



**The Lie of Compatibility and the Cry for a Role Model.**

**Austria versus Sweden- a Comparison**

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## Index

1. Introduction.....	3
2. Esping- Andersen and the welfare state- and others joining this debate .....	3
2.1. De- Commodification .....	4
2.2. Stratification .....	6
2.3. The State- Market Relation and Welfare State Regimes.....	9
2.3.1. The Liberal Welfare State Regime.....	9
2.3.2. The Conservative Welfare State Regime .....	10
2.3.3. The Social Democratic Welfare State Regime .....	10
2.3.4. The Welfare Systems of Austria and Sweden.....	11
2.4. Excuse: Critical Voices .....	12
2.5. Feminist Approaches and the Struggle of the Bread Winners.....	13
2.5.1. De- Commodification Reconsidered.....	14
2.5.2. Stratification reconsidered.....	15
2.5.3. State, Market, Family- The Welfare Triad and De- Familialization .....	16
2.5.4. Breadwinner Models and the (new) challenges of Welfare States: Steps towards the role model? .....	17
3. Austria vs. Sweden: What about gender friendly policies?.....	20
3.1. Compatibility of Work and Family in Austria.....	20
3.2. Compatibility of Work and Family in Sweden.....	22
3.3. Family policy: Plaything of ideologies?.....	23
4. From Theory to Practice: Debating Compatibility and Opportunities of Women in Austria and Sweden.....	24
4.1. Declaration of the strategy .....	24
4.2. Coding and Findings .....	27
4.3. Self- Reflection .....	34
5. Conclusion.....	35
6. Resources.....	37
7. Appendix.....	40

## Images

Image 1.....	8
Social Democratic, Corporatist and Liberal Welfare State Regimes with effects on different policy fields	
Image 2.....	16
Six different Breadwinner Models by Lewis (2001)	
Image 3.....	23
Demographic characteristics of the focus group discussants	
Image 4.....	24
Share of paid and unpaid work between men and women in Austria and Sweden OECD (2014)	

## 1. Introduction

*“State social provision affects women’s material situations, shapes gender relationships, Structures political conflict and participation, and contributes to the formation and mobilization of identities and interests.”* (Orloff 1993: 303) Even though it is not very creative to start a Bachelor thesis with a quotation, I think it is a perfect introduction to the topic of my analysis.

To begin with, many people, especially my generation is concerned with compatibility of paid labour and unpaid care work as the influence of the market on the family grows constantly. Furthermore emancipation of women leads to the claim of individualization, many women of my age do not want to give up their job in order to stay at home and be able to care for children or the elderly. There is a cry for the renewal of mind set and more gender equality within the welfare state. Especially in Austria there is increasing critique on the neoliberal- conservative family policy mix that *“just aims at saving money”* (cf. Sauer 2007: 36- 37). Whereas Sweden is seen as the role model for modern family policy, but except of limiting the Austrian welfare state to “the ugly one” and the Swedish to “the good one” (cf. Duvander/ Ferrarini 2013: 3; Manow 2002)

I would like to compare among the two welfare state systems with the help of the following question: Which impact on female labour market participation does the structure of Austrian compared to Swedish family policy have? In the first place I would like to compare theoretically among the two welfare state systems. The main authors of my Bachelor thesis are Gøsta Esping- Andersen (1990, 1999) as well as feminist critics like Ann- Shola Orloff (1993) and Jane Lewis (1992- 2006).

I would like to go one step further and test the questions that evolved of the theoretical comparison directly in the field, so I held a focus group discussion on compatibility of work and family and opportunities for (young) women in Austria compared to Sweden. In a third step I will bring these two parts of theory and empirical research together and try to answer my research question.

## 2. Esping- Andersen and the welfare state- and others joining this debate

To frame the edges of the problem, I take into account Gøsta Esping- Andersen’s theory of welfare states, the three dimensions he works with and his typology of different welfare state regimes. Furthermore critical voices, like Manow (2002) and Arts/ Gelissen (2002) are taken into consideration when working on this debate. In chapter 2.6. the most important

criticism for the question on this Bachelor thesis is subsumed, namely the feminist critique on the concept of welfare states by Esping- Andersen.

In a first step, I will depict the earlier criticism on Esping- Andersen's theory embodied in Lewis (1992) and Orloff (1993). In this place I would like to mention, that there are numerous (feminist) critical papers on the *Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism* and the structure of welfare states itself and I will limit myself to a small range when working on my research question and testing working hypotheses. I select this range in regard to the second core theoretical typology in this thesis on bread winner models discussed by Jane Lewis (2001) and my own scientific aim to find well reflected answers to my research question.

In the following three subchapters I will treat the core concepts of Esping- Andersen's welfare state theory, therefore I will take into consideration the origins of the different dimensions of welfare state capitalism and the theoretical approaches to them. Due to the fact that these dimensions have been criticized and afterwards reformed several times I will depict the evolution of these central concepts in a historic- theoretical way. His main work is on the three dimensions of the welfare state which will be the topic of the following chapters.

## **2.1. De- Commodification**

In order to understand the concept of de- commodification the concept of T.H. Marshall (1950) has to be taken into consideration. In his theory social citizenship constitutes the core idea of a welfare state. It involves the granting of social rights to any citizen, furthermore these rights are inviolable (cf. Esping- Andersen 1990: 21; cf. Marshall 1950).

According to Esping- Andersen, modern social policy in capitalist states has to take into account two different blocks: human welfare and the market. People can achieve welfare through participating in the labour market but in any human life there are disruptions of the "career life" such as illnesses, care work and other incidences that are not compatible with a full range of labour supply. The discussion on de- commodification starts, unsurprisingly with Marx (1954) (cf. Esping- Andersen 1990: 35- 38). He considers the transformation of independent producers into propertyless wage- earners as the beginning of the development of classes within society. A capitalist accumulation process made wage- earners, thus workers dependent on the labour market on which they sell their ability to

work as de facto commodities (cf. id.: 35- 38). By definition that means in Esping-Andersen's theory that "[de- commodification] is meant to capture the degree to which welfare states weaken the cash nexus by granting entitlements independent of market participation." (id. 1999: 43; cf. id. 1990: 35) Furthermore de- commodification prevents work as a discrete commodity from competing almost perfectly in the market, because the stronger and thus the more perfect the competition, the cheaper the price gets- and the cheaper the price of work the lower the wages of workers get. Esping- Andersen states that the aim of de- commodification is not to eradicate labour as a commodity to the full extent. It means for a person or a family to be able to uphold a certain social standard independent of the participation in the market (cf. Esping- Andersen 1990: 37).

In the next step the views of the three "big" ideologies Conservatism, Liberalism and Socialism on de- commodification are treated. In the *Three worlds of Welfare Capitalism* the influence of the conservative tradition is seen as the historical origin of modern social policy and thus of de- commodification. The biggest motivation to de- commodify workers from the market might be the conservative philosophy that commodification of individuals is "*morally degrading, socially corrupting, atomizing and anomic.*" (id.: 38) Furthermore Esping- Andersen names two motivational sources for pre- capitalist elites to promote de- commodification: First, these conservative elites didn't let the development of liberalism, democracy and capitalism destroy their power bases through abolishment of labour control and second, it was a "natural" response to the development of laissez- faire principles (cf.id.: 41).

The ideologies of Liberalism are important in this debate because they sanctify the market and thus the market is a perfectly self- sufficient system of allocation of welfare. The biggest problem and simultaneously a very contradictory idea is that Liberalism takes for granted pre- capitalist institutions of social aid, for example the family, the church or/and the community. That means in this tradition privately organised institutions of insurance are preferred (cf.id.: 42-43).

In the socialist tradition de- commodification prevents workers from being entirely subordinated under the separating and employer- controlled mechanism of class formation and -division. It's made possible to develop unity throughout the working class because of the partly emancipation from the market and the employer. Therefore interests of the

working class can establish themselves and through unity they could be enforced to a certain extent if necessary (cf.id.: 44-45).

For my Bachelor thesis it is important to work with the preconditions Esping- Andersen sets with his work in the field of welfare state theory, because feminist critics like Orloff (1993) and Hernes (1987) who are oriented alongside these preconditions re-specify his categories. In the progress of my work especially the concept of de- commodification will play an important role as it has to do with citizen- rights and social rights as above mentioned (cf. Esping- Andersen 1990: 21; cf. Marshall 1950). Exactly these rights, social, universal, inviolable and thus (de facto) available for all, which are sharply criticized in chapter 2.6. and I would like to stress again that this criticism is central to this Bachelor thesis.

## **2.2. Stratification**

The second dimension, stratification emphasizes the clustering effects of welfare state mechanisms throughout the different social strata:

*“The welfare state may provide services and income security, but it is also, and always has been, a system of social stratification. Welfare states are key institutions in the structuring of class and the social order. The organizational features of the welfare state help determine the articulation of social solidarity, divisions of class, and status differentiation.”* (Esping- Andersen 1990: 55)

The key words of this theoretical dimension are solidarity and class. A welfare state should enable for all individuals living within it to hold a certain standard of living and to not drift through poverty as already mentioned when discussing de- commodification (cf. id.: 23, 36, 55- 56). It should not be forgotten that the welfare state itself creates classes, though stratifies society in clusters of different welfare situations. Esping- Andersen refers to the welfare state, even when it is highly advanced as a system which *merely reproduces and perhaps even nurtures existing class society* (cf. id.: 55). In empirical studies the emphasis lies strongly on income redistribution. Comparing countries, the redistributive activity of welfare states differs heavily. That means that some country’s systems are more capable of redistributing income equally through mechanisms like taxation and transfers between classes than others (cf. id.: 56). The first question might be: How comes, that some countries can manage it to allocate welfare evenly between their citizens and some cannot?

To answer this question I will further stick to Esping- Andersen (1990). In his argumentation he starts at the very beginning of the discussion, he asks the question of how important income redistribution is in fact. According to his theory income redistribution is a not very satisfying way to analyse the structure of social stratification thus classes. For example he states, that large welfare states lose their tax- redistributive potential but as a result, high taxes are replaced by social transfers and in fact these transfers are the underlying instrument for fair redistribution through social strata. This statement is of great importance for my following arguments as the Scandinavian and thus the Swedish welfare state follows this tradition (cf. id.: 56).

As another important indicator of the redistributive function of welfare states he names the “level of living”- studies, for example the “life quality index” or the “human development index” (HDI). These indices (e.g. HDI) allow researchers to take into account not only the monetary aspect of living but also the situation of health care, housing, work life, education and social and political rights for example. In short, the concern with stratification lies in how nations structure social citizenship differently mostly through education, mobility of individuals and social services (cf. id.: 57- 58). In this place I would like to stress the importance of the structure of social service for my Bachelor thesis. Esping- Andersen (1990) emphasizes that the structure of social services (especially important for women, respectively working women) determine the employment structure of a nation. To show how the different ideologies influence the impact of stratification, I clustered them into three different points: stratification in conservative, liberal and social democratic social policy:

Stratification in conservative social policy: Esping- Andersen is referring to the first social-insurance system promoted by Bismarck at the end of the nineteenth century. In this system workers were strongly linked to the paternal autonomy of the monarchy and thus these tendencies still have effects on contemporary conservative social policy instruments of stratification such as taxation, social services and so on. The structure of these instruments cause the recognition and preservation of old status distinctions and has been carried over into modern capitalism (cf. id.: 59- 60). In the *Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism* three reasons why in continental Europe Conservatism is as powerful are identified. In continental Europe late- industrialized countries prevail, thus as a consequence status, hierarchy and

privilege are important values and finally the Catholic Church and therefore conservative ideas play(ed) a great role in social reform (cf. id.: 61).

Stratification in liberal social policy: Still referring to the assumptions of Esping- Andersen, the liberal school of thought is the sheer opposite of the foregoing conservative ideology. Liberalism is really suspicious about social policy as a system, as in this tradition it is equated with paternalism and elitism. The (theoretical) notion is to abolish the state and thus have no elites or monopolies manipulating the citizens. Therefore individuals are atomized and self- responsible to deal with the market and the law. Contemporary liberalism is shaped by the unleashing of modern capitalism and thus by reform liberals who promoted to uphold a minimal standard of living for the poorest strata of society such as Booth and Rowntree who edited social reports about the living and working conditions in London between 1892 and 1897 (cf. Esping- Andersen 1990: 63; Rowtree Society 2014). The fact that in liberal social policy it is only the poorest strata that receive state provision causes social stigma and dualism of the society (cf. Esping- Andersen 1990.: 64).

Stratification in socialist social policy: *“Universalism [...] became a guiding principle because it equalizes status, benefits and responsibilities of citizenship, and because it helped build political coalitions.”* (id.: 68) As the conservative stratification system sticks to elites and hierarchies and the liberal tradition causes dualism, in socialist social policy universalism is a major concept. It promotes solidarity among the classes- Esping- Andersen names the importance of labour movements for which solidarity was a central principle (cf. id.: 65). The early socialists had to overcome the legacy of old conservative or liberal structures and to fight poverty due to unemployment. They tested several options to deal with these problems: The socialist movement had to gain on power, trade unions have been formed and tried to solve the problem through collective bargaining or, as a third approach, where the movement itself became the welfare provider (cf. id.: 66- 67). These concept itself created again differences through membership and were inherently vulnerable to the cash nexus, e.g. when longer economic crises emerged (cf. id.: 67). The solution for a relatively broad universalism was and still emerged with the extension and consolidation of democratic rights (cf. id.: 67). This was taken one step further by Scandinavian social democratic politics and socialists, who even promoted the extension of universalism to the middle classes. (cf. id.: 69)

The stratification dimension of the welfare state is of great importance in the argument of my Bachelor thesis because it is one more reason for the emergence of different types of welfare states that will be discussed in the following chapters. The three main traditions conservatism, liberalism and socialism depicted above shaped (with some relativizations) according to Esping- Andersen (1990) welfare states as they exist contemporarily. For my work the distinction between these different types of welfare states is central because only this de facto possibility to differ theoretically between states allows me to meaningfully compare among states and specifically between Austria and Sweden.

### **2.3. The State- Market Relation and Welfare State Regimes**

In the *Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*, the relation of state and market is intrinsically important for the understanding of the welfare state. It determines the level of social protection and vice versa shapes it (cf. Esping- Andersen 1990: 80). Furthermore it is of great importance for the next chapter that is about the different welfare state regimes. The different welfare state regimes have particular institutional arrangements which determine the so- called public- private mix. This public- private mix differs from regime type to regime type and therefore from state to state (cf. id: 81). Esping- Andersen thus clusters three regime types: liberal, conservative and social- democratic.

#### **2.3.1. The Liberal Welfare State Regime**

As liberal welfare states Esping- Andersen considers states that promote a free market and in which the market in general is ranked very highly. Examples for liberal welfare state regimes are Great Britain, Canada, Australia and the USA. Main characteristics for these states are means- tested assistance, modest universal transfers and modest social insurance. Benefits of the state are mainly given to the lower class, that means often working class people, or so to say, the poorest strata of a postindustrial state. A problem evolving of that distribution strategy is, that social transfers and social provision in general are accompanied by social stigma for dependents. In this welfare state regime only a minimum of social protection is guaranteed. The states often subsidizes private welfare schemes. Therefore de- commodification effects are minimized and a certain poverty among welfare state dependents, market differentiated welfare and thus class dualism between recipients of welfare benefits and non- recipients is promoted (cf. Esping- Andersen 1990: 26- 27).

### **2.3.2. The Conservative Welfare State Regime**

As conservative welfare state regimes in the *Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism* countries like Austria, France, Germany and Italy are clustered. Furthermore Esping- Andersen identifies them as conservative and corporatist states. Characteristics are that there are significant status differentials between professional groups which are preserved thorough the institutional setting of these states. Therefore the state's redistributive effects are negligible. The sanctification of the market was never prior as it is for example in the liberal tradition. Furthermore the corporatist regimes are strongly shaped by the Church. What is intrinsically important for this Bachelor thesis: that conservative corporatist states like Austria are promoting the preservation of traditional familyhood. The concept of social provision in conservative family policy is that it intervenes not preventively but when the capacity of the family is exhausted. Institutions for child care and care for old people are underdeveloped and the setting of family benefits encourages women to stay at home and quit paid labour (cf. Esping- Andersen 1990: 27).

### **2.3.3. The Social Democratic Welfare State Regime**

In comparison to the two regime types named above, the social democratic regime extends social provision to a greater extent throughout society. This regime type doesn't react just when the potential of the family is exhausted, but intervenes universally into child care and care for old people. The cluster of social democratic welfare state regimes includes the Scandinavian countries, such as Sweden, Norway and Denmark. According to Esping- Andersen in this regime type the de- commodification rights, social provision and public benefit were extended to the middle classes. Redistribution effects of the welfare state are strong and the receipt of public benefits is not linked to social stigma. This welfare state regime evolved out of a long social democratic tradition that promotes universalism and equality to the highest standards, thus all strata are subsumed under one system of social insurance. The social democratic policies addresses to the emancipation of the individual from the market and the traditional family (cf. Esping- Andersen 1990: 27- 28). *"The result is a welfare state that grants transfers directly to children, and takes direct responsibility of caring for children, the aged, and the helpless. It is, accordingly, committed to a heavy social- service burden, not only to service family needs but also to allow women to choose work rather than the household."* (Esping- Andersen

1990: 28) This quotation directly taken from the *Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism* will be heavily criticised by feminist researchers such as for example Orloff (1993) and thus will be important in the process of this bachelor thesis. Finally Esping- Andersen states, that there is never one single pure case when clustering welfare states in regime types. In reality most of the states are mixtures of at least two regime clusters (cf. id: 28- 29). The following image shows the three different welfare state regimes that are discussed in Esping- Andersen's thesis 1990 summarized in one box in regard of poverty and inequality, employment, gender and social security:

	Poverty/ Inequality	Employment	Gender	Social security
<b>Social-Democratic</b>	Low	Generally high employment and low unemployment	High female employment facilitated by child care	Redistributive
<b>Corporatist</b>	Medium	Lower levels of employment; persistent unemployment	Low female employment levels, with benefits to encourage mothers to stay at home	Earnings-related
<b>Liberal</b>	High	High levels of employment and low unemployment	High part-time female employment, but lack of childcare provision limits opportunities for full-time employment	Emphasis on means- tested benefits paid at low levels and more recently in-work assistance

Image 1: Browne 2013

#### 2.3.4. The Welfare Systems of Austria and Sweden

In the end I will summarize the main points of Esping- Andersen's (1990) concept of conservative corporatist and social democratic regime type as the countries Austria and Sweden, which are main actors of this Bachelor thesis, belong to these clusters. As already mentioned above, Austria belongs to the conservative corporatist countries, preserves status differentials and is strongly shaped by the Church. One principle of family policy is the preservation of the traditional family and therefore the setting of social provision doesn't encourage women to enter the labour market (cf. Esping- Andersen 1990: 27).

According to the "*Three Worlds*" theory (1990) Sweden belongs to the social democratic regime cluster in which broader strata are granted by social protection. Swedish family policy promotes the entry of women to the labour market and fosters the emancipation of

traditional familyhood (cf.id.: 28). These claims will be contested a lot in the next chapters as I will emphasize critical voices to the mainstream welfare state theory of the 1990's

#### **2.4. Excuse: Critical Voices**

In the latest chapters I treated the welfare state typology of Esping- Andersen (1990) extensively, but except of feminist critique, which is discussed in chapter 2.5., there are several more criticizing aspects of his typology. I selected three authors out of a great range of critical voices to relativize the theoretical views in *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*. Firstly, Manow (2002) who defines Esping- Andersen's arguments as normatively charged to a great extent and secondly, Arts/ Gelissen (2002) who note a lack of theoretical saturation in his concepts of the dimensions of welfare states and the different welfare state regimes and additionally determine a lack of a Mediterranean regime type (cf. Arts/ Gelissen 2002: 142; Manow 2002: 203).

Manow (2002) claims that the differentiation and conceptualization between the regime types is based predominately on normative assumptions. Referring to Sergio Leones' film "The Good, the Bad and the Ugly" (1967) he identifies the clustering of welfare state regimes as the following: Social- democratic regimes are "good" because a great range of social protection is guaranteed publicly, liberal regimes are "bad" because there is a lack of public social insurance and continental conservative regimes as "ugly", because they are neither really good nor really bad as they share the mind set with social democratic views but foster class segregation and are strongly class- oriented. Furthermore Manow (2002) states that there is an implicit tendency to denounce catholic consciousness as "bad" or "false" (cf. Manow 2002: 203- 204). What is of great interest for me related to this Bachelor thesis is that he criticizes Esping- Andersen to not taking into account the Christian culture in the "religious heartland" identified as the conservative- corporatist countries (like for example Austria) and denying the effects of these religious preconditions to education and attitude (cf.id.: 206). Similar to Manow (2002), the second critique I thematise, starts with the lack of theoretical saturation in the differentiation between the regime types:

Firstly, Arts and Gelissen (2002) problematize his typologies based on ideal- types and the representation of a reality with the help of these categories and they stress that a matured empirical research should rather emphasize the construction of theories than the formulation of typologies (cf. Arts/ Gelissen 2002: 138- 139). Furthermore they find the

typologies incomplete as Italy is subsumed to the continental- corporative regime and Spain, Portugal and Greece are largely ignored, they blame Esping- Andersen including them implicitly to the conservative- corporatist regime (cf.id.: 142). In short, they demand at least one more regime type that covers the Mediterranean countries (cf.id.: 146).

This chapter is necessary in order to not taking Esping- Andersen's (1990, 1999) assumptions as given or as "social constraints". I wanted to show that there are several different approaches to the problem and that any of them can fulfil the explanatory demand to a full extent. The next chapter will focus on the critique from a feminist point of view and will additionally provide contrasted views onto the mainstream welfare state theory.

### **2.5. Feminist Approaches and the Struggle of the Bread Winners**

As already mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the following will be one of the most relevant for this bachelor thesis. It is about the critique on Esping- Andersen's welfare state concept he discusses in the *Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*. I will build up my arguments with the help of the gender sensible critique of Orloff (1993), Hernes (1987) and Lewis (1992). Furthermore Esping- Andersen responds to this feminist critique and respecifies his concepts, respectively the different dimensions of his welfare state theory in the book *Social Foundations of Postindustrial Economies* published in 1999. The aim of the following chapter is to depict an evolution of the different dimensions and implications of the welfare state and therefore the evolution of the modern welfare state under the influence of globalization and liberalization in order to make it possible to compare Austria to Sweden in an actual manner. Furthermore the concept of the male breadwinner- model and its development in the course of time will be discussed by Lewis (1992- 2006). In general the feminists named above identify an implicit male bias in the mainstream literature, like in Esping- Andersen's welfare state research (1990). Orloff, for example states, that: "[...]gender must incorporated into the core concepts of research on the welfare state – "citizen", "social rights", "claims", "welfare" - and the analytic dimensions used to evaluate inputs, content and effects." (Orloff 1993: 306)

Furthermore all three authors identify one "overriding principle" or "higher goal", in fact that there is the chance to create a women- friendly welfare state (cf. Hernes 1987: 15; Lewis 1992: 170; Orloff 1993: 304). The categories I depicted above will be rethought in regard

of feminist criteria and the gender effects of de- commodification, stratification and the state- market relation will be discussed.

### **2.5.1. De- Commodification Reconsidered**

To begin with, the gender effects of de- commodification are identified by Orloff (1993). According to Orloff (1993), based on the male bias that mainstream literature is working with, domestic labour is ignored in the debate of de- commodification. A pre- condition of being de- commodified is being commodified at first. Due to the female bias of unpaid respectively domestic work, men have greater capacity to enter the labour market and stay there to a greater extent (cf. Orloff 1993: 317).

As it is more difficult for women to enter the labour market due to the additional burden of unpaid work, she extends the basic theoretical concept of Esping- Andersen (1990) to two additional dimensions of the welfare state, in fact, firstly, access to paid work and secondly the capacity to form and maintain an autonomous household (cf. Orloff 1993: 318- 319).

The first additional dimension, access to paid work contains two pre- conditions, that women can be independent individuals thorough paid labour and secondly, that they have access to services that make it possible to be an employed mother (cf.id.: 318). The second dimension, capacity to form and maintain an autonomous household deals with the problem of dependency. If an individual in a relationship carries out domestic work, it cannot enter the labour market or cannot enter it to a satisfying extent, a dependency arises. Thus individuals need self- determination in order to be independent of the (male) breadwinner (cf.id.: 319).

Due to this, Esping- Andersen makes acknowledgements towards feminist critiques as he states that his concept of de- commodification inherently presupposes that individuals are already commodified and he furthermore acknowledges that *“It may adequately describe the relationship between welfare states and the standard, full- career male worker, but it is not easily applicable for women considering that their economic role is often non- commodified or at least only partially commodified.”* (Esping- Andersen 1999: 44; cf. Orloff 1993: 43- 44) He especially highlights the two welfare state regimes that also play a great role in this bachelor thesis, he compares the conservative continental idea of de- commodification like Austria with the universalistic

social democratic idea of de- commodification of the Nordic countries like Sweden. The former preserves according to Esping- Andersen familialism as it gives de- commodification rights mainly to the male breadwinner. The latter abandons these familialistic tendencies in the late 1960's after women's movements brought pressure to the policy- making organs. Here the concept of de- commodification functions increasingly also partially for women and not anymore to a full extent to men due to the reforms towards a dual breadwinner system (cf. Orloff 1993: 44-45). Furthermore similar blind spots are identified in the stratification dimension.

### **2.5.2. Stratification reconsidered**

Secondly, Orloff (1993) criticizes that in the concept of stratification in the *Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism* effects on gender hierarchies are ignored and sees this resulting in a gap between care work and paid work that results again in inequalities in social benefits. Furthermore women are predominately incorporated in the welfare state through husbands, in fact as two types of women, mothers and wives. A struggle between men and women to count certain types of unpaid work as legitimization bias for welfare rights is determined (cf. Hernes 1988: 194; Orloff 1993: 315). The state perpetuates gender divisions through the social security system, the tax system and the absence of public services. I want to emphasize that according to Orloff (1993), corporatist welfare states like Austria foster bargaining directly with the state over social benefits through politicized labour- market participation (cf. Orloff 1993: 315- 317). In short that means that: "*Systems of social protection produce gender differences as well as class differences in interests and coalitions.*" (id.: 317)

In the *Social Foundations of Postindustrial Economies*, Esping- Andersen describes the family behaviour in the post war urban working- class as predestined for the male breadwinner, female housewife model. The participation rate of married women was strongly affected because wages were high enough that a single breadwinner could maintain a whole family. He makes a recourse on de- ruralisation and states that after de- ruralisation women were more likely to stay at home because they already did when they lived in rural circumstances. The big difference is though that in urban circumstances women were no longer able to carry out productive work (linked with reproductive work) at home, so the male breadwinner model became a mass- phenomenon. These tendencies were also subject to class differences, as the full housewifery- model prevailed in the working- class and better

educated middle class women went towards a de facto career model (cf. Esping- Andersen 1999: 27- 28). In short: *“The post- war political economy [...] was built around a set of family prototypes that are now becoming marginal if not outright extinct.”* (id.: 29) Stratification and de- commodification are linked with the state- market- family nexus and are influenced by it and vice versa, thus Orloff (1993) identifies the third blind spot of mainstream welfare state theory in the welfare triad of state market and family.

### **2.5.3. State, Market, Family- The Welfare Triad and De- Familialization**

Thirdly, according to Orloff (1993) families are ignored as private providers of welfare services and the sexual segregation of labour is unnoticed in the mainstream literature. For a gendered analysis the recognition of the importance of female unpaid work and the sexual segregation of work have to be taken into consideration (cf. Orloff 1993: 312). What is especially important for my analysis is that she defines conservative states like Germany and Austria as more or less weak states when it comes to the institutional organization of child care. That’s the reason why the growth of female labour participation has been retarded. In comparison to Sweden, where institutional child care already established, but where the part- time share of women and the segregation of the labour market by gender is significantly high (cf.id.: 312- 313). Furthermore Esping- Andersen is describing that women choose between paid work and housewifery, this view is challenged by the assumption that women as working mothers just have the choice between either housewifery or housewifery and (additional) paid labour (cf.id.: 313). Including families as providers of welfare and shifting the burden of unpaid labour to the welfare state and to men (cf.id.: 314).

As a response, Esping- Andersen states that: *“The family, [...] cannot be dismissed as a haven of intimacy and consumption. It is an all- important actor whose decisions and behaviour directly influence, and are influenced by, the welfare state and the labour market.”* (Esping- Andersen 1999: 35) This statement is justified by the assumption based on the critique of feminist scholars that the family never stopped being a producer and that the source of welfare is still provided of the family to a great extent (depending on the country) (cf.id.: 37). Therefore the next step he sets is disputing familialism and de- familialization. De- familialization is also closely related to de- commodification (see chapter 2.6.1) as female independence needs de- familializing provisions as precondition (cf.id.: 45). When dealing with this term he again refers to the

paradigm of a women- friendly state established by Hernes (1987). In his conception a familialistic state provides as much welfare obligations as possible to release women from the burden of unpaid labour or at least limits it. Family responsibilities keep women from being independent on the basis of paid work, de- familialization depends on the structure of the welfare state. To respond to the question of comparing Austria to Sweden, Esping- Andersen identifies the Nordic countries (e.g. Sweden) as the only welfare systems that are explicitly designed to maximize women's economic independence whereas conservative- corporatist countries (e.g. Austria) strengthen the male breadwinner and female care giver model through de- commodifying, or privileging the bread winner with income guarantees. This reproduces patriarchy and traditional family dependencies (cf. Esping- Andersen 1999: 45- 46). The theme of breadwinner models will be extensively treated in the next chapter, it will show that the institutional arrangements in social policy can influence the share of paid work and unpaid labour between men and women in different welfare state regimes (cf. Lewis 1992).

#### **2.5.4. Breadwinner Models and the (new) challenges of Welfare States: Steps towards the role model?**

In the former chapters I used the term breadwinner several times. Lewis (1992) shows a theoretical concept to deal with it and to understand what a breadwinner model actually is. Furthermore I will have a closer look on the “Swedish way” as she describes its status of role model rather contested but at the same time identifies good approaches towards compatibility of paid work and domestic labour in the Scandinavian welfare state regimes (cf. Lewis 1992: 162).

Firstly, she classifies strong male breadwinner states, for example Ireland and Britain. She states that government policy played a decisive role in ensuring that men have got priority on the labour market. Strong male breadwinner models cause low levels of female labour market participation, especially mothers with children under school age drop out due to the lack of child care provisions (cf. Lewis 1992: 162- 163).

Secondly, she subsumes for example France to the concept of modified male breadwinner states. In these countries welfare is allocated from people without children to families and the policy makers react to labour market changes. Furthermore in modified breadwinner

states policy makers recognize women's claims as mothers as well as workers (cf.id.: 165-166).

Thirdly, she defines weak male breadwinner countries (e.g. Sweden) as systems of social provision that make two breadwinner families the norm. According to Lewis (1992) the most important factors are high marginal tax rates that make it favourable to have two incomes instead of one breadwinner adding extra- time, the increase of places in public child care and the scheme of parental insurance that was implemented in 1974 and compensated lost market earnings and to also offer men 90 per cent replacement of earnings if they stay at home for care work (cf.id.: 168- 169).

These measures increased labour market participation of women dramatically, in short it became easier to combine paid work and care work but it haven't got easier for women to choose to engage in paid work. The biggest problems are that women were "forced" to the labour market but still have the role of the care giver while men's behaviour in the nexus between family and the market hasn't really changed at that time. Furthermore the sexual segregation of labour is worse than in stronger breadwinner states (cf.id.: 169). The position of women differ from one welfare state regime to the other, the challenge is to value unpaid work and to share it between genders. Sweden managed the first problem but not yet the second (cf.id.: 170).

In the following image the different breadwinner models are categorized (cf. Image 2), what is of great importance for the following line of reasoning is, that in reality the pure male breadwinner model has hardly ever existed but due to massive family change, de facto defamilialization and individualization of the social sphere the male breadwinner model as dominant trend has eroded and the concept of the adult worker family evolved (cf. Esping-Andersen 1999: 45- 46; Lewis 2001: 153- 154; Lewis 2002: 333). In short, "*The male breadwinner model has eroded but the social reality is still far from a family comprised of self- sufficient, autonomous individuals.*" (Lewis 2001: 155) Now women achieved entering the labour market but due to the traditional allocation of domestic work predominately to women, additional dilemmas evolve. These dilemmas, such as the great female part- time share call for labour market policies that are oriented to the long term, respecting changes in the biography of men and women and benefiting part- timers compar to full- timers (cf. Esping- Andersen 2002: 87; Lewis 2001: 165).

<b>1. Male-Breadwinner Model</b> Male FT earner	Female FT caregiver
<b>2. Dual-Breadwinner Model 1</b> Male FT earner, female short PT earner	Care supplied mainly by female earner and kin
<b>3. Dual-Breadwinner Model 2</b> Male FT earner, female long PT earner	Care supplied mainly by kin, and state/voluntary/market
<b>4. Dual-Breadwinner Model 3</b> Male PT earner, female PT earner	Care supplied by male and female earners
<b>5. Dual-Career Model</b> Male FT earner, female FT earner	Care supplied mainly by the market and kin/state/voluntary sector
<b>6. Single-Earner (Lone-Mother Family) Model</b> Female earner FT or PT, or FT mother reliant on state benefits	Care supplied either by the mother or by the mother, kin, and the state

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FT, full-time; PT, part-time.

Image 2 (Lewis 2001)

Furthermore welfare states and thus the constellation of domestic- versus paid work is influenced by external and in succession externally caused internal changes such as globalisation, liberalization, the cut down of government competencies, demographic challenges and internal economic problems (cf. Esping- Andersen: 1999; Lewis 2002: 334). These changes cause changes of welfare settings, in fact welfare state constellations have to be adapted to such upheavals what especially continental European countries cannot manage (cf. Lewis 2002: 334). The Scandinavian adult worker model recognizes care for children and the elderly, due to these measures indicators like poverty among lone mothers are low. Sweden also implemented measures like the daddy- month which fathers can use or it is lost to the family and exhibit shorter working days and weeks which is favourable for families in which both parents work (cf. Lewis 2001: 163- 164). Compared to the Nordic countries Western Europe, especially Christ Democratic countries still stick to the implication of the male based welfare of families and react very slowly to behavioural changes within the family- market- nexus and though policy makers officially acknowledge the adult worker model, but they promote it as gender neutral and ignore the gendered division of labour in paid and unpaid work (cf. Esping- Andersen 1999: 70; Lewis 2002: 339). Conservative- corporatist states like Austria and Germany are providing the “choice”

between work and care to women but not necessarily to men (cf. Esping- Andersen 1990; Lewis 2006: 109). Compared to Sweden which promotes a gender participation model via cash for parental leave in combination with direct social services like child care and care for the elderly, to relativize and not glorify the Swedish model as the “right” way, one big disadvantage has to be considered: Due to severe job sex segregation women do a bigger share of low status jobs and the incentive to enter the labour market is again not as big as for men (cf. Lewis 2006: 109). Summarizing these points in western respectively continental Europe the one and a half earner model shows up predominately, whereas in the Scandinavian countries the one and three quarter model prevails (cf. id.: 105).

With the help of these theoretical implications I want to stress that there have been huge changes when it comes to the question of the entry of women to the labour market, the new problems that evolved spot around the questions of gender equality and advantages versus disadvantages for women in the labour market (cf. Esping- Andersen 2002: 69). In fact in EC countries there have been little attempts on the institutional level to reach gender equality and there is still some catching up to do like valuing care work, organizing the way of elaborating the provision of the care leaves, cash payments for care and maternity, provisions for work absence when children are ill, the expansion of direct care services like in the Scandinavian model and a third order change towards compatibility of paid work and care in the mind set. All in all tendencies towards an adult worker model but this cannot function without public support (cf. Esping- Andersen 2002: 94; Lewis 2002: 354; Lewis 2006: 108).

### **3. Austria vs. Sweden: What about gender friendly policies?**

This will be the first step towards dealing with the practice of social policy in general and family policy in particular. To deepen the theoretical thoughts and assumptions of the previous chapters I will now discuss measures of social provision in Austria and Sweden and test it in regard to gender equality.

#### **3.1. Compatibility of Work and Family in Austria**

To begin with, I want to depict the general setting in which debates about family policy in Austria evolve contemporarily. According to Sauer (2007) it has become rather difficult to cluster the “Austrian way” of making family policy. She describes it as a *neoliberal family policy*

*cocktail* and indicates that through liberalization tendencies the conservative family policy that is originally oriented towards traditional familyhood is influenced by the devolution of social responsibilities from state to society with the aim of saving money (cf. Sauer 2007: 36). In her argument, that causes reevaluation and reprivatisation of care work, the shrink of social redistribution and making children financially rewarding through selective money transfers to families (cf. id.: 36- 37). Furthermore she states that the connection of neoliberalism, conservatism and populism is exploited by right- wing populism and centre- right parties towards emotionalization of the debate in order to promote the “values” of the traditional family (cf. Sauer 2007: 28- 31, 37; Dörfler 2009: 107). The competences of child care are located on the national level as well as on the federal state level. Child benefit, cash for child care (Kinderbetreuungsgeld) and tax regulations are organized on the national level whereas additional financial benefits and allocation of care places in pre- school and day care institutions (Kindergarten- und Hortwesen) are organized on the federal state level (cf. Dörfler 2004: 230; Dörfler 2009: 111). The principals of Austrian family policy are the child’s well- being and the preservation of the traditional family (cf. Dörfler 2004: 230). The preservation of the status quo (or of outright extinct role models) is in Austria guaranteed by mechanisms such as tax credits for single earners, the lack of care institutions for children under three years and the absence of paid paternity leave directly after the birth of the child by law (cf. id.: 230, 235). Concerning tax credits for single earners the Federal Ministry of Finance describes it as *“The single earner tax credit dues to only one person. If both the partners fulfil the preconditions, it dues to the partner with higher earnings. If the partners don’t have earnings or if earnings are equal, the tax credit dues to the women, except the man predominately runs the household.”* (BMF 2015 [original in German, own translation])

Concerning parental leave (Karenzzeit), there are several models to choose. Four models are based on fixed amounts and one option is based on the previous earnings of the person in parental leave (cf. Arbeiterkammer 2014). In Austria there is no share of parental leave by law as it is for example in Sweden (cf. Dörfler 2004: 236). Despite conservative welfare state regimes like Austria promote the traditional share of female unpaid domestic and male paid labour, there is and have been a tremendous trend of growth in the female labour force (cf. Wernhardt/ Winter- Ebmer 2008: 5). Long term panel data on wages and employment based on the Microcensus in Austria show that higher education of women leads to higher participation, in particular in the case of married women, that married women reduce

participation in paid work whereas men increase participation by the presence of children (cf. id.: 5-6, 8). This analysis gains on weight when being compared to another system of family policy and therefore I will compare it to the “role model” for modern family policy: Sweden (Duvander/ Ferrarini 2013: 3).

### **3.2. Compatibility of Work and Family in Sweden**

The Swedish system of family policy is internationally highly regarded as it fosters the entry of the labour market of both genders and started to promote the double earner model since the 1970's (cf. Duvander/ Ferrarini 2013: 3-4). This has profound impact on the mind set and family behaviour of people. Since 1995 the daddy- respectively mommy- month was introduced. If the secondary carer (and primary worker) doesn't take this month of parental leave, it is lost to the family (cf. id.: 4). General principals of Swedish family policy are the child's well- being and gender equality (cf. Dörfler 2004: 233; Dörfler 2009: 124). Since 2002 parental leave of 16 months is provided, 13 months with 80 per cent wage replacement. After 16 months of parental leave there is the possibility to prolong it by reduced wage replacement, rather women than men choose the latter option (cf. Duvander/ Ferrarini 2013: 4). Furthermore any child in the age of one point five and twelve, has the right on a place in day- care and negative incentives for double earner households were removed by tax reforms (cf. id.: 4). Similar to Austria, parties and ideologies have a great influence on this debate. In 2008 family policy was reformed, the “package of reforms” can be seen as trade- off between the conservative party Kristdemokraterna and the liberal party Folkpartiet Liberalerna. The package includes tax deductibility of home help, bonus for equal treatment by share of the parental leave and, as a contrast (and de facto claim by the conservative party) the introduction of child care allowance, the municipality decides whether to introduce this measure or not. The latter reform is subject to debates about gender- equality and critics claim that child care allowance encourages mostly women to stay at home with their children (cf. Ellingsaeter 2012: 8; Duvander/ Ferrarini 2013: 6). Ellingsaeter 2012 stresses that in Finland, where a similar measure was introduced in 1985, a greater share of women with children under three years stay at home doing unpaid domestic work. According to her child care allowance promotes traditional gender role models and worsen chances on the labour market by return (cf. Ellingsaeter 2012: 8-9). Furthermore Sweden provides an obligatory parental leave of ten days directly after the birth of the child, the father receives 80 per cent wage

replacement. The motive behind this measure is to deepen the relationship with the new born child, to gain competences in child care and to support the mother and therefore break gender roles within the family (cf. Dörfler 2004: 235- 236).

The share of competences between national level and federal state level are similar to Austria: allocation of family and child benefits and social insurance are regulated by the national level whereas child care and care for the elderly are regulated on the federal state level (cf. Dörfler 2004: 233).

In spite of the many positive impulses of the Swedish family policy towards gender equality like increasing compatibility of work and family and promoting paid work among women by giving fathers the possibility to care, there are also negative impulses that arise out of the very flexible, long- time and highly- paid parental leave. There are negative effects on career chances of women by return. Especially in the Nordic countries like Sweden, this means a disadvantage for mostly well- educated and highly qualified women and additionally severe sex segregation of labour (cf. Rille- Pfeiffer 2014 et al.: 36- 38).

In both welfare state systems there are negative and positive impulses towards gender-equality which are partly shaped by party politics as the example of child care allowance in Sweden and the promotion of the traditional family as “ideal family” in Austria shows.

### **3.3. Family policy: Plaything of ideologies?**

To summarize the implications of the last two subchapters, I want to stress again that despite of some negative effects on gender equality (e.g. severe sex segregation of labour) the Swedish system makes it easier for parents and especially for women to combine paid and domestic work compared to Austria (cf. Rille- Pfeiffer et al. 2014: 36- 38). Furthermore a range of policies in Sweden (e.g. paid parental leave of ten days after the birth of the child and the so- called daddy- month) encourage men to participate in child care and promote new approaches to the “care- and paid labour- dilemma”. One aspect that differs significantly between the two countries is that in Sweden extensive child care institutions that allow parents to work even if the child is under three years old are common, whereas in Austria the sector of care institutions for children under three is unsatisfyingly developed (cf. Dörfler 2004: 234; Dörfler 2009: 110, 111, 128- 129; Duvander/ Ferrarini 2013: 4).

Sauer (2007) for example stresses the influence on neoliberalism and party politics on family policy (cf. Sauer 2007: 32, 36). According to her, neoliberalist influence and party politics

plays a great role in shaping measures of family policy, she identifies contemporary Austrian family policy as “*neoliberal family policy cocktail*” and determines the exploitation of this policy field for populist propaganda (cf. Sauer 2007: 25, 36- 37). Similar tendencies can be identified in Sweden in 2008 when the conservative and the liberal party obtained a trade-off which included both sorts of reforms, conservative (e.g. the introduction of child care allowance) and social democratic (e.g. tax deductibility of home aid and the gender equality bonus by equal share of care duties among both genders) (cf. Ellingsaeter 2012: 8-10).

In the end I want to stress that there is nothing like a “perfect family policy”, short and long term effects of family political measures are not clear a priori and measures that allow parents to combine paid labour with domestic work does not mean automatically that the effects of these measures promote more gender equality (e.g. severe sex segregation of labour in Sweden) (cf. Rille- Pfeiffer 2014: 38).

To come to an end, these are the general framework conditions, the next chapter will treat more than these, it is about personal thoughts and claims towards compatibility of work and family in Austria and Sweden and the personal prospects and implications of opportunities of young Austrian women that have already made experiences in Sweden.

#### **4. From Theory to Practice: Debating Compatibility and Opportunities of Women in Austria and Sweden**

In the former chapters I depicted implications on the welfare state and the gendered respecification of it theoretically. To underline my theoretical thoughts, I held a focus group discussion, on June, 8<sup>th</sup> 2015 on the topic: “Compatibility and Opportunities of Women: Austria versus Sweden”. In the following chapters I will declare my strategy and of course the findings that I made in the following empirical part of the bachelor thesis.

##### **4.1. Declaration of the strategy**

First, there was the aim to catch some “real” voices on the topic. I didn’t want to stop after having done a theoretical analysis respectively an analysis of the literature and assorted policy documents. I wanted to take my questions into the field and decided to search for potential candidates for a focus group discussion. Smithson (2002) describes a focus group discussion not only as *a quick way to pick up relevant themes around a topic*, as for example Vaughn

et al. (1997) argue, she identifies them as a social event. Furthermore the setting of the discussion functions as a social event and in this specific social event the performance by all concerned matters (cf. Smithson 2002: 105). A statement of the same author is, respectively was intrinsically important for my empirical research: *“Focus groups [...] should not be analysed as if they are naturally occurring discussions, but as discussions occurring in a specific, controlled setting.”* (Smithson 2002: 15)

My unit of analysis was the group. Now the question of “the group” is not yet clear, in this place I want to give information about the sampling and recruiting strategy. My goal was to find five to ten candidates for the discussion. First I was thinking about looking for more candidates but I was concerned, that there wouldn’t be enough time for each to join the debate, as I limited the duration of the discussion to one and a half hours.

The sampling: I wanted to collect voices about how young women see their opportunities and their future in the welfare state of Austria in comparison to the welfare state of Sweden, so I needed candidates who have made experiences in both countries. I decided to look for Austrian women between 18 and 25 who have spent at least half a year in Sweden. In the invitation to the discussion I gave as examples an “Erasmus”- semester, student exchange, work-travel, worked some time in Sweden etc. I recruited all my candidates via social networks- I posted the invitation to the focus group discussion into several student groups and after two weeks of recruiting I held the discussion on June, 8<sup>th</sup> 2015. The entire discussion was held in German, because all my candidates were German- speaking, thus the transcript is also in German. When translating from German to English for the coding and building categories, I tried to be very careful about keeping the meaning of the phrases.

I have got seven definite candidates with the following demographic characteristics:

Sex	7/7: female
Country of origin	7/7: Austria
Residence (city respectively community)	6/7: Vienna, 1/7: Ebensee, OÖ
Age in years	4/7: 22, 2/7: 21, 1/7: 23
Highest running/ completed qualification	7/7: University/ Fachhochschule
Employment status	In education

Image 3: own figure

The main questions:

Was waren eure Beweggründe dafür, nach Schweden zu gehen?

*What was your motivation to go to Sweden?*

Was verbindet ihr persönlich mit dem Wort Wohlfahrtsstaat?

*What do you personally connect with the word „welfare state“?*

Was sollte der Staat im Hinblick auf Geschlechtergerechtigkeit für seine Bürgerinnen und Bürger tun?

*What should the state do for its citizens concerning gender equality?*

Welchen Eindruck habt ihr in Österreich: Wie sind die Aufgabenbereiche zwischen Männern und Frauen verteilt?

*What is your opinion about Austria: How the areas of responsibility are shared between men and women?*

Was würdet ihr vom österreichischen Wohlfahrtsstaat in Zukunft fordern?

*What would you demand of the Austrian welfare state in the future?*

Welche Aufgabenbereiche sind in Schweden eher Frauen und welche eher Männern zugeteilt?

*Which areas of responsibility are rather referred to women and which are rather referred to men in Sweden?*

In welchem der beiden Staaten würdet ihr lieber eine Familie gründen und warum?

*In which of the two states you rather want to start a family and why?*

Jetzt werde ich euch eine OECD- Statistik zeigen, die die Verteilung von bezahlter und unbezahlter Arbeit zwischen Frauen und Männern zeigt. Was fällt euch auf? Was verwundert euch?

*Now I will show you a diagram based on OECD-data which depicts the share of paid and unpaid work between women and men. What do you recognise? What surprises you?*



Image 4: OECD (2014)

#### 4.2. Coding and Findings

In general, I can say that the group opinion was rather homogenous. This could be because, as Flick et al. (2000) assume, within a group discussion, reality is literally produced by the participants, furthermore the participants are externally part of certain living situations determined by education, welfare, employment situation, housing and so on. Similar preconditions imply similar “Lebenswelten”, “Laientheorien” or “Weltbilder” (cf. Flick et al. 2000: 20- 21). Due to the demographic data of the candidates in the “Austria versus Sweden” group discussion I can assume that their “Lebenswelten” and therefore their “Weltbilder” have already been very similar *before* they got involved in the special situation of a group discussion within a scientific setting. Of course the act of producing reality interactively through collective and individual interpretation fosters a homogenous opinion as well. To figure out how strong the constructed group opinion was in that specific case: While doing the coding, I count 18 times, that a candidate completes the sentence of a co-discussant.

When analysing the transcript I identified some problems. I gave codes to all relevant statements to identify their meaning. On the one hand I wanted to depict the opinions of the discussants in categories, what I actually did but on the other hand I didn’t want to lose

the process in which the statements and therefore the codes have developed. Because as Littig and Wallace (1997) assume in accordance to Kritzinger (1994): The potential of a focus group discussion gets lost, when the researcher just paraphrases the separated statements. Furthermore the process- character of the opinions get lost (cf. Littig/ Wallace 1997: 5).

To begin with, for my analytical part I am oriented towards open coding (“offenes Kodieren”). As the theoretical research process was already quite advanced and thus the questions to the discussants were relatively close to the theoretical part before testing the categories empirically, I needed a wide scope to decide which passages of the transcript are relevant for my epistemological interest and which are not (cf. Flick 1995: 392).

As this method is rather vague when it comes to the question of the relevance and the frequency of codes and the comparison between them I decided which passages were relevant for my research by consequently thinking deductive and inductive while identifying and testing categories and codes (cf. id.: 394). I emphasize the most important passages in direct quotations, within the bachelor thesis they are translated in English, the original version in German can be found in the appendix.

When analysing the material I identified five categories after two text reductions. In the end these five categories crystallise out of the main discourses of the discussion and I identify them as well as the main topics the focus group discussion is about. The five categories are the following: Welfare State (wfs), Welfare State Austria (wfsa), Welfare State Sweden (wfss), Education System (es) and Gender (gen). Furthermore I work with additional codes in order to identify the quality of the quotation thus whether the discourse is about the status quo (sq), preconditions (pc), problems (pr), a normative claim (nc) or an institutional claim (ic). As mentioned before I will depict the essential passages of the material in a chronological manner in order to keep the character of the discussion process.

The first remarkable passage of the material is on the category “Welfare State”. The discussants talk about the duties of a welfare state and they name key words (thus identified as codes) like redistribution, minimum benefits and fair society (sq, nc). Then candidate 3 names as a precondition that the welfare state has to be economically strong to provide provision for its citizens (pc). After that candidate 2 relativizes this statement with the

example that Cuba has got a strong welfare state but is economically weak. After a longer pause the moderator sets an interposed question:

M: Does that have something to do with the funding of the welfare state?

C7: No, I think that it is part of the political culture.

C1: Mhm, I think that cause and effect are hard to determine.

[Debate, Sweden was financial profiteer of the Second World War]

C3: Yes, they have gained from the Second World War, actually. But I would agree [towards C7] that it is about political culture, that anybody is of worth, and getting supported.

C5: Yes, especially at the topic of gender equality this is very visible, there even the right parties have got in their programs, ehm, gender equality between man and women.

Passage 1

During this communication the other candidates nodded and I have the impression that they broadly agree with the assumption that the welfare state is more a matter of political culture than a matter of financial feasibility. Here, I identify implicit normative claims (nc). Candidate 7 studies political science, she uses the term “political culture”. This political culture- argument implies that there is a normative claim for a strong welfare state, that means, simplified, when a state possesses a “good” political culture, the welfare state will be strong enough to “take care of us”(nc). The same pattern of thinking shows up in the statement of candidate 5 as she states that Swedish parties (“even the right”) entrench equality between men and women in their party programs. That means, again simplified, when there is “good” political culture, parties entrench gender equality in their party programs (nc).

The next important passage is about the duties a welfare state has got towards its citizens concerning gender equality. In this section of the material the discourse is about the categories Welfare State (wfs), in the ongoing discussion process the candidates go towards the comparison between Sweden (wfss) and Austria (wfsa). Numerous normative and institutional claims are mentioned by candidates four, three, one and five, for example: Men and women should be paid equally in the private sector (ic), the state should equal historically evolved inequalities (nc) and costless child care and care for the elderly (ic). In each of these statements the Swedish welfare state is seen as the role model by the group,

I want to confirm this assumption with the following statements that evolved out of the depicted discussion about the duties of a “good” welfare state:

C1: In Sweden, my guest siblings, who were older than me...or their friends as well getting married in piles, getting babies, starting families, just because it is *possible* and here it is like [claps her hands] I can't afford children yet. Just because it is *possible* [in Sweden].

C2: Yes and in this context it is not only important for women but also for men, because it is...I know it from Sweden I have never ever seen so much men walking around with buggies, I know, this is something obvious, but it is a point that attracts attention and yes, you have to create possibilities for men that they *can* care...or so, and to relieve women. That it is distributed more equally.

## Passage 2

In this conversation they identify as precondition of an equally shared burden of care, that the state sets incentives or even at first possibilities for men to care as much as women. In this section the codes preconditions (pc) and institutional claims (ic) prevail. Furthermore I identify implicit normative claims (nc) as candidate one states, that in Austria it is a problem that young people can't afford children (pr), but their friends in Sweden can- she blames the structure of the Austrian welfare system (cf. Passage 2, C1: “[...]and here [in Austria] it is like [claps her hands], I can't afford children yet. [...]”) that young people cannot afford children. She states that it is a precondition for getting children that it is made (financially) possible by the welfare state (pc).

Then the group discusses about the Austrian welfare state (wfsa), then candidate two states an example that a male friend of her tried to obtain a daddy leave towards his employer and didn't get it, because otherwise his job would have been given away (sq). Then the group comes to the conclusion that the Austrian welfare state would have to intervene much more into the private sector (wfsa, ic).

C7:...that the *state* creates certain preconditions, at least circumstances in the private sector...ehm, that it is made possible, firstly, more part time for men and secondly, that it is considered like for women.

C2: Then, probably the state has to set incentives for firms, that this is implemented and...maybe not just guidelines, but also, yes, you have certain advantages when you implement it.

## Passage 3

The opinion of candidate two presupposes that financial incentives (pc) are indeed important for the implementation of guidelines towards gender equality (ic) and contests the political culture argument (nc) that the group assumes above. Nevertheless the same candidate two states in the further discussion about the same topic that the political culture in Sweden is indeed completely different (nc) than in Austria. After that the other candidates broadly agree. I have the impression that the group is not yet sure about whether the general political culture and thoughts (nc), or financial circumstances (ic) are important for a strong welfare state (cf. Passage 1, C1: “*Mhm, I think that cause and effect are hard to determine.*”).

The next debate I highlight is on gender relations respectively political power of women (gen). In passage 4 the candidates look for explanations why gender equality is a bigger topic in Sweden than in Austria and why “they” can manage to distribute care work more fairly between gender roles.

C6: Half of the riksdag are women and at University she [note: the professor] named as a cause,...that women there just *demand* it, that they exert such pressure, that it is implemented and there is a lack in Austria I think, that real pressure is exerted, that women have real power, that something *has to* be changed.

[C2 responds and gives an example of her experience about a Swedish feminist party that has got a rather high percentage at the recent elections.]

C2: [towards C6]: Yes, and I think that a feminist party in Austria obtains this percentage is *unthinkable*.

C3: Yes, I have got the impression that women in Austria don't insist on their rights as much in comparison to Sweden.

C4: Yes, that's right.

C7: Yes, because anybody makes fun of Glawischnig.

[agreement]

#### Passage 4

The further discussion is about that “feminism” is a swearword in Austria (gen, wfsa) but not in Sweden (gen, wfss) and therefore especially concerning this topic the Swedish state has got a “completely different self- conception”(nc). These arguments are of a more

normative nature than a concrete institutional. They identify the welfare state Sweden as more gender- friendly in real political issues than the welfare state Austria.

The next passage is again on real politics and within this section of the material the candidates make institutional claims concerning real party politics in Austria (ic, wfsa)

C5: I think it is difficult, because in the FPÖ it will never be possible and in the ÖVP it is also difficult and they will never say: “Yes, that’s a great idea, when we treat women equally as men.”

C7: [raised voice] For them this *is* already achieved: [joking] “You’re anyway allowed to study, you’re anyway allowed to vote!”

[loud laughter] [anomy] [agreement]

C5: You’re anyway allowed to vote, yes that’s great. [laughs]

#### Passage 5

They name as a precondition of obtaining gender equality in various spheres of the welfare state that there is a political lobby (pc) to represent these claims on gender equality (ic, nc). They claim a lobby in real politics to force other parties to respect and treat the gender topic (ic). At the same time they blame the right party FPÖ and the centre- right party ÖVP to deny that the gender topic is still important (pr), respectively they take gender inequality as already solved (sq).

Then the group picks up a topic that is intrinsically important for this bachelor thesis and of great personal interest. I gave the code welfare state (wfs) and as you will see in the highlighted passage, mostly claims, normative as well as institutional are again of relevance.

C1: The whole debate is always, yes, how do we get women to the labour market, yes, the other part of the debate would be, how do we get men into care work?

C5: Yes, exactly.

C1: Because, as I said before, you can get all females to the labour market, but then you have to either create public care facilities, and to be honest when you look at the actual financial policy, that is not likely to happen, so you have to get men into care work *or* you renounce the intended birth rates. Because otherwise it isn’t realistic.

#### Passage 6

C1 criticizes the recent political debate of how to open the access to the labour market for women (sq). She states that this is not enough (nc). She hints at a phenomenon which is also treated in the theoretical part, in fact, that the result of these labour market reforms is, that women keep doing the care work and do additional (mostly part time) paid jobs. This is linked to the feminist critique of for example Orloff (1992) and Hernes (1987) which criticize that Esping- Andersen (1990) sees women choosing between paid work and care work if the institutional setting of the welfare state allows it, this choice is actually unrealistic as women are still linked more closer to care work than men are (cf. Lewis 2002). Furthermore I identify an implicit normative claim that men should actually insist on their “right” to care (nc) as the further discourse of the discussants proves. The main topic is responsibility and they identify responsibility having a different meaning for men than for women (sq). They state that responsibility is something that you socially learn and they claim that men are socialized towards less responsibility for the family than women are (pc, pr). I think the following quotation depicts the atmosphere at this point of the focus group discussion perfectly. All seven women were very into this topic because due to several personal stories having to do with “responsibility conflicts” with the own partner or friends it seemed as if they were personally involved to a great extent. Again C1 gives a statement according to the prevailing group opinion:

C1: Exactly and that is why I support publicly paid abortion. I just say it, because if the man can shirk responsibility, then I please want to have the chance too!

#### Passage 7

The last section I want to cite directly shows that the group generally idealizes the Swedish system towards the Austrian:

C3: Concerning child care and generally that, what the state gives to the people, it is easier to start a family in Sweden.

C2: I want to have the Swedish system just anywhere I live. That's it.

[laughter] [agreement]

C2: I mean, it is utopian, but...

C3: Just take it anywhere you go!

C2: Yes, no, but...

C3: Yes.

C2: Basically.

### Passage 8

This is interesting because the discussants relativize their views when in the last question they were asked to talk about the graph that shows the share of paid and unpaid work between men and women in Austria compared to Sweden (cf. image 4: OECD 2014). They expected the gap to be bigger between the two countries.

C5 identifies neoliberalist tendencies as the reason for the de facto similarity between the graphs. C4 for example states that she thinks that Sweden and Austria are generally similar countries as she had not got any culture shock when coming to Sweden. C3 agrees in that point, but C7 and C1 state that they are surprised by these statistics. They expected Sweden being a more “significant role model”. These relativizing tendencies brought up a new topic of discussion which will be depicted in more detail in chapter 4.4. One important question arose out of this final debate: Does Sweden still deserve the status of the “role model”?

### **4.3. Self- Reflection**

First of all I want to mention, that this attempt of qualitative research is a more or less incomplete attempt. I just wanted to test my theoretical findings practically in the field, furthermore I wanted to contest my personal beliefs and assumptions. The design of the sampling is partly motivated by the epistemological interest of this Bachelor thesis and partly by personal interest. A big factor is that I was curious about what my age- and gender-colleagues think of the discussion questions that evolved from theoretical preparatory work in the first chapters. Of course I have got the option to go one step further doing more focus groups with the same questions and different sampling designs to have a base of comparison between the group specific opinions but that would go beyond the scope of that Bachelor thesis.

Immediately after having finished the group discussion, I made a memory report (Gedächtnisprotokoll). In this report all the feelings and thoughts after the focus group discussion are subsumed. In this protocol I also identified the group opinion as very homogeneous. Furthermore I noted, (maybe another result of the homogeneous sampling) that the discussion took up in speed and progress just after the second question, after

twenty minutes on average, the discussion started to get more lively and the candidates exchanged very personal stories and thoughts concerning for example the intimate life with the partner or controversial statements. The frequency of controversial or more or less radical opinions increased as well with the progress of the discussion. I got the impression that some of the candidates wanted to test whether the group will misunderstand ironical respectively controversial statements or whether they agree, disagree or accept these beliefs.

Furthermore I have got the impression that the focus group discussion was very conducive for the reflection of my own beliefs about my research topic, especially because caused by my research I am in it very deeply. Hearing the opinions of “outsiders” gave me the chance to rethink theoretical concepts and thoughts.

Due to the closeness of my own demographic characteristics and “Lebenswelten” compared to the candidates it was sometimes hard to stay the more or less passive moderator but I managed to keep out of the discussion, except one of the candidates addressed directly to me. I personally agree with the group opinion, thus while doing the coding I was very careful to stay as objective as possible, or at least subjectively reflected. I depicted the controversial opinions respectively the opinions opposing the group opinion as well as the voices that agreed with the group.

## **5. Conclusion**

As my comparative analysis shows, the different implications of family policy and its impact on gender equality, respectively on the compatibility of paid work and family are rather contrasted. Let us remember the research question at the beginning of this Bachelor thesis: Which impact on female labour market participation does the structure of Austrian compared to Swedish family policy have?

I identified neither “good”, nor “ugly” tendencies like for example Manow (2002) but an institutional arrangement that promotes two different types of family policy (cf. Manow 2002). These two different types foster different implications of the share of paid and unpaid labour among men and women. Furthermore measures of Austrian or Swedish family policy cannot be limited to short term changes in society (cf. Duvander/ Ferrarini 2013). To answer the question, Sweden promotes the entry of women to the labour market to a greater extent than Austria does but managing this first problem does not solve the

second. Swedish family policy also promotes severe sex segregation of labour and therefore the sheer problem of gender inequality has not yet been solved. Jane Lewis describes it as a need to fine- tune the policy experiment in order to promote the supported adult worker family (cf. Lewis 2006: 112).

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## 7. Appendix

### Passage 1:

M: Glaubt ihr, dass das etwas zu tun hat mit der Finanzierung des Wohlfahrtsstaats?

TN7: Nein, ich glaube, es ist Teil der politischen Kultur.

TN1: Mhm, ich glaube Ursache und Wirkung ist da schwer festzustellen.

[Debatte: Schweden habe vom Zweiten Weltkrieg finanziell profitiert]

TN3: Ja, sie haben davon profitiert, vom Zweiten Weltkrieg, eigentlich. Aber ich würde dir [zu

TN7] da zustimmen mit der politischen Kultur, dass einfach jeder Mensch etwas wert ist, und unterstützt wird.

TN5: Ja, gerade bei Gleichberechtigung ist das sehr sichtbar, da haben sogar die rechten Parteien im Parteiprogramm, ähm, Geschlechtergerechtigkeit zwischen Mann und Frau.

### Passage 2:

TN1: In Schweden so die Gastgeschwister die ich hatte, die schon älter waren oder auch deren Freunde haufenweise heiraten, Kinder kriegen, Familie bilden, weil es einfach *möglich* ist und da ist es einfach so [klatscht in die Hände] ich kann mir noch keine Kinder leisten. Einfach weil es machbar ist.

TN2: Ja in diesem Zusammenhang ist auch wichtig nicht nur für Frauen, sondern auch für Männer, weil es ist...ich kenne es eben aus Schweden ich habe noch nie so viele Männer mit Kinderwagen fahren sehen, ich weiß, das ist etwas ganz offensichtliches, aber das war halt auch ein Punkt der richtig auffällt und ja, da musst du auch Möglichkeiten für Männer schaffen, dass sie auch betreuen können...oder so, und die Frauen damit entlasten. Dass es gerechter verteilt ist.

### Passage 3:

TN7: ...dass der Staat gewisse Voraussetzungen, zumindest Rahmenbedingungen schafft, in der Privatwirtschaft...ähm...dass das möglich gemacht wird, erstens mehr Teilzeitarbeit für Männer und zweitens, dass diese Karenzzeit für Väter wirklich berücksichtigt wird, genauso wie für Frauen.

TN2: Dann muss der Staat Unternehmen wahrscheinlich irgendwie Anreize bieten, dass das eher umgesetzt wird und...vielleicht nicht nur eine Richtlinie, sondern auch so, ja, du hast gewisse Vorteile davon auch, wenn du das ermöglichen

### Passage 4:

TN6: Die Hälfte vom Reichstag sind Frauen und sie [Anm.: die Professorin] hat als eine Lösung...also eine Sache ist ein Grund, dass Frauen einfach das fordern, dass die so einen Druck machen, dass es auch umgesetzt wird und das fehlt bei uns halt in Österreich finde ich, dass wirklich so ein Druck gemacht wird, dass Frauen richtige Macht haben, dass was geändert werden muss.

TN2: [zu TN6]: Ich glaube in Österreich ist eine Partei eine rein feministische Partei, die so einen hohen Prozentsatz erreicht undenkbar.

TN3: Ja ich habe auch das Gefühl, dass in Österreich die Frauen gar nicht so auf ihre Rechte pochen im Vergleich zu Schweden.

TN4: Ja, stimmt.

TN7: Ja, weil die Glawischnig lacht jeder aus.

[Zustimmung]

Passage 5:

TN5: Die FPÖ wird das nie vertreten, aber das ist, aber dass dem dann auch die anderen Parteien klar...also eine Absage erteilen und also, ich finde das echt schwierig, weil in der FPÖ wird es das nie geben und in der ÖVP denke ich mir, wird es auch schwierig und dass die nie sagen werden „Ja, das ist eine Spitzenidee, wenn wir Frauen gleichberechtigten.“

TN7: [erhobene Stimme] Für die ist es ja schon so, „dürft's ja e studieren, dürft's ja e wählen!“

[Lachen] [Anomie] [Zustimmung]

TN2: Dürft's ja e wählen, ja das ist gut. [lacht]

Passage 6:

TN1: Die ganze Debatte ist immer, ja wie bringt man die Frauen in den Arbeitsmarkt, ja, der andere Teil der Debatte wäre wie kriegen wir die Männer in die Pflegeberufe?

TN5: Ja, genau.

TN1: Weil, wie gesagt, du kannst alle Frauen in den Arbeitsmarkt reintführen, dann musst du aber entweder staatliche Betreuungseinrichtungen schaffen und sind wir uns ehrlich, so wie die Finanzpolitik derzeit aussieht wird das nicht passieren und darum musst du entweder schauen, dass du Männer in die Pflegeberufe kriegst oder du verzichtest wirklich auf die Geburtenrate, die angestrebt wird. Weil sonst ist es nicht realistisch.

Passage 7:

TN1: Ja, genau deswegen bin ich auch für staatlich bezahlte Abtreibung. Ich sage nur, weil wenn sich der Mann aus der Verantwortung drücken, dann möchte ich das bitte auch können.

Passage 8:

TN3: Bezogen auf Kinderbetreuung oder eben das, was der Staat für Menschen tut, ist es einfacher in Schweden, eine Familie zu gründen.

TN2: Ich hätte am liebsten das schwedische System, einfach überall wo ich leben will.

[lachen]

TN2: Ist zwar utopisch, aber...

TN3: Nehmt es überall hin mit!

TN2: Ja, nein, aber einfach...

TN3: Ja.

TN2: Grundsätzlich.