not been seen as problematic (Hantrais, 2004:201).

The second, 'partially defamilialised', typology relates to family policies found in the Netherlands, Austria, Germany, Ireland and the United Kingdom (UK). Partial defamilialisation means that family policies are only partially coordinated and legitimised. While government rhetoric is supportive of families, policy actors are reluctant to interfere in private life (Hantrais, 2004:202). Consequently, family policies are implicit and indirect, resulting in less coherent policies than those of the first typology. The two sub-groups are distinguished by their funding mechanisms with Austria and Germany having some similarities with the second subgroup of the defamilialised countries in that they have formal structures for making and delivering policies (Hantrais, 2004:202). The Netherlands straddles the two subgroups.

Table 1.1: Hantrais' (2004) typology of family policy in the EU (with the addition of Bulgaria and Romania)

Typology	Overarching characteristics of family-policy	Countries
1) Defamilialised	Explicit, coherent, legitimised, coordinated, supportive of working parents, universal/residence	Denmark Finland Sweden Belgium France Luxembourg
2) Partially Defamilialised	Residence, partially coordinated, partially legitimised, rhetorical, implicit/indirect	Netherlands Austria, Germany Ireland UK
3) Familialised	Underfunded, un-coordinated, weakly legitimised, non institutionalised, fragmented	Greece Italy Portugal Spain Cyprus Malta
4) Refamilialised	Implicit/indirect, rhetorical, pro-natalist, semi-legitimised, un-coordinated, institutionalised, transitional, underfunded	Bulgaria Czech Republic Estonia Hungary Latvia Lithuania Poland Romania Slovakia Slovenia

Source: Hantrais, 2004:200.

The third, 'familialised', typology includes the Southern European countries of Italy, Spain, Portugal, Greece, Cyprus and Malta. State support for families in these countries is comparatively underfunded, uncoordinated and less strongly legitimised. The non-institutionalised nature of these policies means that they are more fragmented and may vary from region to region according to different local authority practices. The responsibility for family well-being is placed on family members, with families receiving a relatively low level of provision of benefits and support services compared to Northern and Western European countries (Hantrais, 2004:203). Distinctions can be made in this group by funding mechanism, degree of marketisation and influence of religion (Hantrais, 2004:203).

The final, 'refamilialised', typology applies to the Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries in the EU. During the Soviet era, these countries provided extensive benefits and services to their citizens, ensuring that the basic needs of families were met. Transition from Soviet rule resulted in a shift towards a minimalist state and open markets, meaning that enterprise-based welfare support systems for workers and their families were abandoned (Hantrais, 2004:204). Family policy refamilialised in the sense that responsibility for family well-being shifted from the state back to the family. Support systems for families in these countries are comparatively underfunded, unreliable, and often rhetorical rather than practical. These countries' policies tend to be pro-natalist, semi-legitimised and transitional (Hantrais, 2004:200).

1.5 Structure of the report

Chapter 2 presents quantitative data on demographic change in the EU. It outlines the prevalence and type of family breakdown across the EU Member States.

Chapter 3 looks at the effects of family breakdown with regard to the poverty and social exclusion of lone parent households and their children. The chapter reviews definitional and measurement issues related to poverty and social exclusion, examines various indicators of poverty and social exclusion, (providing data for all twelve countries where possible and partial data where not) and identifies key policy responses from the case study countries.

Chapter 4 looks at family breakdown and education achievement, while Chapter 5 explores the associations between family breakdown and health and well-being outcomes for children. Chapter 6 considers the relationship between family breakdown and housing and living arrangements. Chapter 7 presents the conclusions and key lessons for policy makers.

2 Demographic Change in the EU

2.1 Introduction

This chapter examines a range of indicators of family structure, formation and dissolution affecting children across the EU27 Member States, with particular attention paid to trends within the typology groupings identified in Chapter 1. The Chapter provides a context for the discussion of children's' outcomes in subsequent chapters.

2.2 Demographic change in the European Union (EU27)

2.2.1 Total Population

Demographic change in the European Union (EU) is a pressing issue for policy makers. In 2007 the total population of the EU27 was 495 million (Table A.1, Annex A). The countries with the largest populations were Germany, France, United Kingdom, Italy, Spain, Poland and Romania (Figure 2.1). While Germany has the largest population, its percentage share of the total EU27 population has reduced from 17.1 per cent in 1997 to 16.6 per cent in 2007 (Table A.2, Annex A). Meanwhile, the shares of population for France and Spain have each increased by 0.7 per cent over this ten year period. The population shares for all of the refamilialised countries have decreased or remained constant since 1985.

A key issue is that the EU population is growing. Between 1987 and 2007 the EU27 population grew by 6.2 per cent (Table A.1, Annex A). Migration was the major force behind this growth, although increased life expectancy also played a role (Eurostat, 2007a:15, 17). Between 1997 and 2007 all of the defamilialised, partially defamilialised, and familialised countries experienced an increase in their populations (Figure 2.2). Only the refamilialised countries experienced a decrease in total population, with the exception of Slovenia and Slovakia.

Figure 2.1: Population, by country, on January 1, 2007

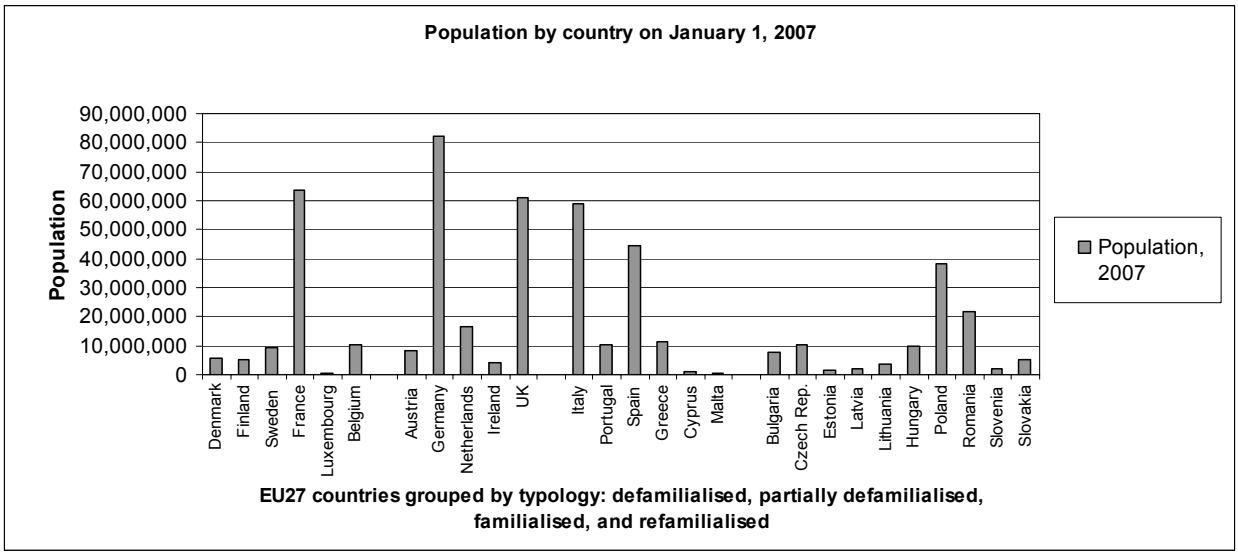
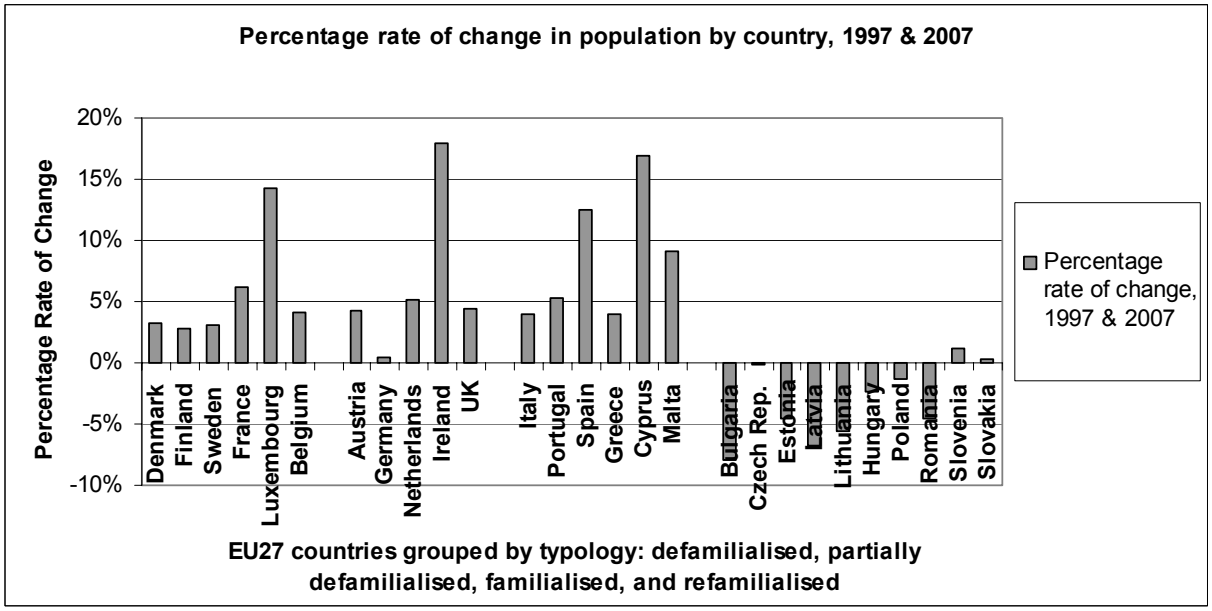


Figure 2.2: Percentage rate of change in population, by country, 1997 and 2007



2.2.2 Live births

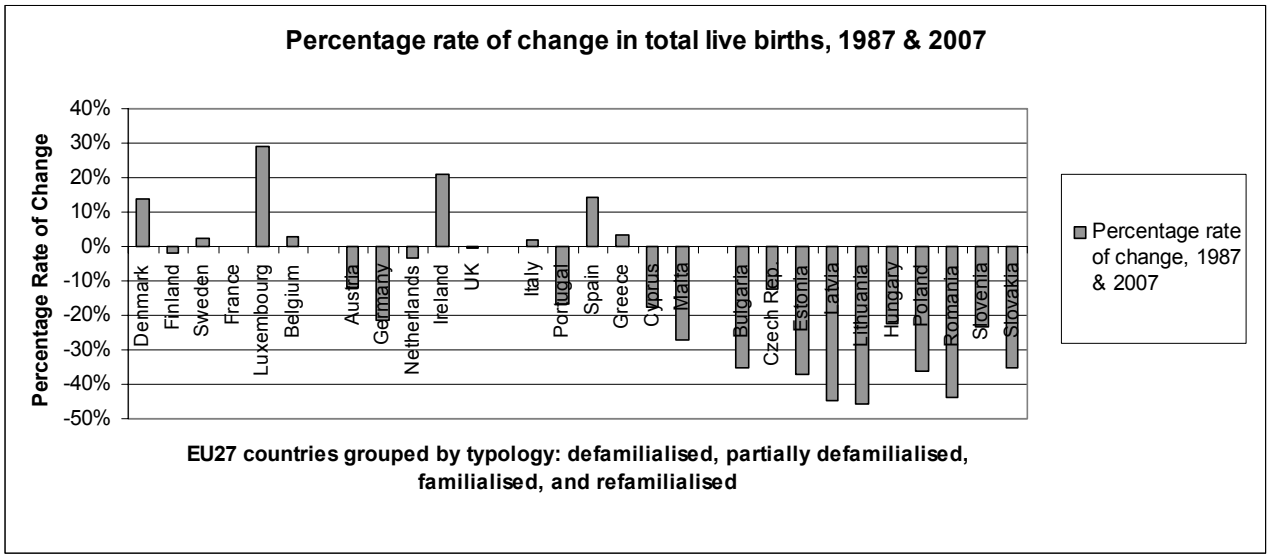
In the 20 year period between 1987 and 2007 Europe saw a decrease in live births by 10.9 per cent (Table A.3, Annex A). Figure 2.3 shows that all but eight EU27 countries experienced a decline during this period. The increases in live births occurred in the defamilialised countries of Denmark (14 per cent), Sweden (2.6 per cent), Luxembourg (29.2 per cent), and Belgium (2.8 per cent), the partially defamilialised Ireland (20.9 per cent), and the familialised Italy (2.1 per cent), Spain (14.4 per cent), and Greece (3.4 per cent).

Comparing the number of live births in 1997 and 2007, shows that almost half of the EU27 countries had positive rates of growth, indicating a turnaround for the UK and half of the refamilialised countries from relatively low levels of births in

the 1990s (Figure 2.4). None of these countries, however, returned to their 1987 levels.

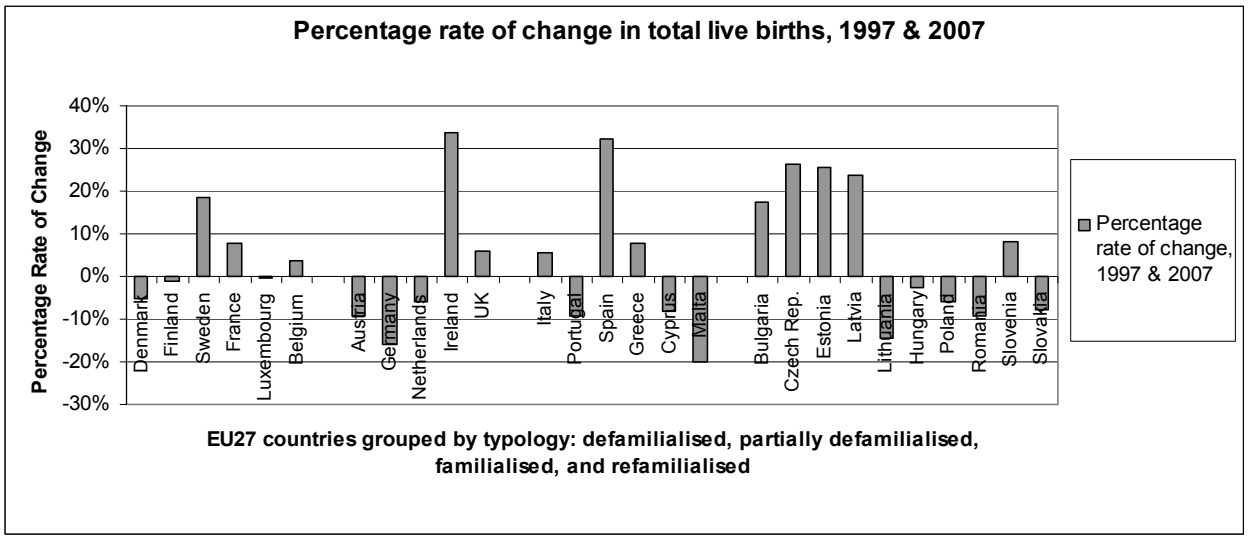
The highest growth rates in live births may be attributed to family policies that support working parents. As some commentators have argued (see, for example, Gornick and Meyers, 2003), family policies that support working parents may be crucial in addressing the problem of declining fertility. A feature of defamilialised family policies is that they are, for the most part, supportive of working parents, and so limit the employment penalties for women associated with child bearing in some other European countries (Hantrais, 2004; Fahey and Speder, 2004). So, perhaps unsurprisingly, five of the eight countries which experienced positive rates of live births between 1987 and 2007 were among the defamilialised and partially defamilialised countries.

Figure 2.3: Percentage rate of change in total live births, 1987 and 2007



In addition, rates of teenage pregnancies and the consequent levels of young single parenthood also vary considerably between countries (Micklewright and Stewart, 1999) (single parenthood is discussed below).

Figure 2.4: Percentage rate of change in total live births, 1997 & 2007



2.2.3 Children in the European Member States

There is no universally accepted definition of a child; and discussions around the definition of children and childhood are complex. The different definitions are based on varying notions of economic dependency on families and parents, or in some contexts, on somewhat looser definitions based on concepts of emotional and psychological maturity. Moreover, as Hantrais (2004:41) notes, the age of children in years is not necessarily a good indicator of family dependence, especially in the context of the later age at which many young people across the EU become financially independent and leave the parental home.

Differences in the minimum school-leaving age across the EU add to the complexity. Since the turn of the 21st century, the minimum school-leaving age has been 15, although most Member States maintain compulsory schooling to at least the age of 16. Belgium, Germany, Hungary and Poland require young people to remain in school until age 18 (Hantrais, 2004:75).[1] For this reason, Eurostat, in some of its publications, has tended to define dependent children as:

> *'all children up to the age of 14 plus all those persons aged 15-24 who are economically inactive (mainly in education) and who are living with at least one of their parents'*
>
> Eurostat (2007:8)

While the definition of a dependent child may vary across Eurostat publications to include age ranges such as 0-16/17-24, 0-17/18-24 and 0-18/19-24, for the purpose of this report we will base our discussion on a definition which recognizes the 0-14/15-24 age category unless otherwise stated.

In 2006, people aged 0-14 made up 15.9 per cent of the EU27 population (Table A.4, Annex A). Germany, France and the UK had the largest numbers of 0-14

[1] The school leaving age will be raised to 18 in the UK in 2013.

year olds. The refamilialised and the partially defamilialised countries had group averages for the proportion of 0-14 year olds close to the EU average with 15.4 per cent and 16.0 per cent respectively. The average proportion of 0-14 year olds for the familialised countries was below the EU average (14.4 per cent), while the defamilialised countries average was above the average (18.2 per cent). Among Member States, Ireland had the highest proportion of 0-14 year olds (20.4 per cent), followed by Denmark (18.7 per cent) and France (18.6 per cent). Bulgaria (13.5 per cent) and Germany (14 per cent) had the lowest percentage of 0-14 year olds.

Both the proportion and overall number of children aged 0-14 has been declining. The proportion of 0-14 year olds has declined from 18 per cent of the European population in 1996 to 15.9 per cent in 2006 (Table A.4, Annex A). Furthermore, all of the refamilialised countries experienced a significant drop in the absolute number of children age 0-14 (Figure 2.5 and Table A.4, Annex A). On average, the number of children age 0-14 within this group's population fell by 26.1 per cent. This compares to a decrease of 7.4 per cent among the partially defamilialised group and 1.7 per cent among the familialised countries. The absence of any overall change for the defamilialised grouping is misleading as there was substantial variation among these countries with the larger population of France, which only increased slightly over this period, accounting for much of the group's average. Across Europe, only Denmark, Luxembourg, France, the Netherlands, Ireland, and Spain increased their numbers of children age 0-14; and only in Denmark did this result in a slight increase (one per cent) in the proportion of this age group in the overall population.

Figure 2.5: Percentage rate of change of persons aged 0-14, 1996 and 2006

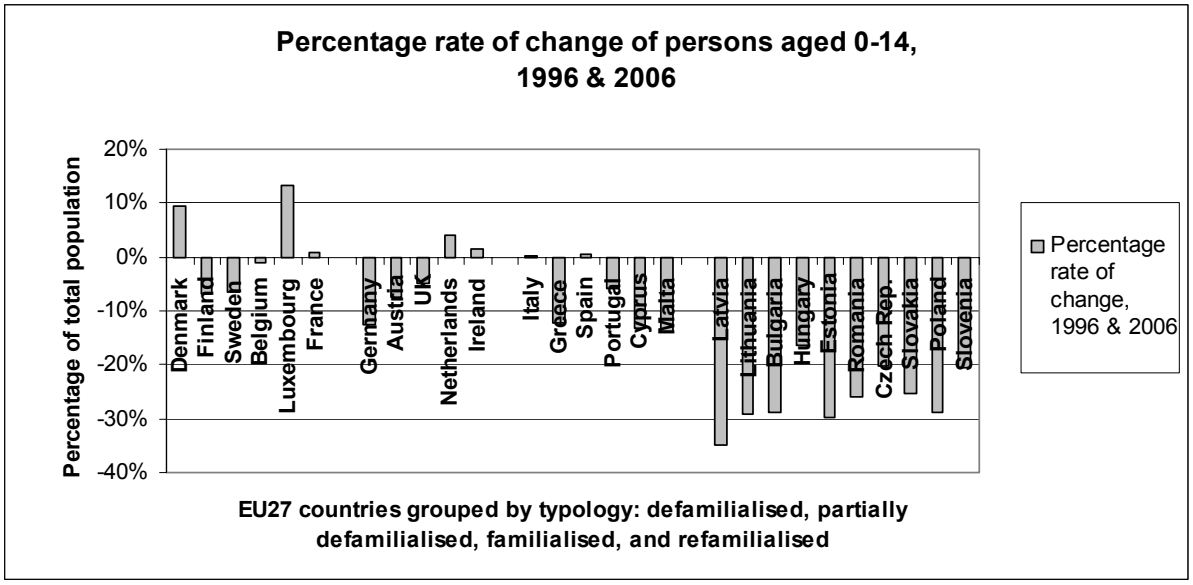
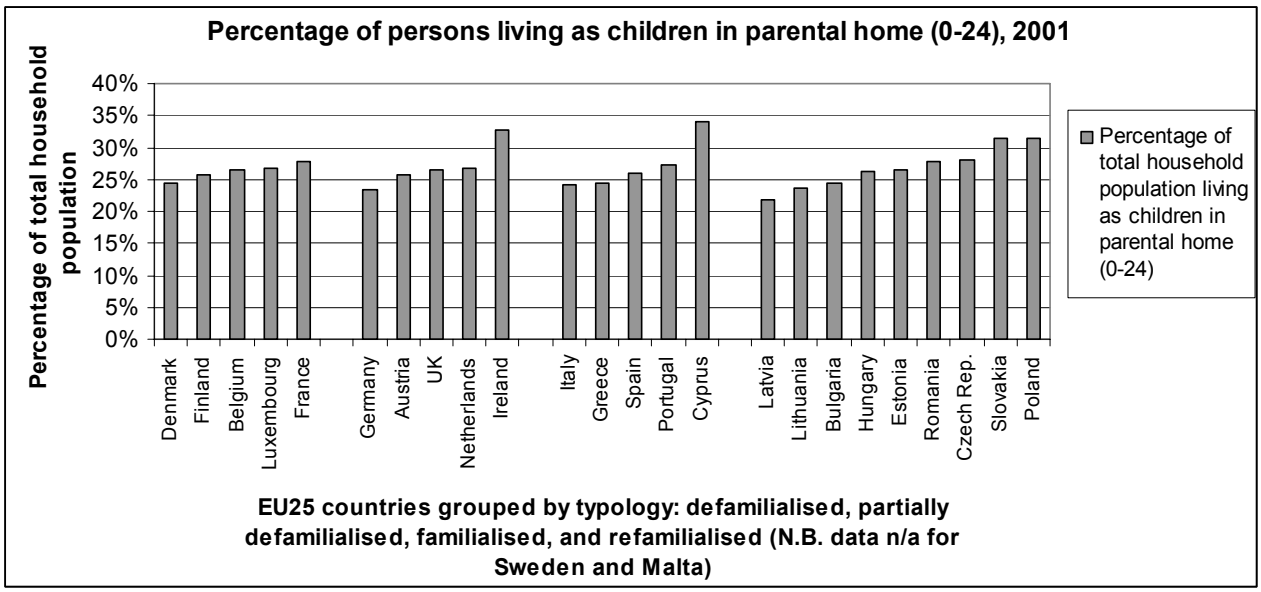


Figure 2.6: Percentage of persons living as children in parental home aged 0-24, 2001



Using the broader Eurostat definition of children, data on the number of persons living as children in their parental home is only available for 2001. On average, a quarter (26.3 per cent) of Europeans living in households were persons aged 0-24 living as children in their parental home (Table A.5, Annex A). Figure 2.6 shows that across the EU, the percentage of persons aged 0-24 living as children in their parental home ranged from 21.8 per cent in Latvia to 33.9 per cent in Cyprus with only Ireland, Cyprus, Slovakia, and Poland noticeably above the European average. Among our typology, the partially defamilialised (25.1 per cent) and familialised (25.2 per cent) countries had group averages (weighted by population size) close to the EU27 average, although both Ireland and Cyprus were substantially above that average. However, owing to the relatively small size of their populations, these outliers did not substantially affect the overall group average. Similarly, the group average for defamilialised countries was 27.3 per cent, although the significantly larger population of France accounted for much of this. The group average for the refamilialised countries was slightly above the EU average at 28.7 per cent; however, the refamilialised countries showed greater variation than those of the defamilialised grouping. In general, the Baltic States were closer to the lower end of the spectrum, while the Eastern European countries were closer to the middle or higher end of the range. Poland, with its large population, is responsible for 'pushing' the refamilialised group average higher than it would otherwise have been.

2.3 Households in the EU

2.3.1 Defining families and households

While the terms 'family' and 'household' are related concepts, they are distinctive terms. The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), which is responsible for revising the definitions to be used in each

census round, base their definition of a household on the concept of a housekeeping unit (rather than a housing unit[2]). This definition includes:

- a one-person household, that is, a person who lives alone in a separate housing unit or who occupies, as a lodger, a separate room (or rooms) of a housing unit but does not join with any of the other occupants of the housing unit to form part of a multi-person household as defined below, or
- a multi-person household, that is, a group of two or more persons who combine to occupy the whole or part of a housing unit and to provide themselves with food and possibly other essentials for living. Members of the group may pool their incomes to a greater or lesser extent. (UNECE, 2005:2-3).

Eurostat (2008) follows this definition.

The definition of a family differs from that of a household in that the UNECE's recommendation is based on the concept of a *'family nucleus'*, which is defined as:

> *'two or more persons within a private or institutional household who are related as husband and wife, as cohabiting partners, or as parent and child.'*[3]
>
> (UNECE, 2005:3)

The family nucleus constitutes a sub-category of a household. In general, data collected in national censuses refer to private households rather than families as the unit of measurement, as this approach has the advantage of including one-person households (Hantrais 2004:39). Despite definitional recommendations by the UNECE, discrepancies remain between countries in the type and quality of the data collected.

Measuring newly emerging family forms presents challenges for both statisticians and policy makers (Keilman, 2008). The UNECE Task Force on Families and Households is developing an analytical framework of policy concepts and definitions that includes new and emerging family and household forms with the aim of enabling consistent international measurement (Freguja, 2008:4). New family forms currently under consideration for the 2010 Censuses of Population and Housing include reconstituted families, the increasingly common living apart together (LAT), same-sex relationships, people with multiple residences, and persons living within a family or social network (UNECE Secretariat, 2006). Many of the difficulties in the measurement of new family forms relate to problems of consistent measurement and definition across the

---

[2] Some countries use the different concept of *house-dwelling* which is simply the aggregated number of persons occupying a housing unit. However, UNECE recommends that these countries should provide estimates of the number of households based on the *housekeeping* concept in their census report (UNECE 2005:3).

[3] The UNECE definition of child includes children *'who have no partner and no child and have usual residence in the household of at least one parent. Children also includes stepchildren and adopted children, but not foster children'* (UNECE 2005:3).

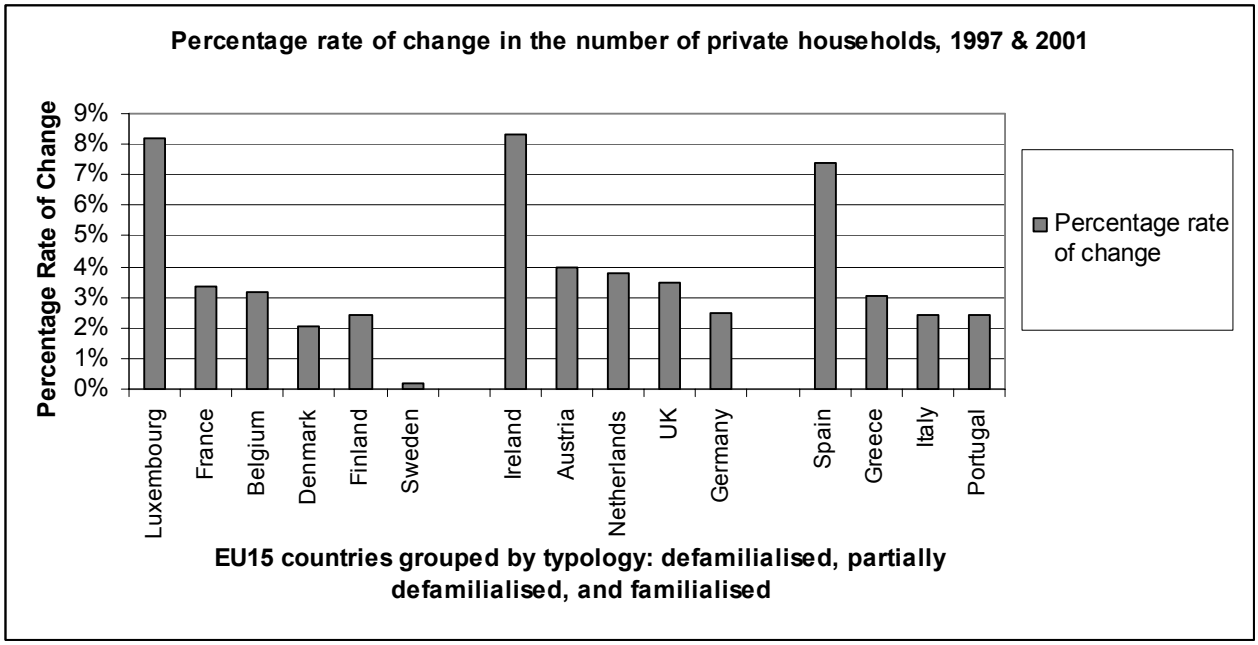
EU; difficulties which are being addressed in current field testing (due for completion in June 2008) (UNECE, 2005; UNECE Secretariat, 2006).

2.3.2 Households in the EU

This section explores three Eurostat datasets on households: the percentage change in the number of private households; the average number of persons per household; and the distribution of households with dependent children among the population.

On average, the number of private households within several Member States increased by 3.3 per cent between 1997 and 2001 (Table A.6, Annex A). The typology's group averages are similar to the EU average, and ranged from a four per cent increase for the familialised to a 2.8 per cent increase in the defamilialised countries. However, these group averages conceal wide variation within each group. Each group in our typology had one country which was significantly above the EU average (see Figure 2.7). Luxembourg (defamilialised) had an 8.2 per cent increase in the number of households, Ireland (partially defamilialised) experienced an 8.3 per cent increase, while Spain (familialised) saw a 7.4 per cent increase. Depending on the context, the steady growth in the number of households may be attributed to population growth as well as increasing diversity in family forms.

Figure 2.7: Percentage rate of change in the number of private households, EU15, 1997 and 2001



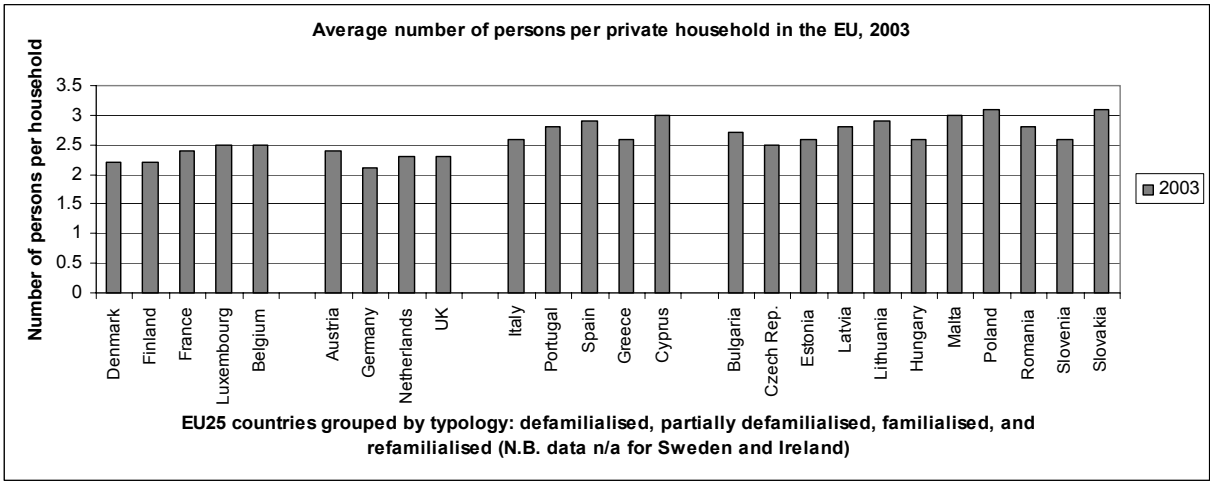
Alongside the increase in the number of households, there has been a trend across the EU towards fewer people in households. Table A.7 (Annex A) shows the estimated average number of people per household[4] across the EU25 in 2003 was 2.4, down from 2.5 in 2000.

[4] Average household size is calculated by dividing the number of people living in private households by the number of households. This, however, conceals important variations

Figure 2.8 shows that families in familialised and refamilialised countries tended to have, on average, larger sized households in 2003 than those in defamilialised and partially defamilialised countries. The larger households in the familialised and refamilialised countries are not surprising in the context of Hantrais' typology (2004), as they are more likely to include a broader range of family members, such as grandparents. However, in the light of broader societal shifts, including lower fertility rates, the increasing financial cost of raising children and changes in family forms, both familialised and refamilialised countries, with the exception of Poland and Latvia, experienced a fall in family sizes between 1993 and 2003.[5] Average household size in Poland rose from 2.5 persons in 1997 to 3.1 persons in 2003 and in Latvia from 2.4 persons in 2001 to 2.8 in 2003. Conversely, average household size in Hungary (refamilialised) fell from 3.4 persons in 1996 to 2.6 persons in 2003.

The largest changes in family size tended to be among the refamilialised countries and in familialised Spain. The defamilialised and partially defamilialised countries show a small decrease in the average number of persons per household between 1993 and 2003.

Figure 2.8: Average number of persons per private household, 2003



2.3.3 Households with children

The average distribution of households with dependent children among the total population for 2006 was 52 per cent (Figure 2.9 and Table A.8, Annex A). Eurostat data show that the refamilialised countries and familialised countries had the largest distributions of households with dependent children. Cyprus (familialised) had the highest distribution with 64 per cent followed by Lithuania and Poland (refamilialised) with 62 per cent. With the exception of the two familialised countries Greece (49 per cent) and Italy (50 per cent), all familialised and refamilialised countries were either at or above the EU25 average, while the defamilialised and partially defamilialised groups had the

in household size. People living in collective households (boarding houses, hospitals, and halls of residence) are excluded from average household size calculations.

[5] Data for some years in this time period are not available for certain countries, so generalisations are made based on the data that are available.

greatest number of countries with distributions below the EU25 average, the lowest of which was in Germany (46 per cent). The main exception to this trend was Ireland which had one of the largest distributions of the EU25 with 63 per cent.

While there has been growth in the number of households across the EU, between 2000 and 2006 there was a decrease in the distribution of households with dependent children across the total population in most EU25 countries (Figure 2.10 and Table A.8, Annex A). EU15 estimates show a four per cent drop in the distribution between 1996 and 2006 and a two per cent decrease between 2000 and 2006. The familialised and defamilialised countries had the greatest decreases in the distribution of households with dependent children across the population. Only a small number of countries showed percentage increases. Luxembourg (defamilialised) shows an 11 per cent increase from 46 per cent in 2000 to 57 per cent in 2006; although the 2006 figure represented a return to its 1996 level. The Netherlands (partially defamilialised) and Latvia (refamilialised) both show a small increase of one per cent, while the two partially defamilialised countries Germany and Ireland experienced no changes from their 2000 levels.

Figure 2.9: Distribution among total population: households with dependent children, 2006

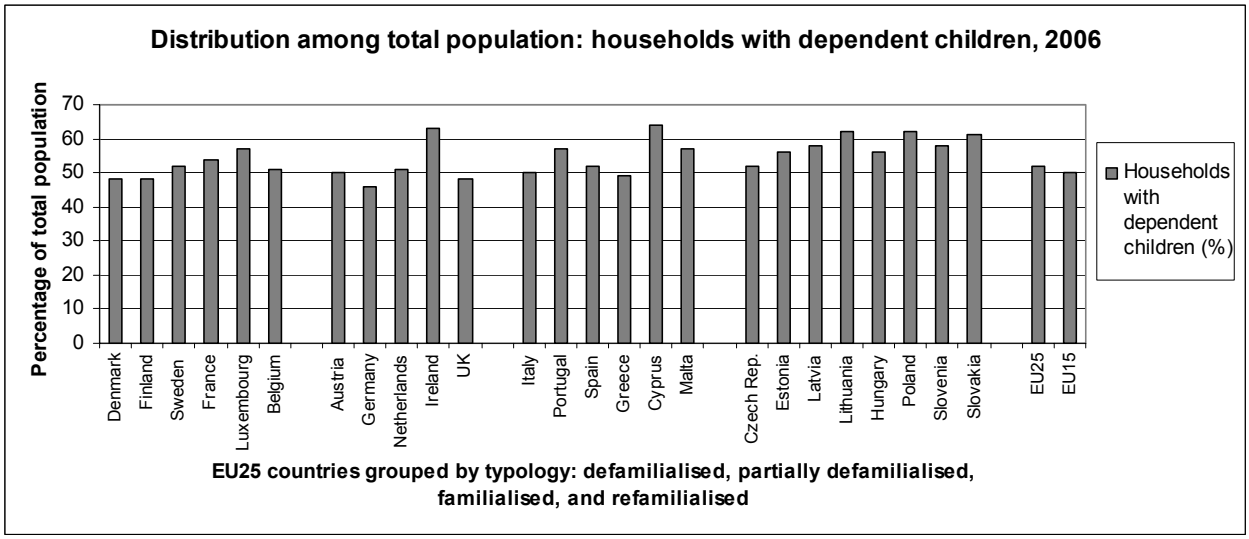
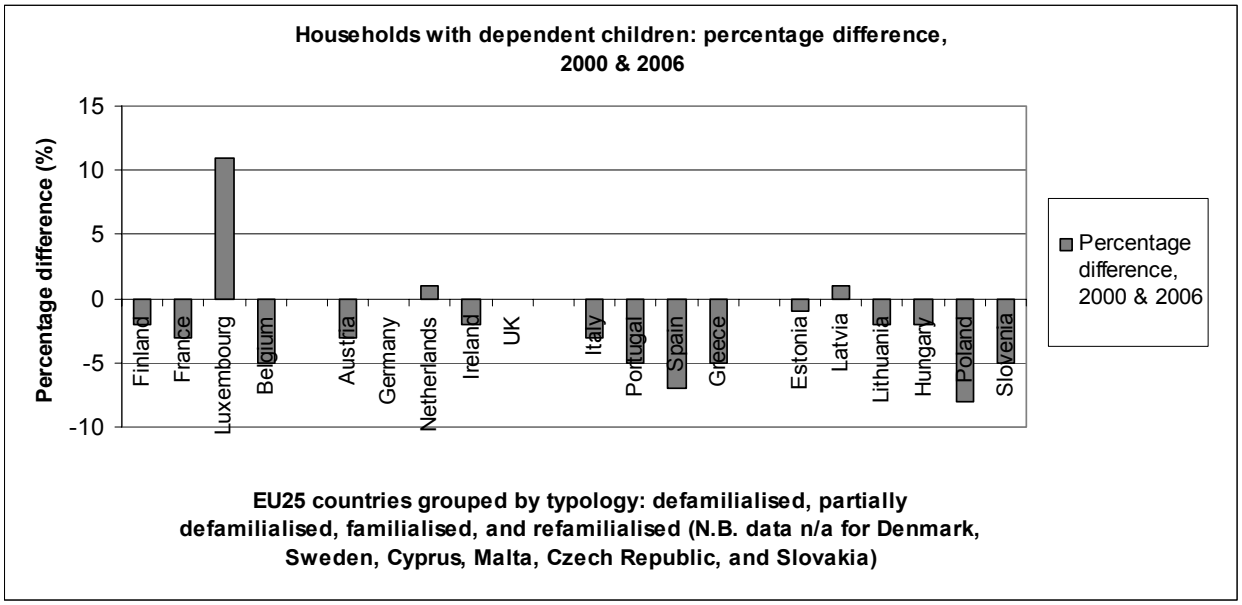


Figure 2.10: Households with dependent children: percentage difference, 2000 and 2006



2.4 Typology of families in the European Union

Non-intact families take many forms and family structures are dynamic, dissolving and re-forming over time (Andersson 2002). Pong et al. (2003) observe that there are also important cultural differences between countries, for example in the degree to which non-marital childbearing is socially acceptable and, consequently, the extent to which parenthood results from the dissolution of cohabiting unions rather than from divorce. This section explores the different types of families in the EU: single parent families, cohabitation, marriage, reconstituted families, and intergenerational households. From this discussion a fuller picture emerges of the situation of children in different family nuclei and households across the EU, as well as the differences between defamilialised, partially defamilialised, familialised and refamilialised country groupings.

2.4.1 Single parent families

The allocation of single parent status is not straight forward. UNECE (1998:43) guidelines differentiate between a single parent as a 'household nucleus' and as a partner in a cohabitating relationship; however, datasets among different countries do not consistently adhere to UNECE guidelines (Hantrais, 2004:58). A single parent living in a cohabiting relationship may fail to be identified as a cohabitee in some surveys, while national differences in the legal status of step-parents may complicate the identification of reconstituted families (Hantrais, 2004:59). In addition, the growth in the number of couples who 'live apart together' (LAT) represents a further challenge to the data.

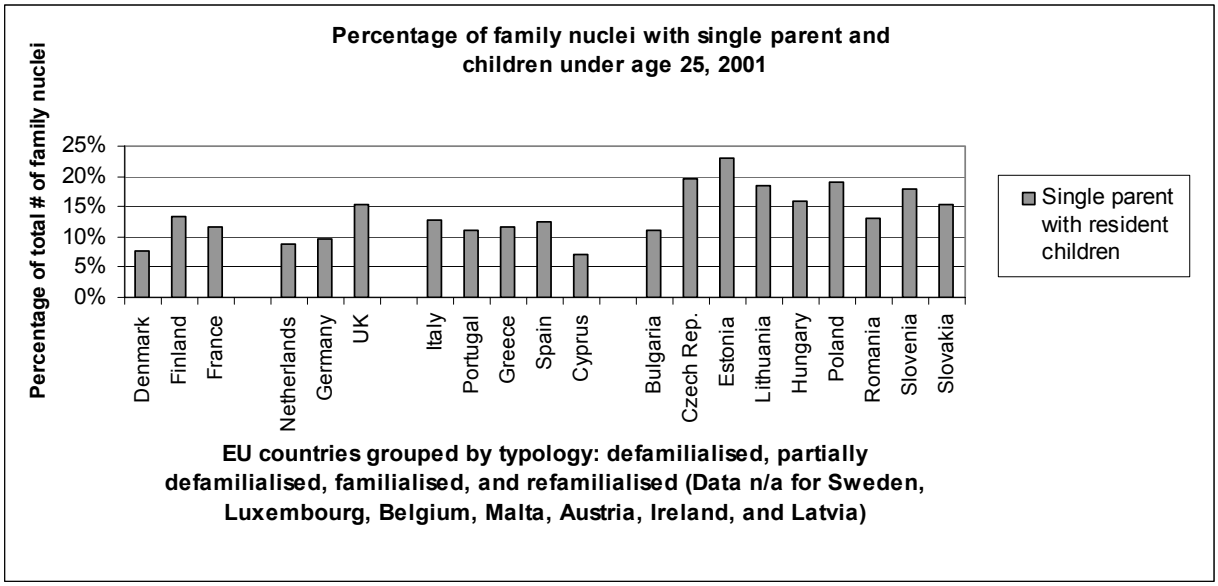
Single parent status is not necessarily an indicator of family breakdown, as there are different routes into single parenthood. For example lone parenthood can be caused by the breakdown of a relationship, either married or unmarried, with

dependent children, the birth of a child or children outside a partnership, or death (Lehmann and Wirtz, 2004: 2)

There are different types of single parent households: single mother and single father households, as well as single parent households that include other family members. Across the EU27 12.9 per cent of households with dependent children and no other person outside the family nucleus were single parent families in 2001 (Table A.9, Annex A). When households containing adults outside the family nucleus were included, the percentage of total households with dependent children rose to 13.6 per cent (Table A.10, Annex A).[6] This relative increase may be explained by the support that other family members, such as a child's grandparent, may provide to single parents by living in the same household. A comparative study of single parent families in Europe by Chambaz (2001) shows that lone parenthood is not only least common in Southern European countries, but that a substantial proportion of lone parent families in these countries share their accommodation with other households and are thus *`included'* rather than *'isolated'*.

Where children were living in a single parent family, it was much more likely that they lived with their mother (11 per cent) than their father (1.9 per cent) (Table A.9, Annex A).

Figure 2.11: Percentage of family nuclei with single parent and children under age 25, 2001



Diversification of family forms has resulted in family breakdown replacing widowhood as the main cause of lone parenthood (EC, 2007:2). The Brodolini (2007) study of poverty and social exclusion among single parent households found that in almost all the countries reviewed[7] divorce and separation

[6] Of the EU averages of single parents with children on Table A.10, the average entitled 'EU (minus Austria, Ireland, and Latvia)' is used for the sake of consistency of available data between Table A.9 and Table A.10.

[7] Thirteen countries were reviewed in the Brodolini (2007) report: Bulgaria, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain and the UK.

accounted for between 40 per cent and 60 per cent of routes into single parenthood (EC, 2008:24). Nevertheless, routes into lone parenthood were found to vary among countries: single mothers (due to out-of-wedlock births) accounted for 45-50 per cent of lone parents in the UK, 30 per cent in Germany, France and the Netherlands, and roughly 20 per cent or less in Southern countries (EC, 2008:23-24). This pattern is consistent with Hantrais' (2004) theory of defamilialisation in which the more defamilialised countries are more individualised in their family forms compared to the more intact family institutions of the familialised Southern countries.

In contrast to the Brodolini study, an EC (2006) report on single parents in thirteen countries[8] downplayed the importance of *'solo'* parenting, claiming that there was little evidence that women having children without either being married or cohabiting were major routes into lone motherhood (EC, 2006:86). The study found that even in the UK where teenage pregnancy rates were particularly high, this especially vulnerable group of young mothers constituted only a minority of all lone mothers (EC, 2006:86). Furthermore, it was found that these mothers were disproportionately from economically deprived neighbourhoods or families, and that the incidence of sole parenting varied by ethnicity, with greatest numbers found among Afro-Caribbean mothers (EC, 2006:86).

The high rates of single mothers due to out-of-wedlock births cited in the Brodolini report are likely to be a result of rising rates of cohabitation. In fact, within Finland, Sweden and the UK, cohabitation disruption as a route into lone parenthood is considered to be of similar significance as that of divorce (EC, 2006:86). Out-of-marriage births can easily be misunderstood, as single parenthood due to cohabitation breakdown is sometimes misinterpreted as a result of 'solo' parenting. This may be indicative of difficulties involved in the measurement of cohabitation and cohabitation breakdown, which may be dependent on the criteria a government uses to define a cohabiting relationship, and the policies that are in place in response to dissolving cohabiting relationships. Considering the rising rates of cohabitation across Europe, social policy in regards to the children of dissolving relationships of unmarried parents is of particular importance.

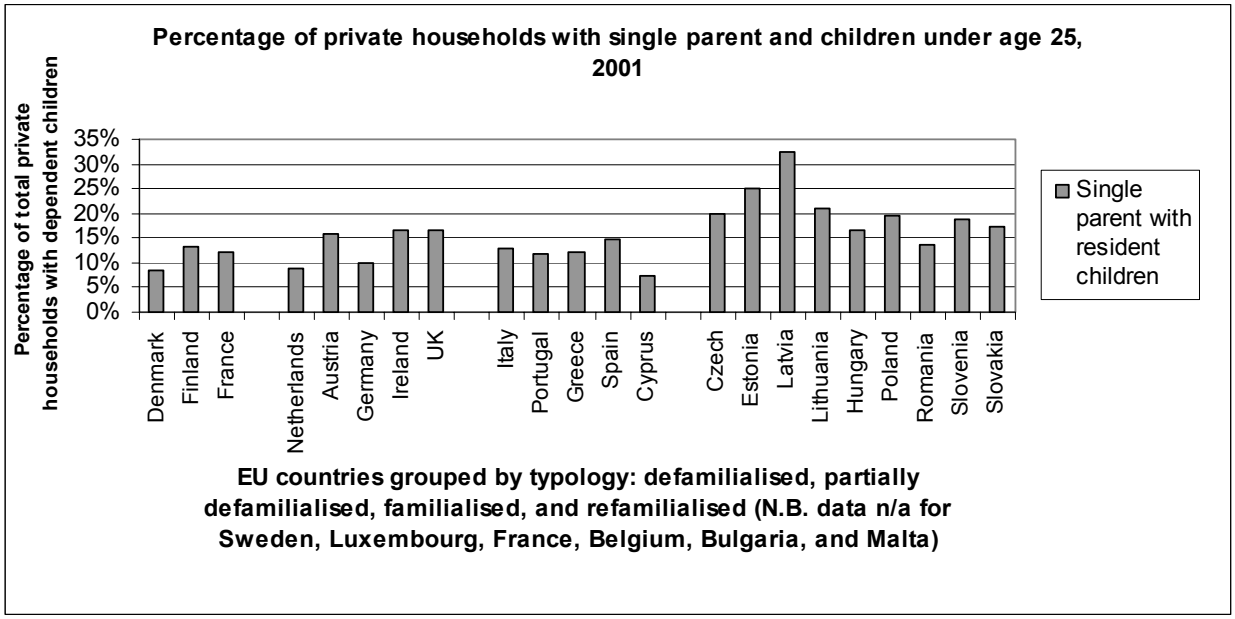
Refamilialised countries had the largest percentage of single parent families (16.8 per cent), followed by the familialised (12.4 per cent), defamilialised (11.4 per cent) and partially defamilialised (11.6 per cent) countries. Among the refamilialised countries, Estonia had the largest percentage of single parent households (23 per cent), followed by the Czech Republic (19.5 per cent) and Poland (19.0 per cent) (Figure 1.11). Figure 2.11 also shows that of the partially defamilialised countries the UK had the largest proportion of single parent families (13.4 per cent), although this percentage is still below the average for the refamilialised countries. The UK also had the largest number of single mothers, while Germany had the largest number of single fathers. Of the defamilialised countries, Denmark had the lowest percentage of single parent families. These findings suggest that the incidence of single parenthood is

[8] The thirteen countries reviewed in the EC (2006) report included: Bulgaria, Estonia, Finland, Hungary, Ireland, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Norway, Spain, Sweden and the UK.

highest among the refamilialised countries and lowest among the defamilialised countries, although comparable data for the defamilialised and partially defamilialised countries of Sweden, Luxembourg, Belgium, Austria and Ireland were not available.

Trends for total households across the typologies were similar to those of households with no other person outside the family nucleus (Figure 2.12 and Table A.10, Annex A). The defamilialised countries still had the lowest proportion of single parents (12.1 per cent), the partially defamilialised countries were similar (12.4 per cent), the familialised countries had an average of 13.4 per cent, and the refamilialised countries had the largest percentage of single parents (18 per cent).

Figure 2.12: Percentage of private households with single parent and children under age 25, 2001



While comparable data for the partially defamilialised countries of Austria and Ireland and the refamilialised country of Latvia were not available for Table A.9, statistics for these countries were available for total private households with dependent children (see Table A.10, Annex A). Austria, with 15.9 per cent single-parent households, and Ireland, with 16.6 per cent single-parent households, had similar proportions to the UK with 16.4 per cent. While these two additions were relatively consistent with the other countries in the partially defamilialised grouping, Latvia's addition to the refamilialised grouping was significantly above the group's average. Latvia had the largest proportion of single parent families with 32.4 per cent (Figure 2.12). Latvia also had the highest proportion of single father and single mother households, 3.3 per cent and 29.1 per cent respectively. The next highest proportions of single parent households were among the other two Baltic States, Estonia (24.9 per cent) and Lithuania (20.9 per cent).

In comparing the EU averages from Table A.9 to Table A.10, the difference between the proportions of single fathers to single mother is larger in Table

A.10, suggesting that more single mothers than single fathers share a household with at least one other adult.

The distribution of single parent families with dependent children among the EU25 population was five per cent in 2006 (Table A.11, Annex A). The defamilialised and the partially defamilialised countries had the largest distributions of single parent families with most of the countries at or above the EU25 average (Figure 2.13). Indeed, the three countries with the highest distributions of single parent families were defamilialised Sweden and partially defamilialised Ireland and the UK. Luxembourg (defamilialised) and Austria and the Netherlands (partially defamilialised) were exceptions with four per cent. The refamilialised Baltic States and Hungary were at or above the EU25 average. With distributions in the range of two to three per cent, the familialised countries were the least likely to have single parents with dependent children.

Figure 2.13: Distribution among total population: single parent with children, 2006

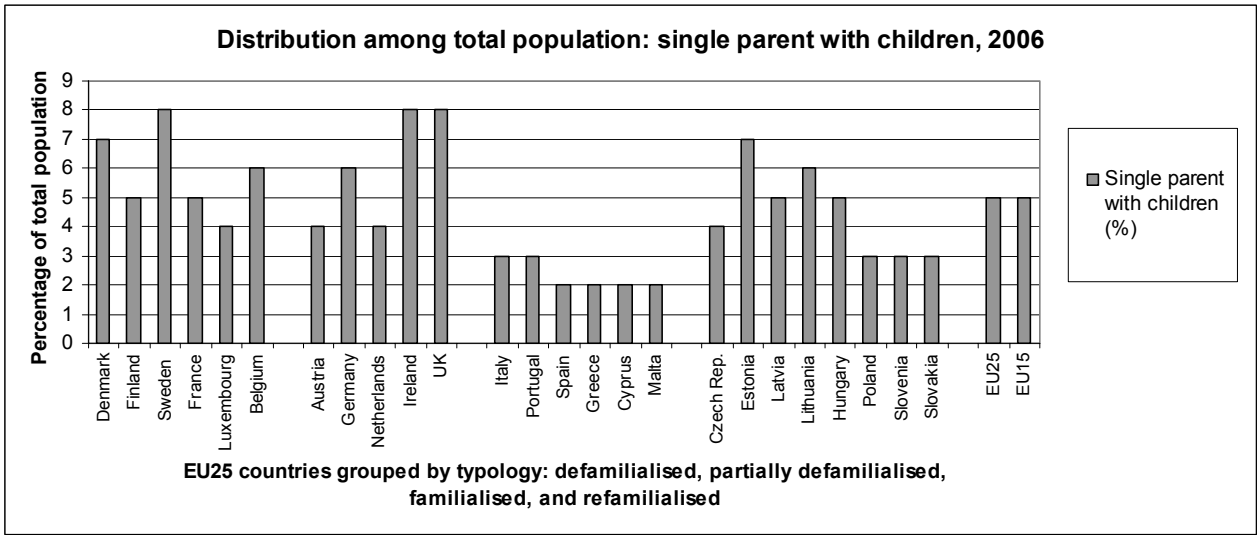
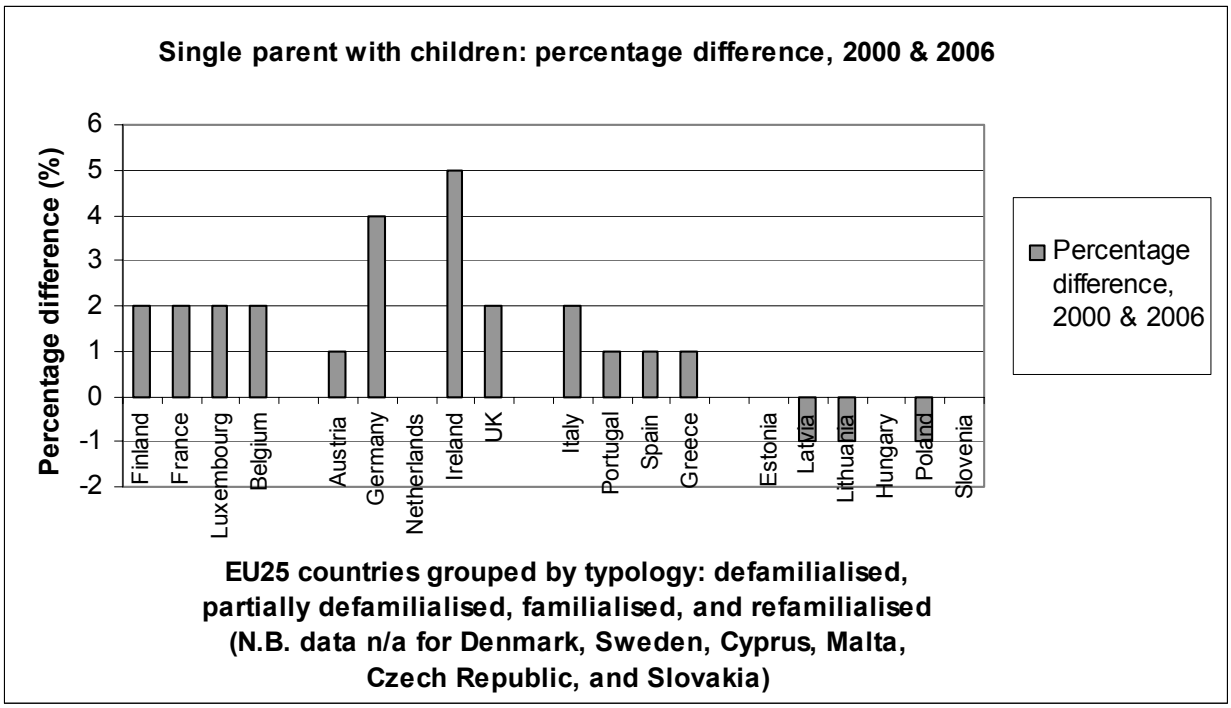


Figure 2.14 shows that the distribution of single parents with dependent children among the total population in the EU15 rose by an average of two percentage points between 1996 and 2006, while estimates for 2001 and 2006 suggest a similar trend for the EU25. Distributions increased most in the partially defamilialised countries of Germany and Ireland. Only the refamilialised countries Latvia, Lithuania and Poland showed decreases (of one per cent).

Figure 2.14: Single parent with children: Percentage difference, 2000 and 2006



Bradshaw *et al.* (2007) find a strong correlation between the distribution of single parents and step parent families across countries. They combined these two family types to produce a ranking for family structure across the EU25, so that countries with the highest proportion of intact families achieved positive index scores. The index scores[9] for family structure ranged from +2.0 to -2.0. Malta – where divorce is illegal - was the only country to achieve a positive score of more than 1.5. Other case study countries with positive scores were - in descending order: Greece (between 1 and 1.5); Spain and Poland (between 0.5 and 1); and the Netherlands (between 0 and 0.5). Countries with negative scores – again in descending order - were France and Germany (between 0 and -0.5), Czech Republic and Finland (between -0.5 and -1), Sweden, and Denmark (between -1 and -1.5); and the UK (between -1.5 and 2). In terms of the Hantrais typology, familialised countries (Malta, Greece and Spain) are clustered at the 'top end' of the index and defamilialised countries (Finland, Sweden and Denmark) at the bottom. This is not, however, a simple match with the typology since the UK, a partially defamilialised country, appears at the very bottom of the index. France, a familialised, country hovers around the middle, along with Germany and the Netherlands (partially defamilialised) and Poland and Czech Republic (refamilialised).

[9] The chosen method was to calculate z scores for each variable and average the z scores to obtain an average score for a domain.

2.4.2 Two adult families

The most common configuration of households with children in all countries is two adults and a dependent child or children (Tables A.9 and A.10, Annex A). However, there are variations across households. Couples may be married or they may be cohabiting; both adults may be biological parents or only one may be biologically related to the child or children; and these couples may also be living with adults, such as other family members, from outside the family nucleus.

Of households with dependent children and no other person outside the family nucleus, 87.1 per cent were comprised of married or cohabiting couples across the EU (Table A.9, Annex A). Similarly, married or cohabiting couples accounted for 86.3 per cent of total households with dependent children in 2001 (Table A.10, Annex A).

The refamilialised countries had the lowest proportion of two adult families (83.2 per cent), while the other typology averages were between 87.6 per cent and 88.6 per cent, with the highest proportion falling among the defamilialised countries (Table A.9, Annex A). Similar trends were evident from the data for total private households with dependent children (Table A.10). The Baltic States had the lowest percentage of two adult households, with only 67.6 per cent for Latvia, 75.1 per cent for Estonia, and 79.1 per cent for Lithuania.

There is variation in family form within these two adult families: hence cohabitation, marriage, and reconstituted families will be looked at in turn.

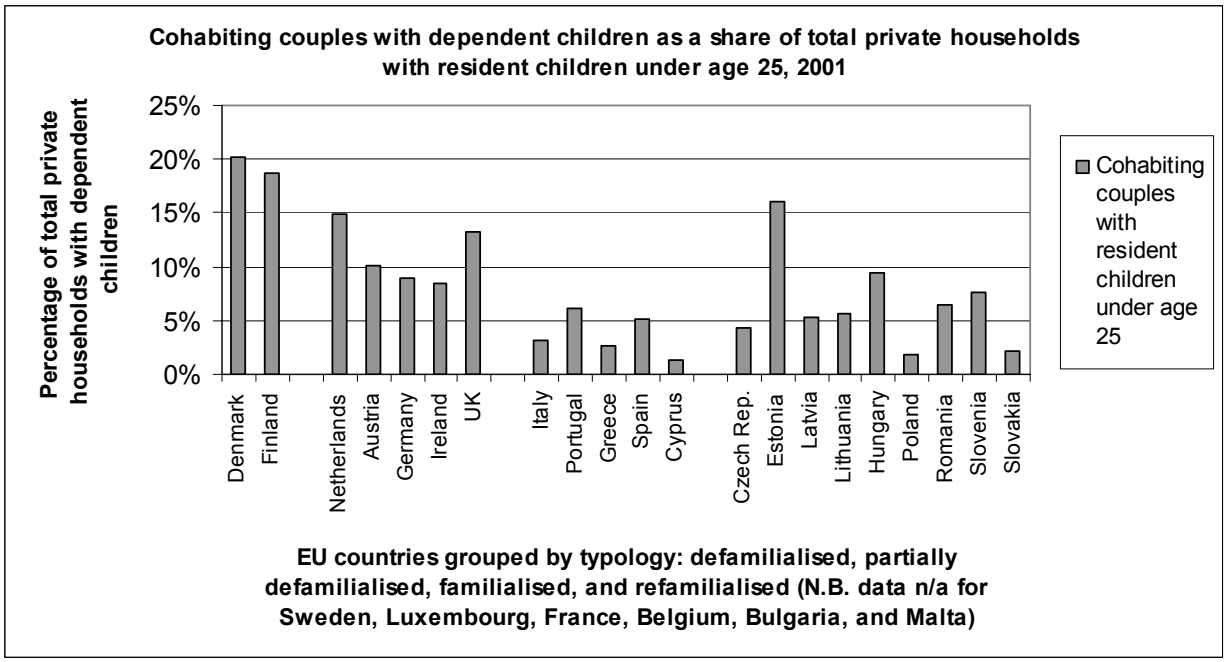
2.4.3 Cohabitation

Cohabitation is difficult to define, although it is usually taken to mean '*a sexual, emotional and relatively stable relationship, euphemistically described as living together as a couple, and the absence of formal marriage'* (Hantrais, 2004:44). UNECE recommendations suggest that the term 'couple' should include married couples and couples who report living in consensual unions, and where feasible, a separate count of consensual unions and of legally married couples should be given. Two persons are understood as partners in a consensual union when they have usual residence in the same household, are not married to each other, and report having a marriage-like relationship to each other (UNECE, 1998:43). However, inconsistencies between survey and census data among European countries, combined with the sometimes relatively unstable nature of some cohabiting unions, create difficulties in measuring the extent and nature of cohabitation (Hantrais, 2004:44).

One thirteenth (7.6 per cent) of total households with resident children under age 25 across Europe were cohabiting in 2001 (Table A.10, Annex A). Thus there are fewer cohabiting couples with children than there are single mother households. The defamilialised countries, Denmark and Finland, had the largest proportion of cohabiting couples with dependent children, with 20.2 per cent and 18.7 per cent respectively (Figure 2.15). While data on cohabiting couples with children were not available for the remaining defamilialised countries, according to Hantrais (2004:57) Sweden and France are among the countries with the highest cohabitation rates among younger people (along with Denmark, Finland, and the UK). The partially defamilialised countries had the second largest percentage of cohabiting couples with dependent children, with a group average

of 11.1 per cent. The familialised and refamilialised countries had the lowest average proportions of cohabiting couples with children (four per cent and 4.6 per cent respectively). However, the refamilialised countries had the greatest range from 1.9 per cent in Poland to 16.1 per cent in Estonia.

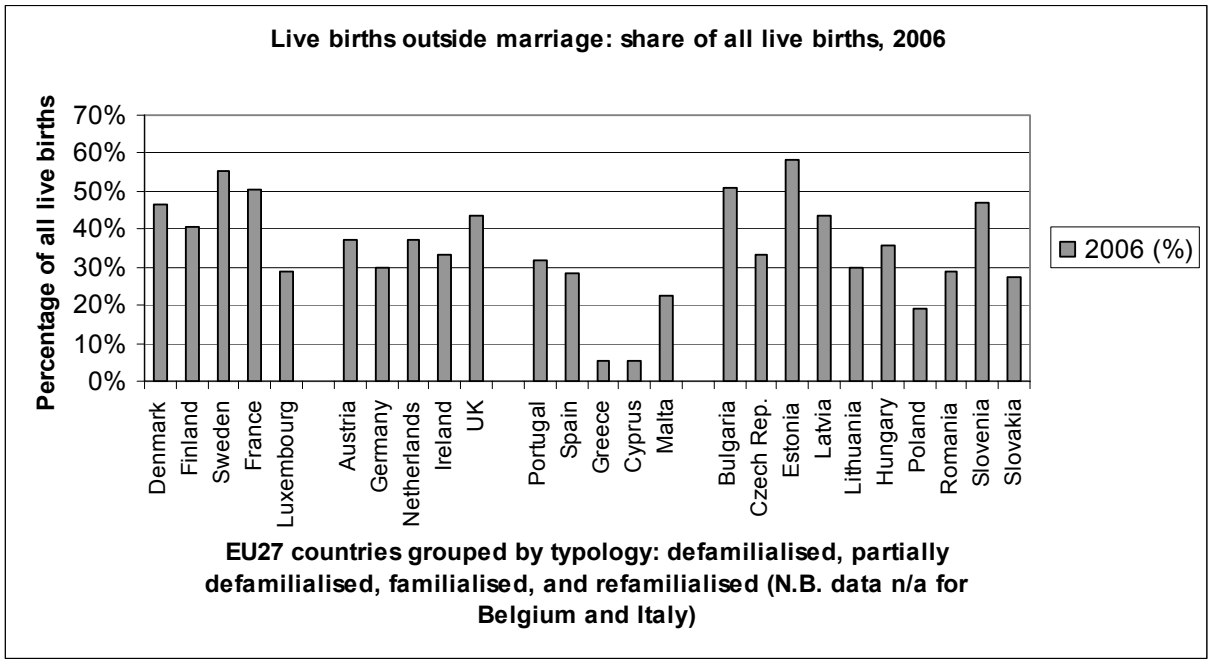
Figure 2.15: Cohabiting couples with dependent children as a share of total private households with resident children under age 25, 2001



The proportion of births outside marriage across Europe has been rising steeply since 1980 (Hantrais, 2004:56). Hantrais (2004:57) found that the countries with the highest cohabitation rates for younger people had the highest percentages of extramarital births, in particular Sweden, Denmark, Finland, France and the UK.[10] Eurostat data for 2006 (Figure 2.16 and Table A.12, Annex A) also reveal this pattern, with these defamilialised countries and the UK (partially defamilialised) reporting proportions of extramarital births above 30 per cent. While the refamilialised countries Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, and Slovenia had percentages over 40 per cent; in the context of their relatively high percentages of single parenthood in 2001 (see Table A.10, Annex A), the high percentage of extramarital births may be associated with single parenthood rather than cohabitation.

[10] Extramarital births refer to births where the mother's marital status at the time of birth was other than married.

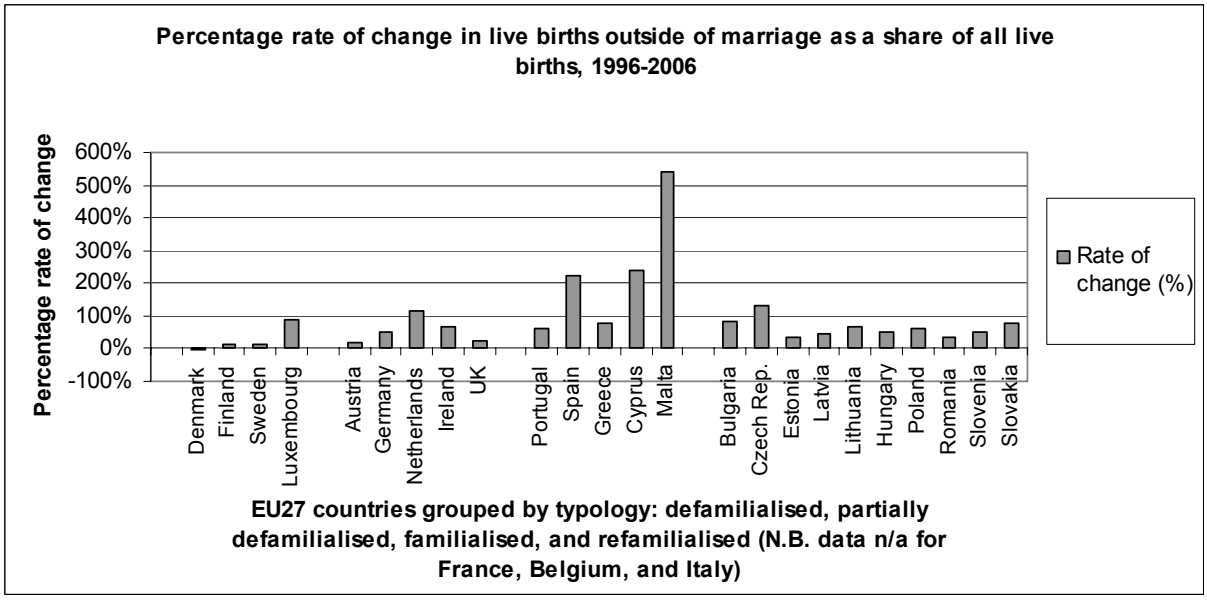
Figure 2.16: Live births outside marriage: Share of all live births, 2006



More children are being born out-of-wedlock than previously. All European countries experienced an increase in the proportion of extramarital births between 1996 and 2006, and all countries except Denmark increased their absolute numbers of extramarital births. The familialised group had the largest increases in the number of extramarital births with Malta, Cyprus, and Spain experiencing increases at a rate of over 200 per cent and Portugal and Greece recording increases of over 60 per cent (Figure 2.17 and Table A.12, Annex A). Half of the refamilialised countries reported a rate of change of over 60 per cent, marking a shift from relatively low numbers of extramarital births to higher ones. The defamilialised countries did not experience such high rates of change given the already relatively high proportions of extramarital births in 1996. The exception was Luxembourg which increased from 15 per cent to 28.8 per cent. Of the partially defamilialised countries, the Netherlands (113 per cent) and Ireland (66.4 per cent) had the highest rates of change.

Unmarried cohabitation has received formal recognition in the form of contracts or registration in several countries among the EU Members States, including Denmark, Sweden, the Netherlands, France, Germany and Hungary (Hantrais 2004:113). However, legislative arrangements for the protection of the interests of children have been subject to a less coherent response (Hantrais, 2004:113) which has implications for the longer term care and well-being of children living in new, and sometimes complex, family arrangements.

Figure 2.17: Percentage rate of change in live births outside of marriage as a share of all live births, 1996



2.4.4 Marriage

There has been a well documented decline in marriage in most European countries, with the EU15 Member States experiencing a fall in the average number of marriages per 1,000 population of nearly 34 per cent between 1960 and 2000 (Hantrais, 2004:51).

Across Europe (in 2001), 78.3 per cent of total private households with resident children under the age of 25 consisted of a married couple with children (Table A.10, Annex A).[11] The familialised countries had the highest group average with 82.6 per cent, while the refamilialised countries had a group average of 77.3 per cent. The defamilialised and partially defamilialised countries had the lowest proportion of married couples with children (69.6 per cent and 76.4 per cent, respectively). The two lowest percentages of married couples with children were among the refamilialised Baltic States of Estonia (59.0 per cent) and Latvia (62.2 per cent), which also had the highest rates of single parenthood (Table A.10, Annex A). Of the defamilialised countries, Finland also had a low percentage of married couples with children; however, it was the country with the highest percentage of cohabiting couples with dependent children.

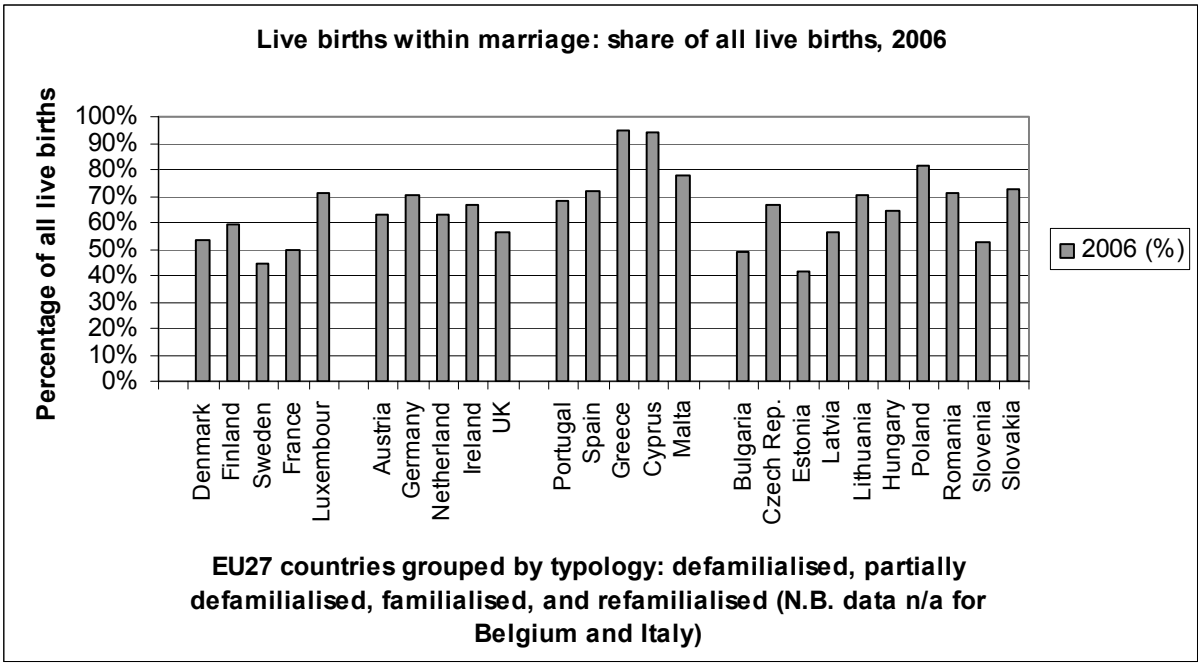
Moreover, between 1996 and 2006 the proportion of live births within marriage across Europe has been falling (Table A.13, Annex A). All countries show a decrease of between 4.1 per cent and 38.4 per cent except Sweden (defamilialised), Ireland (partially defamilialised), and Spain and Greece (familialised). Instead, these countries reported increases in the number of births within marriage despite experiencing proportional decreases as a share of

[11] This average does not include France as the authors of the study believe the numbers for married couples with children were skewed due to the absence of data for cohabiting couples with children for this country. Also, data were not available for Sweden, Luxembourg, Belgium, Bulgaria and Malta.

total live births. All of the refamilialised countries recorded both proportional and absolute decreases in live births within marriage.

Figure 2.18 shows that the proportions of children born within marriage in 2006 were lowest among the defamilialised countries, ranging between 44.5 per cent and 59.5 per cent, with the exception of Luxembourg which had 71.2 per cent. The partially defamilialised countries had a range of 56.3 per cent to 70.0 per cent, while the familialised countries had the largest proportion of births within marriage with a range of 68.4 per cent to 94.7 per cent. The refamilialised countries showed the greatest variation, ranging from 49.2 per cent of live births within marriage in Bulgaria to 81.1 per cent in Poland.

Figure 2.18: Live births within marriage: Share of all live births, 2006



2.4.5 Reconstituted families (Stepfamilies)

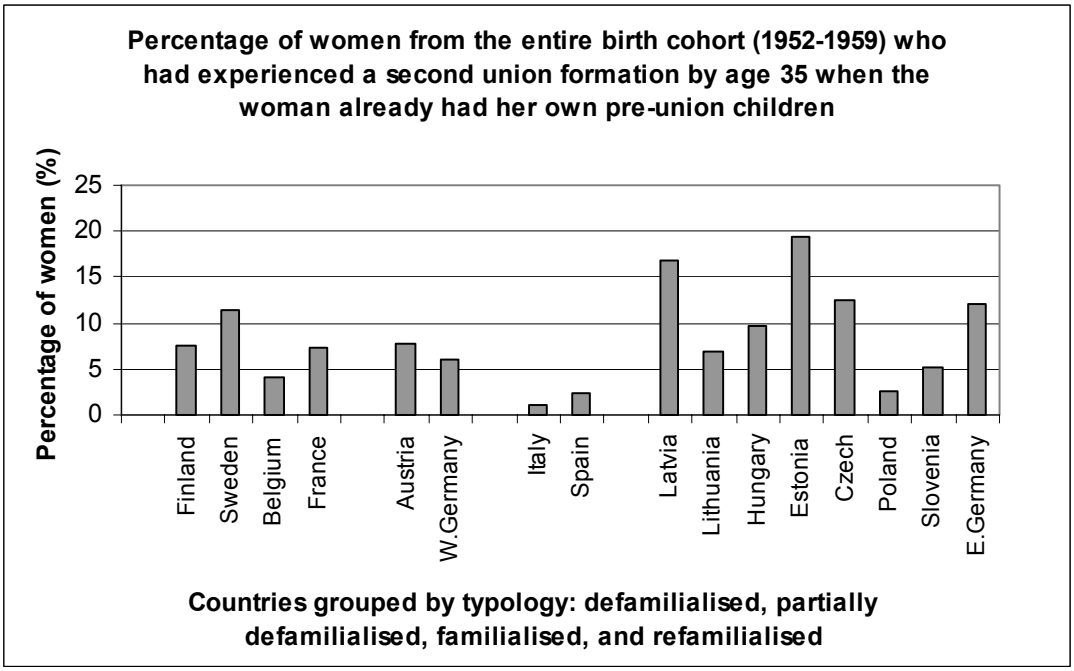
UNECE recommendations for the collection of statistical data define a reconstituted family as:

> *'a family consisting of a married or cohabiting couple with one or more children, where at least one child is a non-common child i.e. either the natural or adopted child of only one member of the couple.'*
>
> UNECE (1998:46)

There is evidence that stepfamilies are becoming more widespread (Hantrais, 2004:61), although a comparative picture on stepfamily formation is lacking (Hantrais, 2004:71). One study (Prskawetz *et al.*, 2003) examined stepfamily formation using individual-level data for the 1990s round of the Fertility and Family Surveys (FFS) from 19 European countries for which internationally comparable data were available for the birth cohort of women born between 1952 and 1959. Prskawetz *et al.* (2003) grouped the countries into four categories: Northern European countries (Finland and Sweden); Western

European countries (Austria, Belgium, France, and West Germany); Southern European countries (Italy and Spain); and former socialist countries (Czech Republic, East Germany, Hungary, Poland, Slovenia, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania). The study found that in the former socialist countries – refamilialised in our typology – more than 70 per cent of women entering a second union already had a child, although there was significant inter-country variation in union dissolution and repartnering (Figure 2.19 and Table A.14, Annex A) (Prskawetz *et al.*, 2003:130). Forming a stepfamily before the age of 35 was highest in Estonia and Latvia. Poland and Lithuania had relatively few second unions and stepfamilies, while the Czech Republic, Hungary and East Germany fell in-between (Prskawetz *et al.*, 2003:131).

Figure 2.19: Percentage of women from the entire birth cohort (1952-1959) who had experienced a second union formation by age 35 when the woman already had her own pre-union children



Prskawetz *et al.* (2003) found a clear distinction between countries in Western and Northern Europe and the CEE countries: in the Western European countries (defamilialised Belgium and France and partially defamilialised Austria and West Germany), women were less likely to have children in the (eventually dissolved) first unions than in the former socialist countries. However, the case of defamilialised Sweden was unique as most dissolved unions in Sweden had no children, although both union dissolution and repartnering were comparatively frequent (Prskawetz *et al.*, 2003:131).[12] With the exception of Belgium, Western European countries as well as defamilialised Finland had relatively low percentages of women entering a second union with children. Familialised

[12] Even though the dissolved first unions of Swedish women were among the least likely to have children, because dissolution is relatively common, Sweden was among the countries with high stepfamily experience (Graph 2.19 and Table A.14, Annex A) (Prskawetz *et al.*, 2003:139).

Southern Europe and defamilialised Belgium had relatively few second unions and had the lowest prevalence of stepfamilies among all the studied countries (Prskawetz *et al.*, 2003:131).

Prskawetz *et al.* (2003) conclude that in North European countries and, to a lesser extent, in Western European countries, repartnering had become more frequent (Prskawetz *et al.*, 2003:137). However, it was less common for these women to already have a child at the point of forming a second union. Conversely, in most Southern European countries, as well as the CEE countries, childbearing remained closely connected with first unions (Prskawetz *et al.*, 2003:137). In all the former socialist countries (that is, the refamilialised countries) most of the women who formed a second union had children (Prskawetz *et al.*, 2003:138).

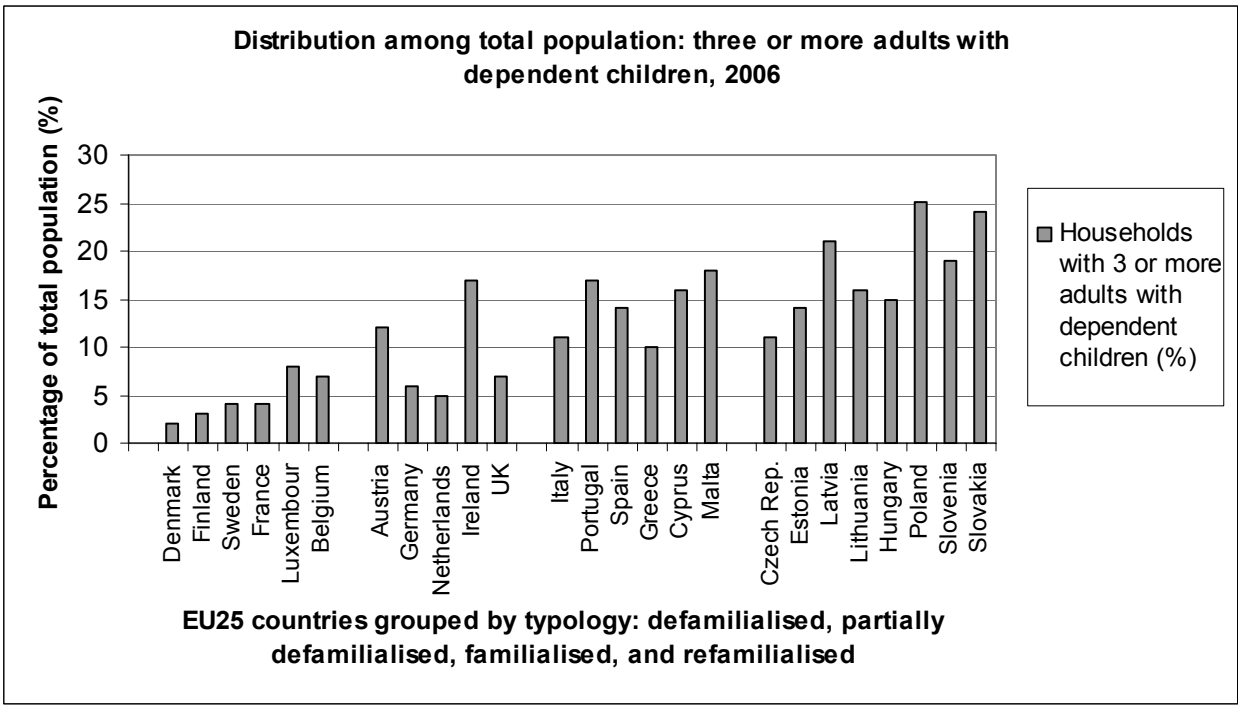
2.4.6 Intergenerational households and extended families

Intergenerational households and extended families represent another definitional challenge. UNECE recommendations for the 2010 round of censuses define a three-generation (multi generational) household as consisting of:

> '*two or more separate family nuclei or one family nucleus and (an) other family member(s). A woman who is living in a household with her own child (ren) should be regarded as being in the same family nucleus as the child (ren) even if she is never-married and even if she is living in the same household as her parents; the same applies in the case of a man who is living in a household with his own child (ren). Thus, the youngest two generations constitute one family nucleus*.'
>
> UNECE (1998:46)[13]

[13] UNECE (1998:para. 198) also suggests that countries derive information on '*extended families*', defined for census purposes as '*a group of two or more persons who live together in the same household and who do not constitute a family nucleus but are related to each other (to a specified degree) through blood, marriage (including consensual union) or adoption*'. Suggested classifications for '*extended family status*' and '*type of extended family*' define household members with reference to their relationship to the household reference person (UNECE, 1998:198).

Figure 2.20: Distribution among total population: three or more adults with dependent children, 2006



According to Eurostat data for the EU25 countries, in 2006 10 per cent of the European population lived in households of three or more adults with dependent children (Table A.15, Annex A). This is a decrease from 15 per cent in 2001. There are, however, wide variations between countries (Figure 2.20). The refamilialised countries had the largest proportions of their populations living in households of three or more adults with dependent children, with the greatest proportions in Poland (25 per cent), Slovakia (24 per cent) and Latvia (21 per cent). Data available for 2001 show that Romania also had a high proportion of the population living in households with three or more adults and dependent children. The next largest proportions were among the familialised countries, while lower percentages were found among the partially defamilialised and defamilialised countries. Of the familialised countries, Malta and Portugal had the highest proportions (18 per cent and 17 per cent, respectively). Ireland, at 17 per cent, had the highest percentage among the partially defamilialised countries. The lowest percentages were among the defamilialised countries, with Denmark recording the smallest proportion (two per cent).

Over time the proportion of households with three or more adults and dependent children has declined. Among the EU15 countries the percentage of people living in households with three or more adults and dependent children has fallen between 1996 and 2006 (Figure 2.21 and Table A.15, Annex A). Proportional decreases seemed to be largest in the familialised and then the partially defamilialised countries. However, comparative data for the EU25 between 2001 and 2006 reveal that in some of the refamilialised countries the proportion of the population living in these types of household arrangements was increasing, as was the case in Estonia, Lithuania and Poland (Figure 2.22). This was also the case in defamilialised Finland.

Figure 2.21: Three of more adults with dependent children: percentage difference, 1996 and 2006

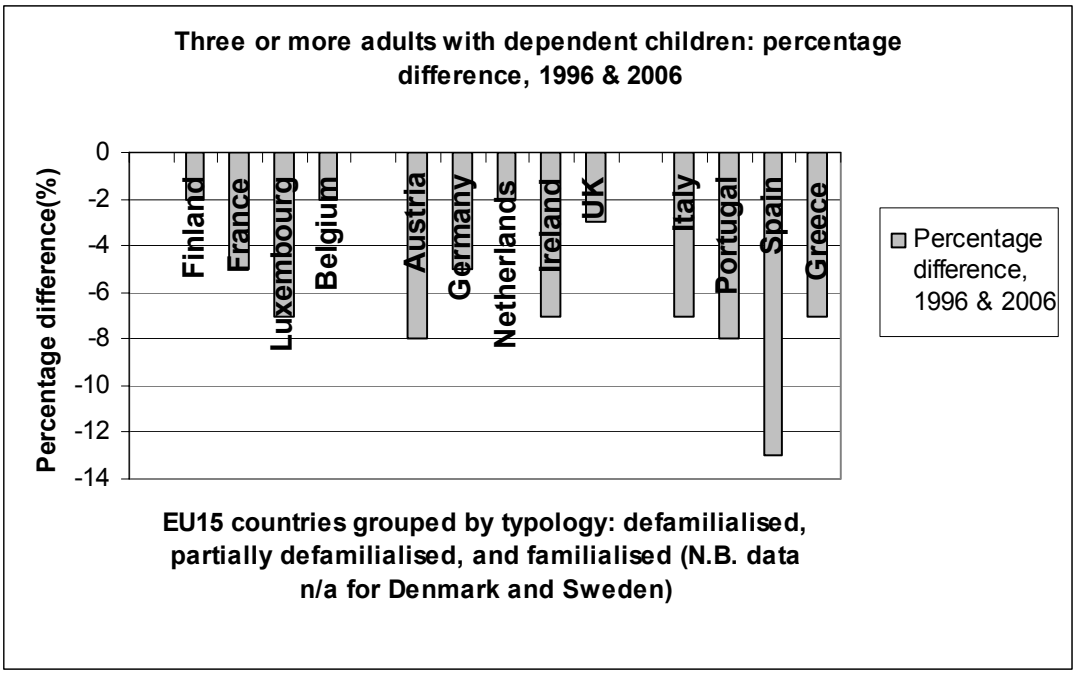
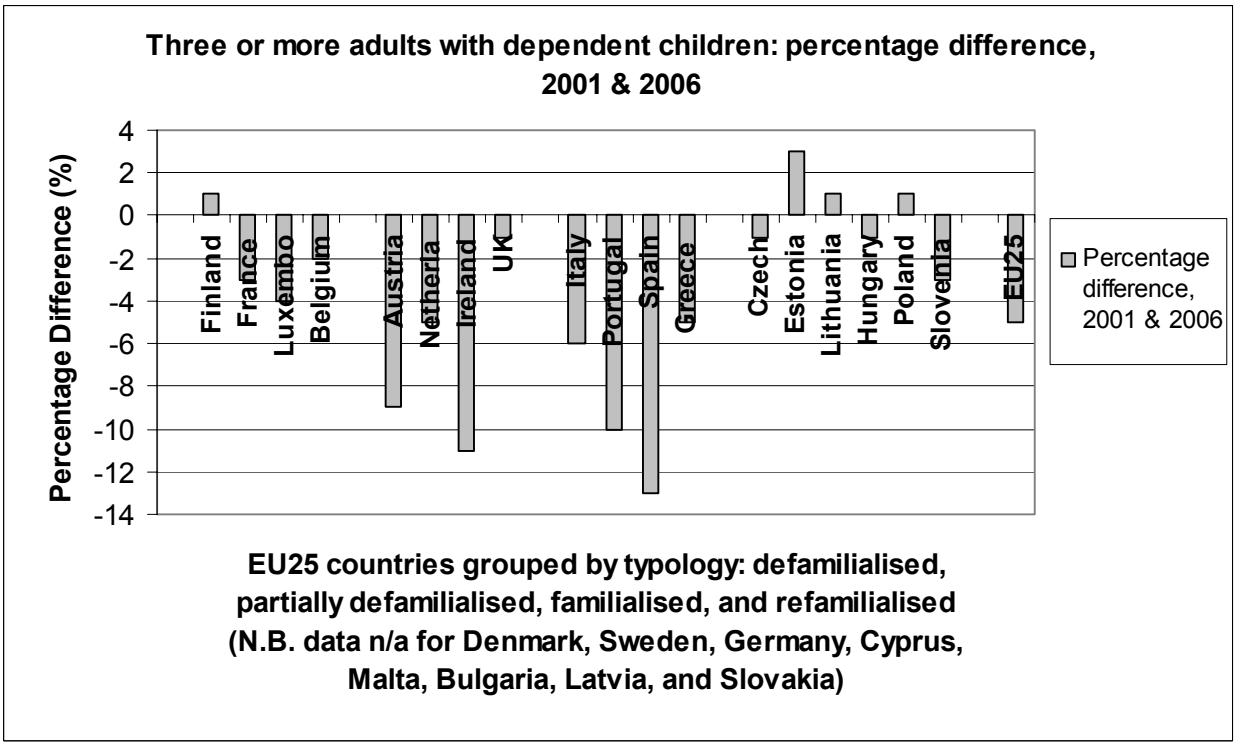


Figure 2.22: Three of more adults with dependent children: Percentage difference, 2001 and 2006



Eurostat data show that the proportion of people living in households with three or more adults and dependent children conforms to the defamilialised and familialised typology. This type of living arrangement is comparatively unusual

in defamilialised countries, and while it has been declining in many familialised and refamilialised countries, it nevertheless remains an important feature of households in these countries.

2.5 Family breakdown and reformation

This section examines divorce, remarriage, cohabitation breakdown and children living in institutional care. Eurostat data are presented on total divorce rates, crude divorce rates, mean duration of marriage at divorce, and marriages by previous marital status. Studies looking at data on cohabitation dissolution and children in institutional care are also examined.

2.5.1 Divorce

In addition to the increase in cohabitation and single parenthood, the changing nature of family relationships is characterised by increasing total divorce rates (Figure 2.23 and Table A.16, Annex A).[14] Evidence from the EU27 shows nearly one divorce for every two marriages across the European Union in 2005 and 2006, with variation between countries (Figure 2.24 and Table A.16, Annex A). Rates were highest among the defamilialised countries and relatively high in the partially defamilialised countries and, in general, lowest among the familialised countries. Among the refamilialised countries there was wide variation in the total divorce rates. In 2005 and 2006, the defamilialised countries had the highest divorce rate at 0.5 divorces per marriage for all countries in this group (with the exception of France for which there were no data). Similar rates were found among the refamilialised Czech Republic and the Baltic States which all had a rate of 0.5 in 2006. Partially familialised Austria also had a rate of 0.5. The rest of the partially defamilialised countries had rates of 0.4 in 2005 and 2006, with the exception of Ireland which only legalized divorce in 1996 (Hantrais, 2004:52). The familialised countries had the lowest rates with a range of 0.1 to 0.3 divorces per marriage; however, some of these countries showed the largest rates of change between 1995 and 2005 (Figure 2.23). Total divorce rates either increased or remained the same across Europe in this 10 year period, and the refamilialised and familialised countries saw the largest rates of change, with Poland, Slovakia and Spain reporting increases of 200 per cent and Cyprus experiencing a 100 per cent increase (Figure 2.23). This indicates that while divorce rates were still small in these countries, the prevalence of divorce was rising rapidly.

[14] Eurostat definition of *'total divorce rate'* is: *'The mean number of divorces per marriage in a given year. This number is not influenced by different sizes of the 'marriage cohorts' (i.e. marriages concluded in a specific year). Therefore, the total divorce rate is not the divorce rate of any specific 'marriage cohort'; rather, it is the divorce rate of a hypothetical generation subjected at each age to the current marriage and divorce conditions. This way, it reflects the current marriage and divorce conditions unbiased by the age structure of the population, leading to better comparability between countries and over time'* (Eurostat, 2008).

Figure 2.23: Rate of change in total divorce rate, 1995 and 2005

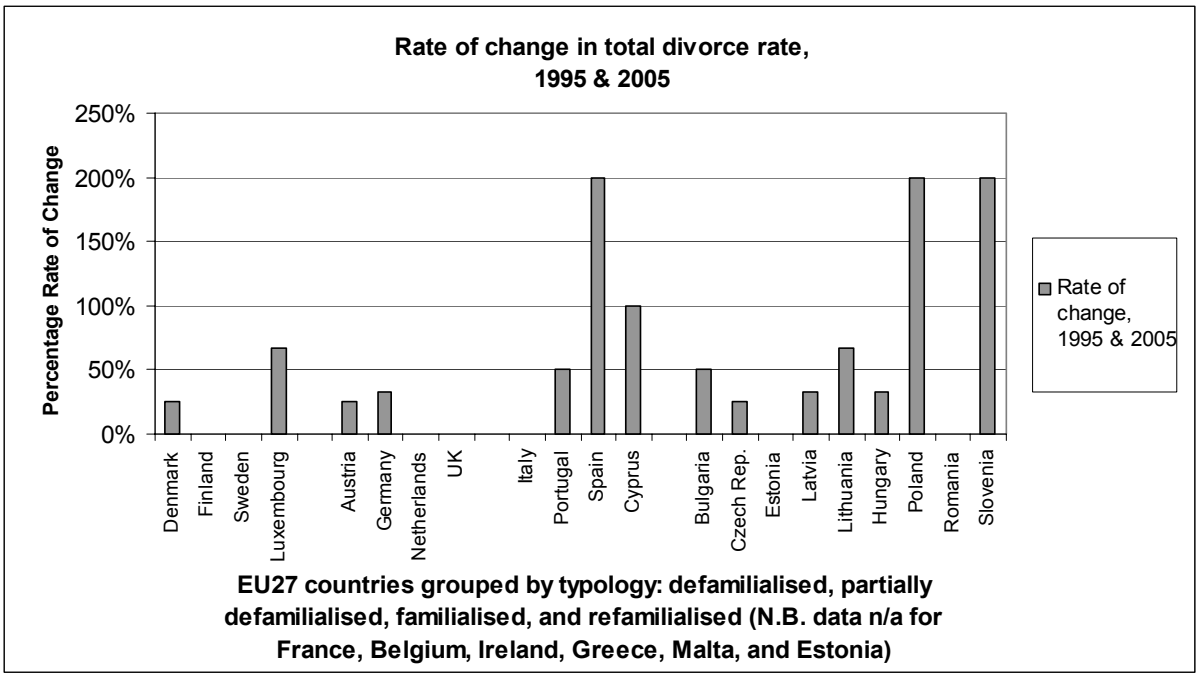
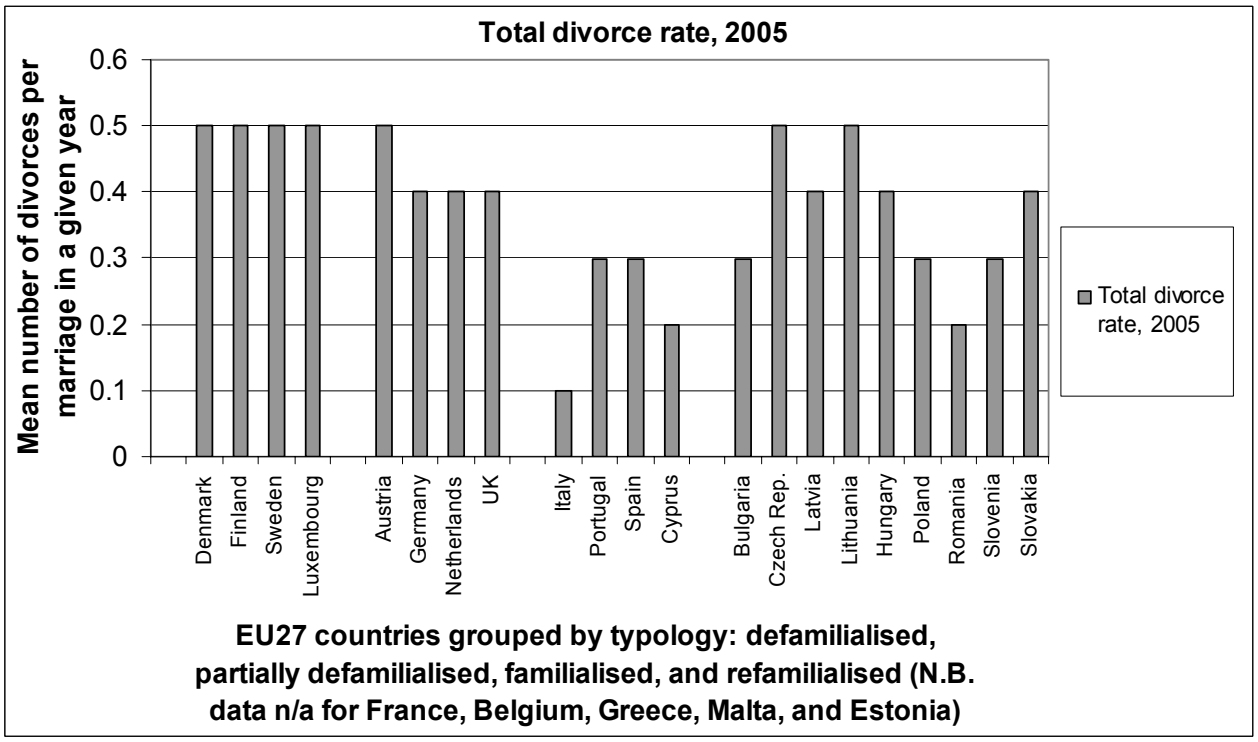


Figure 2.24: Total divorce rate, 2005

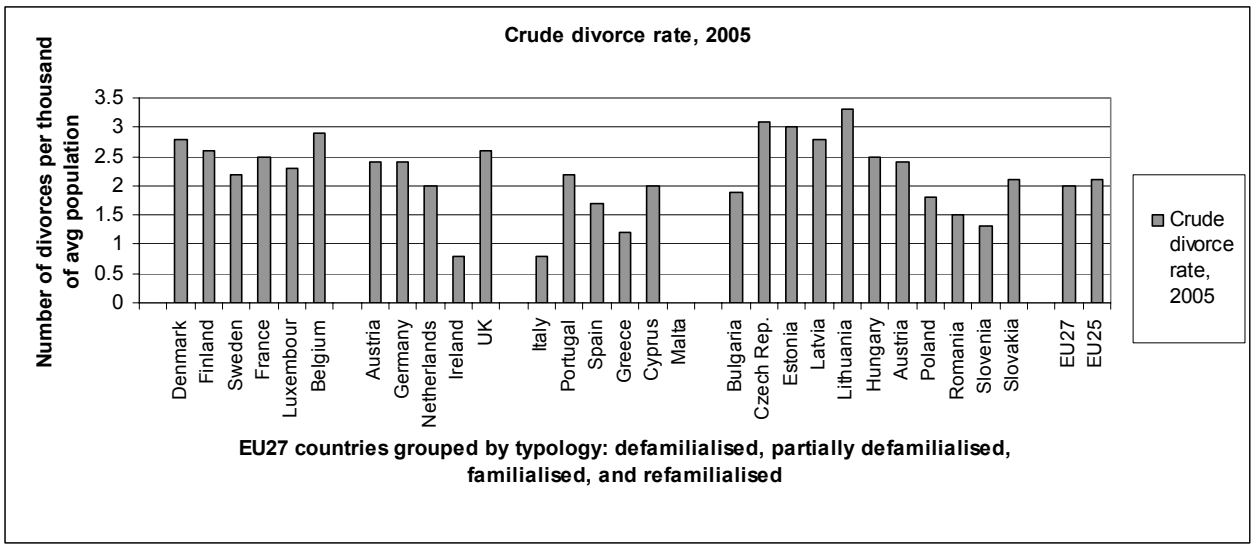


The crude divorce rate, or the ratio of the number of divorces to the average population, averaged two divorces per 1,000 inhabitants across the EU27 in

2005 (Figure 2.25 and Table A.17, Annex A).[15] This represented an overall increase of 11 per cent from 1995 and 18 per cent from 1985. The distribution of the crude divorce rates across the EU27 in 2005 was similar to that of total divorce rates, with the rates highest among the defamilialised countries and some of the refamilialised counties and lowest among the familialised countries. The countries with rates of over 2.5 divorces per 1,000 inhabitants were the defamilialised countries Denmark (2.8), Finland (2.6), France (2.5), Belgium (2.9), the partially defamilialised UK (2.6), and refamilialised Czech Republic (3.1), Estonia (3.0), Latvia (2.8), Lithuania (3.3), and Hungary (2.5) (Figure 2.25). Most of the remaining refamilialised countries were below the EU27 average. Of the partially defamilialised countries, Ireland had the lowest crude divorce rate (0.8), while the other countries in this group were all at or above the EU27. Most of the familialised countries were below the EU average. Portugal was the only country in this group above the EU27 average with a rate of 2.2 divorces per 1,000 inhabitants. Divorce remains illegal in Malta, hence its divorce rate of zero.

Between 1995 and 2005 the crude divorce rate increased in all but eight EU countries. These countries include the defamilialised and partially defamilialised Finland, Sweden, Belgium, the Netherlands, and the UK, and refamilialised Estonia, Latvia, and Romania. The reasons for this fall in the crude divorce rate are unclear. As was seen with the total divorce rates, the familialised countries experienced the largest rate of change in the crude divorce rates throughout the 20 year period between 1985 and 2005.

Figure 2.25: Crude divorce rate, 2005



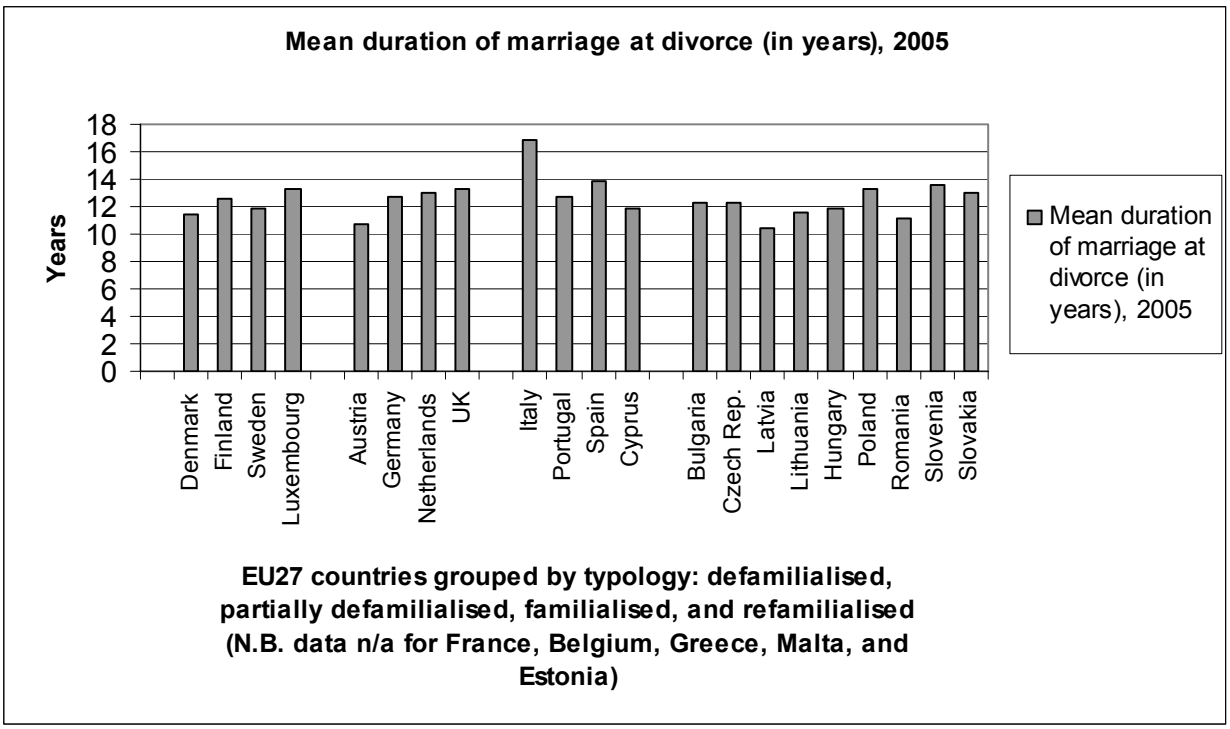
The mean duration of marriage at divorce in 2005 ranged from around 10 to 14 years for all EU countries, except for Italy which had a mean duration of 16.8 years (Figure 2.26 and Table A.18, Annex A).[16] Figure 2.27 shows that, despite

[15] Eurostat definition of *'crude divorce rate'* is: *'The ratio of the number of divorces during the year to the average population in that year. The value is expressed per 1000 inhabitants.'* (Eurostat, 2008).

[16] Eurostat definition of *'mean duration of marriage at divorce'* is: *'The mean marriage duration at divorce by calendar year is obtained by adding the series of divorce rates by*

generally rising divorce rates, the mean duration of marriage at divorce between 1995 and 2005 rose or stayed the same in most European countries. The familialised countries Portugal and Spain were the only countries not to experience an increase in the amount of time spent in a marriage before divorce. The greatest increase occurred in the refamilialised countries, especially in Bulgaria and Romania which saw increases in duration of marriage of more than three years and two years respectively.

Figure 2.26: Mean duration of marriage at divorce (in years), 2005



Kiernan and Cherlin (1999), using data from the UK's National Child Development Study, consider whether young adults who had experienced parental divorce were more likely than those from intact relationships to have dissolved their own first partnerships before the age of 33. They found that individuals who had experienced parental divorce before the age of 20 were more likely to have dissolved their first partnerships, and that this relationship persisted when age at first partnership, type of first partnership, indicators of class background, child and adolescent school achievement and behaviour problems were taken into account. Their best estimate was that parental divorce before age 20 increased the risk of partnership dissolution for adult children by 16 per cent for women and 41 per cent for men. Strong links were found between certain demographic variables, notably type of first partnership, and age at first partnership and partnership dissolution, suggesting that these might be important pathways mediating the association between parental divorce and second-generation partnership dissolution, particularly for men.

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duration of marriage for the calendar year under consideration, and by calculating the mean of this sum.' (Eurostat, 2008).

Figure 2.27: Rate of change in mean duration of marriage at divorce, 1995 and 2005

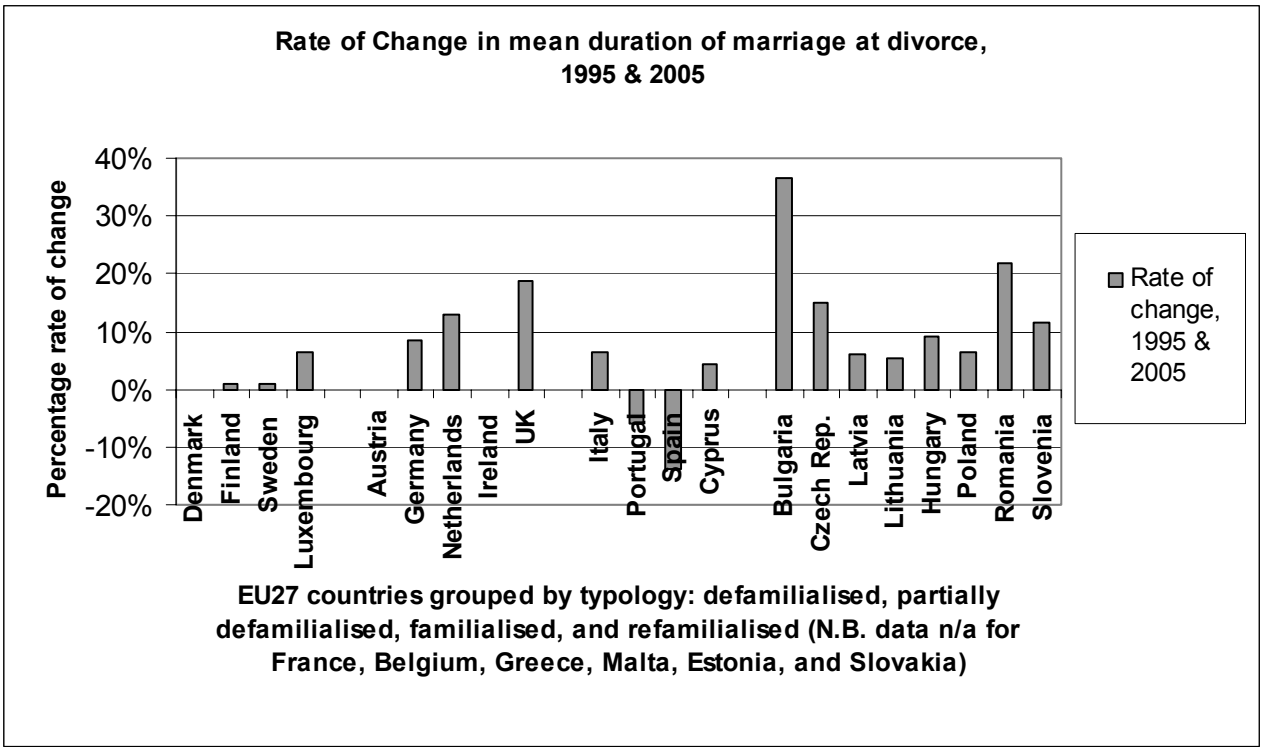


Figure 2.28: Percentage of marriages by divorced persons. Male and female, 2006

2.5.2 Remarriage

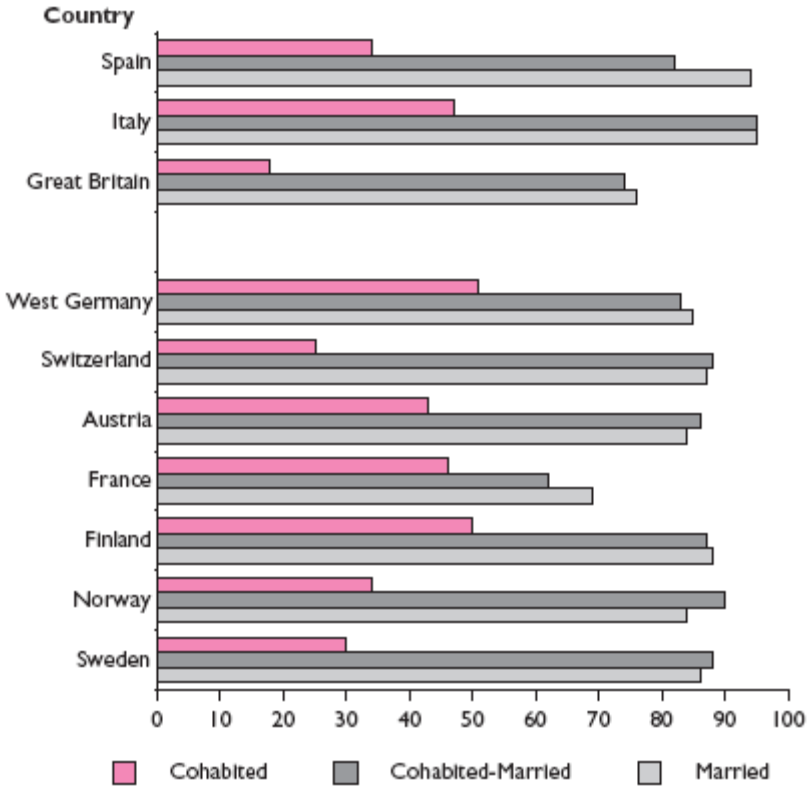
As divorce becomes more prevalent across Europe, it is not surprising to find that more marriages in some countries involve divorced persons. While in 2006 most people getting married in the EU27 were single (rather than divorced or widowed), a substantial minority were divorced (Table A.19, Annex A). The proportion of remarriages varies by country (Figure 2.28). In general, familialised countries had the lowest proportion of marriages that included people who were divorced. Similarly, the refamilialised countries of Poland and Slovenia had less than a tenth of marriages by divorced persons. In contrast, Luxembourg (defamilialised), Austria and Germany (partially defamilialised), and the Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia and Hungary (refamilialised), around one-quarter of all marriages were of persons previously married (Figure 2.28).

As Prskawetz *et al.* (2003) highlight, the proportion of these remarriages that involve children varies from country to country.

2.5.3 Cohabitation breakdown

Cohabitation has eclipsed marriage as the marker of first partnership in the defamilialised and partially defamilialised countries, while in the familialised countries and in Ireland it has remained marriage (Kiernan, 1999). In this context, cohabitation breakdown becomes an issue of importance to policy makers. Drawing on the 1990s round of the Fertility and Family Surveys (FFS) as well as the British Household Panel Survey (BHPS), Kiernan (1999) was able to analyze the duration of cohabiting unions and the dissolution of unions in Western Europe. One of the key findings was that in most countries cohabiting unions tended to be short-lived, either dissolving or converting into marriage (Kiernan, 1999:32). The median duration of cohabitation was found to be less than two years in all countries, with the exception of Sweden where the median duration was four years (Kiernan, 1999:96). Unions that dissolved without resulting in marriage tended to last longer on average. These unions generally lasted two years or more in most countries (Kiernan, 1999:96).

Figure 2.29: Percentage of first partnerships surviving 10 years (life table estimates) according to type of first partnership. Woman aged 20-39 years



Source: Kiernan (1999:30)

Figure 2.29 gives the percentage of first partnerships surviving 10 years according to type of first partnership. Cohabiting unions that did not convert into marriages were the most likely type of partnership to dissolve. However, marriages that began as a cohabiting relationship were no more likely to breakdown than marriages in which there was no prior experience of cohabitation (Kiernan, 1999:32). The highest percentages of cohabiting couples to reach their ten year anniversary were among couples in Finland, France, Austria, West Germany and Italy. Within these countries 40-50 per cent of these couples survived. Within Sweden and Spain 30-40 per cent survived, while in Great Britain the figure was only 18 per cent.

It is important to note that these findings are based on data from the early and mid 1990s and that these data may not be representative of the current situation, particularly in countries where cohabitation has continued to increase. Newer data on cohabitation breakdown is required to properly assess the longevity of these types of relationships. Furthermore, information on the number of cohabitation breakdowns which involve resident children would be of interest to family policy makers.

2.5.4 Children in institutional care

The proportion of children living in institutions is comparatively high in some countries. Although estimates seem to vary. Chou and Browne (2008:43), for example, show relatively high proportions of children aged three and under living in institutions in the CEE countries (not including Slovenia), as well as in

Belgium, Finland, Malta, and Spain. These countries had over 20 per 10,000 children aged less than three years in institutional care in 2003 (Table A.20, Annex A). Furthermore, France, Romania, Spain and Belgium were estimated to have more than 2,000 children aged under three in institutional care in 2002-2003 (Chou and Browne, 2008:44).

2.5.5 Other family breakdown indicators

Other family breakdown indicators include the number of children who had experienced the death of a parent and custody patterns of single parent families (contact and no contact with non-resident parent). However, searches among quantitative data sources such as Eurostat, UNICEF and UN country statistics yielded no results for comparative data across the EU.

2.6 Conclusions

As this chapter has shown, the European Union has undergone substantial changes in regards to family structure, formation and dissolution. Many of these shifts have been highlighted using demographic indicators, bringing to light trends among country clusters and differences between the typology groupings. Table 2.1 summarises general trends among selected indicators.

Table 2.1: Summary table of selected indicators

Selected Indicators	Defamilialised	Partially Defamilialised	Familialised	Refamilialised
Population growth, 1997 & 2007	Positive	Positive	Positive	Negative (except SI,SK)
Rate of change in total live births, 1987 & 2007	Positive (except FI)	Negative (except IE)	Negative (except ES,GR)	Negative
Percentage of persons aged 0-14, 2006	Highest; above EU avg. (group avg.)	Close to EU avg. (group avg.)	Lowest; below EU avg. (group avg.)	Close to EU avg. (group avg.)
Rate of change in persons age 0-14, 1996 & 2006	Half negative, half positive	Negative (except NL,IE)	Negative (except IT,ES,)	Negative
Percentage of persons living as children in parental home, 2001	2nd Largest (group avg.)	Close to EU avg. (group avg.)	Close to EU avg. (group. Avg)	Largest (group avg.)
Avgerage number of persons per private household, 2003	Smaller households	Smaller households	Larger houeholds	Larger houeholds
Distribution of households (3 adults or more) with dependent children among total population, 2006	Low	Low (except AT, IE)	2nd highest	Highest
Proportional growth in distribution of households (3 adults or more) with dependent children among total population, 1996 & 2006	Negative	Negative	Negative	Negative
Distribution of households with dependent children among total population, 2006	More below EU avg.	More below EU avg.	More above EU avg.	More above EU avg.
Households with dependent children, percentage difference, 2000 & 2006	Negative (except LU)	Not much change	Negative	Negative (except LV)
Distribution of single parents with children among total population, 2006	Largest	Largest	Smallest	Mixed
Percentage of cohabiting couples with dependent children, 2001	Highest (group avg.)	2nd highest (group avg.)	Lowest (group avg.)	2nd lowest (group avg.)
Growth in births outside of marriage,1996 & 2006	Positive	Positive	Positive	Positive
Percentage of married couples with children, 2001	Lowest (group avg.)	2nd lowest (group avg.)	Highest (group avg.)	2nd highest (group avg.)
Total divorce rates, 2005	Highest	2nd highest	Lowest	Mixed
Growth in total divorce rates, 1995 & 2005	Positive or constant	Positive or constant	Positive or constant	Positive or constant

Note: Please refer to List of Abbreviations or Annex A for country abbreviations.

Population growth was positive across the EU between 1997 and 2007 with the exception of most of the refamilialised counties. Within the 20 year period between 1987 and 2007, the EU experienced a decline in fertility, with only the majority of the defamilialised countries experiencing a positive growth in live births. The percentage of children aged 0-14 was greatest within the defamilialised countries and lowest among the familialised countries. Between 1996 and 2006, the proportion of children aged 0-14 declined in most countries, although the most notable exceptions were among the defamilialised and partially defamilialised countries. The greatest percentages of children aged 0-24 living at home were among the refamilialised countries, followed by the defamilialised countries. Households with most members in 2003 were among the familialised and refamilialised countries, which (in 2006) also had the greatest distributions of households with three or more adults with dependent children. Overall, however, the distribution of households with three or more adults and dependent children decreased between 1996 and 2006 across the EU, marking a general decrease in household size. The familialised and refamilialised countries had slightly higher proportions of households with dependent children. Nevertheless, between 2000 and 2006 the distribution of households with dependent children fell among these countries, as well as among the defamilialised countries. Only within the partially defamilialised countries did the distribution of households with children remain relatively constant. These trends indicate that along with general decreases in children among the population, the distributions of households with children have also been decreasing.

The distribution of single parents with children was highest among the defamilialised and partially defamilialised countries. Single parents were least common among the familialised countries. The prevalence of single parents varied substantially among the refamilialised countries.

The defamilialised countries had the highest proportions of cohabiting couples with dependent children in 2001, followed by the partially defamilialised countries. The smallest proportions were among the familialised countries, known for their more traditional family forms. Mixed results were once again observed among the refamilialised countries, although on the whole the proportions within these countries were quite low. Births outside marriage, often a sign of relatively high levels of unmarried cohabitation, were largest among a number of defamilialised and partially defamilialised countries. High rates of births outside of marriage among some of the refamilialised countries may be indicative of relatively high levels of single parenthood. Unsurprisingly, the largest proportion of married couples with children in 2001 was among the familialised countries, and the smallest proportions were among the defamilialised countries followed by the partially defamilialised countries.

Since 1995, divorce has risen or remained constant across the EU Member States. Total divorce rates in 2005 show that divorce was most prevalent in the defamilialised countries, followed by the partially defamilialised countries. Rates among the refamilialised countries varied, while the lowest rates were among the familialised countries.

The demographic indicators identified in this chapter demonstrate the diversity in patterns of family structure, formation and dissolution in different areas of the European Union. These variations highlight the importance of the need for a flexible policy response to protect the interests of children in new family forms, and the need for consistent, good quality data.

3 Poverty and Social Exclusion among Children and Lone Parents

3.1 Introduction

Socio-economic changes in Europe over the second half of the 20th century have brought about new at-risk groups within society. Whereas in the past widows and orphans were considered the most in need of social protection from the state (Brodolini, 2007; EC, 2007:6), single-parent households and their children are now increasingly being recognized by governments as at-risk of poverty and social exclusion. The rise in single parent households is one of the most visible outcomes of changing patterns of family formation and dissolution across the European Union (EU) (Millar, 2004:79). The increased individualism widely associated with modernity (Giddens, 1994, cited in EC, 2006:86) is considered to be a contributing factor. This is evidenced by marriage and cohabiting relationships becoming less stable, births outside marriage becoming more common and less stigmatised, and the increased economic autonomy of women (EC, 2006:86) (see Chapter 2).

The rise in single parent households must be understood in the context of broader socio-economic developments. Changes in the labour market and the increasing independence of women precipitated the decline of the male breadwinner model of the post-war era. Based on the assumption of male economic activity outside the home and female responsibility for children and housework within the home, the male breadwinner ideal depended on full male employment and stable families (Lewis, 2006:5). These two tenets were jeopardised as women gained increasing autonomy and as *'the stable, typical, blue-collar, low-skilled and male jobs of the Fordist societies were replaced by more insecure, flexible, high-skilled and differentiated jobs, accessed by a growing proportion of married mothers'* (European Commission, 2007:1).[17] Labour market changes meant that fewer families were able to depend on a sole income, giving rise to the dual earner model or the one-and-a-half earner model (Bradshaw and Hatland, 2006:3-4). The timing of these changes varied between countries, with the Nordic and the Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries experiencing a shift to the dual earner model first, followed by the UK and the rest of Western Europe (Brodolini, 2007:7). The evolution of the Southern European countries has followed a different path, as their economies were never fully Fordist and, arguably, their social policies never fully subscribed to the male breadwinner model (Brodolini, 2007:7).

[17] Fordism refers to the system of mass production and consumption based on the development of assembly line production, characteristic of highly developed economies during the 1940s-1960s.

Dual earning gave rise to an *'adult worker model'*, now promoted by most governments (Lewis, 2006). Lewis (2006:9) notes the considerable convergence across Europe in terms of governments' current encouragement of the adult worker model, promoted with the aim to stimulate non-inflationary economic growth, reduce poverty, further gender equality in the labour market and tackle the problem of deteriorating dependency ratios. However, as Skevik (2006:233) points out:

> *'The dual breadwinner/dual carer model carries its own dangers though: like the male breadwinner model, this is premised on the assumption that families will have two parents who cooperate and share the day-to-day responsibilities. Women (and men) who struggle to form and maintain autonomous households do not have this support*.'

Faced with both earning and caring responsibilities, single parents face higher risks of poverty and unemployment, even in countries where lone parents are doing best in terms of poverty and employment rates (Skevik, 2006:233). There are variations in the adult worker model, with the Nordic countries following closer to a *'caregiver social wage model'* which supports mothers through social transfers and a *'parent-worker model'* which involves high rates of labour market participation with a high *'social wage'* (Lewis and Hobson, 1997:15-18, cited in EC, 2006:85).

This chapter examines the effects of family breakdown with regard to the poverty and social exclusion of single parent households and their children. These effects will be investigated among twelve EU Member States. The first part of this chapter reviews some definitional and measurement issues related to poverty and social exclusion. The second part examines various indicators of poverty and social exclusion, providing data for all twelve countries where possible and partial data where not. In the final section, examples are drawn from different policy responses in the case study countries. One final note should be made: As noted in chapter 2, family dissolution (that is, divorce and cohabitation breakdown) is only one route into single parenthood. Other paths include single, never married mothers and widowhood. Data used in this chapter do not distinguish between the various pathways into single parenthood, and for this reason the discussion is based on single parents as a whole.

3.2 Poverty and social exclusion: Some definitional and measurement issues

Poverty, a highly contested notion (Barnes, 2004:3; Lister, 2004:3), is difficult to define. Traditionally, poverty is understood as a distributional issue: *'the lack of resources at the disposal of an individual or household – primarily the lack of income'* (Barnes, 2004:3). In comparing levels across the EU, poverty is defined in relation to the socio-economic context of each country. According to Townsend (1979) this *relative* approach to defining poverty means:

> *'Individuals, families and groups in the population can be said to be in poverty when they lack the resources to obtain the types of diet, participate in the activities and have the living conditions and amenities which are customary, or at least widely encouraged or approved, in the societies to which they belong. Their resources are so seriously below those commanded by the average individual or family that they are, in effect, excluded from ordinary living patterns and activities'*
>
> Townsend (1979:31)

Townsend's emphasis on the exclusionary effect of poverty highlights the non-material as well as the material manifestations of poverty. This has led to a view that *'poverty has to be understood not just as a disadvantaged and insecure economic condition but also a shameful and corrosive social relation'* (Lister, 2004:7). Therefore, poverty is not just a distributional issue but a relational one as well.

Social exclusion – a concept which has been influential in recent political discourse (Barnes, 2004:5) – recognizes the multi-dimentional and relational issues associated with poverty. Room identifies these as: *'inadequate social participation, lack of social integration and lack of power'* (Room, 1999:169). This approach introduces the social relations of power and control and the processes of marginalisation and exclusion which can cause multiple forms of disadvantage which may interact to create a cumulative impact (Williams and Pillinger,1996:9). The concept highlights social inequalities (along the lines of gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality, age and disability) and issues of autonomy and dependency (Barnes, 2004:5-6). This has led to the EU Observatory on Social Exclusion, for example, linking social inclusion and participation to political, civil and broader human rights (Lister, 2004:89).

Social inclusion policies have, however, tended to focus on social integration, primarily through access to paid work (Lister, 2004:79). The association of social inclusion with paid work is challenged on two main premises: first, because *'inclusion in the labour market through marginal, low paid, insecure jobs under poor working conditions does not constitute genuine poverty-free social exclusion'*; and second, because the focus on paid work tends to ignore the (gendered) unpaid work of reproduction and care, effectively devaluing and marginalizing these activities (Lister, 2004:79

A rounded measure of poverty should take account of both income and living standards (Lister, 2004:5). Income poverty is usually measured against a poverty standard, often referred to as the poverty line, which represents a threshold below which individuals are considered 'poor' (Lister, 2004:41). The EU agreed poverty threshold is set at 60 per cent of the national median equivalised household income, meaning that a household living on an income below this level is considered *'at-risk-of-poverty'* (European Commission, 2008:12). Poverty standards such as this are criticized as being arbitrary (Bradshaw, 2005:4), however they

are used for official poverty estimates due to their suitability for international comparisons (Lister, 2004:41). Poverty threshold measures provide an estimated head count of those living below the poverty line but do not give any indication of the severity of the poverty experienced. 'Poverty gap' measures, on the other hand, take account of the severity of poverty by measuring a person or household's distance from the poverty line, expressed as a percentage of the threshold. Poverty gap measures are important as *'policies that are successful in bringing those just below the poverty line up to it (thereby reducing the headcount) may not be the best way of helping those furthest below it (thereby closing the poverty gap)'* (Lister, 2004:42). Another important indicator is that of persistent poverty. Poverty is thought to be more damaging, particularly for children, if it persists (Ritakallio and Bradshaw, 2006:247). The longer a child remains in poverty the greater the impact on a child's life-chances. Eurostat (2008) defines at-persistent-risk-of-poverty as, *'The share of persons with an equivalised disposable income below the risk-of-poverty threshold in the current year and in at least two of the preceding three years'*.

One of the shortcomings of income based measures is that they do not reflect differences in living conditions. Evaluating living conditions can give a picture of the resources actually available to households living in poverty. Material deprivation measures are one way of evaluating the living conditions of households, and are based on the proportion of the population that are deprived from a range of goods and services that can be considered necessary to enjoy a decent standard of living in the national context (European Commission, 2008:51). Examples of such indicators include economic strain, enforced lack of durables and poor housing conditions (European Commission, 2008:51).

Despite a number of problems with available datasets on child poverty and deprivation (see Bradshaw, 2005:4), quantitative data are much more prevalent than qualitative. However, Lister (2004:38) stresses the importance of qualitative research, arguing that it *'can uncover meanings and provide insights into the experience of poverty that have implications for the development of policy'*. Qualitative studies shed light on what deprivation actually means for those experiencing it. The picture painted by qualitative studies generally consists of: *'constant restrictions; doing without; running out of money at the end of the week; limited choice; no room for spontaneity; [and] damaged relationships'* (Lister, 2004:54). Furthermore, qualitative studies lend themselves to participatory approaches based on *'the belief that people in poverty are themselves experts in poverty and that therefore, ideally, their views should be taken on board at all stages of the research process – as subjects and not just objects from whom information is extracted'* (Lister, 2004:47). Participatory approaches recognize the value of 'voice' and participation/consultation in the development of social policy.

Poverty estimates usually refer to individuals but are actually based on measures of household income rather than that of each individual within the family unit. The reason for this is based on the rationale that members of a household pool their resources and share living standards,

at least to an extent (Lister, 2004:48). In order to compare households of different compositions and sizes, equivalence scales are used to take account of economies of scale and the differing needs of adults and children (European Commission, 2008:12; Lister, 2004:48). However, using measures based on household income ignores the distribution of resources among household members and can underestimate the poverty of women and children who are more likely to suffer from an unequal share of income within the family (Lister, 2004:48). This concern has led to a gendered and child-centred perspective which emphasises the experience of poverty by individuals rather than households (Lister, 2004:60). Brannen and O'Brien (1996), for example, argue for a research focus on *'children in families'* rather than on *'families with children'*.

3.3 Child poverty

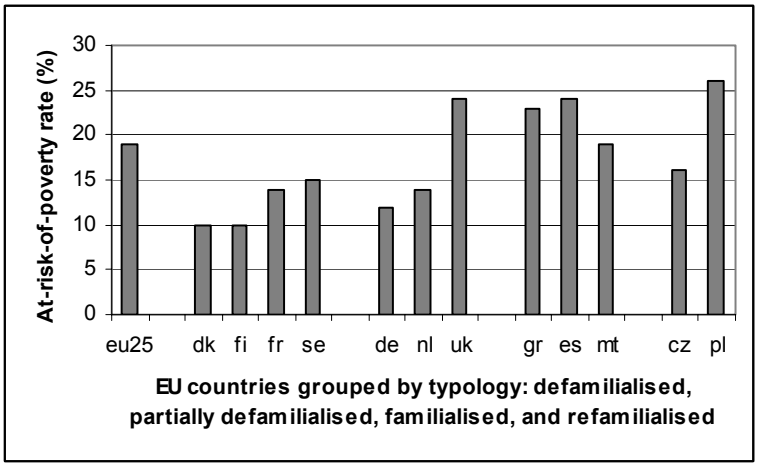
On average, the poverty rate of children (aged less than 18 years) exceeds that of the total EU population. In 2006, it was estimated that across the EU25 the poverty rate of children was 19 per cent, whereas the poverty risk for the population as a whole was 16 per cent (Figure 3.1 and Table 3.1). Only four of our case study countries had child poverty rates lower than those of the total population: defamilialised Denmark, Finland and France, and partially defamilialised Germany. All of the defamilialised and partially defamilialised countries had low child poverty risks, with 15 per cent or less of their child population living below the poverty line. The only exception was the UK which had one of the highest at-risk-of-poverty rates for children, with 24 per cent of children living below the poverty threshold. The highest rates were among the familialised and refamilialised countries, with roughly a quarter of all children at-risk-of-poverty in Poland and Spain.

Table 3.1: At-risk-of-poverty rate (60 per cent of median equivalised income after social transfers), children vs. total population, 2006

Typology		D.				P.			F.			R.	
	eu25	dk	fi	fr	se	de	nl	uk	gr	es	mt	cz	pl
Total population	16	12	13	13	12	13	10	19	21	20	14	10	19
Less than 18 years	19	10	10	14	15	12	14	24	23	24	19	16	26

Source: Eurostat 2008, Income and living conditions, 'At risk of poverty rates by age and gender', ilc_li02.
Note: 2006 data for EU25 is a Eurostat estimate; 2006 Malta data is provisional.

Figure 3.1: At-risk-of-poverty rate, persons less than 18 years of age, 2006



While the at-risk-of-poverty rate indicates the proportion of people living below the poverty line, it does not show how far they fall below the threshold. Poverty gap measures, on the other hand, give an indication of the depth of poverty of those living below the poverty line. In 2006, the relative at-risk-of-poverty gap for children in the EU25 was on average 23 per cent, compared to 22 per cent for the EU25 population in total (Figure 3.2 and Table 3.2). This suggests that in the EU poverty is slightly more severe for children than it is for the rest of the population. The countries which had poverty gap measures for children greater than those for the total population were Spain (familialised) and the refamilialised countries. The smallest at-risk-of-poverty gaps were among the defamilialised countries. The partially defamilialised countries also had poverty gaps below the EU25 average. The extent of poverty tended to be most severe for children living in familialised Spain and Greece, and refamilialised Poland, with measures ranging from 25-28 per cent.

Across the EU25, children (less than 16 years) are more at-persistent-risk-of-poverty than the total population. In 2000, it was estimated that 12 per cent of children in the EU25 were living below the poverty line and had been for at least two of the three preceding years, compared to nine per cent of the greater EU25 population (Table 3.3). For our case study countries in 2000 and 2001, only three had at-persistent-risk-of-poverty rates below those of the total population: Denmark, Finland, and Greece. Denmark and Finland (defamilialised) also had the lowest rates of persistent poverty for children (three per cent and four per cent respectively). The UK (partially defamilialised) had the highest rate of persistent poverty for children at 19 per cent, followed by Spain (familialised) at 16 per cent.

Table 3.2: Relative poverty gap (60 per cent of median equivalised income), children vs. total population, 2006

Typology		D.				P.			F.			R.	
	eu25	dk	fi	fr	se	de	nl	uk	es	gr	mt	cz	pl
Total population	22	17	14	19	22	20	17	23	26	26	21	17	25
Less than 18 years	23	15	10	15	21	18	17	21	28	25	19	18	27

Source: Eurostat 2008, Income and living conditions, 'Relative at-risk-of-poverty gaps', ilc_li11.
Note: 2006 data for EU25 is a Eurostat estimate; 2006 data for Malta are provisional.

Figure 3.2: Relative poverty gap, persons less than 18 years of age, 2006

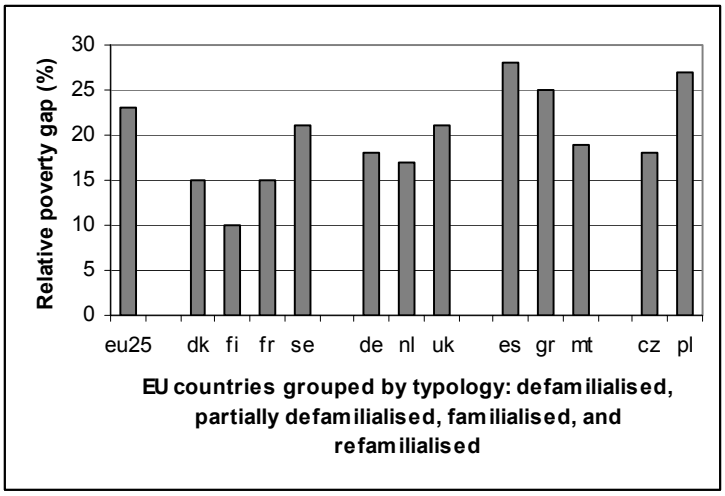


Table 3.3: At-persistent-risk-of-poverty rate (60 per cent of median equivalised income), children vs. total population, 2000/2001

Typology		D.			P.			F.	
	eu25	dk	fi	fr	de	nl	uk	es	gr
Total population	9	6	6	9	6	6	11	10	14
Less than 16 years	12	3	4	10	7	11	19	16	10

Source: Eurostat 2008, Income and living conditions, 'At-persistent-risk-of-poverty rates by gender and age', ilc_li21.
Note: All data is for 2001 except for eu25, FR, and UK for which that data is 2000. Data for eu25 is a Eurostat estimate, data for NL is provisional, and data for FI and UK have a break in series.

3.4 Poverty among children and single parent households in twelve case study countries

3.4.1 Definitional issues

A single parent can be defined as a person living without a partner, who has the daily care responsibility for a dependent child (EC, 2006:85). However, a number of ambiguities within this definition make cross national comparison difficult. For example, the age at which a child ceases to be considered dependent varies across the EU, although 18 years of age is the most common threshold (EC, 2006:85) (see Chapter 2). Further ambiguities include: whether or not a non-resident parent is involved in supporting or caring for the child(ren); at what point a new partnership constitutes a transition from single parenthood to a couple; and the distinction between single parents who live in separate households and those who live with other family members (such as their own parents) in a complex household (EC, 2006:85). Moreover, datasets on single parents frequently treat single parenthood as a static category, as research undertaken is often cross-sectional rather than longitudinal. This obscures recognition that spending time as alone is part of a wider life course which changes as single parents repartner and as children grow up (Millar, 2004:79-80).

3.4.2 Children of lone parents in lone parent households and complex households

Based on data from the 2000/01 census round, on average 19 per cent of children in the EU were living with only one of their parents (Table 3.4 and Figure 3.3). Of our case study countries, only the refamilialised countries (Poland and the Czech Republic) and the UK (partially defamilialised) were above this average. Three countries had less than 15 per cent of children living with just one parent (Denmark, the Netherlands, and Greece), with the rest either at the EU average (Finland) or within a few percentage points below (France, Germany, Spain). Since the 1990/91 census round, the familialised countries (Greece and Spain) saw their share of children living with just one parent increase the most (by six percentage points), followed by the UK (by five percentage points).

Children who live with just one of their parents do not necessarily live in a single parent household. While some single parents do live on their own, others seek economic relief by living with other family members in complex (or multi-generational) households (EC, 2008:23). This can lead to an underestimation of the numbers of single parent families in data based on household structures as this kind of measurement does not take account of lone parent families nested in complex families (Brodolini, 2007:14). In 2005, households of this sort were most prevalent in the familialised and refamilialised countries where the distribution of children in complex households exceeded that of those in single parent households (Table 3.5). In these countries the distribution of children in single parent *households* was much less than the share of children living with only one parent. For example, in Poland 21 per cent of children were living with one parent (Table 3.4), but only five per cent were living in single parent households (Table 3.5). This trend was reversed in the defamilialised and

partially defamilialised countries where the distribution of children in lone parent households matched the share of children living with only one of their parents more closely.

Table 3.4: Share of children living with only one of their parents (percentage, 1990/91 and 2000/01)

Typology		D.			P.			F.		R.	
Census	eu	dk	fi	fr	de	nl	uk	gr	es	cz	pl
1990/91	:	15	15	13	15	13	19	9	12	:	:
2000/01	19	15	19	17	16	13	24	15	18	24	21

Source: Table modified from EC, 2008:23; Eurostat census – family nuclei database.

Figure 3.3: Share of children living with only one of their parents (percentage, 2000/01)

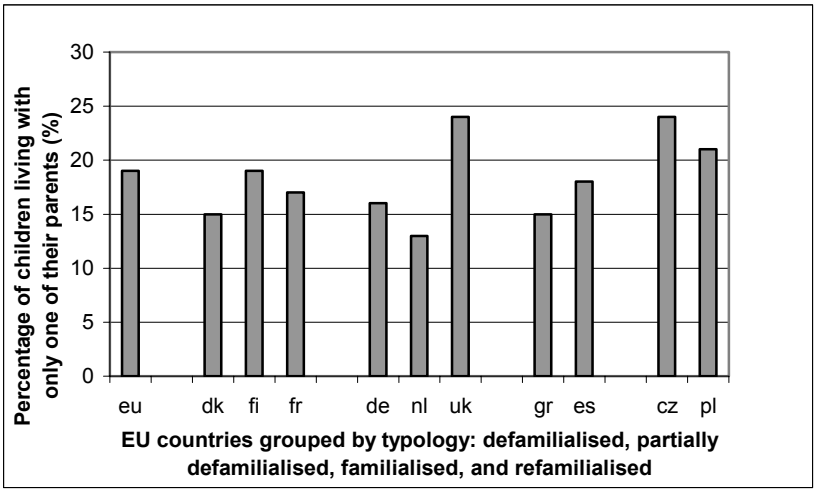


Table 3.5: Distribution of children in lone parent households and complex households (percentage), EU25, 2005

Typology		D.				P.			F.			R.	
	eu25	dk	fi	fr	se	de	nl	uk	gr	es	mt	cz	pl
LP HH	13	17	13	12	19	21	9	25	5	4	6	11	5
Cmplx HH	11	3	4	5	4	5	5	7	8	17	18	12	28

Source: Table modified from EC, 2008:155; EU-SILC (2005) PDB
Note: EU25 data is a Eurostat estimate; UK data are provisional

Considering the disproportionately high poverty rates of children living in single parent households within the familialised and refamilialised countries, it is not surprising that many single parents in familialised and refamilialised countries seek economic relief by living in complex households (Table 3.6 and Figure 3.4). The at-risk-of-poverty rates of these children range from 42-54 per cent, whereas in the defamilialised and partially defamilialised countries the range is from 20 per cent-38 per cent. What may explain this divide is greater state support for single parent households in the latter and lower levels of provision in the former. In the absence of state support that would enable single parents to live

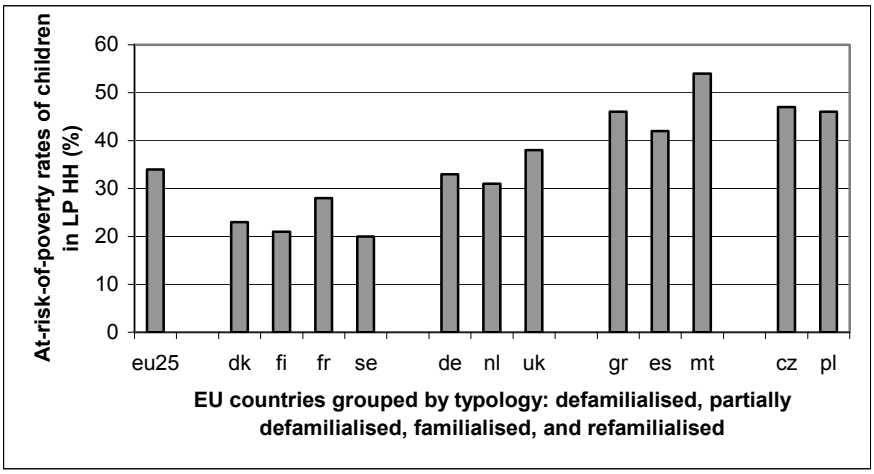
independently, many must depend on their extended families for relief instead.

Table 3.6: At-risk-of-poverty rates of children (percentage) in single parent households and complex households, EU25, 2005

Typology		D.				P.			F.			R.	
	eu25	dk	fi	fr	se	de	nl	uk	gr	es	mt	cz	pl
All children	19	10	10	14	9	14	15	21	20	24	22	18	29
LP HH	34	23	21	28	20	33	31	38	46	42	54	47	46
Cmplx HH	20	10	13	18	23	7	9	15	32	23	13	16	26

Source: Table modified from EC, 2008: 145; EU-SILC (2005) PDB
Note: EU25 data is a Eurostat estimate; UK data is provisional

Figure 3.4: At-risk-of-poverty rates of children (per cent) in lone parent households, EU25, 2005



3.4.3 Poverty among single parent households

The distribution of single parent households among the EU25 population was estimated to be 5 per cent in 2006 (Figure 3.5 and Table B.1, Annex B). However, among the at-risk-of-poverty population single parent households were more prevalent, representing nine per cent of this population. The distribution of single parent households was largest among the defamilialised and partially defamilialised countries, with these households representing 5-8 per cent of the population (with the exception of the Netherlands which had a distribution of four per cent). This distribution was smallest within the familialised countries (two per cent), followed by the refamilialised countries (3-4 per cent). In all of the countries the distribution of single parent households among the at-risk-of-poverty population was greater than their distribution among the total population, suggesting that single parent households are overrepresented among the poor. The sole exception was Greece, for which the distribution was the same among both populations. There was a similar pattern for all households with dependent children: the distribution of these households was greater among the at-risk-of-poverty population than among the total population, which indicates the general vulnerability of households with children to poverty. The exceptions in this case were predominantly among the defamilialised countries. Within these countries

(as well as in Germany), households with dependent children had a distribution smaller or equal to the distribution among the total population. This result can be expected considering the policy imperatives of the Scandinavian countries to support families with children. Nevertheless, supportive policies in these countries have not kept single parent households from being overrepresented among the poor.

Figure 3.5: Distribution of single parents with dependent children among total population and at-risk-of-poverty population, 2006

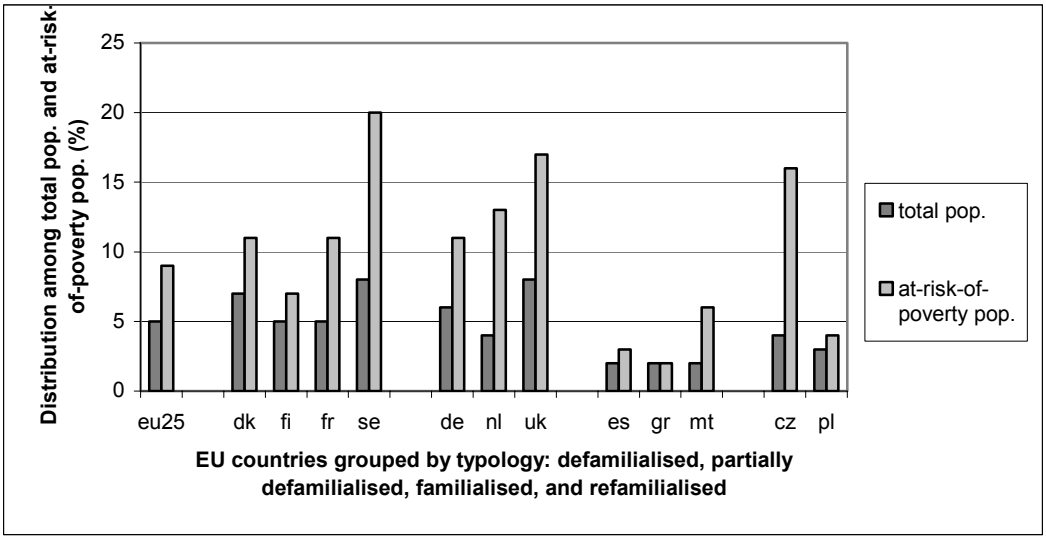
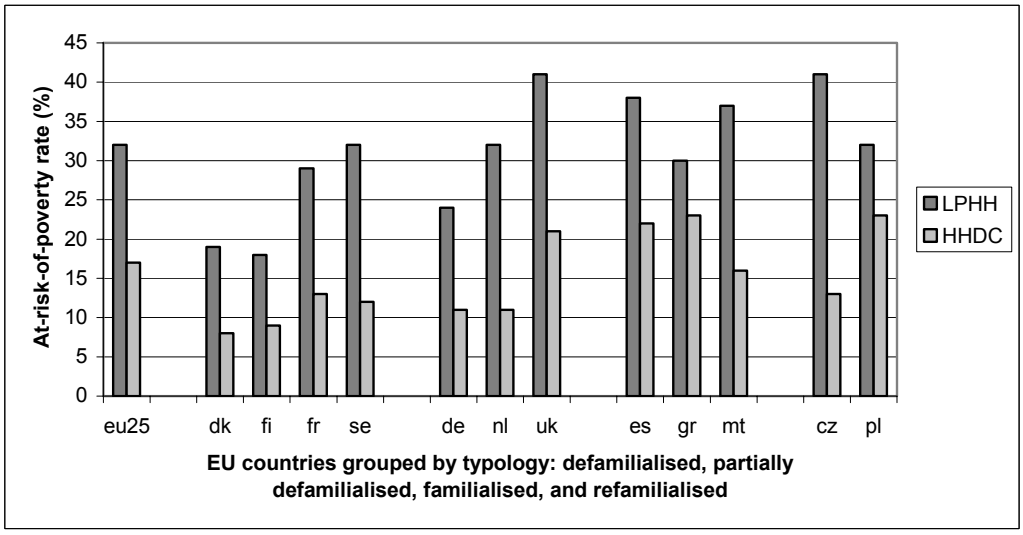


Figure 3.6: At-risk-of-poverty rate (60 per cent of median equivalised income after social transfers), lone parent households and households with dependent children, 2006

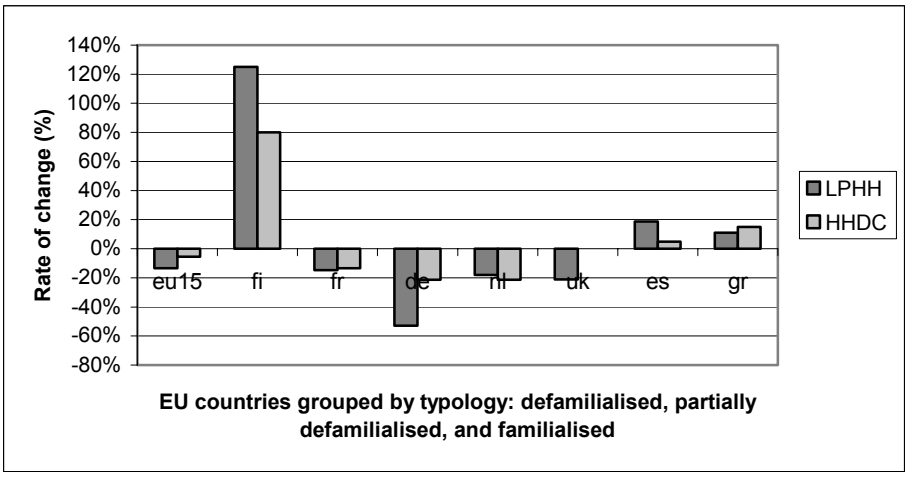


The vulnerability to poverty of single parent households is further demonstrated by at-risk-of-poverty rates for 2006. Thirty-two per cent of single parent households in the EU25 were living below the poverty

threshold compared to 17 per cent of all households with dependent children (Figure 3.6 and Table A.2, Annex B). The lowest poverty risks were among the defamilialised countries which all had poverty rates at or below the EU25 average. The partially defamilialised countries were also at or below the average, with the exception of the UK which had 41 per cent of single parent households living below the poverty line. The only other country to have such a high poverty risk was the Czech Republic, which also had a rate of 41 per cent. The familialised and refamilialised countries generally had rates above the average with the exception of Poland, which was at the average, and Greece, which was just below the average (30 per cent).

Between 1996 and 2006, the at-risk-of-poverty rates generally decreased for both single parent households as well as all households with children. The EU15 poverty risk for single parent households dropped by 14 per cent, while those for all households with children decreased by six per cent (Figure 3.7 and Table B.2, Annex B). The main exception to this was Finland, whose poverty rates increased by 125 per cent for single parent families and 80 per cent for all households with children. However, this was an increase from a low base and in 2006 Finland still had the lowest poverty rate for single parent households and the second lowest (after Denmark) for all households with children. The familialised countries also experienced increases of between 11-19 per cent for single parent families, and of between 5-15 per cent for all households with children. The most significant decreases in the percentage of single parents below the poverty line was among the defamilialised Germany and UK, which experienced decreases of 53 per cent and 21 per cent respectively.

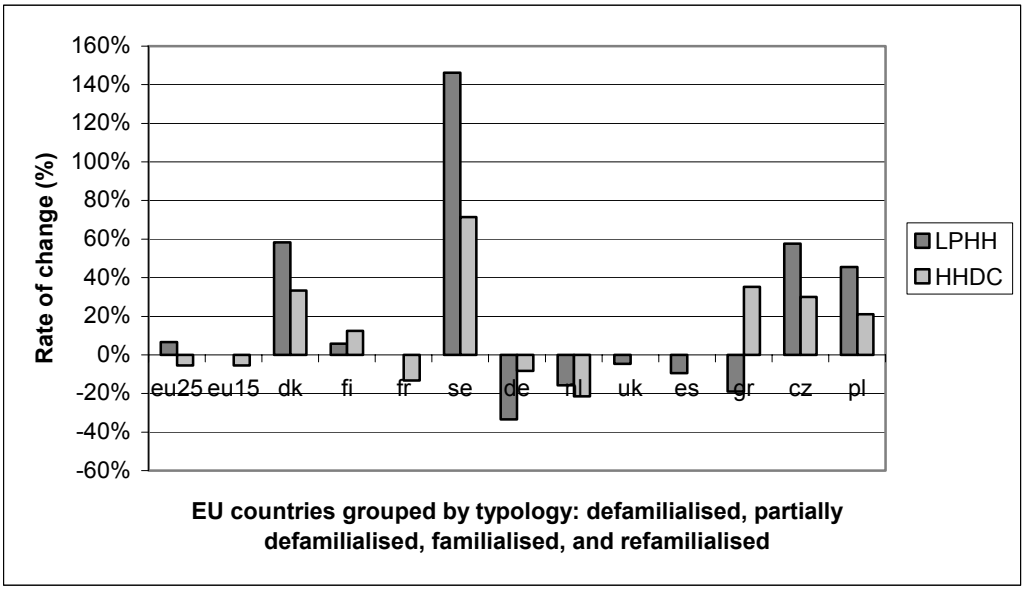
Figure 3.7: Percentage rate of change in at-risk-of-poverty rates: single parent households and households with dependent children, 1996 and 2006



Despite the general decreases in the ten year period between 1996 and 2006, in more recent years at-risk-of-poverty rates for single parent households have been going up in a number of countries. Between 2001 and 2006, the EU25 average for single parent families increased by seven per cent, while the average for all households with dependent children

decreased by six per cent (Figure 3.8 and Table B.2, Annex B). The Nordic countries, which in 2001 had poverty rates for single parents well below the EU25 average, all experienced increases in 2006. Denmark experienced a 58 per cent change (from 12 per cent to 19 per cent), Finland a 33 per cent change (from 17 per cent to 18 per cent) and Sweden a 71 per cent change (from 13 per cent to 32 per cent). Increases in the at-risk-of-poverty rates for single parent households were also experienced by the refamilialised Czech Republic and Poland, which recorded changes of 58 per cent and 45 per cent respectively. Both the partially defamilialised and the familialised countries experienced decreases in their poverty rates for single parent households.

Figure 3.8: Percentage rate of change in at-risk-of-poverty rates: single parent households and households with dependent children, 2001 and 2006



3.4.4 Labour market situation of lone parents

The labour market situation of lone parents has a major impact on a single parent household's risk of poverty. Joblessness represents the main poverty risk for households with children, although in-work-poverty remains a significant cause of low income among families (EC, 2008:27), as single parents face particular difficulties in reconciling work and family life (EC, 2008:29). On average, 47.5 per cent of children living in a jobless household in 2006 were also living in a single parent household (EC, 2008:29). In the refamilialised Czech Republic and the partially defamilialised Germany, Netherlands and the UK half or more than half of children in a jobless household were living with a single parent. This rate was highest in the UK at 67 per cent.

The prevalence of joblessness among single parent families is a highly gendered phenomenon. Single parents are predominantly female, with single mothers representing nine out of 10 single parents in the EU (Table 3.7). Not only do mothers struggle to balance work and care responsibilities, but the wages they can command in the labour market

are on average lower than those of men (EC, 2006:11). Therefore, single mothers are most likely to face difficulties in finding jobs that are sufficiently well paid and flexible to enable them give up welfare benefits, in countries where such benefits are available (Brodolini, 2007:31). In considering paid employment, single mothers must take into account the financial gains and losses that employment will pose to a family and the cost and availability of suitable childcare (Millar, 2004:86). A further consideration includes the extent to which employers will accommodate workers with children. Single fathers also face some of these issues. Although single fathers have higher employment rates than single mothers, they tend to have lower employment rates than other men (EC, 2006:11).

Table 3.7: Percentage of single parents by sex, 2001

Typology		D.				P.			F.	
	eu15	dk	fi	fr	se	de	nl	uk	es	gr
Males	9	12	14	12	26	4	12	7	12	9
Females	91	88	86	88	74	96	88	93	88	91

Source: Eurostat 2008, Income and living conditions, 'Percentage of lone parents by age and sex', ilc_hlc_hh07.
Notes: eu15 data is a Eurostat estimate.

Table 3.8: Percentage of single parents aged 25-49 who are 'not working' by sex, 2001

Typology		D.				P.			F.	
	eu15	dk	fi	fr	se	de	nl	uk	es	gr
Males	5 s	:	:	:	19 u	:	:	:	:	:
Females	29 s	19	20	28	27	34	40	40	18 u	19 u

Source: Eurostat 2008, Income and living conditions, 'Percentage of lone parents aged 25-49 who are 'working' or 'not working' by sex', ilc_hlc_wa01.

In 2001, it was estimated that 29 per cent of single mothers in the EU15 were 'not working' compared to five per cent of single fathers (Table 3.8). In Sweden this gap was much smaller, with 27 per cent of women and 19 per cent of men 'not working'. The partially defamilialised countries had the highest rates of women out of work, ranging from 34 per cent in Germany to 40 per cent in the Netherland and UK. The familialised countries had the lowest rates of single mothers out of work (18-19 per cent), which supports findings from the EC (2008a:28) report that earnings (as opposed to social transfers) played the biggest role in the incomes of poor families in Southern European countries, representing more that 70 per cent of these families' gross income. The defamilialised countries also had relatively low levels of single mothers 'not working' (19-28 per cent). Millar (2004:90) distinguishes between two groups of countries with relatively high levels of employment for single mothers with dependent children:

> *'On the one hand, there are those countries that actively support employment for parents, and so high levels of employment represent responses to a more positive environment for working parents. On the other hand, there are those counties where the*

type and level of support offered to non-employed lone parents is very low and so there is more of a negative 'push' into work (rather than a positive pull).'

The lower rates of the defamilialised countries (particularly Denmark and Finland) are examples of the former category, while the familialised countries are examples of the latter.

Children living in single parent households are at a much lower risk of poverty if their parent works full-time, but the same is not the case for single parents who work part-time (EC, 2008:36). The risk of poverty for children of single parents where the parent is employed full-time is 15 per cent compared to 19 per cent for all children (EC, 2008:36). Among the defamilialised and partially defamilialised countries this risk is between 4-14 per cent, but it is only among the defamilialised countries that the majority of single parents with dependent children work full-time (EC, 2008:36). Conversely, children whose single parent works part-time have a much higher risk of poverty - 30 per cent on average in the EU.

In-work-poverty is a considerable risk for single parent families and can be a consequence of low wages and/or part-time work, which is often poorly paid. Single parents must balance work and care responsibilities on only one income, and part-time work for some single parents is the only way of reconciling the two. Within the EU25, 17 per cent of working single parent households were at risk of poverty in 2006, compared to only 10 per cent of all households with dependent children (Table 3.9). These rates were lowest among the defamilialised countries (with the exception of Sweden), as well as within Malta and Poland. The partially defamilialised countries were either at or just above the EU25 average, while Sweden, Spain and the Czech Republic had the highest rates of in-work-poverty with 26 per cent, 23 per cent and 20 per cent respectively.

Table 3.9: In-work at-risk-of-poverty rates, 2006

Typology		D.				P.			F.			R.	
	eu25	dk	fi	fr	se	de	nl	uk	es	gr	mt	cz	pl
LPHH	17	9	8	14	26	18	17	19	23	16	11	20	13
HHDP	10	4	4	7	7	5	6	10	14	17	7	5	16

Source: Eurostat 2008, Income and living conditions, 'In-work at-risk-of-poverty rates by household type', ilc_iw02.
Note: eu25 data is a Eurostat estimate; MT data is provisional and single parent data is unreliable or uncertain; FI data is provisional.

3.4.5 Living conditions and material deprivation

Material deprivation measures provide insight into the living conditions of those in poverty. They can cover economic strain, housing conditions and costs, and the enforced lack of important amenities and durables.

In 2001, single parent households living below the poverty line were more likely to experience a heavy financial burden due to housing costs than all households living in poverty. (Housing outcomes are discussed in Chapter 6)

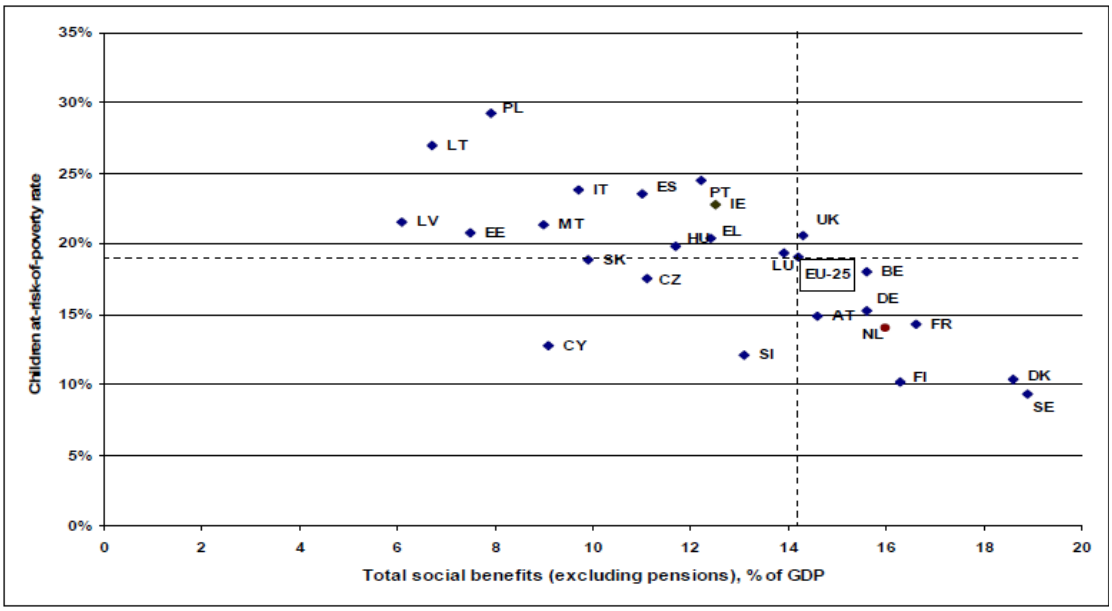
Not only are households living below the poverty threshold at risk of having housing problems, they are also at risk of missing at least one of three basic amenities. These three basic amenities include: hot running water on the premises; bath or shower within the dwelling; and flush toilet within the home. However, in 2001 single parent households living in poverty were less likely to be missing at least one basic amenity than all poor households, 21.1 per cent and 28.9 per cent respectively (Table B.6, Annex B). Nevertheless, the rate for single parents, as well as for all poor households, increased significantly between 1995 and 2001: from nine per cent to 21.1 per cent, and from 10.5 per cent to 28.9 per cent, respectively. Only Denmark and Germany experienced a downward trend during this period for single parent households. All of the defamilialised and partially defamilialised countries were below the EU15 average in 2001, although much of these data is marked as uncertain or unreliable. On a more positive note, the number of single parent households without central heating in their home has decreased over ten percentage points since 1995. Only the Netherlands has experienced an increase, but this was from a low base and its overall levels in 2001 were still significantly below the EU15 average.

Households living below the poverty line are more likely than the rest of the population to be unable to afford certain commonplace durables. In 1998, single parents in the EU15 were 1-3 per cent more likely than other poor households to be unable to afford durables such as a video recorder, dishwasher, microwave, and they were over twice as likely not to be able to afford a car. However, while cross-country comparisons are difficult to make due to missing and unreliable data, the percentage of single parent households without the funds to buy a car compared to all poor households is nevertheless striking (67.3 per cent vs. 26.6 per cent). The lack of car ownership among single parents can contribute to the social exclusion of children, making it difficult for children to develop strong friendships with classmates living outside their neighbourhood and impede children's participation in out-of-school activities in cases where transport is necessary (Ridge, 2002).

3.4.6 Social protection expenditure

The EC (2008a:38) report found that in terms of social expenditure and at-risk-of-poverty rates of children, those who spend most have the lowest poverty rates. Figure 3.9, shows that, in general, the defamilialised and partially defamilialised countries have high rates of social expenditure and low rates of child poverty while the reverse is true for the familialised and refamilialised countries. The exceptions to this include the UK (which had slightly above average social expenditure but above average child poverty rates) and the Czech Republic (which had below average social expenditure but below average child poverty rates).

Figure 3.9: Social benefits as a percentage of GDP vs. child poverty rates, 2005



Source: EC, 2008:38; EU-SILC (2005)

3.5 Policy responses to poverty among children and single parents

3.5.1 Political priority

In order to ensure the economic well-being and social inclusion of children, child poverty strategies need to address the particular vulnerability of children living in single parent families. The issue of child poverty and social exclusion has been a growing political concern across the majority of Member States (Frazer and Marlier, 2007:45). However, growing awareness of the issue in many countries has yet to be translated into coherent, mainstreamed and multi-dimensional strategies to alleviate the poverty and social exclusion of children and their parents (Frazer and Marlier, 2007:45). For some countries the well-being of children and families has been a long established priority, while for others it has been a more recent development. The Nordic countries are typical examples of the former group, as they have had long-standing inclusive policies directed at supporting all children and families, which have, in effect, resulted in generally low child poverty levels (Frazer and Marlier, 2007:45). In line with the defamilialisation typology, the Nordic countries have employed a combination of universal benefits, activated employment policies, and good childcare and service provision (EC, 2004:6). France, a defamilialised country, has also maintained below average child poverty rates for the EU with its generous and supportive state provision – both in transfers and in-kind provision – for families with children in general, and single parent families in particular.

While support for families with children has been a characteristic of the partially defamilialised Netherlands and Germany, a comprehensive policy

framework for the explicit prioritisation of child poverty and social exclusion has been missing (Frazer and Marlier, 2007:45). Nevertheless, the partially defamilialised UK has given a high priority to tackling child poverty and social exclusion since its 1999 pledge to end child poverty by 2020 (Ridge, 2002:1). As a result, the UK has managed to reduce child poverty by nearly a quarter, just narrowly failing to meet its own target for 2004/5 (Bradshaw and Bennett, 2007:1).

The familialised and refamilialised countries – all of which have high levels of child poverty (Greece, Malta, Spain and Poland) or child poverty rates just below the EU average (Czech Republic) – have, in comparative terms, not given tackling child poverty as high a political priority (Frazer and Marlier, 2007:46). In Spain policies remain *'piecemeal and limited'*, while in Malta a plethora of initiatives and structures for the provision of different services exist although without a coherently delineated policy targeted at children (Frazer and Marlier, 2007:46). Neither Poland, the Czech Republic nor Greece has initiated a strategic approach to the issue.

The relative lack of political prioritisation in these five countries is consistent with the typology of family policies. As Brodolini (2007:59) notes, the Southern European countries lack both family policy measures and national social assistance networks of last resort. Thus, *'they lack any frame in which to locate measures for lone parents'* (Brodolini, 2007:59), let alone measures for children. As typified by familialised family policy, *'the family, in particular the extended family, has a central role in all areas of welfare self-production'* (Brodolini, 2007:59), including the protection of single parents. In the words of one Spanish national respondent, *'the family has been a second Ministry of Social Affairs: personal problems, work life or social issues, everything was resolved inside the family and by the family'* (Brodolini, 2007:62). Similarly, in the transition countries the decline of social services in the post-soviet era meant a revival of familial support networks (Brodolini, 2007:59).

3.5.2 'Work' and 'benefit' strategies

OECD recommendations call for an appropriate balance between *'benefit strategies'*, which increase the adequacy of benefits for low-income families with children, and *'work strategies'*, which promote policies to increase employment among poor families (OECD, 2007:4). As an OECD (2007:4) working paper states:

> *'The fact that all countries with very low child poverty rates … combine low levels of family joblessness and effective redistribution policies supports the view that successful anti-poverty strategies should seek a balanced approach combining improved benefits where necessary and improved incentives to work.'*

Thus, policy responses need to include both work and benefit strategies, carefully tailored to the situation of each country.

3.5.3 Increasing income through employment

In keeping with the 'adult worker' model, the general direction of single parent policies in EU member countries in recent years has been aimed at

promoting employment (EC, 2006:92). Increasing the income of single parents through employment requires action on two main fronts. The first entails increasing single parent access to employment, and the second involves making work pay, in other words, ensuring that income from work is sufficient (Frazer and Marlier, 2007:60). Hence reforms, most commonly among the defamilialised and partially defamilialised countries, have placed stricter job search requirements on single parents, usually accompanied by benefit modifications to 'make work pay' (EC, 2006:92). For instance, in Germany and the Netherlands single parents on social assistance now face greater pressure to take jobs (EC, 2006:92).

Brodolini (2007:75) notes, however, that the 'welfare-to-work' strategy has evolved in countries with low employment rates for single mothers, and thus does not fit the experience of the Mediterranean countries and the transition countries in which single mothers already work in a higher proportion compared to the activity rates of women in general. The report advises *that 'in none of these cases do the measures need to be framed in terms of a renewed "ethics of work" nor has the problem of welfare dependency ever arisen'* (Brodolini, 2007:75). Therefore, the main issue for the familialised and refamilialised countries is improved access for single mothers to higher quality jobs as well as measures for reconciling work and family life.

In order to provide single parents with better access to employment, measures to reconcile work and family life must be developed. In this area, not only is childcare seen as critical to raising the participation of lone parents (particularly single mothers) in employment, but good quality childcare is recognised as important in itself for its constructive role in the early development of children (Frazer and Marlier, 2007:68). In order to draw more single parents into the labour market, both the availability and cost-effectiveness of childcare need to be taken into consideration. In many countries the net childcare costs are high, and *'in several countries, tax burdens and the withdrawal of social benefits reduce gains from work to such an extent that even very limited childcare expenses can leave families with less money to spend than if they were to stay at home'* (OECD, 2007:35). This means that along with the expansion of the availability of childcare, increased childcare support is required to improve affordability (OECD, 2007:31, 35).

While childcare services have expanded in some countries stimulated by the Barcelona target, only the defamilialised countries have reached the target of providing a childcare place for at least 33 per cent of children under the age of three (EC, 2006:94). In addition, Germany, the Netherlands and Spain joined the defamilialised countries in meeting (or scoring close to) the second Barcelona target: that at least 90 per cent of children aged between three years and the mandatory school age should have a childcare place (EC, 2006:94). Provision was lowest in Greece and Poland, and also in Spain and Malta where there were no public subsidies for childcare. In 2002, coverage of infants was low in Spain, with only 12.1 per cent of children aged three and under covered (EC, 2006:94).

Frazer and Marlier (2007:25-26) noted that the absence of sufficient affordable childcare was an important factor in the level of child poverty and social exclusion in Poland and Greece in particular. The limited availability of childcare in Poland had a strong negative influence on the employment possibilities for single mothers. In Greece, only employed women tended to have access to childcare, thereby increasing the difficulties for unemployed women to seek a job (Frazer and Marlier, 2007:26). It was highlighted that in Germany children from the lower social strata, especially those with a migration background, were few among day care attendees (Frazer and Marlier, 2007:26). Affordability was also cited as an issue in the UK, where childcare remained expensive despite recent increases to the childcare subsidy element of the Working Tax Credit (EC, 2006:94).

The defamilialised countries stand out as having a high level of coverage and affordability. Municipalities in Sweden have an obligation to provide a childcare place within three to four months of demand, regardless of the parent's employment status (EC, 2006:94). Finland has a similar policy, in addition to which if there is an urgent need for day care, for example if a job is offered at short notice, childcare must be provided within two weeks (SOCCARE, 2002:21). In Finland and Denmark, every child below school age has an individual right to day care (EC, 2008b:22). In France, 100 per cent of three to five year olds and as many as 35 per cent of two year olds were enrolled in a pre-school in 1998 (SOCCARE, 2002:31). The high employment rate of single parents in France appears to be related to the special provisions made for single mothers, who are given access to subsidised pre-elementary schooling, for children aged two years and above. In recent years, both Denmark and Sweden have reduced day care charges, which has improved the access of poorer families to childcare (Frazer and Marlier, 2007:68). Sweden, which provides a subsidised childcare system, introduced a maximum childcare fee in 2002, which reduced costs for almost all families (EC, 2006:94).

Developments among some of the partially defamilialised and refamilialised countries have been observed in recent years regarding the reconciliation of work and family life. In the UK, there has been a large expansion in childcare, nursery care and a special early childhood intervention programme, Sure Start. Germany, following a 'day-care summit', declared that by 2013 all children under three years of age will have a legal guarantee to a place in day care (Frazer and Marlier, 2007:68). Proposals in the Czech Republic and Poland have been less specific, although both have expressed a commitment to introduce measures to help families balance work and family life (Frazer and Marlier, 2007:60).

Flexible working hours have the potential to enable parents to balance employment and family responsibilities. *'Time flexibility'* refers to working arrangements other than the standard working week of Monday to Friday, 9 to 5. With the development of the 24/7 economy, working hours have become more flexible to the advantage of some and to the detriment of others (Letablier, 2006:202; Klammer, 2006:237). In terms of a work-life balance, flexibility can be 'good' or 'bad':

> *'Good flexibility' is when people have control over their working time schedules and is usually associated with a high level of job satisfaction. It is more often found among middle-class workers, many of whom have regular and secure jobs in the public sector. 'Bad flexibility' is associated with lack of control over hours, place of work and working conditions, low job satisfaction, as experienced by low-skilled workers in services, retail, hotels and catering.'*
>
> Letablier (2006:208)

In Germany, France and the UK women tend to be concentrated in these sectors and are therefore more exposed to bad flexibility than men (Letablier, 2006:208). Irregular working schedules and non-standard working hours create problems for parents, especially single parents, in combining their hours of work with their children's hours of care and school, homework and play (Letablier, 2006:206). Thus, for women working in low-qualified jobs, flexibility does not bring greater autonomy, but more constraints and pressures for mothers trying to organise childcare (Letablier, 2006:214). The increasing issue of atypical working hours has led countries such as France and Finland to develop flexible, on-demand childcare (for example, 24/7 childcare) (EC, 2008b:22). While certain initiatives – such as financial support for parents to employ a childminder in the home (France) or a commitment to provide *'wrap-around cover'* childcare between 8am and 6pm for children of working parents (UK) – are welcome developments, the extent to which childcare should be adapted to the 24/7 economy is questionable (Perrons, 2006:259). Nights and weekends are important for child-parent relationships, and the 24/7 economy can pose a threat to family life and child well-being (Klammer 2006:237; Letablier, 2006:202). The need for stability and regular rhythms in family life is *'staunchly in opposition to the labour market ideal of the flexible worker'*, and the labour market norm can no longer be the *'(male) full-time worker without any obligations beyond work'* (Klammer, 2006:238). Klammer (2006:238-239) contends, what is needed is a paradigm shift in companies, creating a situation in which each employee is automatically regarded as a potential caregiver with responsibilities outside work.

In addition to work-life reconciliation policies, specific measures aimed at increasing the access of parents to paid work are important. The UK's New Deal for Lone Parents (NDLP), introduced in 1998 to maximize employment among single parents, has resulted in some single parents entering employment that otherwise might not have done (Frazer and Marlier, 2007:61). However, Bradshaw and Bennett (2007:14) suggest that the NDLP *'may have creamed off lone parents most ready and willing to work, and getting others into work may prove much harder'*. Furthermore, the difficulty some single parents have in retaining their jobs has called into question problems related to childcare and the quality of work (EC, 2006:92). Nevertheless, single parent employment in the UK in 2007 was 57 per cent, up from 45 per cent in 1997 (Bradshaw and Bennett, 2007:14).

Activation measures, such as training initiatives or programmes to reintegrate mothers into the labour market, are important means of providing single parents increased access to paid work. The NDLP introduced a *'care to learn'* scheme for teenage lone mothers, which resulted in an increase from 23.1 per cent in 1997 to 29.7 per cent of teenage mothers in education, employment, or training (EC, 2006:90). In Malta, single mothers and pregnant women between the ages of 13 and 18 have been included in small-scale projects encouraging employment and/or a return to education (EC, 2006:92).

Policies to increase the employment of single parents must be accompanied by measures to *'make work pay'*, as *'raising employment levels, without raising income does not reduce child poverty'* (EC, 2004:6). This can be done though income support for working families and minimum wage policies. Plans to increase the minimum wage have been expressed by Germany as well as the Czech Republic (Frazer and Marlier, 2007:61). The UK government has sought to improve in-work incomes by increasing the minimum wage faster than average earnings and by substantially increasing Child Benefit for the eldest eligible child (Frazer and Marlier, 2007:61). Nevertheless, despite the minimum wage and tax and benefit system, a single earner family must work 45 hours per week on the minimum wage in the UK if the household's net income is to reach the poverty threshold (Bradshaw and Bennett, 2007:16). For this reason, single parents remain particularly vulnerable to in-work poverty.

3.5.4 Increasing income through benefits and social transfers

As noted above, income from employment is not always sufficient to raise single parent households out of poverty. Redistribution, therefore, through benefits and tax credits, is a key feature of social policy. Both horizontal redistribution (from families without children to those with children) and vertical redistribution (from wealthier to poorer families) are important for alleviating the poverty of single parent families and children. There are a number of ways to redistribute income toward single parent families and children: through family benefits, out-of-work benefits, in-work income supplements, and non-cash benefits and services. Furthermore, the degree to which benefits are universal or targeted also impact on the effectiveness of social transfers in reducing poverty among single parent households.

Family benefits play an important role in supporting the income of families with children, and represent on average approximately half of cash social transfers to EU households (EC, 2008b:20). Two components of family benefit regimes that particularly impact on single parent families are child allowances, which vary depending on the age and number of children, and single parent supplements, which take account of the specific vulnerability of single parent families. Child benefits tend to be universal, with the exception of Spain, which does not provide specific benefits for children (EC, 2008:177; Frazer and Marlier, 2007:27). Spain has, however, recently reformed its system of tax concessions in order to give further support to families (EC, 2008:179). Family benefits tend not to be targeted at poor children, although among the countries that do so, are

those countries that significantly reduce poverty through family transfers (France, Germany and the Czech Republic), as well as countries where family benefits only have a limited impact on alleviating child poverty (Greece, Malta, and Poland) (EC, 2008:42). Poland, however, has recently committed itself to increasing the allowance for families in *'unfavourable circumstances'* by 50 per cent (Frazer and Marlier, 2007:63).

In most European countries single parent households receive specific financial transfers through either the tax or benefit system (EC, 2006:92). In Finland, Germany, and Denmark single parents receive extra support regardless of income. In Finland, family allowance is paid universally for all children under 17 years of age, and single parents get a monthly supplement for each child (SOCCARE, 2002:22). In other countries, single parents receive means-tested additional financial support. For example, *le Allocation de Soutien Familial* (ASF) in France is a means-tested support payment intended for those raising an orphaned child; however, it also extends to children of single parent families in cases where the absent parent does not pay alimony, or pays less than the amount of the ASF. Moreover, *le Allocation de Parent Isolé* (API) is a means-tested Lone Parent Allowance paid to those with a child below the age of three (SOCCARE, 2002:29).

Sweden differs from other countries in that special rights exist for the children, rather than the adult, in single parent households (EC, 2006:93). This entitlement for children who do not live with both parents has been in existence since the early 1930s. This approach has a particular advantage: *'Given that in some European countries lone parents are sometimes attacked as undeserving in public debate (for example in the United Kingdom and Ireland), a benefit entitlement instituted as a right of a child may prove more enduring'* (EC, 2006:93).

In addition to family benefits, income can be redistributed towards single parent families by: a) providing a minimum level of income for those without paid employment, such as through social assistance, unemployment benefits, and disability payments; and b) by supplementing the income of employed parents as a means to 'make work pay'. Both Greece and the UK supplement the incomes of single parents based on the employment status of the parent (EC, 2006:179). This type of approach reflects a welfare-to-work strategy. This contrasts with France's Lone Parent Allowance which is available for single parents regardless of their employment status.[18] Policy development in this area must pay sufficient attention to the balance between work incentives and adequate provision, and must ensure enabling services such as childcare are in place in order that workfare approaches are successful in reducing poverty.

[18] This should not be taken to mean that, for instance, the UK does not pay child-related benefits regardless of employment status. The UK has a Child Tax Credit paid to the main carers of children with a low to modest income regardless of their employment status.

A further area of concern is the high effective marginal tax rates that face low-paid workers as they make the transition from receipt of benefits into paid work (OECD, 2007:34). In most countries average effective tax rates on the low paid can be higher than on average earners or even the high paid, largely through the interaction of direct taxes with the withdrawal of benefits (OECD, 2007:34). Therefore, low effective tax burdens for low-wage earners could be of benefit to single parents seeking to move into paid work.

The well-being and social inclusion of single parents and children depends not only on income support but also on in-kind benefits. In this way, policies relating to childcare, housing, education, health, and the participation of children in social, cultural and recreational life are of great importance.

As noted by Frazer and Marlier (2007:73), *'a key element of the social inclusion and well-being of children is that they are given opportunities to participate in the normal social, recreational, sporting and cultural activities that their peers do'*. These strategies have been observed in a number of countries. French policy has prioritised the promotion of access to culture and sport in impoverished neighbourhoods, while the UK Department for Culture, Media and Sport has announced increased funding to improve the participation of disadvantaged children in sport, drama, and music after school as part of its plan for *'extended schools'* (EC, 2008b:30; Frazer and Marlier, 2007:73-74). The Czech Republic provides grants for free time activities, and the Netherlands's Ministry of Public Health, Welfare and Sports encourages equal opportunities for children from disadvantaged families to participate in meaningful activities (Frazer and Marlier, 2007:73-74).

While health and education outcomes are discussed in subsequent chapters, policy issues related to the social exclusion of children at school warrant a brief discussion in this chapter. Countries such as Poland and the UK have assisted schoolchildren from low income families by providing free school meals (Frazer and Marlier, 2007:64). Nutritionally, free school meals play an important role in the health and development of these children; although, some research has indicated that *'free school meals are often viewed as problematic and heavily stigmatised'* (Ridge, 2002:82). Ridge's (2002:82) qualitative research with children living in poverty in the UK suggests that *'the issue may not be the free school meal itself, as much as the process of qualification for it and delivery'*. She proposes that *'a universal system of tokens or swipe cards would ensure that all children collected their meals using the same currency, and that children receiving free school meals would be treated no differently to others'* (Ridge, 2002:148). Two other issues highlighted in Ridge's UK study were: first, children's social exclusion from school trips due to costs; and second, children's exclusion from their peers based on inadequate school clothing or uniforms (Ridge, 2002:147). In response to this latter, Ridge recommends the restoration of the uniform grant in the UK.

Child maintenance from non-resident parents can also influence the financial situation of single parents. Arrangements for determining formal child maintenance obligations in cases where parents were unable to come to a private agreement vary between countries: courts have the main responsibility for determining child maintenance in France, Sweden, Germany and Spain; agencies were used in Denmark and the UK; and a combination of the two operate in Finland and the Netherlands (Brodolini, 2007:50; Skinner *et al.*, 2007:2). Brodolini (2007:51) observes that the defamilialised and partially defamilialised countries view the issue of unpaid alimony as *'a non-private, socially relevant one'*, while there is a less sensitive, and more legalistic attitude in the Southern countries. The report recommended the use of agencies as a *'friendlier alternative to courts'* in the hopes of reducing litigation between former couples (Brodolini, 2007:77). This could pave the way for convergence towards shared custody between parents, the prevalence of which within some countries[19] is estimated to be between 7-15 per cent (Skinner *et al.*, 2007:3).

A report on international child support policy (Skinner *et al.*, 2007:4) found that most of the countries[20] in the study had some agency involvement in the collection and forwarding of maintenance, and that some provided guaranteed maintenance schemes (Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, and Sweden). The main advantage of this latter provision was that it guaranteed a minimum amount of child maintenance regardless of the economic status of the liable parent. The main drawback, however, was that such schemes were costly to administer and only Finland and Denmark had recovery rates greater than 50 per cent (65 per cent and 88 per cent respectively). In terms of the effectiveness of child maintenance regimes, Denmark, Finland, and France were noted for their regularity of provision, while Denmark, Finland, Sweden, Germany and the Netherlands for ensuring the child's entitlement.

3.5.5 The impact of social transfers

The impact of social transfers can depend on the degree of universality or targeting of benefits. Countries with more generous systems (such as those among the defamilialised typology) provide most of their support through universal non-income related benefits, an approach that appears to be successful in supporting children and fighting child poverty (EC, 2008:184). The advantage of universal benefits is that they are non-discriminatory and therefore less affected by low take-up. Nevertheless, in the context of strained public budgets means-tested benefits are an efficient way of targeting support to the most needy, but can be more expensive to administer than universal support. The success of means-tested benefits, however, depends on three things: coverage, adequacy, and take-up (Behrendt, 2000:37). Means-testing must target the appropriate population, be generous enough to alleviate poverty and must

[19] Data on the prevalence of shared custody was inconsistent and partial, and was based on what data could be found for Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, the UK, and the USA.
[20] Refer to above list of countries.

provide for optimal take up. Addressing the last factor requires efforts to increase knowledge and access to benefits, as well as resourceful methods of reducing any stigma that may be attached to seeking benefits. Targeting must also be crafted carefully to avoid introducing adverse work incentives.

The UK has achieved relative success in its means-testing, with *'an astonishingly high degree of effectiveness, especially among the lower poverty brackets'* (Behrendt, 2000:36). Sweden's record is less clear, and Germany's is far less impressive (Behrendt, 2001:36). The transition from universal coverage to income testing in the Czech Republic and Poland between 1990 and 1993 was accompanied by a relative worsening of the income position of children (Forster and Toth, 2001:338). Poverty rates during this period doubled in the Czech Republic and nearly tripled in Poland (Forster and Toth, 2001:337). In more recent years, however, there have been attempts to relax means-testing and restore at least some of the universal qualities of family policies in these two countries (Forster and Toth, 2001:338).

Given the different policy norms and models of family forms and obligations, policy responses need to be dynamic and carefully tailored to the situation of each country. Nevertheless, the Brodolini study (2007:76) concludes:

> *'Although a lone-parent-family policy begins with targeted and specific measures, it will then mature only if included in a broader, multifaceted framework of family support policies. The introduction of specific measures (or more favourable conditions) for lone-parent families should always be supported by a consistent framework of measures for all parents altogether.'*

Not only does the *system* of transfers (that is, if they are universal or targeted) bear weight on the impact of social transfers, but so does the *type* of support. Whether income is redistributed through benefit regimes or the tax system can affect the outcome of poverty reduction measures. Tax concessions tend to assist better off families, and so shifting support from taxes to benefits would have the effect of redistributing income to the poorest children, especially if the benefits are means-tested (EC, 2008:45). However, *'tax concessions tend to involve less distortion in terms of work incentives and have fewer problems of non take-up'* (EC, 2008:45). (Although the take-up of Working Tax Credit in the UK, illustrates that low take-up remains a serious issue for tax administered schemes.) Furthermore, strong evidence that mothers are more likely to spend income on children's needs than fathers, suggests that, *'to the extent that child-contingent cash benefits are granted to mothers, they are, therefore, more likely to be spent for the well-being of children than tax concessions which simply reduce the tax of the income earner'* (EC, 2008:184).

There are, however, very wide discrepancies between countries in the overall impact of income transfers and tax policies (Frazer and Marlier, 2007:63). For example, while the UK has increased both its in-work and

out-of-work benefits, the Government has not met its own interim child poverty reduction targets:

> *'It can be seen that the UK starts with a pre-transfer poverty rate only 19 per cent higher than Sweden; but after transfers, the child poverty rate in the UK is 50 per cent higher than in Sweden. Sweden makes more effort. It spends more in making that effort … and its level of inequality is lower'*
>
> Bradshaw and Bennett (2007:15)

So while the UK has experienced some success over the past ten years in reducing poverty, inequality has increased (TUC, 2008:1). Inequality, it can be argued, is as bad as poverty for children as it can have detrimental effects on their health, their education and their well-being (TUC, 2008:1). Therefore, while targeting support towards children and families (particularly single parent families) is a necessary feature of a poverty reduction scheme, it is not sufficient. What is required, therefore, is an overall system of redistribution which addresses underlying inequalities (Frazer and Marlier, 2007:63).

3.6 Conclusions

In the context of family change in the EU, the particular vulnerability of single parents and their children must be mainstreamed into poverty reduction strategies and given sufficient political priority by Member State governments. Child-centred and gender sensitive approaches should be adopted that confront the overlapping and cross-cutting causes of poverty, emphasising the negative effects that poverty and social exclusion have on the current and future well-being of children and their families.

Without a child-centred approach to policymaking, children's interests and needs are easily subsumed by those of the family or the state. Despite the increasing attention of many governments to children's particular vulnerability to poverty, countries such as the UK have been criticized for taking a *'social investment'* approach to the issue (Lewis, 2006:17; Lister, 2006; Ridge, 2002:4). From this perspective, *'children are protected, educated and valued for what they will become: future citizens'* (Lewis, 2006:17). This future-oriented approach regards children as *'becomings'* rather than *'beings'*, and as *'children as adults in waiting'* to the detriment of the child qua child (Lister, 2006:321). As such, childhood is not valued in itself but is valued for its instrumental role in the development of children into productive adults. In this way, the emphasis is on *'achievement but not enjoyment; education and not play'* (Lister, 2006:321). Proponents of a child-centred perspective are interested in children's own accounts of their experiences of poverty and consider the policy implications for children's concern over stigma, *'fitting in'*, and bullying (see, for example, Ridge's (2002) child-centred study of poverty). Lewis (2006:16) proposes a rights-based, citizenship model that focuses on the individual child and his or her need for protection.

The 'social investment state', as opposed to the traditional welfare state, focuses on *'investment in human capital wherever possible, rather than on direct provision of economic maintenance'* (Giddens, 1998:117). Therefore, in the process of governments' elevation of paid work as the primary obligation of citizenship, without adequate support single mothers and their children become particularly vulnerable to poverty as single mothers attempt to balance paid work with their care responsibilities (Lister, 2006:322-323). Lister (2006:315) criticizes Britain's New Labour child welfare policy for its lack of a gender analysis. She argues that *'one consequence is that children are de-coupled from their mothers so that it is no longer a case of "women and children first" but "children (not women) first"'* (Lister, 2006:315). She maintains that the well-being of children cannot be divorced from that of their mothers' and that the interrelationship between women's weak labour market position and child poverty must be recognized and prioritised in social policy (Lister, 2006:327). As children's material welfare depends disproportionately on the welfare of their mothers, tackling the well-documented feminisation of poverty (Lewis, 2006:7) is crucial for the success of child poverty strategies as well as being important in its own right (Lister, 2006:327). The challenge, therefore, is to develop child centred and gender-sensitive policies in order for children and their families – particularly single parent families – to thrive.

When discussing social exclusion it is important not to over-concentrate on poverty as the sole cause of individual marginalisation or the sole manifestation of deprivation. Sen (2000) has highlighted the need to focus on *'the multidimensionality of deprivation and its emphasis on the relational processes rather than the individual'* (cited in Munck, 2004:21). Although poverty is a key element of social exclusion discourse, it is important to recognise that the concept of 'deprivation' is much more complex than material or financial poverty. Indeed, this is one of main reasons why the language of 'social exclusion' became so popular within the European Union (Munck, 2004:22). Currently, the concept of social exclusion within the EU *'refers to the dynamic process of being shut out, fully or partially, from any social, economic, political or cultural systems which determine the social integration of a person in society'* (Walker and Walker, 1997:8). It is important to remember that social exclusion may be caused by other things other than poverty and the two terms are not synonymous.

Each country must also find the right balance between *'work-strategies'* and *'benefit-strategies'* so that not only joblessness among single parents decreases, but that in-work poverty falls also. Of course, in order to increase the access of single parents to employment attention must be paid to the reconciliation of work and family life. Furthermore, social policy should ensure that all children are protected from poverty, deprivation and disadvantage despite the employment status of their parent. This can be done, perhaps, through special rights and entitlements of a child. As Stein Ringen (1987:41) states: *'If poverty prevails, the welfare state is a failure'*. If such a statement is to be taken

seriously, the particular challenges facing single parent families must be given due priority in the social policies of European governments.

4 Children's Educational Outcomes

4.1 Introduction

There is a considerable body of international evidence that children growing up in non-intact families have lower levels of educational achievement than those who live with both natural parents. The evidence however, is not entirely consistent and some findings have run counter to the prevailing view.

While some report an association between family disruption and lower educational achievement, the explanatory frameworks offered by researchers are varied. Some have questioned whether a causal link exists and have highlighted the problems of measuring unobserved variables that may have a stronger impact upon children's achievement than family structure itself. Others have concluded that family structure does exercise a real effect upon children's achievement and have looked for reasons within the family itself or, at a societal and international level, within the family policy environment. There is some evidence that socio-economic status is important.

4.1.1 The nature of the evidence

The educational outcomes for children from non-intact families have been examined in studies which focus upon specific countries and in broader comparative studies. There is large body of US research evidence which lies outside the scope of the present review. It is important, however, to mention the influential meta-analysis of parental divorce and the well-being of children conducted by Amato and Keith (1991) which reviewed 98 studies, including some European research. An update of the analysis was undertaken a decade later, based upon 67 studies undertaken during the 1990's (Amato 2001). Both the original meta-analysis and the update find a significant negative effect of divorce upon a range of outcomes for children, including their educational achievement. Although it was hypothesised that the effects would be weaker in the update – for example, because of improved therapeutic interventions for children and more sophisticated research designs developed over the intervening period – this did not prove to be the case and indeed the effects appeared to be stronger in the later study.

The relevant body of European literature in the English language is much smaller than the US literature. Many studies of specific countries can be identified but these – insofar as they are presented in English – appear to be to be unevenly dispersed across the EU Member States and other European countries. For example, while the Netherlands, Nordic countries and the UK are quite well represented, the detailed situation in many countries is not covered. This highlights the importance of cross-national studies which take a broader sweep across European countries and help to define important policy questions for the EU.

4.2 Child outcomes: Specific country studies

This section discusses the available evidence on child outcomes for the defamilialised and partially defamilialised typologies. Evidence about the educational achievement of children from non-intact families in these countries must be viewed against the complex and shifting reality of family life in modern Europe, as outlined in Chapter 2.

4.2.1 Defamilialised countries: Sweden, Finland and France

Swedish researchers have been able to use comprehensive national registers linked by unique personal identification numbers to conduct studies of entire populations. A study by Ringback *et al.* (2004) of almost 150,000 young people compared educational attainment at ages 24-25 of children of single parents and children from intact families. The study sought to identify those factors which might increase the risk of lowered educational achievement and to examine the influence of the life circumstances of non-custodial parents. The children of single parents were divided into three categories: children of widows/widowers; children of a single parent with a living non-custodial parent; and children of a single parent where the non-custodial parent had died.

Without controlling for background variables, it was found to be more common for children of single parents than those in two-parent families to have acquired only the nine years of compulsory Swedish education. In fact, the proportion was twice as high, except for the children of widows/widowers. The most disadvantaged group was children of a single parent where the custodial parent had died. This pattern of disadvantage persisted in post-school education. Once again, children of a single parent where the custodial parent had died fared worst.

When variables treated as `confounders' (parental age, socio-economic group and other parental characteristics) and `mediators' (social benefits, housing situation, number of children),[21] were introduced into the model, the likelihood of finishing education after just nine years of schooling decreased for all groups of children of single parents, but remained statistically significant for children with a living non-custodial parent and those whose non-custodial parent had died. The chances of not achieving a post-school education also declined and remained significantly increased only for children whose non-custodial parent had died. Children in other types of single parent households also show increased odds, but only when the circumstances of both parents were taken into account.

[21] A mediator is a process or mediating variable that explains the link between an initial variable and an outcome; a confounder is an extraneous variable in a statistical model that correlates (positively or negatively) with both the initial variable and the independent variable. The analyses therefore need to control for these factors to avoid what is known as a type 1 error.

The authors conclude that children who lived with a single parent for at least five years of their adolescence show lower educational achievement at ages 24-25 than children from two-parent families and that the main explanation appeared to lie in a lack of household resources, as indicated by receipt of social assistance and their housing situation. They also observe, however, that achievement varied according to the cause of single parenthood, with children of widowed parents having the best prospects. In general, the negative education outcomes associated with single parenting were greater for girls than for boys, and for children of highly educated parents compared to those with low levels of education.

These findings are in line with a previous study by Jonsson and Gahler (1997), which also used a large dataset, of around 120,000 cases. This was based upon a national random sample of ninth grade (mainly 16 year old) Swedish junior high school students, linked through a unique personal identifier to census information about the households in which they lived. The researchers were able to undertake both cross-sectional and longitudinal analyses, introducing a wide range of control variables including family structure, parents' education, housing situation, immigrant status and social class. Results from both types of analysis show that children who had experienced family dissolution or reconstitution experienced lower levels of educational attainment at age 16 than those from stable two-parent families. Even after controlling for socio-economic characteristics, the effects for children of single parents were substantially smaller, but still present.

The authors considered three possible explanations for the negative effect of single parenthood upon children's attainment: parental time constraints, downward social mobility and economic deprivation. They find little support for the time constraint hypothesis, as, for example, the children of widowed parents demonstrated higher levels of attainment than children of divorced parents, even though time constraints would appear to operate in both situations. Neither was economic deprivation particularly successful in explaining the results, mainly because income differences between different family types were relatively small, reflecting the generous levels of social welfare provision in Sweden. When, however, downward social mobility, measured by changes in household educational and occupational status, was introduced into the model, a strong effect was observed. In particular, the negative impact upon children was found to be greatest when the occupational and educational status of the custodial mother was lower than that of the absent father. While recognising the importance of hidden economic effects in changes of status, the authors nonetheless argued for the merits of distinguishing downward social mobility from other explanations, suggesting that loss of educational resources and sources of aspiration should be taken seriously in studies of family dissolution and educational attainment.

The evidence from Sweden does not, however, always point in the same direction. For example, a small study of 74 children of a one-year sample of parents divorcing through a district court (Wadsby and Svedin, 1996) discounted the effect of divorce upon their subsequent educational attainment. All the children were between 11 years and 17 years old at

the time of divorce and completed their nine-year compulsory education within one year before, to five years after, the divorce. Each child was matched with two classmates of the same sex, born closest in time and living with both biological parents.

Wadsby and Svedin (1996) show that the grade point averages of the children at 16 years from the study group and the control group were similar irrespective of the time elapsed since the divorce. In addition, the grades of children of professionals and higher manual workers were significantly higher than those of the children of manual workers in both groups, irrespective of family status.

Acknowledging that their findings on the effects of divorce differed from those produced by many studies outside Sweden, the authors suggest that the relatively generous level of financial support available to divorced parents in Sweden may mitigate the economic impact of separation, and also that a more accepting attitude towards single parenthood than in more traditional societies may exercise a protective effect. However, the Wadsby and Svedin (1996) findings may also be affected by the relatively small size of the sample used.

In their comparison of the link between childhood family structure, schooling and earnings in Sweden and the USA, Björklund *et al.* (2006) drew the Swedish data from a large national dataset comprising a random sample of 20 per cent of the individuals born in Sweden in 1964/65 (almost 36,000 cases). These individuals were matched to their full and half-siblings, and observed in bi-decennial censuses in 1965, 1970, 1975 and 1980. Educational and earnings outcomes were gathered for 1996. While many studies use one year `window' measurements as a proxy for family structure throughout childhood, this study sought to capture the dynamic nature of family formation and dissolution by constructing age-specific changes in family structure over an individual's entire childhood, up to age 16. When only family structure - with controls for age, sex, race and oversampled groups - was included in the model, nearly all non-intact family structure variables were negatively associated with years of schooling and annual earnings. However, when the sibling composition of the family and parents' education were included in the model, the effect of family structure became statistically insignificant, leading the authors to doubt a causal relationship between non-intact family structures and children's educational outcomes measured in years of schooling. At the same time, the number of full and half siblings and the time lived with them tended to be negatively related to educational achievement and earnings in adulthood. This effect was observed in both countries and was attributed by the authors to the reduction in resources – both time and money – available to be devoted to children in larger families.

Mixed conclusions were also drawn from an investigation of the educational achievement of more than 11,000 Finnish children (Riala *et al.*, 2003), with special reference to single parent families. This study formed part of the 1966 Northern Finland Birth Cohort Study, covering 96 per cent children born in during that year. Data on the cohort members' families and personal characteristics were gathered at various ages:

during pregnancy, at birth in 1966 and at age one year, and then at follow-ups during the years 1980 and 1981. Family background was linked with school performance at 16 years and education attainment at 31 years. Single parent families were divided into four types: where the mother was single at the child's birth and was still single by the time the child was 14 years old; where the mother was single at birth but married before the child was14; where a parent (or both parents) had died before the child was 14; and where the parents were divorced or separated by the time the child was 14.

It was found that offspring from single parent families had lower mean scores for all school subjects at 16 years, and were subsequently less likely to enter and complete tertiary education. Parental death appeared to affect children less adversely than living in other types of single parent family. Also, girls from single parent families seemed more resilient than boys in terms of their educational performance, especially if their mother was well-educated.

The effect of living within a single parent family upon educational performance was, however, considerably reduced when other family background variables and child characteristics were introduced into the analysis, with a significant effect remaining only for children of divorced parents. Thus other family background factors, such as low maternal education and large family size, were generally more powerful predictors of educational achievement than family type. Because the study was epidemiologically oriented and based on registers, there was no contextual information about family function or parent-child relationships which could have shed light on the poorer outcomes for children of divorced parents. Given the generous social welfare payments and high-quality universal education provided by the state in Finland, the authors considered it unlikely that diminished social or educational resources for any type of single parent family would have an effect on the outcomes for children. From the findings of other studies in this field, they suggest that children of divorced parents may be particularly likely to suffer a range of stressors before and after the divorce, including emotional upheaval, disturbed social relations and lack of parental control, which may adversely affect their academic self-concept and educational achievement.

Several studies have sought to measure the presence and impact of conflict. Piketty (2003), in his examination of the impact of divorce on school performance in France between 1968 and 2002, finds that children living with both parents in the years immediately prior to separation did as poorly in terms of school performance as those already living with just one parent. He concludes that parental conflict rather than separation *per se* produced negative outcomes.

4.2.2 Partially defamilialised countries: Britain, Germany and the Netherlands

Wadsworth *et al.* (1990) investigate a range of outcomes for a sample of 5,362 children from the National Survey of Health and Development, the first in a series of British post-war birth cohort studies that was stratified by social class. The analysis of data collected on 12 occasions during

childhood from mothers and teachers and from medical examinations and on 10 occasions in adulthood (up to age 36 in 1982) suggest that the experience of parental separation in childhood was associated with a number of negative outcomes in adolescence and adulthood for both males and females. These included lower levels of educational achievement up to university level, followed by lower earnings in their thirties. These effects were consistent in adulthood for both women and men. Educational attainment was recorded at three stages: up to and including `O' level (then the key public examination at 16 years); `A' level and equivalents; and University. The children were grouped into two social classes, manual and non-manual. At each point and for both social classes, the attainment of children who had experienced parental divorce fell below that of children who had not experienced divorce, and these differences were found to be statistically significant. In contrast, the attainment of children who had experienced the death of a parent was similar to those from intact families at all stages, except for university attainment, where the proportion of children of non-manual parents who had experienced the death of a parent fell below that of children who had experienced the divorce of a parent. The authors did not suggest a simple causal link between parental separation and negative outcomes for children in later life but argued that there was sufficient evidence of increased risk to merit improvements in the emotional care of children post-separation and policies to mitigate the economic and social hardships that separated families suffered.

Cherlin *et al.* (1991) in their analysis of data from the National Child Development Study (NCDS) – a longitudinal study of a national cohort of more than 17,000 children born in the same week in March 1958 – shifts attention from the aftermath of divorce to the conditions prevailing within families prior to divorce. In 1965, when the children were aged seven, the mothers of 14,746 children (85 per cent of the original cohort) were re-interviewed in order to assess the children's behavioural adjustment at home. Teachers provided information about the children's behaviour at school through a standardised questionnaire, and health visitors reported on the families' difficulties and their use of social welfare services. Information from physical examinations and the results of reading and mathematical tests were also collected. Except for the physical examinations, this process was repeated when the children were aged 11.

In order to evaluate the relative contributions of pre- and post-separation circumstances to children's adjustment at age 11, the researchers identify those children whose parents were in an intact first marriage when the children were seven and then divided them at age 11 into those whose parents had divorced or separated and those who parents had remained together.

They find that children whose parents had divorced or separated between age seven and age 11 demonstrated more behaviour problems at 11 as rated by parents and teachers, and scored lower than other children on mathematics and reading tests, even after controlling for social class and race. On average, the magnitude of the differences was modest, although significantly different from zero. However, when information about the

children's health, achievement and behaviour prior to divorce was introduced into the analysis, the apparent effect of the divorce or separation for boys fell by about half to levels that were no longer significantly different from zero for both behavioural and educational outcomes. For girls, the decline was smaller and the effect upon mathematics and reading scores remained significantly different from zero. On the basis of these findings, strengthened by evidence from a comparable US longitudinal study, the research team concluded that much of the effect of divorce on children could be predicted by conditions that existed long before the divorce or separation occurred, and that these pre-divorce effects were stronger for boys than for girls. They further conclude that as much attention should be paid to the processes that occur in troubled, intact families as to the trauma that children suffer after their parents' divorce or separation.

Again using NCDS data but approaching the issue from a different angle, Flouri and Buchanan (2004) investigate the influence of early father involvement on children's later educational achievement, independently of early mother involvement and other influences. In all, 7,259 cohort members provided data on mother involvement at age seven, father involvement at age seven and school-leaving qualifications by age 20. Of these, 3,303 were used in the final analysis. Models were constructed to estimate the influence of various early predictors of educational attainment. The authors find that 52 per cent of educational attainment by age 20 could be explained by a combination of control variables (including gender, birth weight, and parental education), structural variables (structure of parental family, number of siblings and number of family moves) and 'internal' variables (general ability, mental health, and academic motivation). When early father involvement was introduced into the model, the amount of variance in attainment explained increased by only four per cent but the change was statistically significant. Similarly, when early mother involvement was separately introduced into the model, the amount of variance in attainment explained increased by five per cent and again the change was statistically significant.

The authors find that while mothers' early involvement was important for children's educational outcomes, early father involvement at age seven independently and significantly predicted children's educational achievement by age 20, that this effect was equally strong for girls as for boys, and that it was not diminished for children growing up in non-intact families. The implication is that the early disruption of the father-child bond following family dissolution, and where the father does not remain involved, will have a negative impact upon the child's subsequent level of educational attainment and that this persists into adulthood.

More recent findings from a study based upon a selection of young adults from successive waves of the British Household Panel Survey 1991-1995, (Ermisch and Francesconi, 2000) conclude that living in a single parent family was associated with disadvantageous outcomes for most young people. Two samples of young people were used for the analysis: an `individual' sample of 764 individuals and a `sibling' sample of 411 individuals who could be matched to at least one sibling over the same

period. Information about siblings allowed the researchers to control for unobserved effects that would be shared by children belonging to the same family.

With regard to educational attainment, they found that the probability of obtaining an A level (UK pre university examination usually taken at age 17/18) or higher qualification was significantly reduced by 13.7 per cent for the individual sample and by 14.6 per cent for the sibling sample when the young person had spent time with a single mother during childhood. Moreover, they found that family disruption in early childhood up to the age of six years (or being born outside a live-in partnership) had the most pronounced impact on later educational achievement. As a possible explanation for this latter finding, the authors proposed that family disruption was likely to have a particularly powerful impact upon the child's cognitive, cultural and social development at this early stage.

A study by Winkelmann (2005) incorporated the perspective of young people themselves by including subjective measures of well-being in the analysis of outcomes for 640 children from intact and non-intact families in Germany. The study used data from the German Socio-Economic Panel, an annual household survey which has been supplemented since 2000 by a youth questionnaire. While children from non-intact families were significantly more likely to place themselves at the lower end of a subjective scale of well-being (that is, with score of less than five on a one to 10 scale), this family structure effect became insignificance when controls for income and other aspects of material well-being were introduced. Specifically in relation to educational outcomes, while children from non-intact families were 20 per cent less likely than those from two-parent families to attend a Gymnasium (the most demanding tier of secondary education), parental education – particularly the mother's education – was a stronger determinant of a child's educational pathway. Winkelmann (2005) argued against a simple causal link between non-intact family structures, subjective well-being and educational attainment, drawing attention to structural inequalities within the German educational system (such as reduced access to schools in rural areas) which can influence educational outcomes independently of the ability and motivation of the child.

Voegeli and Willenbacher (1993) focus on single mothers in the former Federal Republic of Germany. Given that the German census and household data used for this study related to the early 1960s, the detailed findings have limited contemporary relevance. It is perhaps sufficient to note that the children of single mothers who were employed did better in terms of their take-up of secondary education than those with mothers who were unemployed or dependent on maintenance. Single children from single parent families were as likely as children from two-parent families to enrol for secondary education, and indeed more likely in the case of girls; however, levels of enrolment fell when the single parent family contained two or more children. The authors conclude that this reflected inadequate support (in terms of child care, job security and flexible conditions) for single parents wishing to combine work with bringing up more than one child. In other words, the extra pressures on

the resources and time of single parents represented by additional children required compensatory social and employment provision.

In the Netherlands, research by Dronkers (1994) considered the effect of different forms of single parenthood (including reconstituted families with step-parents) on the educational performance of a national cohort of more than 15,500 children entering secondary school in 1989 using a national dataset for educational attainment. He finds that children living with single parents had lower levels of educational achievement than children living with their natural parents, and that this effect remained after controlling for background variables. Moreover, the negative outcomes for children of single mother families increased in the 1980's compared to the outcomes for children in all single parent families in the 1970s.

Borgers *et al.* (1996) report data from a 1990 survey by the Dutch Institute for Budget Research of more than 11,000 pupils from all levels of primary and secondary schools. More than 10,000 children were living with both natural parents. The remainder were divided into various family types: mother-headed families where the father had died and father-headed families where the mother had died; mother-headed families caused by divorce and father-headed families caused by divorce; step families caused by divorce and stepfamilies caused by the death of one of the original parents. Instead of using educational attainment as the principal outcome measure, the authors used 11 different indicators from the survey analysis to give a more global measure of pupils' well-being. These include two education-related indicators: pupils' self-assessment of their educational success and school truancy. Controls for various demographic variables relating to both parents and children were used.

Significant positive effects were found in relation to seven of the indicators for mother-headed families caused by divorce, including those relating to truancy and self-reported educational success. Three significant effects were identified for mother-headed families caused by death, one of which included school truancy. The education-related indicators were insignificant for stepfamilies caused by either divorce or death. School truancy was significant for father-headed families caused by death. The authors noted that the size of the significant effects related to family form was always small, usually less than one per cent, whereas the control variables explained between two per cent and 19 per cent of variations in well-being. However, when the sample was re-weighted so that the numbers of children in intact families was equal to those in non-intact families, stronger effects were observed in relation to non-intact family types.

The authors conclude that living in single parent families or stepfamilies caused by death had fewer negative consequences for children than living in single parent families caused by divorce. This was notwithstanding the absence of effects for father-headed families following divorce, which the authors explained in terms of the positive selection of the relatively small number of fathers who take on the principal caring role. In general, the results of this study give support to the weak social position of the mother as the most likely explanation for the negative effects of living in a single

parent family. At the same time, these negative effects were not neutralised if the mother had a high educational level, and not diminished if she had a low educational level.

The analysis of family type and its effect on children's well-being was taken forward by Dronkers (1999) through introducing parental conflict into models. He uses data from almost 10,000 questionnaires completed by young people aged 14 years and over who took part in a national survey in the Netherlands in 1994. On the basis of earlier research, the author constructs a number of hypotheses about the presence or absence of parental conflict in different family structures on nine indicators of children's well-being, including school failure and truancy. Although this study did not independently measure the young people's educational achievement and the indicators were based on self-reported information, the findings suggest that the severity of conflict between parents had an important impact upon children's well-being. So where serious parental conflict was not a factor in either family type, children in single parent families who had significant contact with the separated parent after divorce had lower well-being scores than those in two-parent families. Where serious conflict had been present, however, children from single parent families scored better than children from two-parent families. Dronkers (1999) also finds that the persistence of parental conflict after divorce was linked to negative outcomes for children over both the short and longer term.

The suggestion that the presence of parental conflict is a powerful explanatory factor irrespective of family structure receives support from a three-year UK longitudinal study of 230 children aged 11-13 drawn exclusively from two-parent families (Harold *et al.*, 2007). Parental conflict was linked to a subsequent lowering of children's educational attainment and, interestingly, the mechanism through which this operated was the children's attribution of self-blame for their parents' difficulties rather than negative parenting arising out of marital conflict.

It is important to reiterate that the research evidence discussed in this section has been drawn from western European and Nordic countries, and that there are obvious dangers in generalising key findings to other parts of Europe.

4.3 Child Outcomes: Cross-country studies

A key methodological problem for comparative studies is to identify a measure of educational achievement that is consistent across countries. The Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), a comparative survey of attainment using a standardised mathematics and science test for children aged nine, 13 and in their last year of secondary school from 50 countries in 1995, provides researchers with a useful vehicle.

TIMSS provides the educational performance data for an investigation by Pong *et al.* (2003) of the difference in mathematics and science achievement between younger children (third and fourth graders – or around nine years old) living with a single parent and those living with two-parents in 11 industrialised nations, including seven European countries (featuring England, Scotland (both UK) and the Netherlands from our case study countries). They find that single parenthood was significantly and negatively associated with lower mathematics and science achievement. With only two exceptions (Austria and Iceland), an achievement gap between children in single parent families and in two-parent families was found in every country as well as in the 11 countries combined.

The authors estimate the size of effect of single parenthood in countries by constructing two models: the first incorporating dummy family structure variables and control variables for age, gender, immigration status and grade level; the second incorporating family resource variables for which the number of books, the number of possessions and household size were taken as proxy measures. Among the European countries included, the effect size[22] for achievement in mathematics under the first model was greatest for Norway (.24) and England (.23) and weakest for Austria (.03) and Iceland (.01) while for science achievement, the effect size was greatest for England (.22) and Scotland (.21) and, once again, weakest for Austria (.04) and Iceland (.01). Under the second model, the effect size of single parenthood was smaller overall and weakest for Iceland, Ireland and Austria. A significant negative effect was nonetheless sustained for all countries other than for Austria and Iceland; and for Ireland in relation to mathematical achievement and Norway in relation to science achievement.

These findings are interpreted by the authors in relation to the family policies adopted by each of the countries studied. In terms of Hantrais' typology, the EU countries included in the study (Austria, the Netherlands, England and Scotland) all fell into the partially defamilialised category and the findings may not therefore apply to other European family policy environments.

The analysis took into account several policies that support family income and parental time inputs, including the existence of a family or child allowance, universal child benefits to single parents, benefits in tax and social security to single parents, family transfer per child, social expenditure per gross domestic product and parental leave policies. All family policy variables except for maternity leave duration were found to be significant and positive for both mathematical and science achievement. The strongest effects were found in relation to family and child allowances, leading the authors to suggest that the absence of an achievement gap for either science or mathematics for Austria reflected the relatively generous level of universal allowances in that country. In brief, it was found that countries (such as Austria) with the most generous

[22] The effect size is the actual coefficient as a proportion of the standard deviation of the test score being analysed.

family welfare policies show smaller or no achievement gaps by family structure. In conclusion, they argue that the apparently detrimental effects of growing up with a single parent could be partially offset by supportive family policies, particularly economic assistance to single parent households.

Woessmann (2004) also used TIMSS performance data, plus background questionnaires completed by participants, to estimate the effect of parental education and other measures of family background on children's test scores in the US and 15 European countries, including Denmark, England and Scotland (both UK), France, Germany, Greece, Netherlands, Spain and Sweden. The impact of family background on children's performance was strong in all countries. In relation to family structure, it was found that in no country did children living with both parents perform significantly worse than those living with one parent, and that they performed statistically significantly better in the US and eight Western European school systems. Only in Norway was the difference in test-score points (18.7) stronger than in the US (15.5), and the next largest effects were in Ireland (14.4), Greece (13.9) and Germany (9.4). The other countries with statistically significant effects for this measure were Switzerland (8.3), France (7.8), Scotland (7.2) and Sweden (5.2).

The TIMSS was once again the principal data source for a comparative study (Schiller *et al.* 2002) of almost 220,000 middle school students (modal age 13 years) from 34 countries, including Germany, France, Netherlands, Scotland, Denmark and Sweden, with an average of nearly 6,500 students per country. The analysis explored variations in the relationship between mathematical achievement and two aspects of the adolescents' social background: parents' education and family structure. It also considers whether these variations were associated with different levels of economic development between countries, as measured by Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The results show that both aspects of social background exercised a significant effect upon the students' performance. For each additional level of education their parents obtained, the children scored an average of 7.3 percentage points higher on the test (about 28.8 per cent of a year's gain), while those living with both parents scored an average of 5.7 percentage points more than those living in non-traditional families.

When these variations were related to GDP, parents' higher educational attainment had a consistently positive effect on children's mathematics test scores, however, the positive effect of living within an intact family varied between countries, and was significantly higher in countries with the strongest economies. The authors suggest that greater economic development tends to marginalise families in society, increasing the influence of intangible social resources in educational stratification. They argue that the greater relative advantage of living with two-parents in the countries with greater GDP shows the increased importance of parents' strategic investments of time and attention in supporting children's academic success and that additional pressures on the time and energies of single and remarried parents may cause these resources to be particularly lacking in non-traditional families. They also point out that

industrialised societies tend to have more geographically mobile families and smaller families, thus reducing the availability of social supports and other intangible resources through extended family or community networks.

The primary focus of a study of 14 European countries by Hampden-Thompson and Pong (2005) was to consider the possible effect of national family policy environments in mediating the impact of family structure on academic achievement.[23] TIMSS was used to provide academic performance data for almost 70,000 children of around nine years old. The stated advantages of surveying this younger age group were that they were still at school in most parts of the world and also that the curriculum for this level tended to be less differentiated.

Their study relates the findings on family structure and mathematics and science achievement to differences in family policy environments. The authors used Esping-Andersen's (1990) classification of welfare regimes to underpin their analysis. This classification identifies three distinctive welfare regimes according to the ways in which welfare production is allocated between the state, markets and households:

- a social democratic regime, characteristic of Scandinavian/Nordic countries, with generous safety nets, a strong commitment to the principles of universalism and egalitarianism, and a central role for the state in policy-making;
- a liberal regime, whose guiding principles are based on the free market economy and where social benefits tend to be low, means-tested and carry a social stigma (typified by the UK); and
- a conservative regime – falling somewhere between the previous two – in which the actions of the state are directed towards supporting traditional institutions like the family, and where strong family ties rather than state intervention are seen as the first line of support for individuals' welfare. Under this latter regime, the state tends to intervene only when family support has failed.

For the purposes of their study, the authors sub-divided the conservative regime into continental conservative and Southern Mediterranean. They argued that while both sub-types were heavily influenced by Roman Catholicism, they were differentiated by the more developed social safety nets in continental conservative regimes, compared to an extreme reliance on the family, church and charitable institutions and meagre family benefits in Southern Mediterranean conservative regimes. Accordingly, the countries in the study were grouped by regime as follows:

[23] Among our selected case study countries for this review, Great Britain, Scotland (separately), the Netherlands, Greece and the Czech Republic were included in this study. The remaining countries were: Austria, Cyprus, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Latvia, Norway, Portugal and Slovenia.

Liberal	Social Democratic	Continental Conservative	Southern Mediterranean Conservative
Great Britain Ireland Scotland	Iceland Netherlands Norway	Austria Czech Republic Hungary Latvia Slovenia	Cyprus Greece Portugal

There are similarities between these regime categories and Hantrais' (2004:200) typology of family policy environments: the liberal regime broadly corresponds to the partially defamilialised group; the social democratic regime to the defamilialised; the continental conservative to the refamilialised and the southern Mediterranean to the familialised. However, there are some notable differences with regard to specific countries in that Hantrais places Austria and the Netherlands in the partially defamilialised group.

The study was informed by the hypothesis that family policy environments moderate the relationship between single parenthood and children's educational achievement by changing the resources - both money and time - available within these families. It was anticipated that children of single parents in liberal regimes would fare less well than those living within both social democratic regimes and the two types of conservative regime. The hypothesis was underpinned by a recognition of the high level of state support to single parent families in social democratic regimes and the social support available to these families through non-state institutions and networks in conservative regimes. Both were considered to provide single parent families with better social capital than liberal regimes which tend to rely on market solutions to the problem of providing family support.

The study finds that living within a single parent family had a negative effect upon children's academic achievement and that this effect remained largely the same after controlling for family resources and other variables. However, the effect varied significantly between countries. For science scores, the negative effect of living within a single parent family was larger in Great Britain than any other country while, for mathematics, the largest effects were found in Great Britain/Scotland, Ireland, Norway and the Netherlands. In general, negative effects were smallest in the Mediterranean conservative countries (including Greece) and the continental conservative countries (including the Czech Republic).

Moreover, the performance gap between children from single parent and two-parent families was significantly larger in countries with liberal regimes than in those with the other three types of regime. The gap

between liberal and conservative regime countries was not affected by the introduction of additional student-level variables (family resources and control variables such as age, gender and location). These additional variables did, however, affect the achievement gap by family structure between liberal and social democratic regimes. When they were excluded no difference was found between the two types but once they were introduced into the analysis, the achievement gap became significantly larger in the former.

The authors conclude that neo-liberal family policies had a negative effect upon the academic performance of children from single parent families. These policies were said to be relatively weak in terms of the financial supports provided and ineffective in moving single parents out of poverty. They were also relatively unsuccessful in resolving work-family conflicts because over-reliance on expensive market solutions for childcare and restricted provision for parental leave.

Perhaps the most surprising finding was that both the continental conservative countries and the Southern Mediterranean conservative countries demonstrated smaller achievement gaps by family type than the social democratic countries, despite having weaker family policies. The authors are unclear about the reasons for this. However, they speculate that the cultural and political emphasis upon the family unit within countries with either type of conservative regime has enabled families – and, in southern Mediterranean conservative countries, informal community institutions - to provide the caring support that single parent families need, both financially and in resolving the work/family conflict. This chimes with the finding by Chambaz (2001), noted in Chapter 2, that a large proportion of single parent families in Southern European countries were included in other households. Yet Hampden-Thompson and Pong (2005) suggest that the family policies and financial safety nets in countries with social democratic regimes have promoted defamilialisation within households while simultaneously increasing the resources available to single parent families through state support and access to the workplace. A likely consequence is that inputs of time into childrearing by single parents are reduced. An important question left unanswered by this analysis is the extent to which the greater integration of families into extended households and community institutions in countries with conservative regimes is a consequence of forced dependence resulting from inadequate social safety nets and is therefore indicative of high levels of concealed poverty.

Bradshaw *et al.* (2007) consider child well-being at the European level. They analyse data already available for the (then) EU25, including both time series data and comparative surveys of children and young people, and compare the performance of the member states in relation to eight `clusters'. One of these clusters covers education, with educational attainment as a key domain. Measures of educational achievement were derived from data on reading, mathematics and scientific literacy from the OECD PISA 2003 survey. From our case studies, Malta did not appear in this ranking because it is not part of PISA. The index scores ranged from +3.0 to -2.0 with Finland (more than 2.0) outperforming all other

countries by a considerable margin, followed from our case studies by the Netherlands (more than 1.0), UK,[24] Sweden, Czech Republic, France and Germany (between 0 and 1.0). Case study countries with negative scores were, in descending rank, Poland, Denmark and Spain (between 0 and -1.0) and Greece (between -1.0 and -2.0). Greece was the lowest ranking of the 20 countries for which data were available.

Reviewing these findings against the Hantrais typology, there appears to be less clustering by family policy type. Finland, a defamilialised country is the clear leader but other countries achieving positive scores are a mixture of all four types: defamilialised (Sweden), partially defamilialised (UK, Germany and Netherlands), familialised (France) and refamilialised (Czech Republic). At the negative end of the scale, two familialised countries (Spain and Greece) have the lowest scores, but defamilialised Denmark and refamilialised Poland also feature.

Another 'cluster' focused on family cluster.[25] When the two domains of interest here are superimposed, it is clear that there is no simple correspondence between scores for family structure and for children's educational attainment. Thus Greece, with the second highest score for intact family structure, has the lowest score for educational attainment. In contrast, the UK does relatively well in terms of educational attainment, while having the most fragmented families. This does not undermine the findings of other comparative studies that, *within* countries, children from non-intact families are likely to be disadvantaged educationally.

A recent meta-analysis of international economic, social and educational data by Esping-Andersen (2008) finds that countries vary enormously in the polarisation of the educational achievements of adolescents. Reviewing International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) data from the OECD and PISA mathematical data for seven European countries (all case study countries) plus the US, he finds that Finland (a defamilialised country) was the least polarised European country in terms of the skill dispersion of 15 year old students, while also demonstrating the highest levels of overall attainment. The mean performance score of students in Finland from the 2000 PISA study was 547, with just seven per cent falling under the PISA minimum, which indicates a degree of cognitive dysfunction. The proportion of young adults aged 20-24 with no more than compulsory education was eight per cent. At the other end of the scale, Spain (a familialised country) was the most polarised, demonstrating the lowest mean PISA test scores (487) and the largest proportion of students under the PISA minimum (19 per cent) plus the highest proportion of young adults with no more than compulsory education (31 per cent). In between were the Netherlands, Germany and the UK (partially defamilialised) and Sweden and Denmark (defamilialised). The mean PISA score for Netherlands students was actually higher than that of their peers in Finland (552) but the proportions failing to reach the PISA minimum (10 per cent) and of young

[24] Although the UK data was considered to be unreliable because of low response rates.
[25] Bradshaw *et al.* (2007) findings on family structure are presented in Chapter 2.

adults with no more than compulsory education (22 per cent) were higher, indicating a greater degree of polarisation. The mean PISA scores and the percentages failing to reach the PISA minimum in the remaining countries were Germany (527 and 21 per cent), Denmark (521 and 15 per cent), Sweden (518 and 10 per cent) and the UK (511 and 13 per cent

The author identifies a number of structural trends that served to increase polarisation in the skill profile of young adults, including growing income inequality which makes parents' capacity to invest in their children's education more unequal. Demographic changes – particularly greater family instability due to increasing single parenthood and immigration – were seen to be another driver of unequal educational outcomes. Although poverty was strongly associated with poor educational outcomes and was particularly prevalent in single mother families, single mother poverty rates also varied considerably; for example, they were high in the US (almost 50 per cent) and much lower in Nordic countries (10-13 per cent). Indeed, the link between growing up in single parent families and low educational attainment was highlighted by the OECD PISA surveys (2000, 2003) which:

> *'Show that children growing up in lone parent households perform relatively lower than children from other families. This is mostly true in Belgium, Denmark, Ireland, the Netherlands and Sweden while in a number of countries their performance is not significantly different from pupils growing up in other families.'*
>
> EC (2008: 58)

Nonetheless, Esping-Andersen (2008) identifies welfare redistribution strategies as having an important effect in reducing poverty among all families with children, with particularly powerful impacts in Sweden (reducing poverty by 13 per cent) and France (a reduction of 20 per cent).

Although these comparative studies show a high level of agreement regarding the negative association between non-intact family structures and children's educational achievement, the studies are few in number and are perhaps over-reliant upon a rather narrow measure of educational achievement, namely children's performance in standardised mathematical and science tests.

4.4 Conclusions

This Chapter has considered single-country and comparative studies which address the nature of the relationship between family structure and educational achievement. The single country studies are drawn only from defamilialised and partially defamilialised countries, and caution must therefore be exercised in generalising their findings to societies with very different policy environments. The comparative cross-national studies included in this review introduce evidence from a broader sweep of countries but are generally reliant on quite a limited measure of educational achievement.

Although the findings of some studies provide counterexamples, the general thrust of the evidence reviewed here supports a negative association between non-intact family structures and children's educational achievement. Recent studies on child poverty and the dynamics of single parenthood (EC, 2007; 2008) indicate that there is a noticeable correlation between growing up in a single parent family and the socio-economic, labour and educational prospects of children. Educational outcomes are of particular concern as they are now recognised as crucial to the future life-prospects of children and young people. As the EC 2008 report on child poverty observed:

> *'Young people who leave school too early and with only lower secondary education are at a disadvantage on the labour market. Their personal and social development is in danger of being curtailed and they are at greater risk of poverty and social exclusion that other young people who continue their education and training.'*
>
> EC (2008: 57)

Interpreting this association, however, is a challenging and contentious task. This partly reflects the methodological difficulties of separating the effects of family structure from other powerful influences (such as low income, poor housing tenure and low parental education) that tend to be felt disproportionately by single parent families. Many studies have employed sophisticated statistical designs in order to tease out different effects but there are acknowledged difficulties in measuring background factors, such as parental mental health, upon outcomes for children.

Typically, the more complex the analysis, in terms of the multiplicity of variables introduced, the smaller the effect of family structure on educational achievement. In some studies this effect disappears altogether, although, in others, significant effects remain. Does family breakdown *per se* exercises an independent effect upon the achievements of children? Perhaps the most policy-relevant message from this review is that children from non-intact families are more likely than those living with both their parents to be exposed to risks which represent barriers to achievement. These risks may occur within the heart of the family -for example, when adults' parenting skills are affected by stress and anxiety - and in the family's socio-economic environment - for example, when low income and poor access to employment opportunities restrict choices and resources.

The review has offered some insights into the extent to which outcomes for children in different countries are mediated by specific family policy environments, which offer varying degrees of support and protection to non-intact families. There is a reasonably convincing body of evidence that redistributive welfare strategies, generous childcare support and equal access to the labour market that are characteristic of defamilialised countries produce better educational outcomes for children than the mix of private and social welfare solutions promoted in partially defamilialised societies. The detailed situation in the familialised countries of Southern

Europe and the refamilialised countries of Central Europe remains poorly delineated, however; and there is clearly a need for focused research to redress this imbalance. While there are some indications that family and community networks in the familialised countries provide a degree of protection from the social and economic disadvantages single parent families might otherwise face, it is likely that in many cases reliance on family and social networks increases financial hardship in already poor families and creates a more restrictive environment in which the choices available to single parents are influenced by conservative social norms. While the achievement gap between children from intact and non-intact families in these societies has been found to be relatively small, there is also evidence – at least for the Southern European countries - that the overall level of educational achievement is low and that there is greater divergence between the highest and lowest achieving children, irrespective of family structure, than in the defamilialised and partially defamilialised countries of Western and Northern Europe.

There also seems to be a lack of European research on educational outcomes for children when families are reconstituted through the re-marriage or re-partnering of parents. Findings from the US literature have indicated that outcomes for step-children are similar to those for children from single parent families (Mclanahan and Sandefur, 1994) and, moreover, that children in stable *`blended'* families containing both step-children and half-siblings born into the new partnership have substantially lower levels of achievement than those living with both their birth parents (Ginther and Pollack, 2004). Given the increasingly complex family structures in many European countries, this would appear to be an important area for further enquiry.

5 Health and Well-being Outcomes

5.1 Introduction

Exploring and interpreting the associations between family breakdown and health outcomes for children in European Union (EU) countries is a complex task, not least because of the extraordinarily wide range of conditions, behaviours and events that may be construed as outcomes. Moreover, an individual's health and well-being may be scrutinised at many different phases of life, from infancy through to mature adulthood. In order to accommodate both the range and the depth of the subject matter, this literature review is broadly structured according to life stages. Evidence relating to each stage is then considered.

Ideally this chapter would review evidence from all the family policy environments denoted by our typology, however, in practice the research evidence is skewed towards the Nordic countries and the UK where large-scale prospective studies and representative datasets have provided a rich source of material. Some comparative, cross-national studies have also been identified covering a broader range of countries. Accordingly, many of the observations and findings from the studies discussed below may be specific to defamilialised and partially-defamilialised countries and may not necessarily apply to societies with familialised and refamilialised family policy environments.

A shortcoming common to many of the studies discussed below is that they do not distinguish between the routes into single parenthood. So while they may, for instance, compare one parent families with two-parent families and report a significant effect by family type, they rarely say whether the effect holds for single parent families created by family breakdown and/or those arising from non-marital births or the death of a partner. As a consequence, even when an adverse health outcome for children of single mothers is found, it does not necessarily follow that the health outcome can simply be attributed to family breakdown.

5.2 Pre-term births and death in infancy

The relationship between socio-demographic factors and adverse outcomes in infancy, notably pre-term birth, perinatal mortality and Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, is the focus of the studies reviewed in this section.

A comparative study by Zeitlin *et al.* (2002) investigates the impact of marital status on pre-term birth in European countries where extra-marital births were more or less common. Citing earlier research findings that the marital status of the mother had been identified as a risk factor for pre-term birth, the authors consider whether society's acceptance of extra-marital child bearing might mediate the association between being

unmarried and birth outcome. The study draws on data from the European Programme of Population Risks and Pregnancy Outcomes (EUROPOP), a collaborative European initiative carried out between 1994 and 1997 to study the risk factors for pre-term birth, using a case-control design. The sample included data from the Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Russia, Scotland, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden. Cases included all singleton live pre-term and still-births delivered in participating maternity hospitals during the study period, with controls randomly selected from singleton births. Information about the mother, her pregnancy and the newborn child was collected using the same questionnaire in all countries and was supplemented with details from her medical records. The total sample comprised 5,456 cases and 8,234 controls.

The countries are divided into two groups according to the proportion of births to married mothers in the control population, validated with information from EUROSTAT. This proportion varied in the sample from 96.8 per cent in Greece to 58.4 per cent in Sweden. Percentages for other countries in our case study group were: Czech Republic, 85.5 per cent; Finland, 65.8 per cent; France, 66.4 per cent; Germany, 74.8 per cent; Netherlands 68.7 per cent; Poland, 88.7 per cent; Scotland, 62.5 per cent; and Spain, 90.3 per cent. Eighty per cent of births to married mothers is selected as the threshold between low and high values. Thus the familialised countries from our case study group (Greece and Spain) and the refamilialised countries (Czech Republic and Poland) were above the threshold, while the defamilialised countries (Finland, France and Sweden) and partially defamilialised (Scotland, Netherlands and Germany) fell below it.

In the overall sample, there was a significantly elevated risk of a pre-term birth associated both with cohabitation (an odds ratio of 1.2) and single motherhood (an odds ratio of 1.3). The risk was particularly marked in those (familialised and refamilialised) countries where births to unmarried mothers were less common.[26] In contrast, in (defamilialised and partially defamilialised) countries where non-marital births were more common, the risk to both cohabiting and single mothers was insignificant. These results are unchanged in analyses which exclude countries close to the threshold.

For moderate pre-term births (that is, 33-36 weeks' gestation), the data support the hypothesis that the association between pre-term birth is mediated by marital patterns within the general population. Elevated risks for both single and cohabiting women in this sub-group are confined to countries where extra-marital births were less common. However, the risk of pre-term birth before 33 weeks was greater for single and cohabiting mothers in both groups of countries. The authors argue for further research to understand the financial and emotional stressors associated with being an unmarried mother in different societies, with

[26] An odds ratio of 1.69 for cohabitating women and of 1.61 for single women.

attention to community-level factors, such as health care and social support programmes.

Forssas *et al.* (1999) investigate the maternal risk factors associated with perinatal deaths in Finland (a defamilialised country). This involves an analysis of all data from the Medical Birth Register on all newborns (199,291) in Finland between 1991 and 1993. From the total number of births, there were 1,461 perinatal deaths. The purpose of the study was to identify maternal risk factors and to establish how much of the excess mortality could be explained by low birth weight. Eight maternal characteristics were considered: age, previous births, socio-economic status, marital status (married, cohabiting or single), smoking habit, earlier stillbirth, insulin-dependent diabetes mellitus and IVF pregnancy. The results show that previous stillbirth, higher maternal age and maternal diabetes were associated with greatly increased perinatal mortality risks. The risk was also increased for women with lower socio-economic status, those who smoked, single mothers and those giving birth for the first time. While infants' low birthweight explained 100 per cent of the excess perinatal mortality associated with IVF and smoking during pregnancy, it bore a variable relationship to other maternal characteristics. For single mothers, low birthweight explained only 50 per cent of excess mortality, leading the authors to conclude that perinatal mortality for this group must be mediated by other factors, although they did not speculate what those factors might be.

Following a sharp increase in Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) in the Nordic countries in the 1980's, a joint Nordic SIDS study was initiated. While subsequent advice about sleeping positions dramatically decreased the incidence of infant death, particularly in Norway, concern remained about social factors that were known to be associated with the syndrome but which were poorly understood. Daltveit *et al.* (1998) conducted a study to explore these factors by means of a case control study in Sweden, Norway and Denmark. Parents of 244 SIDS infants and 869 control infants, matched on gender, age at death and place at birth, completed a questionnaire. The socio-demographic variables used in the analysis include maternal age, birth order, marital status, parental educational level, parental employment status and housing conditions. In addition, two modifiable risk factors – sleeping and maternal smoking – were included. Univariate analysis shows single motherhood to be associated with an increased risk of SIDS, as were high birth order, young maternal age, low parental education and high parental unemployment. The risk was also high if the parent had no contact with family or friends. However, in a multivariate analysis where maternal smoking was also included, only paternal unemployment, young maternal age and birth order remained significantly associated with SIDS. Although housing conditions were not associated with SIDS, the risk was higher if the parents had lived in their present home for a relatively short time.

5.3 Morbidity, injury and death in childhood and adolescence

A Swedish study by Ringbäck-Weitoft *et al.* (2003) investigates differences in mortality, severe morbidity and injury among children from one parent families compared to those living with both parents. They analyse overall and cause-specific mortality from 1991-1998 and risk of hospital admission during the same period for almost a million children, of whom 65,085 were children of single parents and 921,257 lived with two-parents. Using the unique national registration number allocated to all Swedish citizens, the researchers are able to link data from the 1990 census and a number of other national data sources. The children were aged between six and 18 years at the beginning of the follow-up in 1991, and by the end of the follow-up in 1998, the youngest child was 14 years old and the oldest 26 years. Thus the outcomes encompass mainly childhood and adolescence but shade into young adulthood.

The researchers found marked differences in the socio-economic circumstances of the two groups: single parents generally had a lower employment status, were considerably more likely to be reliant on social benefits and to rent rather than own their homes; and were at a substantially higher risk of admission to hospital for psychiatric illness or addiction to alcohol.

The findings of this study show an increased risk of psychiatric disease, suicide or suicide attempt, injury and addiction in children in single-parent households compared with those in two-parent households. Boys in single-parent families had higher risks than girls of both psychiatric and drug-related illnesses, and they also had a raised risk of all-cause mortality. Much of the raised risk for children from single parent families could be accounted for by socio-economic circumstances, the main explanation for increased risk being lack of household resources as indicated by receipt of social benefits and housing situation. However, significant risks remained unaccounted for even when the model was fully adjusted for a range of socio-economic and demographic circumstances. Specifically, children in single-parent households had increased risks compared with those in two-parent households of psychiatric illness in childhood, suicide attempt, and both alcohol and drug-related illnesses. The authors noted that although the socio-economic situation of single parents in Sweden was relatively favourable, social policies did not recognise the special situation of the single parent as the only bread-winner and carer and that this may have resulted in insufficient support for single parents in meeting the challenge of combining family life and working life.

Commenting on this study, Whitehead and Holland (2003), suggest that the findings left major questions unanswered about the causal pathways that lead to higher risks for single parents and their children. They also questioned whether causal pathways would be the same in all countries. In comparison to single parents in Britain, they noted that single parents in Sweden are afforded a high level of protection from poverty and

unemployment by the generous universal social welfare system. This in turn was likely to shield them from the stress, anxiety and social isolation which might otherwise adversely affect the parental role. They conclude that the health inequalities between children from single parent and two-parent families in Sweden remained largely unexplained. However, they highlight that the meaning of what is measured will differ in important ways between societies. For example, while receipt of welfare benefits may be taken as a marker of poverty, it is likely to have very different connotations in a country such as Sweden (a defamilialised country) with strong social safety nets, compared to countries with less comprehensive social supports. Similarly, housing tenure as an indicator of socio-economic status may not be a consistent indicator between countries.

Within the different social and political context of the UK – a partially defamilialised country - B, Cooper *et al.* (1998) also considers the social patterning of health inequalities among children. Noting the conflicting results from earlier research, which had examined associations between health outcomes and traditional measures of social class, the authors predict that in the aftermath of societal changes in Britain in the 1980s, measures of material and social disadvantage would be more accurate indicators of health inequalities than social class. The study uses data from three years of the British General Household Survey (GHS) from 1992/93 to 1994/95, providing a sample of over 16,500 children aged 0-16 years. Morbidity was measured the presence of a limiting longstanding illness as identified by the person assuming most responsibility for the child. The findings demonstrate that family structure, employment status and receipt of benefit are more closely associated with health differentials than parental social class. However, the outcomes for children with single parents were mediated by the economic and employment status of the parents. Thus the health status of children of working single parents was not significantly different from that of children of intact families where both parents worked. At the same time, non-employment among single parents was associated with higher levels of limiting longstanding illness and, where basic social benefits were received, significantly higher levels of chronic illness in their children compared to children from two-parent families without any benefit entitlement. Given that the health of children in two-parent families was also adversely affected by parental income or unemployment, the general conclusion reached by the authors is that it was not family structure *per se* that resulted in health inequalities for children but poor economic status.

While acknowledging the weight of evidence in the literature for an association between single parent households and a range of adverse health, educational and behavioural outcomes for children, Spencer (2005) hypothesises that the increased risk could be explained by material disadvantage. Using data from the third wave (2001) of the Families and Children Study, a British panel survey, he is able to extract outcome information for 15,636 children aged 0-18 years belonging to 8,541 households. The selected health outcomes are parent-reported health (fair/poor versus good/very good) and longstanding illness or disability. Single parenthood at the time of the survey is the principal explanatory variable of interest, and single parenthood for at least a year

the secondary explanatory variable. The analysis also controls for a variety of variables: household demographics, measures of household material disadvantage, socio-economic circumstances and household tenure. The results show that both boys and girls in single parent households had increased risk of all adverse outcomes (that is, health, behavioural and educational) when controlling for the age of the child alone and for age plus household demographics (age of the main carer, number of dependent children and the child's rank in the household). However, the increased risk is eliminated for all outcomes except parent-reported health of girls following the addition of housing tenure, household hardship index and an interaction term for hardship and single parenthood. There is some evidence that a combination of single parenthood and material hardship generated more risk of adverse outcomes than either of these variables alone. Similar results were obtained when the effect of single parenthood for at least one year was entered into the model: this was associated with increased risks to both boys and girls that, once again, were eliminated when measures of material disadvantage were added. The findings broadly confirm the author's hypothesis that the negative outcomes, including health outcomes, for children from single parent families can be explained by the material disadvantages commonly experienced by these families.

Another UK study, by Fleming and Charlton (1998), sought to identify differences in morbidity in children presenting to general practitioners from households with one adult compared to households with two adults. Data collected from a national study of morbidity in general practice are used. The study involved general practitioners and practice nurses from 60 practices entering their assessment of problems presenting in each face-to-face encounter during the year ending August 1992. The total study population of nearly half a million was representative of the national census population. It included 93,356 children from birth to 15 years, of whom 10,983 (11.8 per cent) were living in households with more than one adult. While rates of consulting for any illness were slightly higher in one-adult rather than two-adult households, rates of consulting for accidents were considerably higher: for boys under one year they were 50 per cent higher and for girls 35 per cent higher. Young children (four years and younger) were less likely to present for immunisation than those from two-adult households, and they were a third more likely than children from two-adult households to be visited at home (this might be explained by the lack of a car – see chapter 2). The authors conclude that single-adult households are an appropriate indicator of deprivation, and argue that children from these households require specific targeting by general practitioners and other primary care professionals for accident prevention and immunisation uptake.

A Report Card issued by the Unicef Innocenti Centre (2001) shows that there is also considerable variation in the prevalence of injury between countries, which is equally poorly understood. The report provides a league table of child deaths by injury in the 26 richest OECD countries. It shows dramatic variations between countries in child death rates per 100,000 children over a twelve month period, ranging from 5.2 for Sweden to 25.6 for Korea. The rates per 100,000 children for other

countries within our case study group were: UK, 6.1; Netherlands, 6.6; Greece, 7.8; Denmark and Spain, 8.1; Finland, 8.2; Germany, 8.3; France, 9.1; and the Czech Republic, 12.0. The authors note that whatever the proximate cause of death or injury, the risk to children was strongly associated with social and demographic factors, including poverty, single parenthood, low maternal education and parental alcohol or drug abuse. They also acknowledge, however, that the detailed data needed to disaggregate these factors and estimate their relative influence are lacking for most countries and that this was a generally underdeveloped area of research. More refined and accurate data about the socio-economic circumstances associated with child injury and death would, in their view, assist the formulation of preventative strategies directed towards families and communities where the risks are known to be higher.

The UK provides a detailed investigation of the relationship between family structure and child injury. A review of available data on the accident risks to children of single parents was undertaken by Roberts and Bless (1995). While highlighting the substantially higher rates of injury to children of single parents – estimated at twice the rate for children of two-parent families in the UK – the authors argue that this increased risk could be explained by poverty, poor housing and social isolation. They point out the consistently strong association in epidemiological research between child injury and poverty, and maintain that the low level of social security benefits and limited access to paid employment for most single parents placed them below the poverty threshold. Their low incomes in turn exposed them to unsatisfactory housing in dangerous environments, both of which pose injury risks to children. They note, for example, that residential fires were the second leading cause of death to children in the UK and that the risks were greatest in older houses, rented accommodation, mobile homes and homes without telephones or smoke detectors. Finally, the authors identify social support as an important factor in the prevention of child injury, both through providing parents with resources and knowledge and in protecting them against depression. The social isolation faced by many single mothers is seen to multiply the disadvantages of poverty and poor housing and further increase the risk of accidents and injuries to children. The principal remedy proposed by the authors is affordable day care which would simultaneously provide a safe environment for children and ease access into paid work for mothers, enabling them to improve their incomes and their housing. Upgrading the housing stock and providing social support for single mothers are also identified as critical strategies for safeguarding children.

Another group of studies has examined associations between family structure and specific disease patterns in children. An example is a study by Hägglöf *et al.* (1991) which considers whether psychosocial stress presented a risk factor for Type 1 diabetes in children. This study forms part of the Swedish childhood diabetes study - a national case referent study. All recent onset child patients aged 0-14 years over one year were invited to participate. Two referent subjects matched for age, sex and geographical distribution were selected for each patient using the official Swedish population register. In all, 338 patients and 528 referent

subjects took part. Family characteristics such as the marital status of parents, parental age, number of siblings and proportion of immigrants were similar for both the diabetic patients and the children in the referent group. Questionnaires were distributed to the families of the diabetes patients and the families of the referent subjects approximately four weeks after the diagnosis of Type 1 diabetes, with the purpose of recording significant life events over the year prior to diagnosis. An inventory of 45 possible life events was incorporated into the questionnaire. These included parental divorce and separation, the remarriage of a parent and the death of a parent or a close member of the family. Three different methods were used to analyse the life events qualitatively. First, a life change values index already established for this questionnaire provided a rating of the severity of the life events. Second, each family evaluated how upsetting a life event had been to the child on a self-esteem scale. Third, losses within the family are analysed separately since these had been indicated in previous research as being associated in both adults and children with the onset of diabetes. All analyses are performed separately for children aged 0-4 years, 5-9 years and 10-14 years.

The results show no difference in the number of life events between the families of the diabetic children and the referent families, with a mean of 1.9 events per family. Neither are there any significant differences when the results are analysed by age group. In the group as a whole, the number of severe life events as rated by the families themselves tended to be higher for the diabetic children but the difference is not statistically significant. However, the impact of life events relating to losses within the family differed according to age group. The chances that such events comprise a risk factor for Type 1 diabetes are significantly higher among children aged 5-9 years and remain significant when standardised for possibly confounding factors such as age, sex, maternal education and whether Type 1 diabetes was present among first degree relatives. The authors suggest that this age group might be especially vulnerable to stressful life events due to the discrepancy between cognitive skills and emotional development; alternatively, they speculate that the occurrence of significant events, such as parental divorce, might be more frequent in this age group.

The relationship between single parenthood and outcomes for children with cystic fibrosis, a severe and life-threatening long-term illness, is the focus of a study conducted by a hospital research team in Northern Ireland (part of the UK) (Macpherson *et al.*, 1998). Seventy-five children aged between eight months and six years are identified from the patient register of a regional cystic fibrosis centre, of which 20 are from single parent families and 55 from two-parent families. An interview schedule was devised for the mothers in order to probe family circumstances, including number of siblings, financial and employment situation, receipt of benefits, smoking and housing. All participating mothers were also asked to complete the General Health Questionnaire (GHQ), which is widely used to detect psychiatric disorders. In addition, the child's age and genetic history was recorded from the patient register, and the pattern of hospital admissions over the previous year was recorded, along

with the most recent Schwachman score (a clinical score widely used to assess the status of patients with cystic fibrosis).

Analysis of the outcomes for children show that those younger than six years with single mothers and teenage mothers had markedly increased morbidity. This was reflected in higher rates of hospital admissions, more days in hospital per year and a significantly lower mean Schwachman score than for children from older two-parent families. The authors suggest that these results could be indicative of lower compliance with prophylactic and preventative regimes, which in turn were likely to reflect a lack of support for single and teenage mothers in managing the increased burden of care. They conclude that young cystic fibrosis children with single or teenage mothers have significantly worse clinical progress than those from intact families and that this population required extra clinical vigilance and social support.

5.4 Behavioural and emotional problems in childhood

While the studies discussed in the previous section are mainly concerned with physical health outcomes, a large body of research has been devoted to identifying the factors associated with behavioural and emotional problems in childhood.

A study undertaken by Harland et al (2002) in the Netherlands, a partially defamilialised country, sought to determine whether children's demographic characteristics (sex, age, ethnicity and degree of urbanisation), family characteristics (family structure, employment status of the parent(s), educational level, and number of siblings living in the family at the time of the study), and stressful life events were associated with an increased risk of behavioural and/or emotional problems. With regard to life events, it focused on parental divorce or separation and unemployment, because these were observed frequently and had been found in previous research to have significant consequences. A particular concern of the study is to assess whether the impact of divorce and separation changed over time, and special attention is paid to risks to children who had recently experienced parental separation/divorce or unemployment compared to those with longstanding experience of this problem.

The Child Behaviour Checklist (CBCL), a well-established and validated instrument for identifying problems in children's behaviour from the parents' viewpoint, was completed by a national sample of 4,480 parents of school-aged children (4-15 years) who were also interviewed about their demographic and family characteristics and about the child's recent life events. Child health care professionals provided additional background information. The data were collected in a standardised way during routine health assessments. Results show that family characteristics and recent life events were more strongly associated with children's risks of behavioural and emotional problems as measured by

the CBCL than other demographic characteristics. Overall, the likelihood of having a clinical CBCL problem tended to be higher for children experiencing divorce or separation than it was for those encountering unemployment. Moreover, children tend to recover over time - although not completely - from the damaging emotional effects of divorce. On the whole, the observed effects are moderate. The authors do not propose a causal link between life events and emotional problems but rather seek to identify high risk groups of children. They feel that the results do not justify screening for children who had experienced stressful life events but nonetheless indicate that child health professionals should be alert if a child's history contained such events.

McMunn *et al.* (2001) sought to unravel the complex relationship between family structure, child and adolescent well-being, socio-economic status and parental mental health. They use data from the Health Survey for England, a large, annual nationally representative survey. The 1997 edition of the survey focused on the health of young people and was the first to use the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ), an instrument for screening children for psychological morbidity. Sampling yielded 5,705 children aged 4-15 years whose parents completed the SDQ. Key questions for the study are whether children from two-parent and single parent families differ in terms of their emotional and behavioural symptoms, and, if so, whether this relationship persists once socio-economic circumstances and parental mental health are taken into account.

Compared to children from two-parent families, children of never-married single mothers were three times more likely to have a high SDQ score, indicating psychiatric disorders. Those with previously married single mothers or from reconstituted families were twice as likely to have a high score. Children in single father families were not significantly more likely to have a high SDQ score. Girls were less likely than boys, and 13-15 year olds were less likely than four to six year olds to have a high score. When various indicators of socio-economic status were taken into account (receipt of benefits, social class of head of household and housing tenure), the effect of single mother households (both never married and previously married) on child psychological status disappeared. However, children of reconstituted families were 60 per cent more likely to have a high SDQ score even when socio-economic status was taken into account.

Information about maternal factors and mother's education, working status and psychological well-being was available only for a sub sample of 1,426 children. While these maternal factors, along with family structure and socio-economic status, were all associated with high SDQ scores for children, they were also strongly associated with one another so that, for example, mothers with no educational qualifications were the most likely to be single parents while the opposite was true for those with degrees or higher education. The authors conclude that it was not single motherhood *per se* that was detrimental to children's psychological well-being but rather the poverty and low maternal educational attainment that are characteristic of many single mothers. However, these factors were

unable to explain the enhanced psychological risk for children from reconstituted families.

Wadsby and Svedin (1993) undertook a two-year follow-up study of Swedish children whose parents had recently divorced. The base population for the study was drawn from all Swedish couples with children under 18 years who applied for and completed a divorce at a single district court over a twelve month period ending in June 1988. One hundred and thirteen children aged 3-18 years from 78 families were included in the original study group, and 300 children from intact families were used as a reference group for mental health assessment. An assessment of the children was made within eight weeks after parents' formal application for divorce. This examined the presence of behavioural disturbances and symptoms of poor mental health among children of divorced parents as compared with children from intact homes, examined age and gender differences, and studied the children's reactions to the information about their parents' divorce. A semi-structured behaviour and symptom interview was undertaken with the parents, supplemented with open questions and information about any contacts with the Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Service before and at the time of divorce. This early assessment had shown that behavioural problems and symptoms of poor mental health were not more common among the children of divorced parents than among the children from intact families, and there were no age or sex differences. The purpose of the follow-up study was to re-examine the children’s mental health, with the specific aim of determining whether their symptom scores had changed.

Ninety-seven of the original children were re-examined: 44 boys and 53 girls. A reference group was once again used, comprising 232 children from intact families randomly selected from the general population. The interview used as part of the original assessment was repeated and was supplemented by parent and teacher questionnaires designed to discriminate between children who showed disorder and those who did not. Subsequent contacts with the child psychiatric service were also noted. Boys of divorced families were found to have a significantly higher symptom score at the follow up.

Differences related to age were seen only between the children who were younger than five years at the time of the original study and subsequently were between five and seven years of age at the follow-up. These children were significantly more symptom- loaded at the follow-up, with the boys once again accounting for the increased score. In spite of the increased total score, there was no significant increase in the percentage of children with behavioural issues at the follow-up (16 per cent) compared with the original study (13 per cent) and no more than for children from intact homes (16 per cent). Of the 27 per cent of children who demonstrated a higher symptom score at the follow-up, psychiatric contact for one or both parents and parental alcohol abuse appeared to be contributory factors, while the experience of a particularly traumatic divorce was associated with a symptom score outside the range of normal behaviour displayed by 16 per cent of children.

Franz *et al.* (2003) note the lack of methodologically sound studies of health and social outcomes for single mothers and their children in Germany. They also observe a lack of targeted support programmes for this group and designed a large epidemiological study in order to improve information and facilitate the development and planning of specific interventions. A school eligibility test carried out for the entire cohort of children aged 5-7 years in Dusseldorf during 1999 allowed the screening of all accompanying adults, from whom a study group of 531 single mothers (who were either living alone or with a new partner but unmarried) and a control group of 278 married mothers were drawn. The authors analyse outcomes for the mothers themselves and for their children. Child outcomes are measured in terms of levels of problem behaviour as measured by the CBCL, which was completed by the mothers. This has nine sub-scales which were aggregated to give a total score for behavioural problems. The authors find that children's problem behaviour is elevated among the single mother group compared to the control group. However, significantly higher means for CBCL subscales (thought disorder, social problems, delinquent behaviour, other problems, mixed problems, externalizing) and CBCL total score were found only in boys of single mothers.

Within the distribution of CBCL total scores for boys a larger subgroup of higher troubled children among single mothers is observed. Younger single mothers considered their sons to show more difficult behaviour than older single mothers. Girls of single mothers also show higher CBCL mean values but do not differ significantly from those belonging to two-parent families. Children of full-time employed single mothers show a CBCL mean total score of 23.27 compared to a CBCL total of 12.82 for children of full-time employed mothers of the control group. The study also finds an elevated prevalence of psychological distress among single mothers compared to the control group and a highly significant correlation between the level of distress of the single mother and the children's CBCL total score. The authors argue for preventative interventions and community support structures for single parent families to be targeted at the points of highest need, along with increased financial benefits. In order to use existing resources efficiently, they feel that priority should be given to young single mothers who have an insufficient income or low educational or professional grades, as well as those who do not have additional personal support for their child.

5.5 Adjustment in adolescence and young adulthood

Some studies discussed above include findings on health outcomes through childhood and into adolescence and young adulthood. The studies described in this Section focus more closely on these latter developmental stages and consider whether outcomes for young people in terms of psychological functioning and life transitions differ according to parental family structures.

Chase-Lansdale *et al.* (1995) use the NCDS to explore the psychological functioning of young adults from divorced families. As noted in Chapter 3, the NCDS is a survey of all children born in the UK during a single week in March 1958. The study uses data gathered at birth and subsequently at ages seven, 11, 16 and 23 years. The 17,414 individuals in the original cohort were reduced by sample attrition to 12,537 at age 23. The authors select a longitudinal sub-sample for this investigation of 10,353 individuals whose parents had remained married until age seven and had subsequently divorced. Three specific questions were posed:

(1) Does divorce during childhood have long-term consequences on adult mental health, and are there gender differences?
(2) Do subsequent life events or developmental capacities counteract negative effects of divorce?
(3) When child and family characteristics prior to divorce are taken into account, is the relationship between the divorce itself and adult mental health weakened?

Mental health outcomes were measured by means of the Malaise Inventory, an instrument designed to sample a broad range of adult emotional disorders.

The results indicate that divorce had negative long-term consequences for both young men and women's emotional and psychological adjustment at age 23, which were associated with a moderate percentage increase in the average score of the Malaise Inventory. In relative terms, divorce was associated with a substantial 39 per cent increase in the risk of psychopathology. While describing an effect of this magnitude as `*important and worrisome'*, the authors also pointed out that this was a relative effect and that, in absolute terms, it remained the case that 82 per cent of young women and 94 per cent of young men whose parents had divorced fell below the clinical threshold, suggesting that in the vast majority of cases there is substantial recovery following divorce.

The timing of divorce was also considered (that is, between ages seven and 11, or between ages 11-16) and there were indications that later divorce was more harmful to children's subsequent adjustment. The authors offer two main interpretations for this finding. The first is that divorce during adolescence may be particularly disturbing. This is a time of major developmental transformations and life choices involving the renegotiation of autonomy and connectedness with the family, the development of a sex-role identity, intimate relationships with others and, in the UK, required an early career choice and decisions on whether to leave school at age 16. The second is that the closer proximity of the divorce to young adulthood created a greater likelihood of continuity between adverse reactions in the aftermath of divorce and maladjustment in the early adult years.

Moreover, children with fewer emotional problems at age seven were more adversely affected by divorce, as measured by magnitude of change in Malaise Inventory Scores, even though they ultimately demonstrated a lower level of mental health problems in adulthood. The authors

speculate that divorce may have been experienced as more of a shock by the well-adjusted children and that the emotional problems of the poorly adjusted children may have reflected dysfunction in their families which was ameliorated through divorce. The study was also able to investigate the question of whether long-term negative outcomes for children following divorce reflected prior problems in the child or family rather than the divorce itself. It finds that the long-term negative effects on adult mental health at age 23 were linked to the divorce since they were not reduced when problematic child and family factors at age seven (that is, before the divorce) were taken into account.

Similar questions about long-term outcomes for young people were addressed by a study undertaken in the Netherlands, another partially defamilialised country. Spruijt and de Goede (1996) compare a series of outcomes indicative of health and well-being for adolescents and young adults from four family types: stable intact families, conflict intact families, single parent families and stepfamilies. Data are used from the Utrecht Study of Adolescent Development, a longitudinal study with a national panel design. The sample comprised 3,393 young people aged between 12 and 24 years. The young people and one of their parents were interviewed. Children from single parent families and stepfamilies had, on average, experienced their parents' divorce or separation ten years before the data were gathered, while the formation of new stepfamilies had taken place on average eight years before, leading the authors to observe that outcomes could be seen as long-term. Family income and the sex, age and educational level of the young person were controlled for in the analysis.

The authors hypothesise that the young people's general physical and psychological well-being and their feelings of well-being in a relationship would be negatively related to the amount of structural change they had experienced within their parental family. Standardised scales are used to measure physical and mental health and psychological distress. In addition, the young people were asked whether they had considered suicide during the previous 12 months. In order to ascertain their feelings of well-being in a relationship, they were questioned about significant events and decisions in their emotional lives.

Findings relating to physical health show that young people from intact families are the 'most healthy', followed by those from stepfamilies, conflict families and, finally, single parent families. Those from single parent families also score lowest on the measures of psychological well-being, and those from intact families once again scored highest. However, those from stepfamilies scored higher on these measures than young people from single parent families and conflictual families. When asked about their own emotional relationships, young people from single parent families and stepfamilies had more experience of emotional upsets and the breaking up relationships, although the difference was significant only for those from single parent families. After controlling for family income, sex and educational level, these reported relationships between family structure and outcomes remain significant. While children from single parent families show the lowest levels of well-being in all respects

and those from intact families the highest, children from stepfamilies occupy an intermediate position, thus refuting the hypothesis that those who had experienced most structural change within their families would experience the lowest levels of well-being.

A small study in Sweden (Samuelsson, 1995) compared the social networks of children aged 9-16 years from single parent families who were patients at a child and adolescent psychiatric clinic with a control group of children of single parents who had not attended the clinic. Both parent and child were asked to complete several standardised self-report questionnaires. The children's questionnaires measured the strength of their social interactions, their sense of being valued and esteemed by others and the extent to which they felt lonely and lacked companionship. They also drew network maps to indicate the people important to them in each area of their lives. The parents completed a screening instrument for behavioural disturbances in children, the same social interaction schedule and their own network maps.

A key finding with regard to the differences between the patient group and the control group was that the former experienced greater feelings of loneliness, were more dissatisfied with their networks, had fewer friends at school, and were less close to the parent with access rights, to school friends and to female relatives. They also reported more conflict between people in their networks. The author estimate that 20 per cent of behavioural disturbances in the clinical group could be explained by the children's social networks.

5.6 Vulnerability in adulthood

As the subjects of prospective birth cohort studies in Finland and the UK have matured into adulthood, researchers have taken the opportunity to explore associations between childhood factors, including family breakdown, and long-term outcomes in adulthood. While the prospective studies in these two countries have dominated this area of research, research based upon retrospective reporting of childhood experiences in Sweden and the UK have also been undertaken.

Rodgers (1994, cited by Wadsworth and Kuh, 1997) examines adult mental health using the Present State Examination (PSE) at age 36 years and the Psychiatric Symptom Frequency Scale (PSF) at 43 years. This shows that experience of parental divorce or separation between 0-15 years was a risk for a high score of psychiatric symptoms at age 43 among those women who were themselves single, divorced or remarried. No effect for men was observed. It was concluded that vulnerability in later life as experienced by single mothers, those married more than once or those never married by age 43 years added significantly to the childhood experience of divorce and separation to increase the risk of psychiatric problems in later life.

In a later study Rodgers (1996) retrospectively collected information about the quality of parent-child relationships using a standardised instrument (the Parker Parental Bonding Instrument, PBI) to assess the quality of parent-child relationships. While the validity of the responses could not be checked directly, those who had experienced parental separation or divorce in childhood showed significantly lower maternal and paternal care scores and significantly higher paternal control scores in comparison to others. PBI scores show a low but significant correlations with adult affective symptoms assessed using the PSE at 36 years and the PSF at 43 years. Indeed, combined care and control scores show an effect on symptoms that was as great or greater than other factors of known importance, such as parental separation or divorce, leading to the conclusion that `interpersonal competence' (the ability to interactive effectively with others) was important in the continuity between childhood relationships with parents and adult mental health.

The second post-war British birth cohort study, the NCDS, has been used to examine associations between childhood patterns and a range of long-term outcomes. For example, Kiernan (1996) uses data from the study up to age 33 to examine whether outcomes in adulthood for children from single parent families differ according to whether or not the mother had worked during the child's teenage years. By this stage, attrition had reduced the original study population from 17,414 at birth to just under 11,500 at age 33. The outcomes examined covered the children's own partnership and parenting experiences in adulthood, including the timing and context of first birth and partnership breakdown.

The major differences in family formation experiences in adulthood were between women from intact families and those from single parent families (with higher rates of teenage motherhood, early cohabitation, partnership dissolution and single parenthood for the latter, although the author does not report the extent to which these are statistically significant). There were some observable differences between outcomes for women from single parent families where the mother was employed and those with non-working single mothers, with higher proportions of the latter having a teenage pregnancy or a child outside marriage. However, only with respect to the risk of teenage pregnancy were these differences statistically significant. One conclusion from the study was that having a working single mother reduced the likelihood of teenage pregnancy, which the author suggests may reflect the higher aspirations of girls who have an economically active mother as a role model. While men and women from disrupted families were more likely to have experienced partnership dissolution than those from intact families, this propensity did not differ according to whether or not the mother was employed. Also, women from the two sub-groups of single parent families (mother employed and not employed) had a similar propensity to become single parents themselves.

Hope *et al.* (1998) also uses data from the NCDS up to age 33 in order to investigate the association between parental separation and alcohol consumption and problem drinking in adulthood. The study was based on a sample of just under 10,000 subjects, with similar numbers of males and females. Analyses were conducted for those who experienced

parental divorce in childhood (up to age 16), those who experienced parental death in childhood and those whose parents divorced at a later time (between the ages of 17 and 33). At ages 23 and 33, respondents estimated their weekly consumption of alcoholic beverages, and this was quantified in terms of units of alcohol. The age 33 questionnaire included the four-item CAGE measure, designed to identify problem drinkers, which had been used in a number of clinical settings.[27] At age 23, the relationship between alcohol consumption and parental divorce was weak and inconsistent but stronger effects emerged at age 33 when higher levels of alcohol consumption, heavy drinking and problem drinking (with odds ratios between 1.29 and 1.90) were found for those who had experienced parental divorce in childhood, but not for those who had experienced parental death or later divorce. These findings were not substantially changed when socio-economic circumstances or marital status at age 33 were taken into account. The authors suggest that the emergence of risk between the ages of 23 and 33 suggested a latency effect with regard to parental separation, although occurring later than for other outcomes, such as anxiety, depression and under-achievement.

In the different context of defamilialised Finland, Sauvola *et al.* (2001) used data from the Northern Finland 1966 Birth Cohort Project, which is linked to the national death register, to study the relationship between family background and offspring mortality. As reported earlier, the original birth cohort comprised more than 12,000 individuals, representing 96 per cent of children born in Finland during 1966. This study is based upon the 11,017 individuals from the cohort who were alive and living in Finland at age 16 years. Information about death and causes of death among individuals in this sample between ages 16 and 28 was collected in a follow up study. The analysis compared mortality outcomes for children from two-parent and single parent families. Given that mental illness is a well-known risk factor for premature death, the analysis took into account validated psychiatric diagnoses for the young people. Controls for social class bias are also used.

Of the sample, 117 individuals died during the follow-up period, with the mortality rate for males three times that of females. The vast majority of deaths (79 per cent) were from unnatural causes: suicides, accidents and homicides. After adjusting for confounding variables, it was found that the risk of deaths for males from single parent families was significantly greater than for those from two-parent families. The adjusted mortality ratio varied from an odds ratio of 1.4 to 2.5 depending on the cause of death. Of all the deceased males, 32 per cent came from a single parent background, compared to 18 per cent who were alive. This difference was statistically significant. The highest risk increase associated with coming from a single parent background was in the level of suicides: 40 per cent of males who committed suicide were from a single parent background and this increased risk (an odds ratio of 2.5) remained significant after adjusting for validated psychiatric diagnosis. No significantly higher risk of mortality was observed for females from a single parent family. The

[27] CAGE is an acronym for: Cutting down, Annoyance by criticism, Guilty feeling, and Eye-openers.

authors argue for further research to explore the specific social, psychological and biological factors which influence risk of mortality among males from single parent families, and also to determine whether there is a link between mortality and timing of parental separation. They also urge mental health professionals to take more account of the need for preventative mental health care for children of single parent families, particularly boys.

Mäkikyrö *et al.* (1998) hypothesise, on the basis of reports in the literature, that children of single parents would be at increased risk of developing a psychiatric disorder in adulthood. Their own investigation seeks to analyse the association between family type and subsequent hospital-treated mental disorders among persons aged 16-28 years. This study once again used data from the North Finland Birth Cohort Project. All cohort members were identified who appeared in the Finnish Hospital Discharge Register until the end of 1994 for any psychiatric disorder and for psychotic disorders before or after the age of 16. If an individual had more than one hospitalisation, the most severe diagnosis over the period was selected. One-parent families were deemed to be of four types: where the mother was unmarried at the child's birth and remained so until s/he was 14 years old; where the mother was unmarried at the child's birth but subsequently married before the child was 14 years old; the mother, father or both had died before the child was 14 years old; and the parents were married when the child was born but divorced before the child was 14 years old. Several confounding variables were considered in the analysis: place of residence, social class, maternal age, maternal parity at the time of birth and the number of children in the family in 1980.

The incidence of treated psychiatric disorder in the whole cohort up to age 28 was 4.7 per cent for males and 2.3 per cent for females. The rates being 4.1 per cent and two per cent for males and females respectively in two-parent families and 7.2 per cent and 3.6 per cent in single parent families. The difference between the single and two-parent families is significant for both males and females. However, the incidence of schizophrenia, schizophrenia spectrum disorders and other psychoses, anxiety and other non-psychotic disorders, and female alcoholism do not vary significantly between the family types. The main differences are in a higher proportion of males with personality disorder and alcoholism from single parent families and of individuals of both sexes with depressive disorders. The findings indicate that there is an association between some single parent family types and specific disorders. Thus, parental divorce was associated with personality disorders, alcoholism and (more weakly) anxiety disorder, while parental death was associated with depression. While noting that the absolute risk to children of single parents in Finland remains small, with 94.6 per cent having no hospital-treated psychiatric disorder, the authors note that the three-to-five fold relative increase in risk is nonetheless remarkable in psychiatric research. They are not able to draw conclusions about causal links from the data but speculate that adverse events associated with single parenthood (such as parental conflict, bereavement, loss of material and psychological support) might play a role.

More recently, a psychiatric field study was undertaken as part of the 31-year follow-up survey for the North Finland Birth Cohort Project (Kantorjävi *et al*., 2008). From nearly 1,600 individuals, those with a personality disorder were identified by means of standardised screening and interviewing methods. All hospital treatment episodes for study members between 1982-1997 (ages 16-31 years) are also identified from the Finnish Hospital Discharge Register, and patient records for public outpatient care over the same period are analysed. One hundred and ten members of the cohort had at least one personality disorder. Family background information for the cohort members had been gathered at birth and at age 14. The variables used in this study included gender, social class and parental mental illness.

The main findings of the study are that a single-parent family type at birth and being an only child are both significantly associated with personality disorders in adulthood. Being born into a single parent family predicted any personality disorder, and cluster B personality disorders (antisocial, borderline, histrionic, narcissistic) in adulthood. Also, single parenthood throughout childhood was associated especially with cluster B personality disorders. Being an only child position was a risk for any personality disorder, particularly cluster A personality disorders (paranoid, schizoid, schizotypal). These associations remained significant after adjusting for parental social class and parental psychiatric disorder. The authors speculate that living in single parent families presents many problems which could influence a child's psychic development, such as moves to a new house or school, loss of friends and changes in patterns of contact. They recommend further studies to explore the psychosocial aspects of family environment that may promote vulnerability to personality disorders in adulthood. They also believe that their findings had implications for clinical practice by highlighting that the assessment of family structure is an important part of psychiatric history taking.

Using a different methodology, Lundberg (1993) seeks to explore the relationship between indicators of social and economic problems in childhood and illness and mortality in adulthood among a representative sample of 4216 Swedish citizens born between 1906 and 1951. They were interviewed in 1968 about their childhood living conditions and re-interviewed 13 years later in 1981. A follow-up of mortality for 1981-1984 was also included. The panel data about these individuals were drawn from the Swedish Level of Living Surveys. Four different illness variables were included: all physical illnesses, aches and pains in back and joints, circulatory illness and mental illness. Four indicators of adverse childhood conditions were introduced, two relating to economic circumstances (economic hardship and a large family defined as four or more children) and two reflecting social conditions (broken family and conflict in the family). The study found that adverse conditions in childhood, between birth and age 16, had a negative effect on health in adulthood and that this remained after controlling for age, sex, and class or origin. Indicators of social problems emerged as more powerful predictors of adult health than economic conditions. Coming from a broken family and experiencing family conflict were important, but the

latter had a stronger effect. These results held true when controlling for mental illness in 1968. Two possible explanations for the findings are considered. The first is the *'biological imprint hypothesis'* which suggests that the organism is changed by factors in childhood, such as poor nutrition, which have an impact on subsequent health. The second is the *'unhealthy life career hypothesis'* which sees childhood and adult ill-health as connected by a chain of unhealthy living conditions which may lead to illness or premature death in adulthood. The author believes that the results of the study support of the latter hypothesis.

The significance of family conflict in childhood is also highlighted by Gahler (1998), who analyses data relating to a sample of 4,831 adults aged 18-75 years from the 1991 Swedish Level of Living Survey, with the purpose of determining the long-term impact of parental divorce or separation on individuals' long-term psychological well-being. The dependent variable is self-reported psychological well-being using six different indicators: general tiredness, insomnia, nervous trouble, depression, mental illness and over-exertion. The main independent variable is family type in childhood (divided into intact families and families dissolved by divorce or separation). A second family variable relating to reported family conflict during childhood is also used. Nine other variables were controlled for, including economic hardship, parental social class, parental education and size of family. Although a preliminary analysis shows an increased risk of low psychological well-being among children of divorced or separated families, this is not statistically significant and the effect disappears when controls for socio-economic situation during childhood are introduced, leading the author to conclude that parental divorce or separation *per se* do not have negative long-term effects upon the individual's psychological well-being. This result applies to both males and females. The decisive factor in long-term well-being is experience of family conflict during childhood. However, this effect was greatest for children from intact families, who reported the lowest level of psychological well-being when conflict had been present, followed by those from divorced or separated families who had also experienced conflict.

5.7 Conclusions

This Chapter discusses findings on the association between family structure and health outcomes for children at several life stages between infancy and adulthood. Most of the evidence is from the UK and the Nordic countries, although studies based on data from France, Netherlands and Germany have also been discussed. A small number of comparative studies has shed light on relative outcomes in familialised and refamilialised countries in Central and Southern Europe although these countries are under-represented in studies in the English language.

Each study requires careful reading as the findings are generally subtle, complex and influenced by the research design. For single parenthood in particular, the association with material deprivation, poor housing and low levels of parental educational achievement is very strong. In many of the

studies reviewed here, a clear relationship between single parenthood and negative health outcomes for children is revealed in a preliminary analysis, only to diminish or disappear when other factors are introduced. There are also examples, however, of health disadvantages accruing to children from non-intact families even after a range of demographic and socio-economic variables have been taken into account. Even so these negative associations are often for sub-groups, such as for younger children (aged under six), teenagers, and boys, and the effects can be long term. The causal pathways that link family structure to health outcomes have yet to be precisely delineated. It is also important to recognise that any negative effects of family breakdown are relative rather than absolute and that the considerable majority of children will be unaffected.

The complexity of the relationship between the variables also makes it difficult to identify policy recommendations. Nonetheless, policy analysts have proposed a range of measures including:

- Provision of affordable child/day care in order provide a safe environment for children and help parents into paid work, which in turn may enable them to improve their earnings and hence their children's health and well-being.

- A related proposal upgrading the housing stock is seen as a route to improving children's health.

- Providing social support for single mothers, in particular for agencies to be sensitive to (sub-) groups that are most likely to be at risk of poor health outcomes as a consequence of family breakdown.

- Increased financial welfare benefits (particularly in countries where benefits are low)..

Underpinning a number of these proposals is the recognition that simply promoting employment for single parents is not on its own an adequate policy response.

6 Housing Outcomes

6.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the relationship between family breakdown and housing across the twelve EU Member States within the context of housing policies and current housing trends. The first part of the chapter discusses definitional and research issues. The second part develops the findings of the first section by examining the impact housing changes due to family breakdown can have on children. This includes the impact family breakdown can have both on the living arrangements and housing standards of children, on their future attitudes to housing and – in the case of marital breakdown - on their relationship with resident and non-resident parents. The final section looks at how housing issues arising from family breakdown fit into the different family policy typologies outlined by Hantrais (2004) (see Chapter 2) and what improvements (if any) could potentially be made.

First, however, it is necessary to look at the relationship between family and housing generally. The purpose of this is to demonstrate the influence family and familial situations can have not only on the housing circumstances of children but also on the future housing careers and approaches of young people.

It is important to note the nature of contemporary notions of 'family breakdown'. In Europe today children are more likely to lose a parent through the breakdown of the parental relationship than by death, and geographical moves are often a consequence of this as families re-form and relocate (Hawthorne *et al.*, 2003). For this reason, this chapter will focus on marital dissolution or relationship breakdown as indicative of family breakdown rather than loss of a family member through death or other means.

6.2 Housing and the EU

Housing is now recognised as one of the key dimensions of stratification in modern day Europe (Kendig, 1990; Dewilde, 2008) and as having a significant influence on individual health, well-being and life-chances. There is a long-standing recognition that good housing is necessary for social cohesion (Maclennan *et al.*, 1996) and that poor housing situations can impinge on the health and education of children (see Chapters 5 and 6). Though specific housing needs have been included in EU initiatives - for example, the provision of social housing under the European Liaison Committee for Social Housing – housing policies remain within the remit of national governments and so there is no over-arching EU housing policy. However, recent publications such as the European Charter on Housing adopted by the Urban-Housing Intergroup on 26 April 2006 (Hutchinson report) and the European Parliament Resolution on housing

and regional policy on 10 May 2007 have underlined the negative social effects of poor housing and called for the EU to adopt a European Declaration on housing (European Parliament, 2007) to address the housing needs and problems of all EU citizens.

Prior to EU expansion in 2004, Maclennan *et al* (1996) identified four common housing-related strands across the EU15 (Maclennan *et al*, 1996):

- The Netherlands, Sweden and the UK are characterised by a large degree of state intervention. These countries have the largest social rented sectors in the EU and their governments spend more than three per cent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) on housing policies.
- In Austria, Denmark, France and Germany there has been less market displacement and large private rental sectors have been retained. Public expenditure on housing policy typically lies in the range of one to two per cent of GDP.
- Ireland, Italy, Belgium, Finland and Luxembourg form a disparate group, but all have large owner occupier sectors and relatively small social rented sectors. Government expenditure on housing is usually around one per cent of GDP.
- Portugal, Spain and Greece have particularly large owner occupied sectors, minimal social rented sectors and (until recently) declining low quality private rental sectors. Government expenditure on housing policy is less than one per cent of GDP.

More recent analyses such as the Housing Statistics in the European Union 2005/06 report (see Federcasa, 2006) outline the diversity of housing policy approaches across current EU Member States. On the whole, EU Member States' housing initiatives are concerned with five key goals:

- the provision of affordable housing for people and families, particularly young and vulnerable people;
- maintaining a flexible, balanced range of tenure options which can meet their populations' housing needs;
- increasing the available good quality housing stock;
- ensuring that people and families have a choice regarding their living arrangements; and
- the promotion of owner-occupation or 'stable' tenancy arrangements.

Housing problems associated with family breakdown are an area of concern for policy makers as family breakdown is believed to worsen the housing situations and living conditions of families and children (Dewilde, 2008; Feijten, 2005). As Murphy (1990: 41) comments, *'in the housing game of snakes and ladders, marital or family breakdown is a snake.'* Family breakdown can make long-term tenures such as owner-occupation financially unsustainable and restrict the housing options of children and their parents. On the other hand, growing up in poorer housing or having difficulty financially sustaining a particular housing tenure is of course not only and not always a consequence of family breakdown. Market forces, limitations in tenure availability and social attitudes may also play a

significant role. For example, moving into poorer housing after family breakdown, and the associated problems this causes for children's well-being, is linked to imbalances in the quality of the housing stock when one form of housing consumption has been favoured at the *'expense'* of other types of tenure (Dewilde, 2008:809; and see Gurney, 1999).

Notwithstanding this, family breakdown does have an affect on families' housing options if only because it leads to an increase in the number of households as individuals leave the family home and this can limit the availability of appropriate housing if the number of dwellings does not increase at the same rate. This can in turn restrict the housing options for recently divided families as it limits the number of affordable, good quality homes available to them.

6.3 Family and housing

Konig (1976), Segalen (1981) and Forrest and Murie (1995) emphasise the importance of family networks in contemporary society. Rossi (1955) argues that household events are linked to housing events (see Smits and Mulder, 2008) and increasingly analysts have taken a form of *'whole family approach'* to the study of housing. Not only does the family bear the responsibility for obtaining housing for its members (Hill, 1971, cited in Morris and Winter, 1978) but recent country-specific investigations into the dynamics of family life suggest that housing often provides the main part of a family's resource wealth. For example, Bonvalet's evaluation of family wealth in France estimates that around 53 per cent of the average French family's resource and economic wealth lay in housing capital (Bonvalet, 1995; and see Forrest and Murie, 1995). This is also true for other EU Member States, such as the UK, where home ownership, at least until recent events in the finance markets, was increasingly seen as a form of wealth accumulation (Forrest and Murie, 1995) and Greece where housing is the main source of *'resource wealth'* for the *'income poor'* (Forrest and Murie, 1995). Recent studies of housing in the UK also demonstrate how the relationship between young people and their families can play a substantial role in their housing career pathways (Green *et al.*, 2008).

Housing is considered to encompass a bundle of characteristics that are integral to family well-being (Bratt, 2002). These include safety, stability, access to necessary resources and decent living conditions. For instance, Bratt (2002) views social success, health and well-being of families as facilitated by decent living conditions. Poor housing can contribute to problems such as social exclusion and is closely associated with limitations in the economic and educational prospects of children and young people. This is discussed further below.

6.4 Research on housing outcomes

Given the complexities of the European housing market, a number of issues arise regarding existing definitions and level of disaggregation employed by analysts.

Measuring households and measuring families are two very different processes and statistical analyses reflect this. For example, although analyses of two-home situations based on the *Enquête sur les resources et les conditions de vie* – the French edition of the EU Survey on Income and Living conditions (see, for example, Eurostat, 2007) – suggest that data regarding multi-residence may be indicative of children of separated parents sharing their time between both parents' homes, this evidence may be subject to omissions (Toulemon, 2008). Toulemon's study highlights that although multi-residence is linked to specific family situations – and changes therein – some of these situations are temporary or ambiguous. Fundamentally, this could imply that while two-home situations could be indicative of family breakdown or separation, they could equally be indicative of situations such as where young people (for example, university students) are registered both as having '*left the nest'* and as living in the parental home, or what has been called Living Apart Together (LAT) where some couples live in different houses but are still together (Billari *et al.*, 2007; Levin, 2004). In addition, using measurements of households as indicative of family dynamics (that is, whether separated or together) is imprecise post-family breakdown as couples occasionally continue to reside in the same house after the relationship has ended either for financial reasons or to be nearer their children (Gram-Hanssen and Bech-Danielsen, 2008) - or the marital home may still be used as a primary address during the transition to different accommodation (Feijten, 2005).

Moreover, housing policy does not discuss 'families' but 'households'. Although housing policy does mention the needs of certain types of family nuclei, for example, single parent families are dealt with in housing commentaries and analyses, as it stands, official Member States' policies focus on meeting the housing needs of households, regardless of their specific characteristics.

The complexity of housing pathways and the impact that problems, such as disparities within housing provision or restricted tenure options, can have on the housing situations of parents and children after family breakdown are important. Furthermore, some housing theorists argue that there is a close link between features of a housing system and societal characteristics (Somerville, 2005). For example, Lauster (2005) locates the decline in 'family household formation' in Sweden and the relative rise in non family or single-person households in the changing social attitudes of young people entering the housing market,. While Dewilde (2008) sees growing up in poorer quality housing as a consequence of family breakdown. However, identifying a drop in

housing quality as implicit in the process of family breakdown fails to pay sufficient attention to the wide range of supplementary factors that may also influence the relationship between family breakdown and housing situations. As Somerville (2000; 2005) argues:

> '*[S]uch relationships are inevitable historically and geographically specific, and are mediated by many important economic, social and cultural variables, such as housing form (e.g. houses or flats), housing affordability (relative costs of renting and buying), housing location (e.g. inner city or suburbs), and cultural bias (e.g. towards owner-occupation). The relationship itself may even be accidental rather than causal.'*
>
> Somerville (2005: 88).

6.5 Family breakdown, children and housing and living arrangements

Separating may entail new housing needs and relocation. Separating may mean that some have to find new housing that meets the needs of the new situation and that others will stay in the matrimonial home (Gram-Hassen and Bech-Danielsen, 2008: 507). From a housing perspective, family breakdown influences children and families in three main ways – economically, practically and emotionally.

6.5.1 Economic effects

One of the main economic effects of family breakdown is a loss in income entering the home which can significantly alter the standard of living post-family breakdown. Housing costs are a significant issue for European households and are one of the primary financial burdens for families in many EU countries, particularly Southern EU Member States. Changes in household income due to family breakdown could exacerbate this problem. In Spain and Greece for example, housing is cited as a financial burden by 83.6 and 67.1 per cent of households respectively (Eurostat, 2008). Housing costs are also a major concern in countries where owner-occupation is the preferred tenure. For instance, in Ireland, where an estimated 82 per cent of households are owner-occupiers (Housing Statistics in EU, 2004), only 38.2 per cent of households say that housing costs are not a financial burden (Eurostat, 2008) compared with 48.4 per cent who regard housing as a financial burden and 13.4 per cent who regard it as a *heavy* financial burden (*ibid*). Tables 6.1 to 6.3 show that households' perception of housing costs as a financial burden increased during the late-1990s. These data are only available between 1994 and 2001 and therefore do not include more recent accession states such as Malta and the Czech Republic of our case study countries. Despite this, they give a good indication of how European households view housing costs. Considered in the light of Hantrais' typology, the figures also indicate that countries in the defamilialised category are significantly less likely to perceive housing costs as a financial burden. For example while 64.1 per cent of Denmark's households (defamilialised)

do not perceive housing costs as a financial burden, only 16.5 per cent of Spanish households (familialised) feel the same way.

6.5.2 Practical effects

Although also dependent on a range of factors such as availability and affordability, family breakdown can restrict the housing choices or pathways of both children and families. This could influence the future housing careers of young people, their attitudes to housing and the age at which children leave home (Iacovou, 2001). Analyses of tenure choices indicate that family breakdown can play an important role in the movement of families between tenures (Feijten, 2005), in particular it is one of the primary causes of moves from owner-occupation into the public and private rented sectors (Murphy, 1990; Bonvalet and Lelievre, 1991, 1997; Helderman, 2007; Dewilde, 2008). Helderman's (2007:244) study of the Netherlands found that moves for union dissolution reasons lead considerably more often to moves to rented homes than moves for other motives. This is due to a combination of reduced income, diminished household size and, in some cases, the need to move quickly due to domestic violence or intense household conflict.

Table 6.1: Share of households with no financial burden due to housing costs (percentage)

	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Denmark	68.2	69.9	68.2	67.7	67.6	67.6	63.6	64.1
Finland	-	-	47.7	49.2	53.9	53.3	54.2	55.7
France	50.8	52.1	50.3	54	51.4	51.8	54.3	57.5
Netherlands	68.6	69.2	68.7	70.9	74.1	76.3	77	76.2
Germany	42.5	42.3	42.8	40.2	41.8	41.9	41.6	41
Ireland	27.7	27	26.6	28.6	33.4	34.7	36.9	38.2
UK	90.4	91.6	92.9	92.8	93.5	94.4	93.7	95.1
Spain	13.6	14.3	14.5	15.1	14	16.4	18.5	16.5
Greece	36.1	44.7	45	45.7	35.5	40.5	41.1	34

Source: Eurostat

Table 6.2 Share of households with financial burden due to housing costs (percentage)

	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Denmark	24	23.9	24.6	26.3	26.1	26	29	28.5
Finland	-	-	35.7	35.1	33	35.8	35.4	33
France	30.7	30.1	31.1	28.5	30.8	29.9	29.4	27.9
Netherlands	26.5	25.6	26	24.2	22.7	20.1	19.9	20.7
Germany	43.3	42.1	42.2	44.7	43	43.5	42.7	44.7
Ireland	47.4	51.5	51.4	53.5	51.4	49.1	49	48.4
UK	-	41.4	40	-	-	-	-	-
Spain	48.5	49.3	52.8	53.4	56.6	57.1	56.4	57.4
Greece	32.9	30.7	31.8	34.2	41.8	39.3	41.8	47.7

Source: Eurostat

Table 6.3: Share of households with heavy financial burden due to housing costs (percentage)

	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Denmark	7.8	6.3	7.3	6	6.3	6.4	7.4	7.4
Finland	-	-	16.6	15.8	13.1	10.9	10.4	11.3
France	18.5	17.8	18.6	17.5	17.7	18.3	16.3	14.6
Netherlands	4.9	5.1	5.4	5	3.2	3.6	3	3.1
Germany	14.2	15.6	15	15.1	15.3	14.6	15.7	14.2
Ireland	24.8	21.4	22	17.9	15.2	16.2	14.1	13.4
UK	9.6	8.4	7.1	7.2	6.5	5.6	6.3	4.9
Spain	37.9	36.4	32.7	31.5	29.4	26.5	25.1	26.2
Greece	31	24.6	23.2	20.2	22.8	20.1	17	18.4

Source: Eurostat

The financial strain of housing costs is most likely to become unmanageable post-family breakdown for the less well-off. Research suggests that the housing options of low-income individuals after marital dissolution or family breakdown are much more limited than the options of middle- or high-income individuals. People with low incomes are significantly more likely to *'sofa-surf'* with relatives and friends or return to the parental home (Dewilde, 2008; Sullivan, 1986) (a situation also known as 'hidden homelessness'). Shortfalls in household income after family breakdown may force families in to poor quality or inappropriate housing. Currently, 'poor quality' is defined by the EC (2007) as a dwelling for one or more persons which lacks basic amenities such as toilets, baths/showers and central heating - though it is questionable whether this definition is sufficient for families with children. In addition to standard housing requirements, children and young people have specific resource requirements such as access to schools and day care facilities and safe areas to play. Without access to these resources, not only the educational prospects but the life prospects of children could be severely restricted often leaving them social excluded and isolated (see Chapters 3 and 4).

As the European Parliament Directorate General for Research noted in 1996, housing policy needs to work in tandem with policies targeting health and education (Maclennan *et al*., 1996) and research suggests that both stepfamilies and single parent families tend to live in areas with fewer community resources, including schools with higher drop-out rates (Rodger and Pryor, 1998; Wade and Smart, 2002; Weithoft, Hjern and Rosen, 2004).

Although it is important not to treat the consequences of growing up in a single parent family as synonymous with the consequences of family breakdown findings such as these help to underline the important role family characteristics and living arrangements can play in the development and long-term prospects of children.

Access to appropriate short-term supported housing after family breakdown is important to separated families. Research suggests that in the immediate aftermath of family breakdown, many parents and children return to the parental home or stay with relatives or friends (Dewilde, 2008), sometimes for considerable periods of time. Without proper immediate and long-term support, this can push families with acute resource problems after family breakdown into a cycle of unstable, temporary housing situations. Previous research has found that, particularly among women, family breakdown is closely connected with homelessness and marital breakdown is a key stage on the *'Homelessness Journeys'* framework produced by Reeve *et al.* (2006) for the UK charity CRISIS. Based on empirical evidence, this framework illustrates how homelessness or 'hidden homelessness' among mothers and their children was often prolonged by lack of immediate, 'emergency' housing options after the family unit had broken down. Overall, a significant consequence of family breakdown for children is an increased likelihood of growing up in families with lower incomes and poorer housing or of entering into a

cycle of homelessness or 'hidden homelessness', especially in families headed by single mothers (Rodgers and Pryor, 1998; Reeve *et al.*, 2006).

These UK findings are similar to the results of studies into the affect of marital dissolution in the Netherlands where one of the most likely destinations for people who had to move out of the marital home due to family breakdown was staying with family or friends (Feijten, 2005; Gram-Hanssen and Bech-Danielsen, 2008). Family breakdown can often force people to change their housing situation immediately, notwithstanding the costs or benefits of their housing choice. One study of previously cohabitating separated couples in Denmark (Gram-Hanssen and Bech-Danielsen, 2008) found that there was a tendency to move into a series of temporary, poorer quality housing situations in the aftermath of family breakdown due to the interface of a decline in resources and the immediate need for new accommodation with market forces, national housing policies and trends. The authors suggest that one way of preventing parents and children from entering into this cycle of poor living arrangements could be to increase expenditure on social or public housing, particularly short-term supported housing.

Coupled with alterations to living standards and resources, family breakdown could exert an influence over the long-term housing attitudes of children and families. As has been already noted, the circumstances within the parental home can shape children and young people's views on housing career moves, such as the decision to leave the parental home (De Jong Gierveld et al, 1991; Goldscheider and DaVanzo, 1989; Goldscheider and Goldscheider, 1998; Murphy and Wang, 1998; Billari and Liefbroder, 2007), and preference of housing tenure. The effects of changes in family living situations - now most commonly caused by family breakdown through marital dissolution or parental separation – can have negative consequences for some children well beyond the time of change, with these sometimes persisting into adulthood (Hawthorne *et al.*, 2003). Research shows (Kiernan, 1992; Cherlin *et al*., 1995) that young people who have experienced family breakdown tend to leave the parental home earlier than other young people. For example, Kiernan (1992) uses the UK National Child Development Study data up to age 23 to compare patterns of leaving home, partnership formation and childbearing in early adulthood. The results show that young women who had experienced the breakdown of their parents' marriage and who were living with a single parent or step-parent at age 16 are significantly more likely to have left home by age 18 than their peers from intact families. This association is not altered by the introduction of background controls (social class at birth and non-verbal ability score at age 11). They were also more likely to have left because of family friction, although this effect was reduced by background controls, remaining significant only for women from stepfamilies and for the very small number who had lived with a widowed single father. Other key findings in relation to young women were that they were more likely to have formed a partnership in their teens, to have had a child before the age of 20 and/or to have had an extra-marital birth. For example, the odds of cohabitation in the teenage years were three times as high for this group as for girls from intact families. These associations are not altered by the introduction of background controls.

In contrast, those who were living in a one-parent family following the death of a parent differed little from their peers from two-parent families.

Some differences were observed in the transitional behaviour of young men. For example, while those who had lived in stepfamilies were more likely to have left home by age 18 than those from intact families, sons of single mothers did not show this propensity and were indeed no more likely to have left home at this age than those living with both natural parents. Family friction was an important factor leading to early home leaving for boys from stepfamilies and single father families, with odds of between three and six times higher than those from intact families. The relationship between family disruption in childhood and adolescence and their own experiences of partnership and family formation were weaker for men but still important. As for women, there was no significant association between having lost a parent through death and youthful partnership formation. However, there was a strong association for those who had experienced the breakdown of their parents' marriage, with an increased risk for young men from stepfamilies of forming partnerships in their teens and becoming fathers before the age of 20.

Cherlin *et al.* (1995) also uses NCDS data up to age 23 to explore demographic outcomes for young adults in the UK, comparing individuals who had experienced parental divorce with those who had grown up with two parents. The authors are particularly concerned to determine whether different outcomes were directly related to divorce or whether they reflected problems that had arisen in the family prior to divorce, and/or characteristics of the child or family. The prospective design of the NCDS enabled them to control for pre-disruption characteristics and to examine in some detail the magnitude of the effect of divorce. They also examine the long-term effects of a child's degree of emotional problems at age seven on his or her demographic outcomes in young adulthood and briefly discussed two extensions of these analyses: cohabitation and non-marital childbearing considered as joint outcomes, and the effects of the timing of the parental divorce. The survey design provided a great deal of information about the children at age seven, enabling the authors to assemble a range of emotional, cognitive and socio-economic indicators. Two indicators of marital disruption were used: whether the child had experienced parental divorce/separation between the ages of seven and 16 years (175 boys and 208 girls in the age seven subsample experienced these events and were interviewed at age 23); and, second, whether a parent died during this period (182 boys and 185 girls were included).

The findings show that parental divorce did not make a young person significantly less likely to marry by age 23 or to have a child by that age; in other words, it did not appear to undermine individuals' desire to enter into long-term commitments. At the same time, however, parental divorce did seem more likely to stimulate a pattern of behaviour characterised by early home leaving due to conflict with parents and step-parents. For both women and men, the odds of leaving home because of friction versus not leaving home were five times greater for those whose parents divorced. In comparison, a parental divorce increased, by about half, the odds of leaving home for other reasons (such as getting married

or taking a job) versus not leaving home. Leaving home because of friction was in turn associated with earlier sexual activity outside marriage, leading in this cohort to a greater likelihood of premarital birth and cohabitation by age 23. Parental death, in contrast, had a substantially weaker effect on leaving home because of familial friction, on premarital cohabitation, and on premarital birth.

The authors also find that the introduction of pre-disruption characteristics into the analysis (behaviour problems, achievement levels, and family difficulties that were already present at age seven) does not significantly weaken the long-term effects of divorce on demographic behaviour at age 23. This finding conflicted with the results of an earlier study based on the same cohort between the ages of seven and 11 which had indicated a reduction in adverse effects over that interval (Cherlin *et al.* 1991), leading the authors of this later investigation to speculate that divorce may have different consequences during middle childhood and early adolescence than during young adulthood.

6.5.3 Emotional effects

Housing arrangements following family breakdown can impact on children's emotional relationship with their parents. This includes the emotional effects of changes in living arrangements and alterations in the relationship between parents and children, specifically with regard to issues of custody, access and the departure of one or both parents from the family home. In their review of UK interventions and policies supporting children of divorcing parents, Hawthorne *et al.* (2003) found that the change in housing situations and the movement out of the family home could have a negative effect on children's well-being and their interactions with their parents.

Managing alterations in living arrangements is important for deflecting some of the emotional problems that family breakdown can cause for children. One of the key findings of Hawthorne *et al.*'s (2003) study is that there was a noticeable link between the amount that everyday family life changed after family breakdown and the intensity of the negative emotional effects of family breakdown for children. In saying this, the report also went to some lengths to stress that changes in living arrangements did not always damage the emotional well-being of the child. Overall the research finds that, while changes in living arrangements after family breakdown may not be a direct cause of childhood trauma, without taking the views and emotional needs of children into account, these changes could have harmful repercussions for childhood well-being. Investigations into children's perspectives of family breakdown due to marital dissolution indicate that the event can cause distress, sadness, anger and self-blame among some young people (Dunn et al, 2001; Mitchell, 1985; Pritchard, 1998; Hawthorne *et al.*, 2003), feelings which can be compounded by the loss of day-to-day contact with non-resident parents. In a cohort of children in the UK who had experienced parental separation and family breakdown, those children who retained good contact with both parents felt they had coped well, in comparison with those who did not (Walczak and Burns, 1984). The UK-based Avon Longitudinal Study of Parents and Children also found that

children either expressed positive or no negative feelings towards *'dual citizenship'* or spending equal amounts of time with both parents (Hawthorne *et al.*, 2003).

However, research has also highlighted that this relationship was equally influenced by the amount or level of conflict between parents (either before or after family breakdown) and the effects of changes in the level of contact, particularly between fathers and children. Again, the effect of changing housing situations, parental contact and children's well-being is a complex one. While fathers' involvement is linked to positive outcomes the actual amounts of time spent with each parent seem not to be so important as the quality of the relationship (Amato and Gilbreth, 1999; Hawthorne *et al*., 2003). This could suggest that divided living arrangements between parents may not always be an accurate indicator of *'positive'* parent-child relations. In other words, in terms of children's emotional well-being after marital dissolution or family breakdown, changes in living arrangements or contact do not necessarily have a negative effect if the changeover is properly managed and mediated.

Similar conclusions were reached by a study of the well-being of children in Dutch secondary schools (Dronkers, 1999). An empirical study comparing the well-being of Dutch youth with a sample of over 9,000 secondary school pupils[28] found that conflict between parents had a significantly greater impact on children's well-being than residential contact with parents. In fact, the research suggests that the well-being of pupils living in single-mother families is higher than that of pupils living in two-parent families with a high level of parental conflict (Dronkers, 1999: 195). Like the Hawthorne *et al.* (2003) study, Dronkers' analysis underlines that although contact with the departed parent (usually the father) was important for children's well-being, the amount of contact had less of an impact than the degree of conflict between parents.

This report suggests that a potential way of preventing some of the more extreme negative emotional effects of a change in living circumstances would be to involve children and young people in the process of negotiating new living arrangements. In saying this, the study stresses that, as yet, no evidence has been found that suggests allowing children the *final* say on their post-family breakdown living arrangements is more beneficial to their emotional well-being than allowing them make some input. However, overall the findings of this study appear to indicate that, in order to off-set some of the more serious emotional damage enforced changes in children's living arrangements due to marital or family breakdown can cause, the transition needs to be properly managed and mediated. To this end, it is important that parental conflict is kept to a minimum and that the views of children involved are taken into consideration.

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[28] This sample excluded children under 14 as the researchers *'were not sure pupils of that young age would underestimate the degree of parental conflict (there are indications that these pupils underestimate parental conflicts)'* (Dronkers, 1999: 200)

The impact of changes in the living arrangements of parents – that is, from residential to non-residential – have on children also needs to be taken into account when negotiating the living arrangements and housing situations of children post-family breakdown. Loss of contact or decline in the quality of contact with non-residential parents can have significant effect on children's emotional reactions to family breakdown or union dissolution. Evidence from Hawthorne *et al.*'s study (2003) implies that children who experience marital breakdown often demonstrate a sense of *'losing a parent'* and this can magnify the emotional stress union dissolution places on them. In spite of this, the study also went to some lengths to highlight that parental residency in the family home was not as important as the quality of the contact time between parents and children – residential or non-residential. Again, this suggests that managing the transition from one set of living arrangements to another during family breakdown effectively is essential to mitigate the more extreme negative consequences for children.

6.6 Family breakdown, housing and family policy

This section examines the types of housing issues present within the EU Member States selected for this evaluation and identifies potential policy changes to alleviate some of the housing problems faced by children after family breakdown.

As the 1996 report (Maclennan *et al.*, 1996) notes, Member States' approaches to housing policy differ sharply. For example, while Hungary lists support for young families with children to buy their own homes, the Netherlands provides no housing aid to families (Norris and Shiels, 2004). These differences are also reflected in Member States' attitudes to housing provision and stock. While some EU Member States such as Greece, Spain and Malta are explicit in their support for homeownership over other tenures, others such as Finland state the aim of housing policy is to:

> *'Ensure a socially and regionally balanced and stable housing market, to eliminate homelessness, to improve the quality of housing, to ensure that housing is available at reasonable cost and to make it easier for people and families to find housing that corresponds to their current housing needs.'*
>
> (cited in Federcasa, 2006: 98)

The Finnish government's approach mirrors that of countries such as Ireland whose housing policy statement outlines that:

> *'The aim is to enable all households to have available an affordable dwelling of good quality suited to their needs, in a good environment and, as far as possible, at the tenure of their choice.'*
>
> Federcasa (2006: 98)

Housing policies have a considerable impact on the lives of children and families who have experienced family breakdown. Having a needs-based system and a universal housing quality standard could prevent some of the more extreme consequences of family breakdown for the living conditions and housing prospects of parents and children. As French housing policy states:

> *Housing policy [in France] is predicted on the assumption, in order for each person to be housed according to his/her wishes, action must be taken on each link in the housing chain.'*
>
> Federcasa (2006: 98)

Table 6.4 Occupied dwelling stock by tenure (percentage), 2003

Hantrais' Typology	Countries	Owner-occupation	Rented	Other (including co-operatives)
Defamilialised	Denmark	53	40	7
	Finland	63	34	3
	Sweden	46	39	15
	France	56	38	6
Partially defamilialised	Netherlands	55	45	0
	Germany	45	55	0
	Ireland	82	18	n/a
	UK	69	31	0
Familialised	Spain	82	11	7
	Malta	70	26	4
Refamilialised	Czech Republic*	47	29	24

Source: Housing Statistics in the EU, 2004
Notes: * 2000 data – 2003 figures not available

One way of ensuring that this aim is achieved, and that already disadvantaged parents and children who experience family breakdown do not fall into a similar cycle of poor living arrangements, could be to increase public expenditure on social or public housing, particularly short-term supported housing (Reeve *et al.*, 2006; Gram-Hanssen and Bech-Danielsen, 2008).

In this important respect Member States' policies appear to follow similar lines to Hantrais' model with countries in the defamilialised and partially defamilialised categories having higher rates of public expenditure on social housing provision than countries in the familialised and

refamilialised categories. For example, in France and Finland (defamilialised) where there are explicit, institutionalised and government funded family policies, over four per cent of state budget expenditure is directed towards subsidising social housing whereas in countries such as Greece and Malta (familialised) where family policy is less developed and coordinated, total public expenditure on subsidising social housing amounts to less than 0.02 per cent. The exceptions are the Czech Republic and Spain but this could partly be due to the high proportion of the population who view housing costs as burdensome (Table 6.5 and Figures 6.1 to 6.4).

As Figures 6.1 to 6.4 demonstrate, public housing subsidies as a percentage of total public expenditure, state budget expenditure and GDP vary widely across the selected twelve Member States ranging from zero per cent of both state budget expenditure and GDP in Malta to 4.45 per cent of state budget expenditure and 1.63 per cent of GDP in France (Federcasa, 2006). The level, or low level, of public expenditure on social housing is particularly an issue in countries where housing costs are a specific concern for their populations. This includes Spain, where less than one per cent of GDP is spent on social housing (Federcasa, 2006) despite 26.4 per cent of the population viewing housing costs as a heavy financial burden (Eurostat, 2007). In the light of both the European Parliament's 1996 suggestions for improvements in EU Member States' housing policies and the need for affordable housing post-family breakdown, these figures could imply that future EU policy initiatives need to focus on increasing social housing investment.

There is a close relationship between the housing policy in the twelve selected countries and their housing tenure. Indeed many housing policies explicitly refer to the importance of ensuring the availability of a tenure-balanced, good quality housing stock. As was noted earlier in this chapter, some of the housing problems experienced by children and parents post-family breakdown relate to the stress of moving from one tenure to another. A country which promotes one type of tenure – for example owner-occupation - at the expense of others (Gurney, 1999) could limit the housing options of these families and push them in to much poorer living conditions. An effective way of preventing this would be to maintain a balanced, flexible stock of good quality housing. An example of this is the housing policy of Sweden:

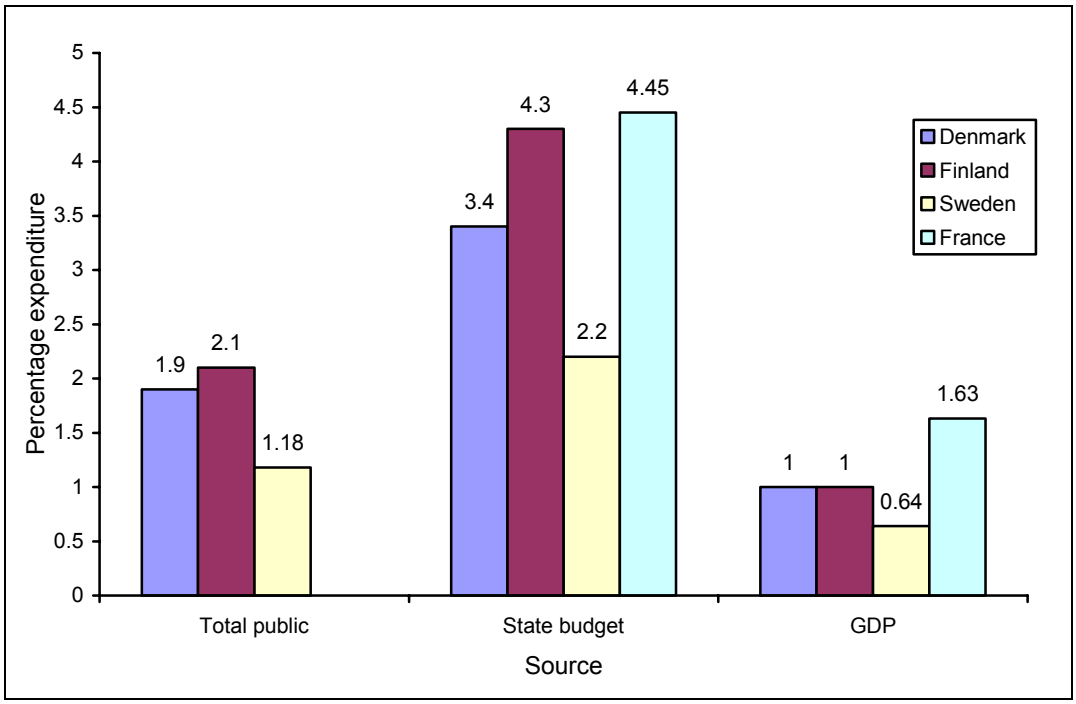
> *'The objective of housing policy is to give everyone the opportunity to live in good housing at reasonable cost and in stimulating a secure environment within sustainable frameworks. The housing environment and built environment must help ensure equal and dignified living conditions and must, in particular, promote good conditions for children and young people. Planning, construction and management must be based on ecologically, economically and socially sustainable development.'*
>
> Federcasa (2006: 99)

Table 6.5: Public housing subsidies expenditure (percentage)

Hantrais category	Country	Total public expenditure	State budget expenditure	GDP
Defamilialised	Denmark	1.90	3.40	1.00
	Finland	2.10	4.30	1.00
	Sweden	1.18	2.20	0.64
	France	n/a	4.45	1.63
Partially defamilialised	Netherlands	n/a	3.00	0.60
	Germany	0.59	2.41	0.28
	Ireland	0.20	0.22	0.10
	UK	n/a	n/a	n/a
Familialised	Greece	0.01	0.01	0.01
	Spain	n/a	2.83	0.81
	Malta	0.01	0.00	0.00
Refamilialised	Czech Republic	1.90	2.80	0.90

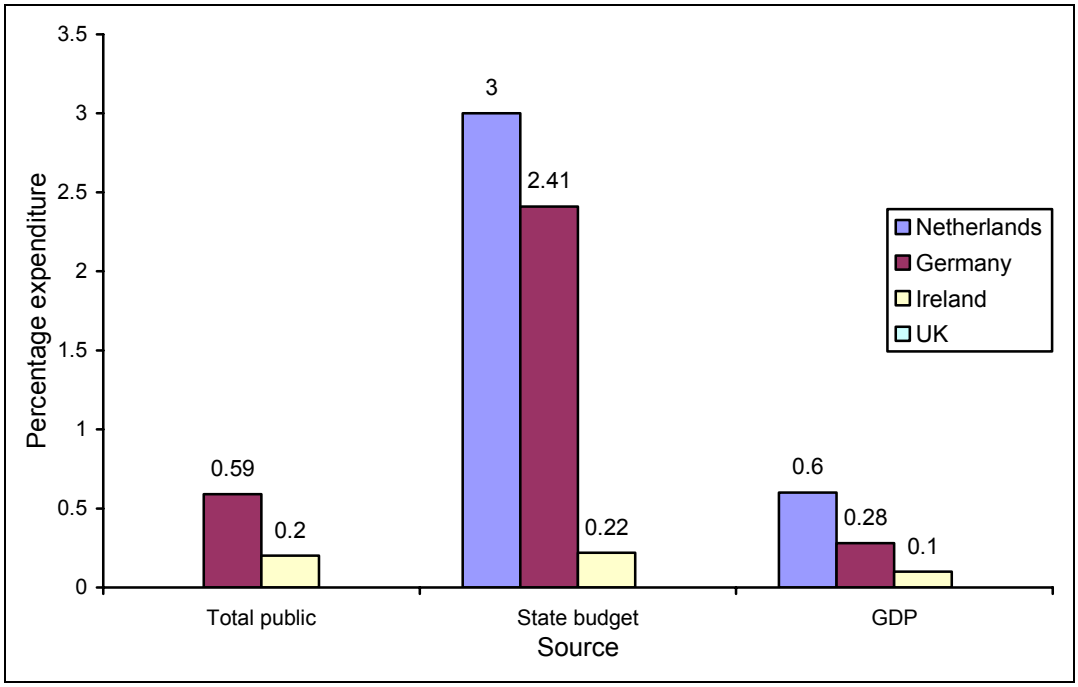
Source: Housing Statistics in the EU 2004/05, Federcasa, 2006; Ministries Responsible for Housing
Notes: Data from 2003 is used for Denmark; data are not available for the UK; and only total public expenditure data are presented for Germany.

Figure 6.1: Public housing subsidies expenditure - Defamilialised countries (percentage)



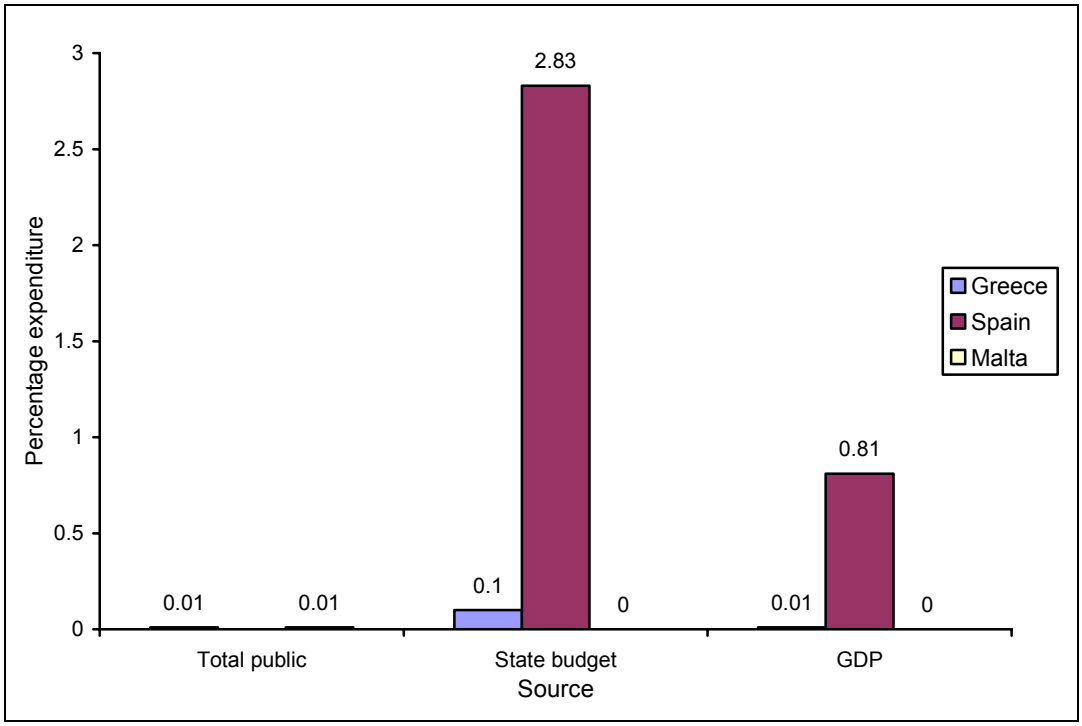
Source: Housing Statistics in the EU 2004/05, Federcasa, 2006; Ministries Responsible for Housing

Figure 6.2: Public housing subsidies expenditure - Partially defamilialised countries (percentage)



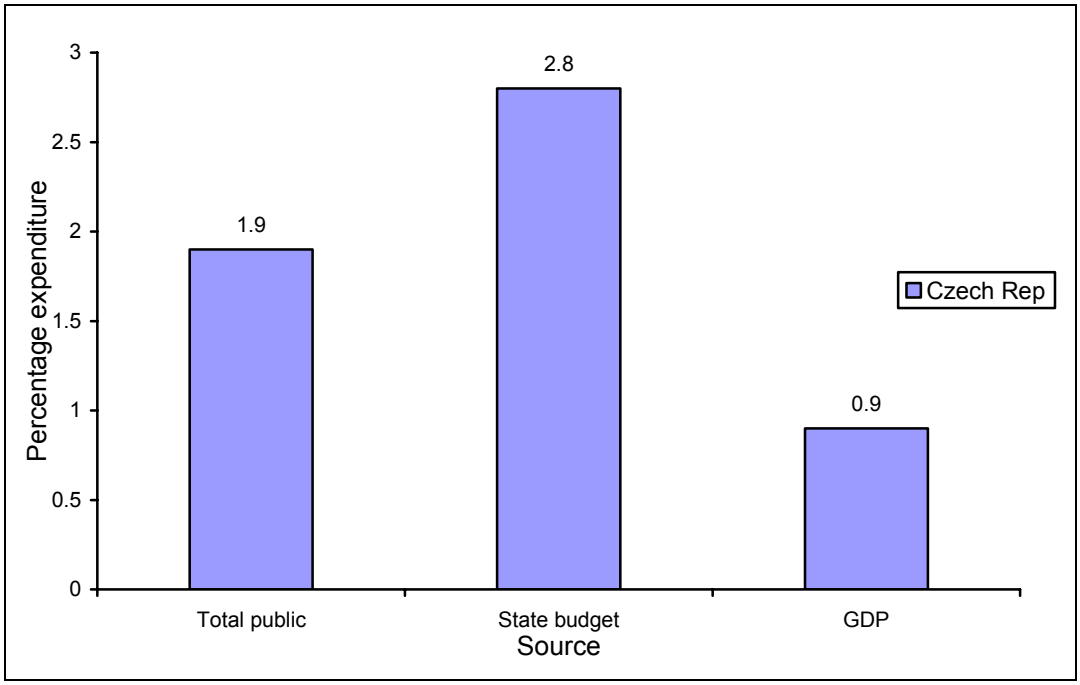
Source: Housing Statistics in the EU 2004/05, Federcasa, 2006; Ministries Responsible for Housing

Figure 6.3: Public housing subsidies expenditure - Familialised countries (percentage)



Source: Housing Statistics in the EU 2004/05, Federcasa, 2006; Ministries Responsible for Housing

Figure 6.4: Public housing subsidies expenditure - Refamilialised countries (percentage)



Source: Housing Statistics in the EU 2004/05, Federcasa, 2006; Ministries Responsible for Housing

6.7 Conclusions

The issues covered in this chapter suggest that family breakdown and dissolution can have substantial, long-lasting repercussions for the housing situations and living arrangements of children and young people. A drop in household income, market pressures and the lack of affordable housing can push post-breakdown households into poor quality or inappropriate housing. Without proper mediation, these changes in living arrangements can compound the emotional stress family breakdown can have on children and young people. Overall, in order to mitigate the damaging effect of family breakdown on the housing situations of children, it is important that EU Member States ensure that their housing policies are able to provide support for these families at every stage of their transition in living arrangements. In particular, Member State's policies needs to address the housing needs of these families both in terms of welfare resources and services, and affordable, good-quality tenure choices.

In addition, this review suggests that there is scope for countries to better align their family and housing policies as greater progress in tackling poor child outcomes is likely to be achieved if housing policy is more closely integrated with family policy.

7 Conclusions

7.1 Demographic change

This study has discussed literature published in the English language on the impact of family breakdown on outcomes for children's poverty and social exclusion, education, health and housing. Hantrais' (2004) typology of family policy provides a conceptual framework for the review.

Chapter 2 shows that the European Union (EU) has undergone substantial changes in regards to family structure, formation and dissolution and fertility rates. The chapter highlights the well documented decline in marriage in most EU countries, with the EU15 experiencing a fall in the average number of marriages per 1,000 population by nearly 34 per cent between 1960 and 2000 (Hantrais, 2004:51). In the defamilialised and partially defamilialised countries cohabitation has replaced marriage as the marker of first partnership (Kiernan, 1999). As a result the proportion of births outside marriage across Europe has been rising steeply since 1980 (Hantrais, 2004:56). Total divorce rates either increased or remained the same across Europe with nearly one divorce for every marriage in 2005 and 2006. More divorce leads to more repartnering which in turn can lead to more complex family living arrangements.

These changes have been taking place alongside other profound social changes across EU Member States which include changes to the gender balance of work and the decline of the male breadwinner model, increasingly 'flexible' labour markets, ageing populations consequent upon improved healthcare and living standards, and declining fertility in many countries. These demographic trends are in turn causing further social and economic changes, for example, longer life expectancy and population ageing may provoke changes in attitudes towards multigenerational living, and destabilise the contract between generations. All these changes impact on the well-being of children.

7.1.1 Impact of demographic change on outcomes for children

Chapter 3 shows that households with children are generally at greater risk of poverty than the population as a whole. In 2000, it was estimated that 12 per cent of children in the EU25 were living below the poverty line and had been for at least two of the three preceding years, compared to nine per cent of the overall EU25 population. Only four of the case study countries had child poverty rates lower than those of the total population: defamilialised Denmark, Finland and France; and partially defamilialised Germany. Denmark and Finland also had the lowest rates of persistent poverty for children. All of the defamilialised and partially defamilialised countries had low child poverty risks, with 15 per cent or less of its child population living below the poverty line. The only exception was the UK (partially defamilialised) which had one of the highest at-risk-of-poverty rates for children, with 24 per cent of children living below the poverty threshold; and the highest rate of persistent poverty for children at 19

per cent. Alongside the UK, the highest rates were among the familialised and refamilialised countries, with roughly a quarter of all children at-risk-of-poverty in Poland and Spain.

Chapters 3 – 6 show that children in single parent families and in stepfamilies tend to shave poorer outcomes with higher poverty rates, poorer health and housing and educational outcomes than those growing up with both biological parents. The vulnerability to poverty of single parent households is demonstrated by at-risk-of-poverty rates for 2006. Thirty-two per cent of single parent households in the EU25 were living below the poverty threshold compared to 17 per cent of all households with dependent children. The lowest poverty risks were among the defamilialised countries which all had poverty rates at or below the EU25 average. The partially defamilialised countries were also at or below the average, with the exception of the UK which had 41 per cent of single parent households living below the poverty line. The only other country to have such a high poverty risk was the Czech Republic, which also had a rate of 41 per cent. The familialised and refamilialised countries generally had rates above the average with the exception of Poland, which was at the average, and Greece, which was just below the average (30 per cent).

The study shows that increased risks of poverty among children in single parent families is reinforced by disadvantage at school and poorer health and housing outcomes. Chapter 4 shows that, while findings are sensitive to methodology (see section 7.1.2 below) children from non-intact families are more likely than those living with both their parents to be exposed to risks which represent barriers to educational achievement. These risks are associated with restricted access to resources and opportunities caused by low income and poor access to employment which may be compounded by stress and anxiety or by working arrangements that fail to take account of the additional need for flexibility when supporting and raising children alone. Educational outcomes are of particular concern as they are crucial to the future life-prospects of children and young people.

Chapter 5 shows a relationship between single parenthood and negative health outcomes for children although, once again, these findings are sensitive to methodology. Nevertheless, there is evidence of health disadvantages for children from non-intact families, although any negative effects of family breakdown on children's health are relative rather than absolute and that a large majority of children will be unaffected.

Chapter 6 suggests that family breakdown can have substantial, long-lasting adverse repercussions for the housing situations and living arrangements of children of single parent families. A fall in household income, market pressures and the lack of affordable housing can push post-breakdown households into poor quality or inappropriate housing. Without effective mediation, these changes in living arrangements can compound the emotional stress family breakdown can have on children and young people.

The demographic indicators highlighted in Chapter 2 demonstrate, on the one hand, the diversity in patterns of family structure, formation and dissolution in the different EU member countries, and on the other that family forms are changing across the whole of Europe; family breakdown is increasing across the

EU with the largest increases in divorce being reported in the refamilialised and familialised countries: Poland, Slovakia and Spain reported increases of 200 per cent and Cyprus 100 per cent. Thus while divorce rates were still small in these countries, the prevalence of divorce was increasing rapidly. As divorce becomes more common in the familialised and refamilialised countries more (re-) marriages involve divorced persons, with a consequent increase in stepfamilies (Hantrais, 2004:61). At the same time, the distribution of households with three or more adults and dependent children decreased between 1996 and 2006, marking a general decrease in household size across the EU. While these trends are more advanced in the defamilialised and partially defamilialised countries the evidence suggests that the familialised countries are on a similar course, and while this trend has reversed in the refamilialised countries as the social mechanisms of the Communist era have ben dismantled and replaced by market oriented approaches this may be the result of specific and perhaps relatively short term historical factors.

These variations highlight the importance of the need for a flexible policy response to protect the interests of children in new family forms. The outcome measures reported in chapters 3 – 6 suggest that the policies in place in the defamilialised countries are already well- adjusted to meeting the needs of these 'new' family forms and highlight the importance, if reduction of child poverty and equal opportunities for children from all types of families is the aim of policy makers, of putting in place in countries across the EU a policy framework that provides single parents with a 'work life' balance, decent family income, and support services delivered by professionals and agencies sensitive to the risk of poorer outcomes for children due to family breakdown.

7.1.2 Research issues and gaps

The review of the literature on education and health highlights that the findings are sensitive to the methodology employed. For example, the more complex the analysis of data, in terms of the multiplicity of variables introduced, the smaller the effect of family structure on educational achievement. In some studies this effect disappears altogether, although, in others, significant effects remain. This raises important questions about causation and whether family breakdown per se exercises an independent effect upon the achievements of children? Similarly, while a relationship between single parenthood and negative health outcomes for children may be revealed in a preliminary analysis, it may diminish or even disappear when other factors are introduced.

There are gaps in the evidence base, at least for publications in English. For example, there is a lack of European research on educational outcomes for children when families are reconstituted through the re-marriage or re-partnering of the parents. Findings from the US literature have indicated that outcomes for step-children are similar to those for children from single parent families (Mclanahan and Sandefur, 1994) and, moreover, that children in stable `blended' families containing both step-children and half-siblings born into the new partnership have substantially lower levels of achievement than those living with both their birth parents (Ginther and Pollack, 2004). Given the increasingly complex family structures in many European countries, this would appear to be an important area for further enquiry.

Overall, further research into different experiences of single parenthood is needed for a more complete understanding of the effects of family breakdown.

7.2 Explanatory frameworks

While the general thrust of the literature – both specific country and comparative – is that family breakdown is associated with poorer outcomes for children, there is debate about the nature of this link. Aspects of this debate have been touched upon in previous chapters. Some researchers have argued that the link has been overstated and that background features of family life, which often go unmeasured, may exercise a greater influence on children's outcomes than family structure *per se*. Others believe that there are specific risk factors associated with growing up within a non-intact family which exercise a real effect upon outcomes. There is a third type of explanatory framework – perhaps better described as a different level of explanation - which considers the extent to which differing family policy environments across countries mediate the link between family structure and outcomes for children. This links to a broader social policy question about the impact of *family* policy in equalising opportunities for children, both within and between EU member countries.

From a public policy perspective these 'theoretical' concerns are paramount. For instance, if family breakdown leads to children moving into poor quality accommodation, this in turn may adversely affect their health outcomes. The challenge for the policymaker is whether they should intervene to tackle family breakdown, poor quality housing or both. It may however, be that the appropriate role of public policy is to meet the needs of families arising from social changes that are taking place not only across Europe but in many other parts of the world too, rather than seek to hold back change, which may result in policies that fail to match the needs of, and provide opportunities for, children in 'new' family forms.

7.2.1 The effect of family structure may be illusory

Determining how family structure affects the well-being of children, including their educational achievement, is fraught with difficulty because of the complexity of variables that might combine to produce the examined effect. It has been noted above that the apparent effects of family structure have in several studies been substantially reduced or have even disappeared when variables such as parental education and number of siblings have been introduced (Ringback *et al.*, 2004). While research designs may try to maximise the number of family characteristics that are controlled for in order to isolate the effects of family structure, some may remain inaccessible to scrutiny. Sandefur and Wells (1999), for example, noted that issues such as conflict, alcoholism and mental health are difficult to measure and that most studies fail to control for their effects. Their response in their own investigation of family structure and educational achievement was to control for family background effects by including data from pairs of siblings. The results revealed smaller effects of family structure than if the unmeasured background effects had not been taken into account, but the effects were nonetheless found to be statistically significant.

Ermisch (2003) is concerned that the frequently reported association between family structure and children's achievements might be spurious because of the presence of some unmeasured, `true' causal factor in the backgrounds of children growing up in single parent families. He notes, for example, previous research findings which highlighted the importance of genetic factors in divorce, suggesting that one half of the variance in latent divorce risk may be attributed to parents' genetic inheritance, mediated by inherited personality characteristics. If families are not randomly allocated into different family types but instead are differentiated by embedded but often unmeasured characteristics, then the validity of comparisons of outcomes for children is undermined. In order to help overcome this problem, Ermisch (2003) also advocated the introduction of sibling comparisons, on the assumption that estimates that related differences in achievements between siblings to differences in their family structure experience would measure the causal impact of childhood family structure on educational achievement levels.

The argument that there are embedded differences between different family types would appear to draw support from the frequently-reported finding that the children of widowed parents do not demonstrate the same negative outcomes in terms of educational achievement as children from other single parent family structures despite apparently similar pressures on resources and time. Evidence from the US to this effect (Biblarz and Gottainer, 2000) has been mirrored in various European studies, including those by Jonsson and Gahler (1997), Riala *et. al.* (2003) and Ringback *et al.* (2004), suggesting that better outcomes for this group may apply in very different social and cultural contexts.

7.2.2 Risk factors within non-intact families

Another body of opinion proposes that family structure has a real effect on children's outcomes independently of significant background variables, such as parental conflict or mental health conditions. Those who take this view do not necessarily believe that single parent families are intrinsically different from intact families, rather, that the former are exposed to more risk factors that may compromise the well-being of their children. The literature includes references to the following heightened risk factors for children of single parent families;

- Reduced economic circumstances. A sharp decline in the income available to single parent families following separation has been identified as a risk factor. For example, Ermisch (2003) suggested that expenditure on children is typically lower after dissolution and that this will involve a reduced investment in the children's human capital, subsequently reflected in lower educational achievement. Ringback *et al.* (2004), as noted above, attributed negative educational outcomes to a lack of household resources, as indicated by social assistance payments and housing situation.

- Downward social mobility. Adverse changes in social status following the transition from two-parent to one-parent family structures have been identified as a risk factor. For example, Jonsson and Gahler (1997) found that downward social mobility among single parent families was a more important causal factor in relation to children's educational outcomes than absolute economic deprivation

Parental time constraints. It has been suggested that stress, reduced circumstances and pressure to work have limited the time that single parents are able to devote to their children's development, with adverse consequences for their outcomes.

- Reduced access to the labour market for single mothers. Several studies - for example, Esping-Andersen (2008), Voegeli and Willenbacher (1993) – have found that access to employment for single mothers improved the life chances of their children. Where access is restricted through discrimination or lack of flexibility, or where the mother is poorly qualified, children's outcomes may be reduced. The demands of employment will, however, increase the pressures on parental time, indicating a need for employment practices that recognise the need for single parents in particular to be able to harmonise their working hours with their children's nursery and school routines and allow mothers time with their children.

- Continuing parental conflict. The harmful effect of parental conflict leading up to divorce, with short and long-term consequences for children's educational and health outcomes has been documented in several studies – for example, Pitketty (2003) and Dronkers (1999). Where parental conflict persists post-divorce, it seems likely that this effect will be heightened (see Dronkers, 1999).

Individual studies have emphasised different risks and there appears to be little consensus about which are the most critical. In any case, it is likely that single parent families will vary in their exposure to risk, with some benefiting from protective factors, such as maternal education and higher household incomes (Riala *et al.*, 2003), while others are affected by an adverse combination of circumstances. This highlights the challenge inherent in family policy of developing a programme of support which responds flexibly and effectively to the particular vulnerabilities of single parent families. In terms of service delivery, it implies a need for more personalised services, tailored to the needs of individual parents.

7.2.3 The role of family policy

Whatever the precise nature of the association between growing up in a non-intact family and poorer outcomes, the fact that such an association has been repeatedly demonstrated has significant implications for public policy, raising questions about how the family might best be supported in order to promote children's development. In the context of the European Union, there is an important issue about the extent to which children's well-being is converging across the Member States. Micklewright and Stewart (1999) argued that convergence has too often been measured by a handful of macro-economic indicators and that information about quality of life has been neglected. They pleaded for better and more consistent monitoring of child welfare across Europe so that disparities between levels of well-being of children in different countries might become more visible and be seen as a priority for political action.

In this context, national family policy may be considered an important intervening variable and several studies have focused on the extent to which it explains observed differences between countries in the levels of well-being and

success achieved by children from non-intact families. Hantrais (2004) notes that family policies differ substantially from country to country, creating a variety of legal statuses and social settings for children from one-parent families. The efficiency and effectiveness of these policies are particularly difficult to assess, since outcomes may be intended or unintended, wanted or unwanted, direct or indirect, short or long term. Nonetheless, these policies generate rights to public and private transfer payments, and give access to the labour market, the educational system, childcare and other supports for parenthood. Countries have developed varying policies that suite their economic, legal, and social contexts.

Voegeli and Willenbacher (1993) introduced the notion of the `*social placement'* of children – created by the conditions of children's personal development and their protection from deficits arising from their upbringing – and argue that while this is closely bound up with resources within the family and the mother's aspirations for her child, it is also decisively linked to the `welfare mix' - the blend of market, state and household resources and the possibilities for independent action that these contain. They hypothesised that if single mothers were enabled effectively to combine childrearing with labour market participation, this would exert a positive influence upon the social placement of their children. Conversely, they anticipated that downward mobility for the children of single parents would occur where deficits in the social and cultural infrastructure partially excluded single parents from the resources necessary for the effective social placement of their children.

They also argue that family policy should include forms of social security payments which encourage the integration of single mothers into the labour market, an infrastructure which helps mothers to combine work and childcare, properly enforced child support payments, and equal access to the educational system for all children. This broadly conforms to the defamilialised family policy environments characteristic of Denmark, Finland, France and Sweden among our case study countries.

A related idea is that policy should be 'child-centred'. How this notion is translated into national policies would vary across the typology. Nevertheless, it provides a benchmark to assess not only family policy but also social security and labour market policies. Countries could be encouraged, as part of their policymaking process, to formally assess the 'child centeredness' of social and economic policies.

7.3 Paid work is not sufficient by itself

It is difficult to understand changing family forms and structure without examining changes in the relationship between changing family life and paid work. Chapter 3 shows that the prevalence of joblessness among single parent families is a highly gendered phenomenon. Single parents are predominantly female, with single mothers representing nine out of 10 single parents in the EU (see Table 1.7). Not only do mothers struggle to balance work and care responsibilities, but the wages they can command in the labour market are on average lower than those of men (EC, 2006: 11). Therefore, single mothers are most likely to face difficulties in finding jobs that are satisfactory enough for

them to give up welfare benefits, in countries where such benefits are available (Brodolini, 2007: 31). A further consideration is the extent to which employers will accommodate workers with children. Single fathers also face some of these issues. Although single fathers have higher employment rates than single mothers, they tend to have lower employment rates than other men (EC, 2006:11).

As an OECD (2007:4) working paper observes:

> *'The fact that all countries with very low child poverty rates … combine low levels of family joblessness and effective redistribution policies supports the view that successful anti-poverty strategies should seek a balanced approach combining improved benefits where necessary and improved incentives to work.'*

While targeting support towards children and families (particularly single parent families) is a necessary feature of a poverty reduction scheme, it is not sufficient. What is required is an overall policy approach which addresses underlying inequalities (Frazer and Marlier, 2007:63).

Gender equality is at the heart of child centred policies. Women are discriminated to a greater or lesser extent in almost all aspects of their lives across the EU member countries with lower average wages and salaries and career opportunities restricted by inappropriate working arrangements. The findings from this review suggest that those countries that have policies to support greater gender equality also provide better outcomes for children, including children from single parent families. However, even in some of the defamilialised countries outcomes for children from single parent families, although better than in the other groupings, are not as good as for children in those countries overall which suggested that there is room in these countries for further measures to improve the opportunities and outcomes for children who live in single parent families.

The review has offered some insights into the extent to which outcomes for children in different countries are mediated by specific family policy environments, which offer varying degrees of support and protection to different types of families. The complexity of the relationship between the variables makes it difficult to identify policy recommendations. Nonetheless, analysts have proposed a range of measures including:

- Provision of affordable child/day care in order provide a safe environment for children and help parents into paid work, which in turn would enable them to improve their earnings and hence their children's health and well-being.

- A related proposal is that EU Member States ensure that their housing policies are able to provide support for these families experiencing family breakdown at every stage of their transition in living arrangements. In particular, Member State's policies needs to address the housing needs of these families both in terms of welfare resources and services, and affordable, good-quality tenure choices. In some instances it may entail upgrading the housing stock (not least as a route to improving children's health).

- Providing appropriate social support for single mothers, in particular for frontline staff and professionals in relevant agencies to be sensitive to (sub-) groups that are most likely to be at risk of poor outcomes as a consequence of family breakdown.

- Increased financial welfare benefits, in particular in those countries that provide inadequate benefits and educational opportunities especially for young single mothers with poor educational attainment. There is a reasonably convincing body of evidence that the redistributive welfare strategies, generous childcare support and equal access to the labour market produce better outcomes for children. While there are some indications that family and community networks in familialised and refamilialised countries provide a degree of protection from economic stress it is equally possible that they put additional financial pressure on to already poor families and create an environment in which the choices available to single parents are dictated by conservative social norms.

Underpinning a number of these proposals is the recognition that simply promoting employment for single parents is not on its own an adequate policy response. Welfare to work policies that are not supported by policies to guarantee job security, 'family friendly' working arrangements and decent wages on which to raise children and opportunities for skill enhancement and career development run the risk of coercing women in to poorly paid work that is damaging to both their own and their children's welfare.

Findings from the review suggest that the defamilialised approach on balance provides best outcomes for children in general including children who have been affected by family breakdown. Although, to be effective policy can not be 'parachuted in' but must take account of both opportunities and constraints within national policy environments there are nevertheless opportunities within the EU for policy learning for countries to improve the outcomes for children affected by family breakdown.

Annex A Chapter 2 Tables

Eurostat Notes:

:	Not available
b	Break in series
e	Estimated value
i	See explanatory text
p	Provisional value
s	Eurostat estimate
u	Unreliable or uncertain data

Eurostat country abbreviations:

be	Belgium
bg	Bulgaria
cz	Czech Republic
dk	Denmark
de	Germany
ee	Estonia
ie	Ireland
gr	Greece
es	Spain
fr	France
it	Italy
cy	Cyprus
lv	Latvia
lt	Lithuania
lu	Luxembourg
hu	Hungary
mt	Malta
nl	Netherlands
at	Austria
pl	Poland
pt	Portugal
ro	Romania
si	Slovenia
sk	Slovakia
fi	Finland
se	Sweden
uk	United Kingdom

Table A.1: Population, by country, on January 1, 1987, 1997 and 2007

Typology		Population, 1987	Population, 1997	Population, 2007	Percentage rate of change, 1987 & 2007	Percentage rate of change, 1997 & 2007
Defamilialised	**Denmark**	5,124,794	5,275,121	5,444,242	6.2%	3.2%
	Finland	4,925,644	5,132,320	5,276,955	7.1%	2.8%
	Sweden	8,381,519	8,844,499	9,113,257	8.7%	3.0%
	France	:	59,726,386	63,392,140	:	6.1%
	Luxembourg	369,500	416,850	476,187	28.9%	14.2%
	Belgium	9,864,751	10,170,226	10,584,534	7.3%	4.1%
Partially Defamilialised	**Austria**	7,572,852	7,964,966	8,298,923	9.6%	4.2%
	Germany	77,780,338	82,012,162	82,314,906	5.8%	0.4%
	Netherlands	14,615,125	15,567,107	16,357,992	11.9%	5.1%
	Ireland	3,545,263	3,654,955	4,312,526	21.6%	18.0%
	UK	56,743,897	58,239,312	60,816,701	7.2%	4.4%
Familialised	**Italy**	56,594,487	56,876,364	59,131,287	4.5%	4.0%
	Portugal	10,034,846	10,072,542	10,599,095	5.6%	5.2%
	Spain	38,586,591	39,525,438	44,474,631	15.3%	12.5%
	Greece	9,985,326	10,744,649	11,171,740	11.9%	4.0%
	Cyprus	550,888	666,313	778,684	41.4%	16.9%
	Malta	343,334	373,958	407,810	18.8%	9.1%
Refamilialised	**Bulgaria**	8,966,462	8,340,936	7,679,290	-14.4%	-7.9%
	Czech Rep.	10,344,119	10,309,137	10,287,189	-0.6%	-0.2%
	Estonia	1,546,304	1,405,996	1,342,409	-13.2%	-4.5%
	Latvia	2,612,068	2,444,912	2,281,305	-12.7%	-6.7%
	Lithuania	3,597,439	3,588,013	3,384,879	-5.9%	-5.7%
	Hungary	10,621,121	10,301,247	10,066,158	-5.2%	-2.3%
	Poland	37,571,771	38,639,341	38,125,479	1.5%	-1.3%
	Romania	22,895,058	22,581,862	21,565,119	-5.8%	-4.5%
	Slovenia	1,985,486	1,986,989	2,010,377	1.3%	1.2%
	Slovakia	5,208,708	5,378,932	5,393,637	3.6%	0.3%
	EU27	466,049,471	478,630,165	495,087,452	6.2%	3.4%

Base: Population
Number: EU27
Source: Eurostat 2008, Population and Social Conditions, 'Population on 1. January', demo_gind

Table A.2: Population, by country, as a percentage of EU27 population, 1987, 1997 and 2007

Typology		(%) 1987	(%) 1997	(%) 2007	Difference in percentage share, 1987 & 2007	Difference in percentage share, 1997 & 2007
Defamilialised	**Denmark**	1.1	1.1	1.1	0.0	0.0
	Finland	1.1	1.1	1.1	0.0	0.0
	Sweden	1.8	1.8	1.8	0.0	0.0
	France	11.9	12.1	12.8	0.9	0.7
	Luxembourg	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0
	Belgium	2.1	2.1	2.1	0.0	0.0
Partially Defamilialised	**Austria**	1.6	1.7	1.7	0.1	0.0
	Germany	16.7	17.1	16.6	-0.1	-0.5
	Netherlands	3.1	3.3	3.3	0.2	0.1
	Ireland	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.1	0.1
	UK	12.2	12.2	12.3	0.1	0.1
Familialised	**Italy**	12.1	11.9	11.9	-0.2	0.1
	Portugal	2.2	2.1	2.1	0.0	0.0
	Spain	8.3	8.3	9.0	0.7	0.7
	Greece	2.1	2.2	2.3	0.1	0.0
	Cyprus	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.0
	Malta	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0
Refamilialised	**Bulgaria**	1.9	1.7	1.6	-0.4	-0.2
	Czech Rep.	2.2	2.2	2.1	-0.1	-0.1
	Estonia	0.3	0.3	0.3	-0.1	0.0
	Latvia	0.6	0.5	0.5	-0.1	-0.1
	Lithuania	0.8	0.8	0.7	-0.1	-0.1
	Hungary	2.3	2.2	2.0	-0.2	-0.1
	Poland	8.1	8.1	7.7	-0.4	-0.4
	Romania	4.9	4.7	4.4	-0.6	-0.4
	Slovenia	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.0	0.0
	Slovakia	1.1	1.1	1.1	0.0	0.0
	EU27	100	100	100		

Base: EU27 population
Number: EU27
Source: Eurostat 2008, Population and Social Conditions, 'Population as a Percentage of EU27 Population', demo_gind

Table A.3: Total live births, by country, 1987, 1997 and 2007

Typology		Live births, 1987	Live births, 1997	Live births, 2007	Percentage rate of change, 1987 & 2007	Percentage rate of change, 1997 & 2007
Defamilialised	**Denmark**	56,221	67,648	64,082	14.0%	-5.3%
	Finland	59,827	59,329	58,729	-1.8%	-1.0%
	Sweden	104,699	90,502	107,421	2.6%	18.7%
	France	:	758,114	816,500	:	7.7%
	Luxembourg	4,238	5,503	5,477	29.2%	-0.5%
	Belgium	117,334	116,213	120,663	2.8%	3.8%
Partially Defamilialised	**Austria**	86,503	84,045	76,250	-11.9%	-9.3%
	Germany	867,969	812,173	682,700	-21.3%	-15.9%
	Netherlands	186,667	192,443	180,882	-3.1%	-6.0%
	Ireland	58,433	52,775	70,623	20.9%	33.8%
	UK	775,405	726,622	770,651	-0.6%	6.1%
Familialised	**Italy**	551,539	534,461	563,236	2.1%	5.4%
	Portugal	123,179	113,047	102,492	-16.8%	-9.3%
	Spain	426,782	369,035	488,335	14.4%	32.3%
	Greece	106,401	102,038	110,048	3.4%	7.9%
	Cyprus	10,337	9,275	8,529	-17.5%	-8.0%
	Malta	5,314	4,848	3,871	-27.2%	-20.2%
Refamilialised	**Bulgaria**	116,672	64,125	75,349	-35.4%	17.5%
	Czech Rep.	130,921	90,657	114,632	-12.4%	26.4%
	Estonia	25,086	12,577	15,775	-37.1%	25.4%
	Latvia	42,135	18,830	23,273	-44.8%	23.6%
	Lithuania	59,360	37,812	32,346	-45.5%	-14.5%
	Hungary	125,840	100,350	97,600	-22.4%	-2.7%
	Poland	607,790	412,635	387,873	-36.2%	-6.0%
	Romania	383,199	236,891	214,728	-44.0%	-9.4%
	Slovenia	25,592	18,165	19,636	-23.3%	8.1%
	Slovakia	84,006	59,111	54,424	-35.2%	-7.9%
	EU27	5,909,277	5,117,878	5,266,125	-10.9%	2.9%

Base: Live Births
Number: EU27
Source: Eurostat 2008, Population and Social Conditions, 'Live Births', demo_gind

Table A.4: Persons aged 0-14, average population by county, 1996 and 2006

		1996			2006				
Typology	Country	Persons aged 0-14	Total population	Proportion of population aged 0-14	Persons aged 0-14	Total population	Proportion of population aged 0-14	Percentage rate of change, 1996 & 2006	Percentage difference, 1996 & 2006
Defamilialised	**Denmark**	928,314	5,263,074	17.6%	1,015,017	5,437,272	18.7%	9.3%	1.0%
	Finland	970,169	5,124,573	18.9%	904,043	5,266,268	17.2%	-6.8%	-1.8%
	Sweden	1,663,395	8,840,998	18.8%	1,555,182	9,080,505	17.1%	-6.5%	-1.7%
	Belgium	1,814,112	10,156,637	17.9%	1,796,916	10,547,958	17.0%	-0.9%	-0.8%
	Luxembourg	76,756	414,225	18.5%	86,892	472,637	18.4%	13.2%	-0.1%
	France	11,648,626	59,624,342	19.5%	11,738,421	63,195,457	18.6%	0.8%	-1.0%
			Group Avg	**19.1%**		**Group Avg**	**18.2%**	**0.0%**	**-0.9%**
Partially Defamilialised	**Germany**	13,212,867	81,914,831	16.1%	11,545,619	82,376,451	14.0%	-12.6%	-2.1%
	Austria	1,410,822	7,959,017	17.7%	1,303,701	8,282,424	15.7%	-7.6%	-2.0%
	UK	11,287,462	58,166,950	19.4%	10,737,520	60,622,964	17.7%	-4.9%	-1.7%
	Netherlands	2,854,587	15,530,498	18.4%	2,971,600	16,346,101	18.2%	4.1%	-0.2%
	Ireland	856,718	3,637,510	23.6%	869,767	4,261,827	20.4%	1.5%	-3.1%
			Group Avg	**17.7%**		**Group Avg**	**16.0%**	**-7.4%**	**-1.8%**
Familialised	**Italy**	8,284,616	56,860,281	14.6%	8,303,032	58,941,499	14.1%	0.2%	-0.5%
	Greece	1,817,594	10,709,173	17.0%	1,595,018	11,148,460	14.3%	-12.2%	-2.7%
	Spain	6,371,182	39,478,186	16.1%	6,400,112	44,116,441	14.5%	0.5%	-1.6%
	Portugal	1,741,108	10,057,861	17.3%	1,640,935	10,584,344	15.5%	-5.8%	-1.8%
	Cyprus	161,714	661,323	24.5%	140,469	772,549	18.2%	-13.1%	-6.3%
	Malta	80,070	372,687	21.5%	68,983	406,408	17.0%	-13.8%	-4.5%
			Group Avg	**15.6%**		**Group Avg**	**14.4%**	**-1.7%**	**-1.2%**
Refamilialised	**Latvia**	497,446	2,457,222	20.2%	323,506	2,287,948	14.1%	-35.0%	-6.1%
	Lithuania	774,583	3,601,613	21.5%	549,259	3,394,082	16.2%	-29.1%	-5.3%
	Bulgaria	1,459,437	8,362,826	17.5%	1,039,484	7,699,020	13.5%	-28.8%	-3.9%
	Hungary	1,841,606	10,311,238	17.9%	1,541,549	10,071,370	15.3%	-16.3%	-2.6%
	Estonia	286,631	1,415,594	20.2%	201,087	1,343,547	15.0%	-29.8%	-5.3%
	Romania	4,504,304	22,619,004	19.9%	3,339,093	21,587,666	15.5%	-25.9%	-4.4%
	Czech Rep.	1,867,970	10,315,241	18.1%	1,490,423	10,269,134	14.5%	-20.2%	-3.6%
	Slovakia	1,180,093	5,373,361	22.0%	882,466	5,391,409	16.4%	-25.2%	-5.6%
	Poland	8,562,112	38,624,370	22.2%	6,105,768	38,141,267	16.0%	-28.7%	-6.2%
	Slovenia	354,433	1,988,628	17.8%	282,151	2,006,868	14.1%	-20.4%	-3.8%
			Group Avg	**20.3%**		**Group Avg**	**15.4%**	**-26.1%**	**-4.9%**
EU		86,508,727	479,841,263	**18.0%**	78,428,013	494,051,876	**15.9%**	**-9.3%**	**-2.2%**

Base: Total Population
Number: EU27
Source: Eurostat 2008, 'Average population by sex and five-year age groups', demo_ppavg

Table A.5: Persons living as children in parental home, 2001

Typology		Less than 5 years	Between 5 and 9 years	Between 10 and 14 years	Between 15 and 19 years	Between 20 and 24 years	Total persons living as children in parental home (0-24)	Total persons living as children in parental home (all ages)	Total population living in households	Percentage of total household population living as children in parental home (0-24)	Percentage of total household population living as children in parental home (all ages)
Defamilialised	**Denmark**	335,385	344,621	303,437	243,004	85,322	1,311,769	1,311,769	5,349,212	24.5%	24.5%
	Finland	288,780	322,684	313,878	292,926	109,485	1,327,753	1,437,863	5,181,115	25.6%	27.8%
	Belgium	548,734	583,982	606,660	569,753	429,032	2,738,161	3,118,762	10,296,350	26.6%	30.3%
	Luxembourg	26,796	26,998	25,254	22,522	16,487	118,057	134,826	439,539	26.9%	30.7%
	France	3,514,141	3,631,924	3,768,456	3,506,070	1,838,918	16,259,509	17,844,369	58,513,700	27.8%	30.5%
									Group Avg	**27.3%**	**29.9%**
Partially Defamilialised	**Germany**	3,842,400	3,948,100	4,641,300	4,275,300	2,443,700	19,150,800	21,008,100	82,276,900	23.3%	25.5%
	Austria	405,606	463,797	466,114	450,456	285,892	2,071,865	2,424,805	8,032,926	25.8%	30.2%
	UK	3,450,745	3,694,035	3,794,485	3,096,371	1,538,984	15,574,620	17,277,931	58,789,200	26.5%	29.4%
	Netherlands	992,860	988,338	969,873	836,728	478,845	4,266,644	4,577,631	15,985,538	26.7%	28.6%
	Ireland	250,735	251,477	275,072	285,729	202,350	1,265,363	1,470,819	3,851,905	32.9%	38.2%
									Group Avg	**25.1%**	**27.7%**
Familialised	**Italy**	2,596,799	2,660,222	2,784,313	2,890,053	2,886,230	13,817,617	18,633,027	56,995,744	24.2%	32.7%
	Greece	475,609	498,471	538,284	571,956	506,587	2,590,907	3,314,411	10,628,113	24.4%	31.2%
	Spain	1,862,086	1,852,876	2,042,073	2,308,526	2,555,146	10,620,707	14,072,750	40,847,371	26.0%	34.5%
	Portugal	530,612	525,613	563,582	640,476	557,186	2,817,469	3,395,799	10,356,117	27.2%	32.8%
	Cyprus	42,509	51,610	52,907	52,158	34,570	233,754	260,015	689,565	33.9%	37.7%
									Group Avg	**25.2%**	**33.2%**
Refamilialised	**Latvia**	59,865	99,863	141,608	130,339	85,451	517,126	672,173	2,377,383	21.8%	28.3%
	Lithuania	175,682	222,395	263,351	157,532	0	818,960	818,960	3,483,972	23.5%	23.5%
	Bulgaria	311,727	372,086	484,529	443,170	315,358	1,926,870	2,234,217	7,904,094	24.4%	28.3%
	Hungary	481,510	569,897	599,954	548,094	484,110	2,683,565	3,212,458	10,198,315	26.3%	31.5%
	Estonia	59,049	76,520	102,667	84,404	40,190	362,830	410,721	1,370,052	26.5%	30.0%
	Romania	1,063,028	1,100,150	1,494,247	1,395,441	997,995	6,050,861	7,014,576	21,680,974	27.9%	32.4%
	Czech Rep.	440,172	557,840	641,521	649,857	570,445	2,859,835	3,328,709	10,230,060	28.0%	32.5%
	Slovakia	254,113	319,956	384,292	412,234	322,279	1,692,874	1,982,284	5,379,455	31.5%	36.8%
	Poland	1,848,310	2,244,649	2,713,843	3,077,542	2,180,000	12,064,344	14,244,969	38,230,080	31.6%	37.3%
	Slovenia	:	:	:	126,719	125,283	:	695,426	1,964,036	N/A	35.4%
									Group Avg	**28.7%**	**33.7%**
									EU Avg	**26.3%**	**30.8%**

Base: Households
Number: 25 EU countries (Sweden and Malta data not available)
Source: Eurostat 2008, 'Population by sex, age and type of household and household status', cens_nhtype

Table A.6: Percentage change in the number of private households (000s), 1997 and 2001

Typology		1997	2001	Percentage rate of change
Defamilialised	**Luxembourg**	159	172	8.2%
	France	23728	24523	3.4%
	Belgium	4147	4278	3.2%
	Denmark	2407	2456	2.0%
	Finland	2326	2382	2.4%
	Sweden	4567	4576	0.2%
			Group Avg.	2.8%
Partially Defamilialised	**Ireland**	1192	1291	8.3%
	Austria	3174	3300	4.0%
	Netherlands	6638	6889	3.8%
	UK	24700	25564	3.5%
	Germany	36787	37711	2.5%
			Group Avg.	3.1%
Familialised	**Spain**	12368	13281	7.4%
	Greece	3875	3993	3.0%
	Italy	21451	21967	2.4%
	Portugal	3310	3391	2.4%
			Group Avg.	4.0%
	EU15	150829	155773	3.3%

Base: Private Households
Number: EU15
Source: Eurostat 2008, Population and Social Conditions, 'Number of private households (in 000s)', ilc_hlc_hh01

Table A.7: Average number of persons per private household, 1993-2003

Typology		1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Defamilialised	**Denmark**	: u	: u	: u	: u	: u	:	:	:	:	:	2.2
	Finland	:	:	: u	: u	: u	: u	: u	:	:	:	2.2
	Sweden	:	:	: u	: u	: u	:	:	:	:	:	:
	France	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4
	Luxembourg	2.7	2.7	2.9	2.5	2.6	2.7	2.7	2.6	2.5	2.5	2.5
	Belgium	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.5	2.5
									Group Avg. 2003			**2.4**
Partially Defamilialised	**Austria**	:	:	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4
	Germany	2.3	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.1
	Netherlands	2.4	2.3	2.4	2.4	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3
	Ireland	3.2	3.1	3.1	3.1	3	:	:	:	:	:	:
	UK	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.3	2.3
									Group Avg. 2003			**2.3**
Familialised	**Italy**	2.8	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6
	Portugal	3.1	3	3	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.8
	Spain	3.3	3.3	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.1	3.1	3	3	3	2.9
	Greece	2.8	2.8	2.7	2.7	2.6	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.6	2.6	2.6
	Cyprus	:	:	:	:	:	:	3	3	3	3	3.0
									Group Avg. 2003			**2.8**
Refamilialised	**Bulgaria**	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	2.8	2.8	2.7
	Czech Rep.	:	:	:	:	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.6	2.6	2.5
	Estonia	:	:	:	:	2	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.7	2.6
	Latvia	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	2.4	2.8	2.8
	Lithuania	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	3	2.9
	Hungary	:	:	:	3.4	3.4	:	:	2.7	2.6	2.6	2.6
	Malta	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.0
	Poland	:	:	:	:	2.5	:	:	:	3.1	3.1	3.1
	Romania	:	:	:	:	3	3	3	2.9	3	2.9	2.8
	Slovenia	:	:	:	2.9	2.9	:	:	2.7	2.6	2.6	2.6
	Slovakia	:	:	:	:	:	3.1	3.1	3.2	3.2	3.1	3.1
									Group Avg. 2003			**2.8**
	EU25	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	2.5 e	2.4 e	2.4 e	2.4 e

Base: Private Household
Number: EU25
Source: Eurostat 2008, General and Regional Statistics, 'Average number of persons per private household', CDB10000

Table A.8: Distribution among total population: households with dependent children

								Notes			
Typology		**1996**	**2000**	**2001**	**2006**	**Percentage Difference, 1996 & 2006**	**Percentage Difference, 2000 & 2006**	1996	2000	2001	2006
Defamilialised	**Denmark**	:	:	:	48	:	:				
	Finland	52	50	50	48	-4	-2			bi	
	Sweden	:	:	:	52	:	:				
	France	58	57	55	54	-4	-3			bi	
	Luxembourg	57	46	47	57	0	11				
	Belgium	56	56	55	51	-5	-5				
Partially Defamilialised	**Austria**	54	53	53	50	-4	-3				
	Germany	46	46	:	46	0	0				
	Netherlands	49	50	50	51	2	1		bi	i	
	Ireland	69	65	68	63	-6	-2				
	UK	50	48	48	48	-2	0			bi	
Familialised	**Italy**	55	53	52	50	-5	-3				
	Portugal	64	62	61	57	-7	-5				p
	Spain	64	59	57	52	-12	-7				
	Greece	56	54	53	49	-7	-5				
	Cyprus	:	:	:	64	:	:				
	Malta	:	:	:	57	:	:				p
Refamilialised	**Czech Rep.**	:	:	55	52	:	:			i	
	Estonia	:	57	57	56	:	-1		i	i	
	Latvia	:	57	:	58	:	1		i		
	Lithuania	:	64	63	62	:	-2		i	i	
	Hungary	:	58	60	56	:	-2		i	i	
	Poland	:	70	70	62	:	-8		i	i	
	Romania	:	66	66	:	:	:		i	i	
	Slovenia	:	63	62	58	:	-5		i	i	
	Slovakia	:	:	:	61	:	:				
	EU25	:	:	55	52	:	:			is	s
	EU15	54	52	53	50	-4	-2	s	s	is	s

Base: Total Population
Number: EU25 (plus Romania)
Source: Eurostat 2008, Population and Social Conditions, 'Distribution of population by household types', ilc_ov19

Table A.9: Households (with no other person outside the family nucleus) which have resident children less than 25 years, 2001

Typology		Single father with children	Proportion of total	Single mother with children	Proportion of total	Single parent with children	Proportion of total	Married couple	Proportion of total	Cohabiting couple	Proportion of total	Two adults with children	Proportion of total	Total # of households (with no other person outside the family nucleus)	
Defamilialised	Denmark	13,566	1.0%	92,847	6.8%	106,413	7.8%	975,336	71.4%	284,780	20.8%	1,260,116	92.2%	1,366,529	
	Finland	26,338	2.0%	147,986	11.2%	174,324	13.2%	901,556	68.4%	242,703	18.4%	1,144,259	86.8%	1,318,583	
	France	238,180	1.6%	1,515,395	10.0%	1,753,575	11.6%	13,406,747	88.4%	:	:	13,406,747	88.4%	15,160,322	
		Group Avg	1.6%		9.8%		11.4%		85.6%		3.0%		88.6%		
									Avg not incl. France		19.6%				
Partially Defamilialised	Netherlands	58,872	1.3%	323,470	7.3%	382,342	8.7%	3,361,352	76.2%	666,470	15.1%	4,027,822	91.3%	4,410,164	
	Germany	341,800	1.5%	1,868,000	8.1%	2,209,800	9.6%	18,741,500	81.1%	2,104,400	9.1%	20,845,900	90.2%	23,103,500	*
	UK	318,883	2.1%	2,071,703	13.4%	2,390,586	15.4%	11,067,096	71.5%	2,019,090	13.0%	13,086,186	84.6%	15,476,772	
		Group Avg	1.7%		9.9%		11.6%		77.2%		11.1%		88.3%		
	Italy	322,185	2.1%	1,593,829	10.5%	1,916,014	12.7%	12,714,261	84.1%	488,920	3.2%	13,203,181	87.3%	15,119,195	
Familialised	Portugal	41,998	1.5%	268,942	9.7%	310,940	11.2%	2,307,929	82.8%	167,452	6.0%	2,475,381	88.8%	2,786,321	
	Greece	43,617	1.8%	238,849	9.7%	282,466	11.5%	2,105,532	85.9%	63,930	2.6%	2,169,462	88.5%	2,451,928	
	Spain	209,023	2.3%	938,719	10.3%	1,147,742	12.5%	7,559,180	82.6%	440,123	4.8%	7,999,303	87.5%	9,147,045	
	Cyprus	1,386	0.8%	10,272	6.2%	11,658	7.0%	151,276	91.5%	2,478	1.5%	153,754	93.0%	165,412	
		Group Avg	2.1%		10.3%		12.4%		83.7%		3.9%		87.6%		
Refamilialised	Bulgaria	33,141	1.9%	157,466	9.2%	190,607	11.1%	1,423,356	83.1%	99,367	5.8%	1,522,723	88.9%	1,713,330	
	Czech Rep.	82,651	3.0%	461,534	16.6%	544,185	19.5%	2,119,818	76.1%	120,522	4.3%	2,240,340	80.5%	2,784,525	
	Estonia	5,969	1.8%	71,182	21.3%	77,151	23.0%	202,171	60.4%	55,410	16.6%	257,581	77.0%	334,732	
	Lithuania	13,902	1.6%	142,441	16.8%	156,343	18.5%	641,608	75.8%	48,184	5.7%	689,792	81.5%	846,135	
	Hungary	51,278	2.0%	365,208	14.0%	416,486	15.9%	1,949,926	74.6%	247,715	9.5%	2,197,641	84.1%	2,614,127	
	Poland	209,105	2.2%	1,609,098	16.9%	1,818,203	19.0%	7,547,580	79.0%	182,110	1.9%	7,729,690	81.0%	9,547,893	
	Romania	111,305	2.0%	624,508	11.2%	735,813	13.2%	4,510,994	80.7%	344,383	6.2%	4,855,377	86.8%	5,591,190	
	Slovenia	11,836	2.4%	76,883	15.6%	88,719	18.0%	368,059	74.6%	36,888	7.5%	404,947	82.0%	493,666	
	Slovakia	20,512	2.1%	132,874	13.4%	153,386	15.4%	818,813	82.4%	21,708	2.2%	840,521	84.6%	993,907	
		Group Avg	2.2%		14.6%		16.8%		78.6%		4.6%		83.2%		
	EU		1.9%		11.0%		12.9%		80.5%		6.6%		87.1%		
									Avg not incl. France		7.6%				
	EU (minus Bulgaria)		1.9%		11.0%		12.9%		80.4%		6.6%		87.1%		
									Avg not incl. France		7.6%				

* Numbers for Germany are slightly off

Base: Households (with no other person out of family nucleus) which have children under 25 years
Number: 20 EU countries (no data for Sweden, Luxembourg, Belgium, Austria, Ireland, Malta, and Latvia)
Source: Eurostat 2008, Population and Social Conditions, 'Family nuclei by type, number of resident children in the family, current economic activity of parents and presence of other persons in the household', cens_nhmb

Table A.10: Single parents and adults in couples with children under age 25 in private households, 2001

Typology		Single father with children	Proportion of total	Single mother with children	Proportion of total	Single parent with children	Proportion of total	Married couple	Proportion of total	Cohabiting couple	Proportion of total	Two adults with children	Proportion of total	Total private households	
Defamilialised	**Denmark**	16,333	**1.1%**	104,731.0	**7.3%**	121,064	**8.4%**	1,028,370	**71.4%**	290,999	**20.2%**	1,319,369	**91.6%**	1,440,433	
	Finland	28,931	**2.1%**	159,432.0	**11.4%**	188,363	**13.4%**	950,887	**67.8%**	262,713	**18.7%**	1,213,600	**86.6%**	1,401,963	
	France	292,698	**1.8%**	1,691,901.0	**10.5%**	1,984,599	**12.3%**	14,112,183	**87.7%**	:	:	14,112,183	**87.7%**	16,096,782	i
		Group Avg	**1.8%**		**10.3%**		**12.1%**		**85.0%**		**2.9%**		**87.9%**		
							Avg not incl. France		**69.6%**		**19.5%**				
Partially Defamilialised	**Netherlands**	61,326	**1.4%**	334,990.0	**7.4%**	396,316	**8.8%**	3,441,857	**76.3%**	673,960	**14.9%**	4,115,817	**91.2%**	4,512,133	i
	Austria	51,140	**2.3%**	300,732.0	**13.6%**	351,872	**15.9%**	1,630,914	**73.9%**	223,365	**10.1%**	1,854,279	**84.1%**	2,206,151	i
	Germany	373,300	**1.6%**	1,982,000.0	**8.3%**	2,355,300	**9.8%**	19,357,700	**80.9%**	2,153,300	**9.0%**	21,511,000	**89.9%**	23,915,800	iu
	Ireland	23,499	**2.5%**	130,364.0	**14.1%**	153,863	**16.6%**	692,985	**75.0%**	77,616	**8.4%**	770,601	**83.4%**	924,464	
	UK	370,860	**2.2%**	2,343,719.0	**14.2%**	2,714,579	**16.4%**	11,641,000	**70.4%**	2,191,170	**13.2%**	13,832,170	**83.6%**	16,546,749	i
		Group Avg	**1.8%**		**10.6%**		**12.4%**		**76.4%**		**11.1%**		**87.5%**		
Familialised	**Italy**	362,582	**2.2%**	1,738,417.0	**10.8%**	2,100,999	**13.0%**	13,519,122	**83.8%**	510,247	**3.2%**	14,029,369	**87.0%**	16,130,368	
	Portugal	49,263	**1.6%**	317,526.0	**10.3%**	366,789	**11.9%**	2,517,039	**82.0%**	185,917	**6.1%**	2,702,956	**88.1%**	3,069,745	
	Greece	58,692	**2.0%**	292,485.0	**10.1%**	351,177	**12.1%**	2,477,566	**85.3%**	76,123	**2.6%**	2,553,689	**87.9%**	2,904,866	
	Spain	322,160	**2.9%**	1,329,960.0	**11.9%**	1,652,120	**14.8%**	8,947,032	**80.1%**	563,785	**5.1%**	9,510,817	**85.2%**	11,162,937	
	Cyprus	1,709	**0.9%**	12,315.0	**6.5%**	14,024	**7.4%**	173,316	**91.3%**	2,573	**1.4%**	175,889	**92.6%**	189,913	
		Group Avg	**2.4%**		**11.0%**		**13.4%**		**82.6%**		**4.0%**		**86.6%**		
Refamilialised	**Czech Rep.**	88,579	**3.0%**	487,842.0	**16.8%**	576,421	**19.8%**	2,208,323	**75.9%**	125,269	**4.3%**	2,333,592	**80.2%**	2,910,013	
	Estonia	9,077	**2.4%**	85,500.0	**22.5%**	94,577	**24.9%**	223,792	**59.0%**	61,223	**16.1%**	285,015	**75.1%**	379,592	
	Latvia	20,817	**3.3%**	181,518.0	**29.1%**	202,335	**32.4%**	388,609	**62.2%**	33,361	**5.3%**	421,970	**67.6%**	624,305	
	Lithuania	18,305	**1.9%**	187,817.0	**19.0%**	206,122	**20.9%**	725,303	**73.5%**	55,253	**5.6%**	780,556	**79.1%**	986,678	i
	Hungary	58,428	**2.0%**	413,473.0	**14.4%**	471,901	**16.5%**	2,125,152	**74.1%**	271,641	**9.5%**	2,396,793	**83.5%**	2,868,694	
	Poland	231,808	**2.2%**	1,798,331.0	**17.2%**	2,030,139	**19.4%**	8,230,097	**78.7%**	197,381	**1.9%**	8,427,478	**80.6%**	10,457,617	
	Romania	132,878	**2.1%**	723,686.0	**11.4%**	856,564	**13.4%**	5,098,869	**80.1%**	414,061	**6.5%**	5,512,930	**86.6%**	6,369,494	
	Slovenia	14,610	**2.6%**	89,682.0	**16.1%**	104,292	**18.8%**	409,561	**73.7%**	42,092	**7.6%**	451,653	**81.2%**	555,945	
	Slovakia	32,375	**2.3%**	213,983.0	**15.1%**	246,358	**17.4%**	1,137,557	**80.4%**	30,466	**2.2%**	1,168,023	**82.6%**	1,414,381	
		Group Avg	**2.3%**		**15.7%**		**18.0%**		**77.3%**		**4.6%**		**82.0%**		
	EU		**2.1%**		**11.7%**		**13.8%**		**79.5%**		**6.6%**		**86.2%**		
							Avg not incl. France		**78.3%**		**7.6%**				
	EU (minus Austria, Ireland, and Latvia)		**2.0%**		**11.6%**		**13.6%**		**79.7%**		**6.6%**		**86.3%**		
							Avg not incl. France		**78.5%**		**7.6%**				

Base: Total Private Households with Resident Children Under 25 Years

Number: 22 EU countries (no data for Sweden, Luxembourg, Belgium, Bulgaria and Malta)

Source: Eurostat 2008, Population and Social Conditions, 'Family nuclei by type, number of resident children in the family, current economic activity of parents and presence of other persons in the household', cens_nhmb

Table A.11: Distribution among total population: single parent with dependent children (percentage)

								Notes			
Typology		**1996**	**2000**	**2001**	**2006**	**Percentage difference, 1996 & 2006**	**Percentage difference, 2000 & 2006**	1996	2000	2001	2006
Defamilialised	**Denmark**	:	:	:	7						
	Finland	6	3	6	5	-1	2			bi	
	Sweden	:	:	:	8	:	:				
	France	4	3	5	5	1	2			bi	
	Luxembourg	2	2	1	4	2	2				
	Belgium	4	4	3	6	2	2				
Partially Defamilialised	**Austria**	3	3	3	4	1	1				
	Germany	3	2	:	6	3	4				
	Netherlands	3	4	4	4	1	0		bi	i	
	Ireland	3	3	3	8	5	5				
	UK	4	6	7	8	4	2			bi	
Familialised	**Italy**	1	1	1	3	2	2				
	Portugal	2	2	2	3	1	1				p
	Spain	1	1	1	2	1	1				
	Greece	2	1	1	2	0	1				
	Cyprus	:	:	:	2	:	:				
	Malta	:	:	:	2	:	:				p
Refamilialised	**Czech Rep.**	:	:	5	4	:	:			i	
	Estonia	:	7	7	7	:	0		i	i	
	Latvia	:	6	:	5	:	-1		i		
	Lithuania	:	7	6	6	:	-1		i	i	
	Hungary	:	5	4	5	:	0		i	i	
	Poland	:	4	4	3	:	-1		i	i	
	Romania	:	3	3	:	:	:		i	i	
	Slovenia	:	3	3	3	:	0		i	i	
	Slovakia	:	:	:	3	:	:				
	EU25	:	:	4	5	:	:			is	s
	EU15	3	3	4	5	2	2	s	s	is	s

Base: Total Population
Number: EU25 (plus Romania)
Source: Eurostat 2008, Population and Social Conditions, 'Distribution of population by household types', ilc_ov19

Table A.12: Live births outside marriage, 1996 & 2006

		1996			2006				
Typology	Country	Live births outside marriage	Total live births	1996 (%)	Live births outside marriage	Total live births	2006 (%)	Percentage rate of change	Percentage difference, 1996 & 2006
Defamilialised	**Denmark**	31,302	67,638	**46.3%**	30,126	64,984	**46.4%**	-3.8%	0.1%
	Finland	21,484	60,723	**35.4%**	23,858	58,840	**40.5%**	11.1%	5.2%
	Sweden	51,348	95,297	**53.9%**	58,749	105,913	**55.5%**	14.4%	1.6%
	France	:	:		419,192	830,288	**50.5%**	:	:
	Luxembourg	851	5,689	**15.0%**	1,589	5,514	**28.8%**	86.7%	13.9%
	Belgium	22,185	116,442	**19.1%**	:	121,382		:	:
Partially Defamilialised	**Austria**	24,880	88,809	**28.0%**	28,956	77,914	**37.2%**	16.4%	9.1%
	Germany	135,700	796,013	**17.0%**	201,519	672,724	**30.0%**	48.5%	12.9%
	Netherlands	32,192	189,521	**17.0%**	68,575	185,057	**37.1%**	113.0%	20.1%
	Ireland	12,797	50,655	**25.3%**	21,295	64,237	**33.2%**	66.4%	7.9%
	UK	260,369	732,863	**35.5%**	326,792	748,563	**43.7%**	25.5%	8.1%
Familialised	**Italy**	43,758	528,103	**8.3%**	:	:		:	:
	Portugal	20,597	110,363	**18.7%**	33,332	105,449	**31.6%**	61.8%	12.9%
	Spain	42,352	362,626	**11.7%**	137,041	482,957	**28.4%**	223.6%	16.7%
	Greece	3,290	100,718	**3.3%**	5,914	112,042	**5.3%**	79.8%	2.0%
	Cyprus	144	9,638	**1.5%**	489	8,731	**5.6%**	239.6%	4.1%
	Malta	135	5,038	**2.7%**	866	3,885	**22.3%**	541.5%	19.6%
Refamilialised	**Bulgaria**	20,284	72,188	**28.1%**	37,572	73,978	**50.8%**	85.2%	22.7%
	Czech Rep.	15,288	90,446	**16.9%**	35,259	105,831	**33.3%**	130.6%	16.4%
	Estonia	6,370	13,242	**48.1%**	8,665	14,877	**58.2%**	36.0%	10.1%
	Latvia	6,540	19,782	**33.1%**	9,654	22,264	**43.4%**	47.6%	10.3%
	Lithuania	5,589	39,066	**14.3%**	9,266	31,265	**29.6%**	65.8%	15.3%
	Hungary	23,813	105,272	**22.6%**	35,547	99,871	**35.6%**	49.3%	13.0%
	Poland	43,548	428,203	**10.2%**	70,688	374,244	**18.9%**	62.3%	8.7%
	Romania	47,919	231,348	**20.7%**	63,594	219,483	**29.0%**	32.7%	8.3%
	Slovenia	5,984	18,788	**31.9%**	8,943	18,932	**47.2%**	49.4%	15.4%
	Slovakia	8,430	60,123	**14.0%**	14,820	53,904	**27.5%**	75.8%	13.5%
	EU27	1,172,663	5,132,932	**22.8%**	:	:			

Base: Total Live Births
Number: EU27
Source: Eurostat 2008, Population and Social Conditions, 'Live births by marital status and mother's age at last birthday', demo_fagec

Table A13: Live births within marriage, 1996 and 2006

		1996			2006				
Typology		Live births inside marriage	Total live births	%	Live births inside warriage	Total live births	%	Percentage rate of change	Percentage difference, 1996 & 2006
Defamilialised	**Denmark**	36,336	67,638	**53.7%**	34,858	64,984	**53.6%**	-4.1%	-0.1%
	Finland	39,239	60,723	**64.6%**	34,982	58,840	**59.5%**	-10.8%	-5.2%
	Sweden	43,949	95,297	**46.1%**	47,164	105,913	**44.5%**	7.3%	-1.6%
	France	:	:		411,096	830,288	**49.5%**	:	:
	Luxembourg	4,838	5,689	**85.0%**	3,925	5,514	**71.2%**	-18.9%	-13.9%
	Belgium	94,257	116,442	**80.9%**	:	121,382		:	:
Partially Defamilialised	**Austria**	63,929	88,809	**72.0%**	48,958	77,914	**62.8%**	-23.4%	-9.1%
	Germany	660,313	796,013	**83.0%**	471,205	672,724	**70.0%**	-28.6%	-12.9%
	Netherlands	157,329	189,521	**83.0%**	116,482	185,057	**62.9%**	-26.0%	-20.1%
	Ireland	37,858	50,655	**74.7%**	42,942	64,237	**66.8%**	13.4%	-7.9%
	UK	472,494	732,863	**64.5%**	421,771	748,563	**56.3%**	-10.7%	-8.1%
Familialised	**Italy**	484,345	528,103	**91.7%**	:	:		:	:
	Portugal	89,763	110,363	**81.3%**	72,117	105,449	**68.4%**	-19.7%	-12.9%
	Spain	320,274	362,626	**88.3%**	345,916	482,957	**71.6%**	8.0%	-16.7%
	Greece	97,428	100,718	**96.7%**	106,128	112,042	**94.7%**	8.9%	-2.0%
	Cyprus	9,494	9,638	**98.5%**	8,242	8,731	**94.4%**	-13.2%	-4.1%
	Malta	4,903	5,038	**97.3%**	3,019	3,885	**77.7%**	-38.4%	-19.6%
Refamilialised	**Bulgaria**	51,904	72,188	**71.9%**	36,406	73,978	**49.2%**	-29.9%	-22.7%
	Czech Rep.	75,158	90,446	**83.1%**	70,572	105,831	**66.7%**	-6.1%	-16.4%
	Estonia	6,872	13,242	**51.9%**	6,212	14,877	**41.8%**	-9.6%	-10.1%
	Latvia	13,242	19,782	**66.9%**	12,610	22,264	**56.6%**	-4.8%	-10.3%
	Lithuania	33,477	39,066	**85.7%**	21,999	31,265	**70.4%**	-34.3%	-15.3%
	Hungary	81,459	105,272	**77.4%**	64,324	99,871	**64.4%**	-21.0%	-13.0%
	Poland	384,655	428,203	**89.8%**	303,556	374,244	**81.1%**	-21.1%	-8.7%
	Romania	183,429	231,348	**79.3%**	155,889	219,483	**71.0%**	-15.0%	-8.3%
	Slovenia	12,804	18,788	**68.1%**	9,989	18,932	**52.8%**	-22.0%	-15.4%
	Slovakia	51,693	60,123	**86.0%**	39,084	53,904	**72.5%**	-24.4%	-13.5%
	EU27	3,960,266	5,132,932	**77.2%**	:	:			

Base: Total Live Births
Number: EU27
Source: Eurostat 2008, Population and Social Conditions, 'Live births by marital status and mother's age at last birthday', demo_fagec

Table A.14: Percentage of women from the entire birth cohort (1952-1959) who had experienced a second union formation by age 35 when the woman already had her own pre-union children

Typology		%
Defamilialised	**Finland**	7.6
	Sweden	11.4
	Belgium	4.2
	France	7.3
Partially Defamilialised	**Austria**	7.8
	West Germany	6.1
Familialised	**Italy**	1.1
	Spain	2.4
Refamilialised	**Latvia**	16.8
	Lithuania	7.0
	Hungary	9.8
	Estonia	19.5
	Czech Republic	12.6
	Poland	2.6
	Slovenia	5.1
	East Germany	12.1

Adapted from: Prskawetz *et al.*, 2003:132.

Table A.15: Distribution among total population: three or more adults with dependent children

		1996	2001	2006			Notes	
Typology		Households with 3 or more adults with dependent children (%)	Households with 3 or more adults with dependent children (%)	Households with 3 or more adults with dependent children (%)	Percentage difference, 1996 & 2006	Percentage difference, 2001 & 2006	2001	2006
Defamilialised	Denmark	:	:	2	:	:		
	Finland	5	2	3	-2	1	bi	
	Sweden	:	:	4	:	:		
	France	9	7	4	-5	-3	bi	
	Luxembourg	15	12	8	-7	-4		
	Belgium	9	9	7	-2	-2		
Partially Defamilialised	Austria	20	21	12	-8	-9		
	Germany (includir	11	:	6	-5			
	Netherlands	7	10	5	-2	-5	i	
	Ireland	24	28	17	-7	-11		
	United Kingdom	10	8	7	-3	-1	i	
Familialised	Italy	18	17	11	-7	-6		
	Portugal	25	27	17	-8	-10		p
	Spain	27	27	14	-13	-13		
	Greece	17	15	10	-7	-5		
	Cyprus	:	:	16	:	:		
	Malta	:	:	18	:	:		p
Refamilialised	Czech Republic	:	12	11	:	-1	i	
	Estonia	:	11	14	:	3	i	
	Latvia	:	:	21	:			
	Lithuania	:	15	16	:	1	i	
	Hungary	:	16	15	:	-1	i	
	Poland	:	24	25	:	1	i	
	Romania	:	24	:	:	:	i	
	Slovenia	:	22	19	:	-3	i	
	Slovakia	:	:	24	:	:		
	EU25	:	15	10	:	-5	is	s

Base: Total Population
Number: EU25 (plus Romania)
Source: Eurostat 2008, Population and Social Conditions, 'Distribution of population by household types', ilc_ov19

Table A.16: Total divorce rate

Typology		1965	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2003	2004	2005	2006	Rate of change, 1995 & 2005
Defamilialised	**Denmark**	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.5	:	25%
	Finland	0.1	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0%
	Sweden	:	0.2	0.5	0.4	0.5	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0%
	France	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	
	Luxembourg	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	67%
	Belgium	:	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.4	0.5	:	:	:	
Partially Defamilialised	**Austria**	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.5	25%
	Germany	0.1	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.4	33%
	Netherlands	:	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.4	0%
	Ireland	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	:	:	:	:	:	
	UK	0.1	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.4	:	0.5	0.5	0.4	:	0%
Familialised	**Italy**	0	0	0	0	0	0.1	0.1	:	:	0.1	0.1	:	0%
	Portugal	0	0	0	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	50%
	Spain	0	0	0	0	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.3	:	200%
	Greece	:	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2	:	:	:	:	
	Cyprus	:	:	:	:	:	:	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	100%
	Malta	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	
Refamilialised	**Bulgaria**	:	:	:	:	:	:	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	50%
	Czech Rep.	:	:	:	:	:	:	0.4	0.4	:	0.5	0.5	0.5	25%
	Estonia	:	:	:	:	:	:	0.7	0.5	0.5	0.5	:	0.5	
	Latvia	:	:	:	:	:	:	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.5	33%
	Lithuania	:	:	:	:	:	:	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.5	67%
	Hungary	:	:	:	:	:	:	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	33%
	Poland	:	:	:	:	:	:	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.3	200%
	Romania	:	:	:	:	:	:	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0%
	Slovenia	:	:	:	:	:	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.2	200%
	Slovakia	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.4	

Base: Mean number of divorces per marriage in a given year
Number: EU27
Source: Eurostat 2008, General and Regional Statistics, 'Total Divorce Rate', cab11152

Table A.17: Crude divorce rate

Typology		1985	1995	2005	2006	2007	Rate of change, 1985 & 2005	Rate of change, 1985 & 1995	Rate of change, 1995 & 2005	Rate of change, 2005 & 2006	Notes 2007
Defamilialised	**Denmark**	2.8	2.5	2.8	2.6	2.6	0%	-11%	12%	-7%	
	Finland	1.8	2.7	2.6	2.5	2.5	44%	50%	-4%	-4%	
	Sweden	2.4	2.6	2.2	2.2	2.3	-8%	8%	-15%	0%	
	France	:	2.1	2.5	2.2	:			19%	-12%	
	Luxembourg	1.8	1.8	2.3	2.5	2.3	28%	0%	28%	9%	
	Belgium	1.9	3.5	2.9	2.8	2.9	53%	84%	-17%	-3%	p
Partially Defamilialised	**Austria**	2.0	2.3	2.4	2.5	2.4	20%	15%	4%	4%	p
	Germany	2.3	2.1	2.4	2.3	:	4%	-9%	14%	-4%	
	Netherlands	2.3	2.2	2.0	1.9	2.0	-13%	-4%	-9%	-5%	
	Ireland	:	0.0	0.8	:	:					
	UK	2.8	2.9	2.6	:	:	-7%	4%	-10%		
Familialised	**Italy**	0.3	0.5	0.8	:	0.8	167%	67%	60%		p
	Portugal	0.9	1.2	2.2	2.3	2.4	144%	33%	83%	5%	
	Spain	0.5	0.8	1.7	:	:	240%	60%	113%		
	Greece	0.8	1.0	1.2	1.3	1.2	50%	25%	20%	8%	p
	Cyprus	0.5	1.2	2.0	2.3	2.1	300%	140%	67%	15%	p
	Malta	0.0	0.0	0.0	:	:					
Refamilialised	**Bulgaria**	1.6	1.3	1.9	1.9	2.1	19%	-19%	46%	0%	
	Czech Rep.	2.9	3.0	3.1	3.1	3.0	7%	3%	3%	0%	
	Estonia	4.0	5.2	3.0	2.8	2.8	-25%	30%	-42%	-7%	
	Latvia	4.5	3.1	2.8	3.2	3.3	-38%	-31%	-10%	14%	
	Lithuania	3.2	2.8	3.3	3.3	3.4	3%	-13%	18%	0%	
	Hungary	2.8	2.4	2.5	2.5	2.5	-11%	-14%	4%	0%	p
	Poland	1.3	1.0	1.8	1.9	1.7	38%	-23%	80%	6%	
	Romania	1.4	1.6	1.5	1.5	1.7	7%	14%	-6%	0%	p
	Slovenia	1.3	0.8	1.3	1.2	1.4	0%	-38%	63%	-8%	p
	Slovakia	1.5	1.7	2.1	2.4	2.3	40%	13%	24%	14%	
	EU27	1.7	1.8	2.0	:	:	18%	6%	11%		
	EU25	1.8	1.8	2.1	:	:	17%	0%	17%		

Number: EU27

Source: Eurostat 2008, Population and Social Conditions, 'Divorce Indicators', demo_ndivind

Table A.18: Mean duration of marriage at divorce (years)

Typology		1965	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2003	2004	2005	2006	Rate of change, 1995 & 2005
Defamilialised	**Denmark**	11.2	11.2	11.1	10.4	11.2	11.4	11.4	11.5	11.1	11.2	11.4	:	0%
	Finland	11.1	11.1	11.6	11.6	12.4	12.4	12.5	12.7	12.5	12.5	12.6	12.6	1%
	Sweden	:	12.4	12.6	11.2	11.8	12.0	11.8	11.7	11.9	11.8	11.9	11.6	1%
	France	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	
	Luxembourg	10.5	13.1	10.5	11.4	11.5	13.1	12.5	11.5	12.9	12.8	13.3	13.3	6%
	Belgium	:	13.1	13.3	12.6	13.6	13.9	13.3	13.1	13.0	:	:	:	
Partially Defamilialised	**Austria**	8.6	8.5	8.4	9.2	9.8	10.0	10.7	11.1	11.2	10.8	10.7	10.6	0%
	Germany	9.0	9.1	9.1	10.0	10.3	11.4	11.7	12.3	12.4	12.6	12.7	12.8	9%
	Netherlands	8.5	13.6	14.4	11.5	12.1	11.8	11.5	12.2	13.0	13.0	13.0	13.2	13%
	Ireland	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	
	UK	12.7	12.3	13.0	12.5	11.1	11.6	11.2	:	12.9	13.1	13.3	:	19%
Familialised	**Italy**	:	:	24.2	17.1	16.9	15.5	15.8	:	:	16.7	16.8	:	6%
	Portugal	18.0	15.2	17.4	13.9	14.3	14.2	13.5	13.3	12.8	12.7	12.7	12.9	-6%
	Spain	:	:	:	:	15.4	14.8	16.1	14.7	14.6	14.8	13.9	:	-14%
	Greece	:	14.4	11.5	14.7	12.8	12.1	11.1	12.4	:	:	:	:	
	Cyprus	:	:	:	:	:	:	11.4	12.0	11.9	12.5	11.9	11.6	4%
	Malta	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	
Refamilialised	**Bulgaria**	:	:	:	:	:	:	9.0	10.2	10.9	12.3	12.3	12.2	37%
	Czech Rep.	:	:	:	:	:	:	10.7	11.2	:	12.0	12.3	12.1	15%
	Estonia	:	:	:	:	:	:	10.1	9.8	10.9	10.5	:	10.6	
	Latvia	:	:	:	:	:	:	9.9	10.4	10.4	10.5	10.5	10.9	6%
	Lithuania	:	:	:	:	:	:	11.0	11.4	11.3	11.6	11.6	11.7	5%
	Hungary	:	:	:	:	:	:	10.8	11.0	11.6	11.7	11.8	11.9	9%
	Poland	:	:	:	:	:	:	12.5	11.4	12.7	12.9	13.3	13.2	6%
	Romania	:	:	:	:	:	:	9.1	9.9	11.0	10.6	11.1	11.3	22%
	Slovenia	:	:	:	:	:	10.4	12.2	12.6	13.6	13.4	13.6	13.7	11%
	Slovakia	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	11.8	12.7	12.8	13.0	13.3	

Number: EU27

Source: Eurostat 2008, General and Regional Statistics, 'Mean duration of marriage at divorce (years)', cab11280

Table A.19: Marriages by previous marital status and sex, 2006

		Males								Females						
Typology		Single persons	%	Widowed persons	%	Divorced persons	%	Total of the marital status		Single persons	%	Widowed persons	%	Divorced persons	%	Total of the marital status
Defamilialised	**Denmark**	26785	**73.5%**	660	**1.8%**	8085	**22.2%**	36452		26384	**72.4%**	708	**1.9%**	7697	**21.1%**	36452
	Finland	20993	**74.3%**	324	**1.1%**	5787	**20.5%**	28236		21630	**76.6%**	428	**1.5%**	6178	**21.9%**	28236
	Sweden	32836	**72.1%**	441	**1.0%**	7994	**17.5%**	45551		35512	**78.0%**	388	**0.9%**	9651	**21.2%**	45551
	France	217865	**79.5%**	4097	**1.5%**	52122	**19.0%**	274084		221032	**80.6%**	4268	**1.6%**	48784	**17.8%**	274084
	Luxembourg	1430	**73.4%**	25	**1.3%**	493	**25.3%**	1948		1474	**75.7%**	15	**0.8%**	459	**23.6%**	1948
	Belgium	:		:		:		:		:		:		:		:
Partially Defamilialised	**Austria**	27121	**73.5%**	515	**1.4%**	9287	**25.2%**	36923		27466	**74.4%**	332	**0.9%**	9125	**24.7%**	36923
	Germany	274022	**73.3%**	7018	**1.9%**	92641	**24.8%**	373681		273222	**73.1%**	4330	**1.2%**	96129	**25.7%**	373681
	Netherlands	:		:		:		:		:		:		:		:
	Ireland	:		:		:		:		:		:		:		:
	UK	:		:		:		:		:		:		:		:
Familialised	**Italy**	:		:		:		:		:		:		:		:
	Portugal	40541	**84.7%**	675	**1.4%**	6641	**13.9%**	47857		41799	**87.3%**	456	**1.0%**	5602	**11.7%**	47857
	Spain	181875	**89.4%**	1864	**0.9%**	19714	**9.7%**	203453		184267	**90.6%**	1116	**0.5%**	18070	**8.9%**	203453
	Greece	50272	**87.0%**	597	**1.0%**	6933	**12.0%**	57802		50945	**88.1%**	408	**0.7%**	6449	**11.2%**	57802
	Cyprus	4297	**81.8%**	97	**1.8%**	819	**15.6%**	5252		4402	**83.8%**	69	**1.3%**	746	**14.2%**	5252
	Malta	2329	**91.8%**	7	**0.3%**	30	**1.2%**	2536		2324	**91.6%**	11	**0.4%**	51	**2.0%**	2536
Refamilialised	**Bulgaria**	28359	**86.5%**	279	**0.9%**	3739	**11.4%**	32773		28730	**87.7%**	313	**1.0%**	3633	**11.1%**	32773
	Czech Rep.	39149	**74.1%**	551	**1.0%**	13160	**24.9%**	52860		39569	**74.9%**	637	**1.2%**	12654	**23.9%**	52860
	Estonia	4843	**69.6%**	129	**1.9%**	1982	**28.5%**	6954		4979	**71.6%**	187	**2.7%**	1788	**25.7%**	6954
	Latvia	10496	**71.8%**	326	**2.2%**	3794	**26.0%**	14616		10692	**73.2%**	487	**3.3%**	3437	**23.5%**	14616
	Lithuania	16278	**76.6%**	340	**1.6%**	4628	**21.8%**	21246		16641	**78.3%**	502	**2.4%**	4103	**19.3%**	21246
	Hungary	34684	**98.9%**	570	**1.6%**	9274	**26.5%**	35058		35058	**78.7%**	599	**1.3%**	8871	**19.9%**	44528
	Poland	202442	**89.5%**	3932	**1.7%**	19807	**8.8%**	226181		204241	**90.3%**	4289	**1.9%**	17651	**7.8%**	226181
	Romania	123635	**84.3%**	1949	**1.3%**	21053	**14.4%**	146637		124680	**85.0%**	2537	**1.7%**	19420	**13.2%**	146637
	Slovenia	5684	**89.3%**	92	**1.4%**	592	**9.3%**	6368		5799	**91.1%**	68	**1.1%**	501	**7.9%**	6368
	Slovakia	22106	**85.2%**	199	**0.8%**	3634	**14.0%**	25939		22694	**87.5%**	146	**0.6%**	3099	**11.9%**	25939

Base: Total Marriages by Sex
Number: EU27
Source: Eurostat 2008, Population and Social Conditions, 'Marriages by previous marital status and sex', demo_nmsta

Table A.20: Population, number and proportion (rate per 10,000) of children under three years in institutional care in 2003

Country	*Population*	*Number in institutions*	*Rate per 10,000**
Belgium[2]	383,639	2,164[7]	(56)
Latvia	71,250[5]	395	55
Bulgaria	245,704[5]	1,238	50
Lithuania	100,268	458	46
Hungary	174,893[4]	773	44
Romania	877,772	2,915	33
Slovak Republic	160,186	502	31
Finland	168,370	466[9]	(28)
Malta	16,485	44	27
Estonia	37,953	100	26
Spain	1,064,764	2,471[8]	(23)
Netherlands	818,713	1,284	16
France	2,294,439	2,980[10]	(13)
Luxembourg	16,992[5]	20	12
Sweden	278,400[5]	213[9]	(8)
Germany	2,232,569	1,495	7
Ireland	166,208	95[8]	(6)
Cyprus	33,339	15[8]	(4)
Austria[1]	107,709[4]	37[6]	3
Turkey	4,388,000	850	2
Italy	1,614,667	310[11]	(2)
Norway	172,877	17[9]	(<1)
United Kingdom[3]	2,037,463	65[9]	(<1)
Iceland	12,412	0	0
Slovenia	53,736	0	0

* Figures in brackets should be treated with caution – these figures have either been based on estimates from samples of children over the age of five years or include children who may be in institutional care with a parent, for less than three months, or in a facility with less than 11 children.

Source: Chou and Browne, 2008: 43. Refer to original source for information on notes on data.

Annex B Chapter 3 Tables

Eurostat Notes:

:	Not available
b	Break in series
e	Estimated value
i	See explanatory text
p	Provisional value
s	Eurostat estimate
u	Unreliable or uncertain data

Eurostat country abbreviations:

be	Belgium
bg	Bulgaria
cz	Czech Republic
dk	Denmark
de	Germany
ee	Estonia
ie	Ireland
gr	Greece
es	Spain
fr	France
it	Italy
cy	Cyprus
lv	Latvia
lt	Lithuania
lu	Luxembourg
hu	Hungary
mt	Malta
nl	Netherlands
at	Austria
pl	Poland
pt	Portugal
ro	Romania
si	Slovenia
sk	Slovakia
fi	Finland
se	Sweden
uk	United Kingdom

Table B.1: Distribution of single parents with dependent children and households with dependent children among total population and at-risk-of-poverty population, 2006

Distribution among:		LPHH	HHDC
eu25	total pop.	5	52
	at-risk-of-poverty pop.	9	55
dk	total pop.	7	48
	at-risk-of-poverty pop.	11	34
fi	total pop.	5	48
	at-risk-of-poverty pop.	7	33
fr	total pop.	5	54
	at-risk-of-poverty pop.	11	54
se	total pop.	8	52
	at-risk-of-poverty pop.	20	51
de	total pop.	6	46
	at-risk-of-poverty pop.	11	40
nl	total pop.	4	51
	at-risk-of-poverty pop.	13	58
uk	total pop.	8	48
	at-risk-of-poverty pop.	17	52
es	total pop.	2	52
	at-risk-of-poverty pop.	3	56
gr	total pop.	2	49
	at-risk-of-poverty pop.	2	54
mt	total pop.	2	57
	at-risk-of-poverty pop.	6	62
cz	total pop.	4	52
	at-risk-of-poverty pop.	16	70
pl	total pop.	3	62
	at-risk-of-poverty pop.	4	76

Source: Eurostat 2008, Income and living conditions, 'Distribution of population by household types', ilc_ov19

Note: 2006 data for eu25 is a Eurostat estimate; 2006 MT data is provisional

Table B.2: At-risk-of-poverty rate (cut-off point: 60 per cent of median equivalised income after social transfers), single parent households vs. households with dependent children, 1996, 2001, and 2006

								Rate of change			
		1996		2001		2006		1996 & 2006		2001 & 2006	
Typology	Geo	LPHH	HHDC	LPHH	HHDC	LPHH	HHDC	LPHH	HHDC	LPHH	HHDC
	eu25	:	:	30	18	32 s	17 s	:	:	7%	-6%
	eu15	37 s	18 s	32	18	32 s	17 s	-14%	-6%	0%	-6%
Defam.	dk	:	:	12 i	6 i	19	8	:	:	58%	33%
	fi	8	5	17 bi	8 bi	18	9	125%	80%	6%	13%
	fr	34	15	29 bi	15 bi	29	13	-15%	-13%	0%	-13%
	se	:	:	13 i	7 i	32	12	:	:	146%	71%
Partially defam.	de	51	14	36	12	24	11	-53%	-21%	-33%	-8%
	nl	39	14	38 ip	14 ip	32	11	-18%	-21%	-16%	-21%
	uk	52	21	43 bi	21 bi	41	21	-21%	0%	-5%	0%
Famil.	es	32	21	42	22	38	22	19%	5%	-10%	0%
	gr	27	20	37	17	30	23	11%	15%	-19%	35%
	mt	:	:	:	:	37 p	16 p	:	:	:	:
Refam.	cz	:	:	26 i	10 i	41	13	:	:	58%	30%
	pl	:	:	22 i	19 i	32	23	:	:	45%	21%

Source: Eurostat 2008, Income and living conditions, 'At-risk-of-poverty rate, by household type', ilc_sis1a

Table B.3: Percentage of households below the poverty threshold with heavy financial burden due to housing costs (total households vs. single parents with dependent children), 1995 and 2001

Typology			Total	SPDC
	eu15	1995	30.5	36.2
		2001	26.4	41.5
Defam.	dk	1995	12.6	15.6 u
		2001	11.9	10.3 u
	fi	1996	25.8	31.1 u
		2001	22.6	18.6 u
	fr	1995	28.4	39.6
		2001	25.8	37.1
Partially defam.	de	1995	22.8	22.9
		2001	19.8	46.9 u
	nl	1995	14.6	29.4 u
		2001	9.6	23.4 u
	uk	1995	13.7 u	:
		2001	5.8	16.7
Famil.	es	1995	56.3	57.0 u
		2000	38.2	65.2 u
	gr	1995	23.5	12.6 u
		2001	17.1	:

Source: Eurostat, Income and living conditions, 'Burden of the housing costs by type of household and income group', ilc_ho_afforda

Table B.4: Tenure status as a percentage of all households below the poverty threshold (total households vs. single parents with dependent children), 1995/1996/1997 and 2000/2001

Typology	Country		Owner		Rent		Rent free	
			Total	LPHH	Total	LPHH	Total	LPHH
	eu15	1995	45.6	27.5	47.6	67.9	6.9	4.6
		2001	50.1	26.6	43.3	66.7	6.5	6.7
Defam.	dk	1995	35.5	6.0 u	63.6	94.0 u	0.9	0.0
		2001	37.9	21.1 u	61.2	78.9 u	0.9	:
	fi	1996	39.8	25.7 u	55.6	74.3 u	4.6	6.8 u
		2001	42.3	9.8 u	55.8	90.2 u	1.9	:
	fr	1995	42.1	16.1	51.7	80.7	6.2	3.2
		2001	47.0	15.1	45.2	75.8	7.8	9.1
	se	1997	37.9	37.7 u	62.0	62.3 u	0.1	:
		2001	35.8	34.9 u	64.2	65.1 u	:	:
Partially defam.	de	1995	23.5	5.7	69.8	92.7	6.6	1.5
		2001	27.5	4.3	64.5	91.5	8.0	4.2
	nl	1995	27.4	3.7 u	69.1	96.3 u	3.5	0.0
		2001	39.8	7.0 u	58.0	93.0 u	2.2	:
	uk	1995	48.0	30.4	48.1	69.6	3.9	1.2
		2001	53.7	21.7	44.1	76.1	2.3	2.1
Famil.	es	1995	74.6	53.1 u	16.6	38.3 u	8.9	8.5 u
		2000	83.4	86.3 u	8.7	12.1 u	7.9	1.6 u
	gr	1995	89.1	77.3 u	8.2	14.2 u	2.7	8.5 u
		2001	90.6	:	5.3	:	4.0	:

Source: Eurostat 2008, Income and living conditions, 'Tenure status of accommodation by type of household and income group', ilc_ho_tenstata

Table B.5: Percentage of households below the poverty threshold with housing problems (total households vs. single parents with dependent children), 1995, 1996, and 2000

			Lack of space		Noise from neighbours or outside		Darkness		Inadequate heating facilities		Rot in the house or damp or leaky roof		Pollution caused by traffic or industry		Vandalism or crime		Households with ≥3 housing problems	
Typology	Geo	Yr	Total	SPDC	Total	SPDC	Total	SPDC	Total	SPDC	Total	SPDC	Total	SPDC	Total	SPDC	Total	SPDC
	eu15	1995	23.6	28.3	28.4	32.2	12.4	16.9	17.9	25.9	28.0	32.5	18.2	20.2	20.6	25.4	26.2	33.4
		1996	21.2	25.3	33.3	46.6	13.0	16.6	17.7	23.1	25.6	25.1	15.2	19.7	20.4	26.6	24.7	30.6
		2000	19.7	21.0	27.3	36.5	11.9	14.7	15.8	19.6	23.4	22.7	12.0	11.5	17.5	23.5	22.5	28.8
Defam.	dk	1995	21.1	38.5 u	15.6	31.1 u	4.6	:	5.6	7.7 u	13.7	15.1 u	8.0	4.5 u	10.3	16.4 u	10.5	19.3 u
		1996	18.9	16.3 u	18.5	37.5 u	5.2	7.8 u	6.6	10.4 u	13.5	23.9 u	8.1	16.2 u	11.2	31.3 u	9.8	23.8 u
		2000	16.4	37.0 u	17.2	40.7 u	3.8	1.8 u	3.5	4.8 u	9.7	13.4 u	5.8	10.1 u	9.2	23.4 u	7.5	20.3 u
	fi	1995	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
		1996	15.1	20.2 u	33.7	59.4 u	6.7	4.4 u	5.2	24.7 u	10.0	9.2 u	17.0	25.8 u	19.3	45.5 u	13.6	33.9 u
		2000	19.9	32.1 u	33.0	70.1 u	4.6	20.1 u	4.5	15.0 u	9.9	9.1 u	14.5	10.1 u	23.6	40.3 u	14.6	42.0 u
	fr	1995	17.1	18.7	29.0	37.7	12.7	10.3	16.9	20.2	35.1	34.6	16.8	19.0	20.9	31.8	27.4	32.8
		1996	15.9	18.4	26.5	39.9	13.5	21.2	17.3	18.7	31.8	32.4	14.2	22.0	22.8	34.7	25.1	32.6
		2000	15.9	19.5	26.1	35.8	15.0	17.9	17.4	27.7	32.9	32.0	16.9	14.5	18.7	20.4	24.3	31.9
Partially defam.	de	1995	20.2	40.6 u	31.2	28.7 u	8.6	23.1 u	8.6	31.2 u	18.7	36.2 u	18.7	24.9 u	10.9	8.1 u	18.3	42.4 u
		1996	16.0	18.2 u	38.6	50.0 u	9.7	19.0 u	9.3	20.4 u	17.5	22.1 u	13.2	17.2 u	12.2	8.2 u	17.2	21.9 u
		2000	19.8	24.4 u	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
	nl	1995	18.1	19.4 u	42.9	61.5 u	6.8	6.8 u	9.2	7.5 u	31.3	38.0 u	15.3	15.7 u	29.3	40.2 u	26.3	36.3 u
		1996	17.0	19.3 u	46.5	41.9 u	7.1	2.2 u	11.5	11.0 u	28.8	46.7 u	12.7	14.1 u	22.8	28.5 u	21.5	13.8 u
		2000	17.1	17.5	41.4	49.8	6.3	5.3	9.8	14.8	29.2	34.8	15.2	14.8	23.7	37.0	24.7	22.7
	uk	1995	25.2	30.7	24.6	25.2	11.0	12.5	19.8	26.5	35.7	42.7	17.8	18.2	37.4	42.7	29.4	30.0
		1996	23.6	34.6	32.3	35.1	10.3	13.6	19.3	34.9	30.4	40.0	15.3	13.1	33.7	41.3	27.8	39.8
		2000	:	:	24.9	37.1	6.4	11.6	6.5	9.1	15.2	26.3	7.7	6.0	20.9	27.6	19.2	33.1
Famil.	es	1995	27.0	19.4 u	29.8	32.4 u	16.2	27.9 u	0.5	:	34.9	22.4 u	16.1	28.5 u	23.4	23.7 u	27.6	35.8 u
		1996	26.9	15.2 u	30.4	55.7 u	21.6	9.2 u	1.1	9.2 u	34.1	3.9 u	11.0	18.1 u	20.0	36.9 u	26.7	23.2 u
		2000	17.5	30.1 u	20.6	25.9 u	12.3	30.0 u	1.0	5.8 u	22.9	31.2 u	6.2	:	13.0	30.9 u	15.8	34.2 u
	gr	1995	27.5	20.9 u	11.7	11.7 u	12.2	12.9 u	56.0	47.0 u	40.5	45.3 u	10.2	26.9 u	3.9	17.8 u	32.7	24.7 u
		1996	27.0	:	14.3	:	12.5	:	49.4	:	36.5	:	11.1	:	3.8	:	29.7	:
		2000	20.6	:	13.4	:	9.6	:	42.9	:	33.8	:	8.9	:	4.2	:	24.3	:

Source: Eurostat 2008, Income and living conditions, 'Housing problems by type of household and income group', ilc_ho_problemb

Table B.6: Percentage of households below the poverty threshold lacking basic amenities (total households vs. single parents with dependent children), 1995-2001

			Hot running water on the premises		Bath, shower in dwelling		Flush toilet in dwelling		Missing at least one of 3 basic amenities		Central heating	
Typology	Geo	Yr	Total	LPHH	Total	LPHH	Total	LPHH	Total	LPHH	Total	LPHH
	eu15	1995	6.5	3.5	6.6	6.7	5	4.4	10.5	9	32.6	32.6
		1996	6.5	3.5	6	3.5	4.2	1.6	9.9	6.1	30.5	26.2
		1997	6.9	3.6	5.7	2	4.9	1.6	11.2	5	31.6	21.8
		1998	8.4	7.9	5	1.9	3.9	1.3	31.6	23.1	29.4	23.1
		1999	7.6	3.9	4.8	1.2	3.8	1	32.9	22.6	30.7	22.4
		2000	6.5	4	4.5	0.7	3.4	0.8	28.8	23.1	26.8 :	
		2001	6.2	3.5	4.2	0.9	3.2	0.7	28.9	21.1	27	21
Defam.	dk	1995	2.7 :		7.7 :		3.1 :		7.7 :		4.8	3.2 u
		1996	2.7 :		6.7	3.1 u	2.7 :		6.8	3.1 u	2.3 :	
		1997	2 :		6.5 :		4 :		6.5 :		1.6 :	
		1998	2 :		5.7 :		2.8 :		6.3 :		1.6 :	
		1999	1.3 :		4.8	1.35 u	3.2 :		5.4	1.35 u	0.8 :	
		2000	1.4 :		3.2 :		2.7 :		3.7 :		0.5 :	
		2001	1.2 :		2.9 :		1.8 :		3.3 :		0.6 :	
	fi	1995	: :		: :		: :		: :		: :	
		1996	5.2 :		8.2 :		5 :		9.3 :		5.4 :	
		1997	6.3 :		8 :		5.8 :		9.7 :		3.7 :	
		1998	8 :		10.1 :		7 :		13.1 :		7.6 :	
		1999	5.1 :		5.8 :		4.8 :		8.8 :		4.9 :	
		2000	5 :		5.4 :		5.5 :		9.5 :		4.9 :	
		2001	5.2 :		5.2 :		5.5 :		9.2 :		5.2 :	
	fr	1995	5.9	1.1	9.5	1.2	6.8	1.3	12.4	2.5	19	7.2
		1996	5.9	1.1	9.6	1.1	6.3	1.3	11.9	2.4	20.4	5.9
		1997	5.6 :		9.1 :		5.8	1.4	11	1.4	19.9	9.4
		1998	5.4	1.3	8.4	1.3	6	1.4	23	10	18.9	10
		1999	6.4	1.2	9.3	1.2	6.5	1.3	24.2	11.8	19.8	11.8
		2000	4.9	1.2	7.5	1.2	5.3	1.4	21.9	10.9	18.6 :	
		2001	3.7	1.3	6.1	1.3	4.7 :		20.7	6.3	17.7	6.3
Partially defam.	de	1995	10.5	3.2 u	7.5	19.5 u	5.1	12.8 u	16.2	24.8 u	21.6	38.6 u
		1996	10.5	3.2 u	6.2	8.5 u	3.2	1.9 u	14.8	11.4 u	18.9	24.9 u
		1997	7.4	6.4	6.5	1.4	7.1	2.4	13.6	7.4	28.4	12.6
		1998	5.8	2.5	3.1	0.6	2.8	0.6	20.9	6.7	18.6	6.5
		1999	4.2	0.4	3.3	1.3	3	1.3	25.2	11.5	22.6	11.5
		2000	3.7	0.39 u	3.3	0.61 u	2.6	0.61 u	18.6	10.11 u	16.2 :	
		2001	4.3 :		4.4	1.28 u	3.7	1.28 u	18.9	10.53 u	15.6	10.53 u
	nl	1995	1.3 :		3.2 :		2.8 :		3.9 :		16.4	4.7 u
		1996	1.3 :		1.7 :		1.6 :		2 :		15.4	13.3 u
		1997	0.9 :		1.9 :		1.8 :		2.8 :		13.7	9.4 u
		1998	0.5 :		2.5 :		2 :		16.2	5.07 u	14.4	5.07 u
		1999	0.9 :		1.1 :		1.5 :		15.9	5.71 u	14.8	5.71 u
		2000	: :		0.8 :		0.5 :		11.4	6.8	11.2 :	
		2001	0.5 :		0.5 :		0.6 :		9.8	6.35 u	9.5	6.35 u
	uk	1995	: :		0.4 :		0.4 :		1 :		19.3	11.2
		1996	: :		0.4	0.5	0.6	0.5	0.7	0.5	16.7	11.9
		1997	: :		1.3	0.5	0.3 :		: :		15.9	9.5
		1998	: :		2.5	1.6	0.7 :		15.8	14.4	14	14.4
		1999	: :		2.1	0.6	0.7 :		16.2	11.2	14	10.6
		2000	: :		2.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	14.6	11.6	12.3 :	
		2001	: :		1.7 :		0.7 :		12.3	3.2	10.5	3.2
Famil.	es	1995	5.5	1.5 u	3.7	8 u	2.7	5.2 u	8.5	8 u	86.9	88.2 u
		1996	5.5	1.5 u	3.1 :		2.6 :		6.8	1.5 u	84.6	75.3 u
		1997	5.5	2.2 u	3 :		1.3	2.2 u	6.1	2.2 u	78.4	93.2 u
		1998	4.6	7.79 u	1.6	2.6 u	1	4.91 u	80	90.11 u	80	90.11 u
		1999	4.3	1.52 u	1.4 :		1 :		84.2	76.3 u	84.2	76.3 u
		2000	4	10.7 u	1.7 :		1.4 :		78.1	89.06 u	78 :	
		2001	2.7 :		0.9 :		0.3 :		77.2 :		77.2 :	
	gr	1995	: :		16 :		18.1 :		: :		73.9	61.8 u
		1996	: :		11.5 :		13.5 :		: :		72.3 :	
		1997	: :		10.9 :		12.6 :		: :		72.4 :	
		1998	81.9 :		11.1 :		13.2 :		70.7 :		69.8 :	
		1999	83.4 :		15.7 :		19.5 :		70.1 :		69.5 :	
		2000	83.4 :		15.8 :		19.1 :		69 :		68.2 :	
		2001	83.5 :		14 :		18.1 :		68.1 :		67.7 :	

Source: Eurostat 2008, Income and living conditions, 'Lack of amenities by type of household and income group', ilc_ho_amenb

Table B.7: Percentage of households below the poverty threshold which cannot afford certain durables (total households vs. single parents with dependent children), 1995-1998

			Car		Colour TV		Video recorder		Dishwasher		Microwave		Telephone	
Typology	Geo	Yr	Total	LPHH	Total	LPHH	Total	LPHH	Total	LPHH	Total	LPHH	Total	LPHH
	eu15	1995	19.6	44.4	4.3	3.5	19.1	23.1	25.0	36.1	20.2	28.4	10.7	15.5
		1996	28.4	45.5	4.2	2.6	23.3	28.4	32.8	39.8	23.2	27.4	7.4	11.5
		1997	13.2	35.5	2.9	2.7	14.2	14.0	18.8	22.0	14.9	19.7	7.4	9.2
		1998	10.1	24.6	2.0	1.1	10.8	11.6	14.7	16.8	11.2	14.5	5.6	7.9
Defam.	dk	1995	23.2	59.3 u	3.2 :		11.9	20.8 u	12.1	32.6 u	14.9	30.2 u	6.8	7.0 u
		1996	21.2	40.7 u	3.8 :		11.6	3.0 u	10.1	21.3 u	12.6	15.6 u	3.9	3.0 u
		1997	22.7	51.2 u	1.8 :		7.5	6.9 u	4.8	12.3 u	8.6	20.6 u	3.3 :	
		1998	17.2	44.2 u	3.2 :		13.5	6.8 u	7.9	34.5 u	9.1	20.1 u	2.5	3.4 u
	fi	1995	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
		1996	23.5	32.8 u	9.2 :		18.9	21.2 u	17.9	34.9 u	16.1	13.5 u	10.8 :	
		1997	24.2	42.1 u	5.6	6.1 u	22.5	14.4 u	15.9	32.1 u	18.5	22.1 u	10.9	16.4 u
		1998	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
	fr	1995	17.7 u	35.8 u	5.8	7.5	22.0	23.4	19.7	25.5	21.2	32.6	5.7	2.1
		1996	16.7	40.9	4.5	5.5	19.9	27.2	20.5	34.4	17.0	25.4	5.3	8.6
		1997	15.6	45.4	3.5	8.9	17.3	15.9	20.1	25.9	16.5	28.9	4.4	3.7
		1998	21.1	34.7	4.7	5.0	19.6	16.6	23.3	33.5	16.8	27.5	5.2	8.6
Partially defam.	de	1995	15.0	40.1 u	1.2 :		11.9	14.6 u	17.9	33.4 u	15.2	20.6 u	8.8	14.6 u
		1996	51.9	59.6 u	3.5 :		35.3	28.4 u	55.5	49.6 u	33.8	31.0 u	6.4	9.5 u
		1997	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
		1998	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
	nl	1995	20.9	36.9 u	4.2 :		14.4	10.4 u	8.3	14.0 u	16.6	21.5 u	2.2 :	
		1996	21.2	40.7 u	3.2 :		11.8	8.2 u	8.8	9.1 u	18.5	17.8 u	2.2 :	
		1997	18.4	25.3 u	2.5	5.3 u	12.7	9.4 u	11.3	11.1 u	14.0	7.7 u	2.5	6.0 u
		1998	14.6	33.8 u	0.9 :		13.7	18.9 u	11.6	15.7 u	12.6	11.4 u	2.2	8.4 u
	uk	1995	26.5	43.2	3.2	2.9	13.3	17.2	24.2	42.4	11.5	18.4	12.3	20.9
		1996	28.1	44.4	3.6	2.7	14.1	15.3	21.1	31.6	12.2	16.5	1.5	1.0
		1997	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
		1998	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
Famil.	es	1995	29.0	64.5 u	2.7	8.7 u	31.4	34.6 u	56.2	61.9 u	48.8	57.8 u	23.3	33.9 u
		1996	26.0	46.6 u	3.2	3.7 u	27.8	27.8 u	50.0	77.1 u	43.6	50.2 u	19.3	29.0 u
		1997	27.9	63.0 u	1.8 :		26.8	33.2 u	49.6	63.8 u	39.3	52.5 u	16.7	16.1 u
		1998	26.6	67.3 u	1.7	1.7 u	23.3	24.8 u	47.7	46.3 u	37.2	42.8 u	17.9	25.3 u
	gr	1995	26.4	57.2 u	16.7	6.3 u	32.5	49.8 u	33.8	72.6 u	21.3	32.0 u	14.5	5.5 u
		1996	28.8 :		12.3 :		26.1 :		35.1 :		17.3 :		13.2 :	
		1997	26.5 :		12.0 :		26.3 :		37.9 :		20.9 :		12.1 :	
		1998	23.8 :		8.2 :		23.6 :		32.5 :		21.4 :		9.9 :	

Source: Eurostat 2008, Income and living conditions, 'Durables by type of household and income group', ilc_ho_durablea

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