

# Institutional and private childcare

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**Family based on Partnership – a Public Good?**

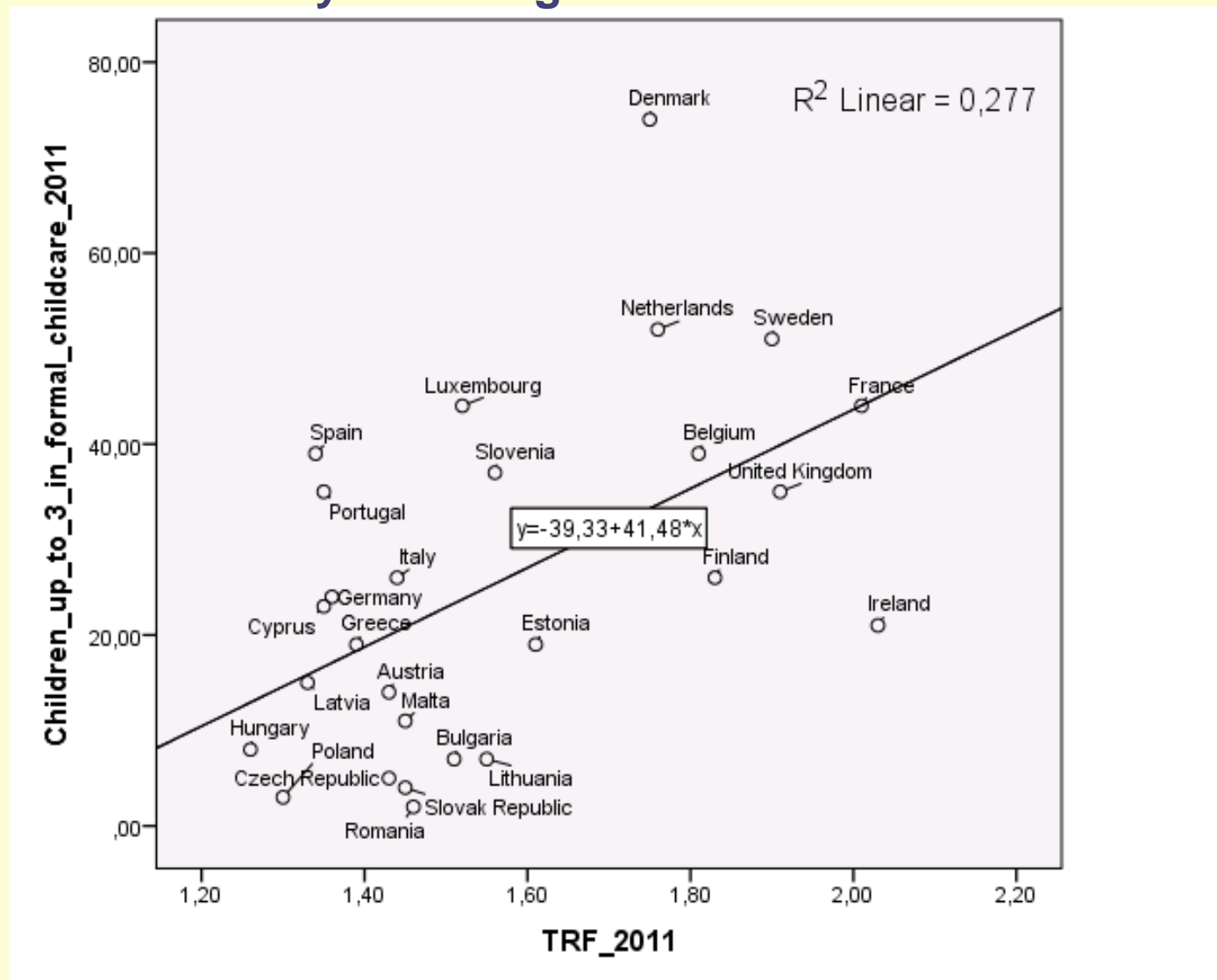
Budapest, 14.11.2014



# Early Childhood Education and Care – different perspectives in support of ECEC services

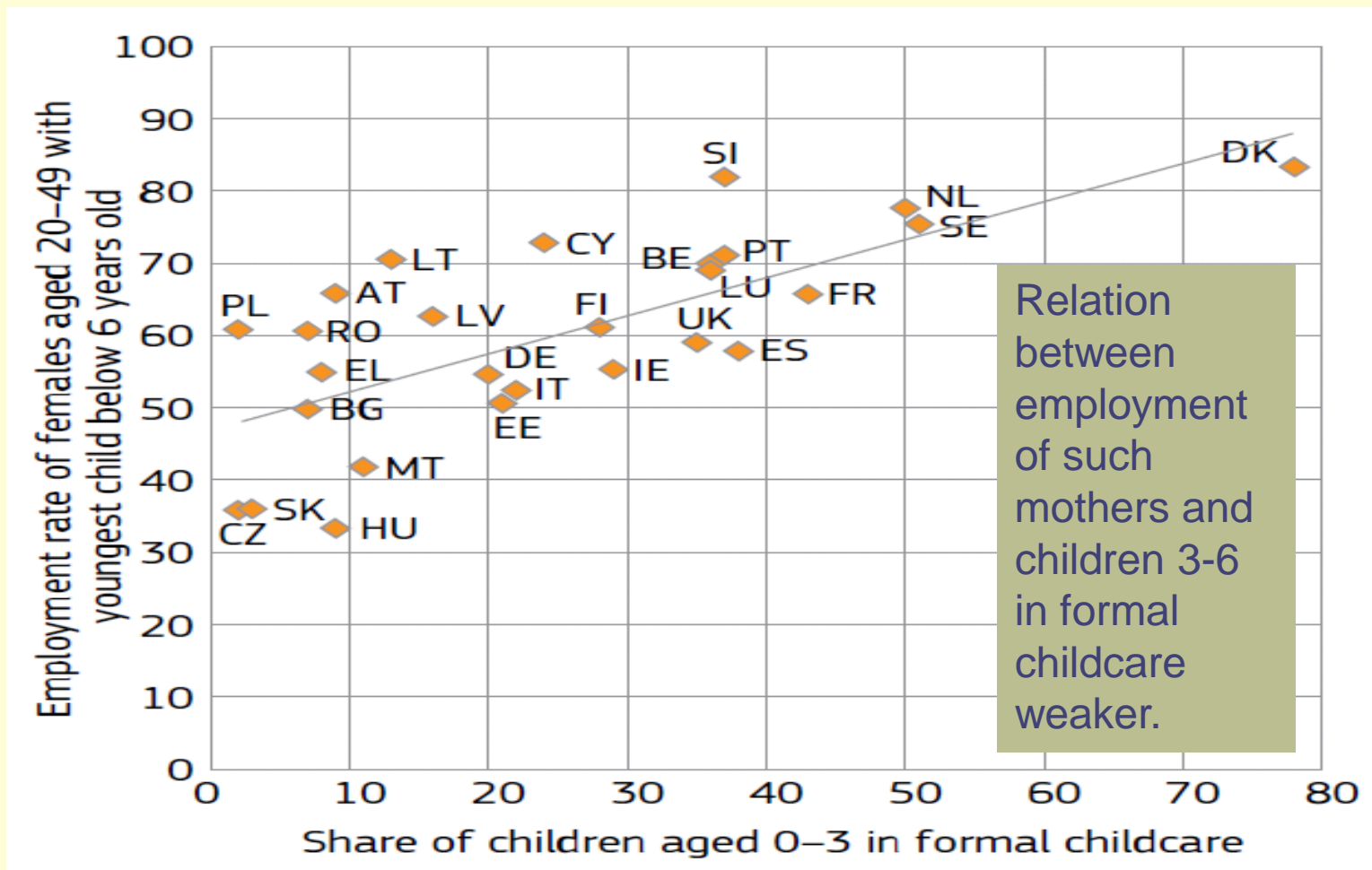
- investment into children
  - work-life balance
  - increase mothers' labor market participation
  - tackle women's poverty
  - increase gender equality
  - decrease gender pay gap
  - opportunities for children from minority groups and disadvantaged children
  - tackle low fertility rates → tackle ageing population
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## Relation between total fertility rates and the proportion of children below 3 years of age in formal childcare in 2011



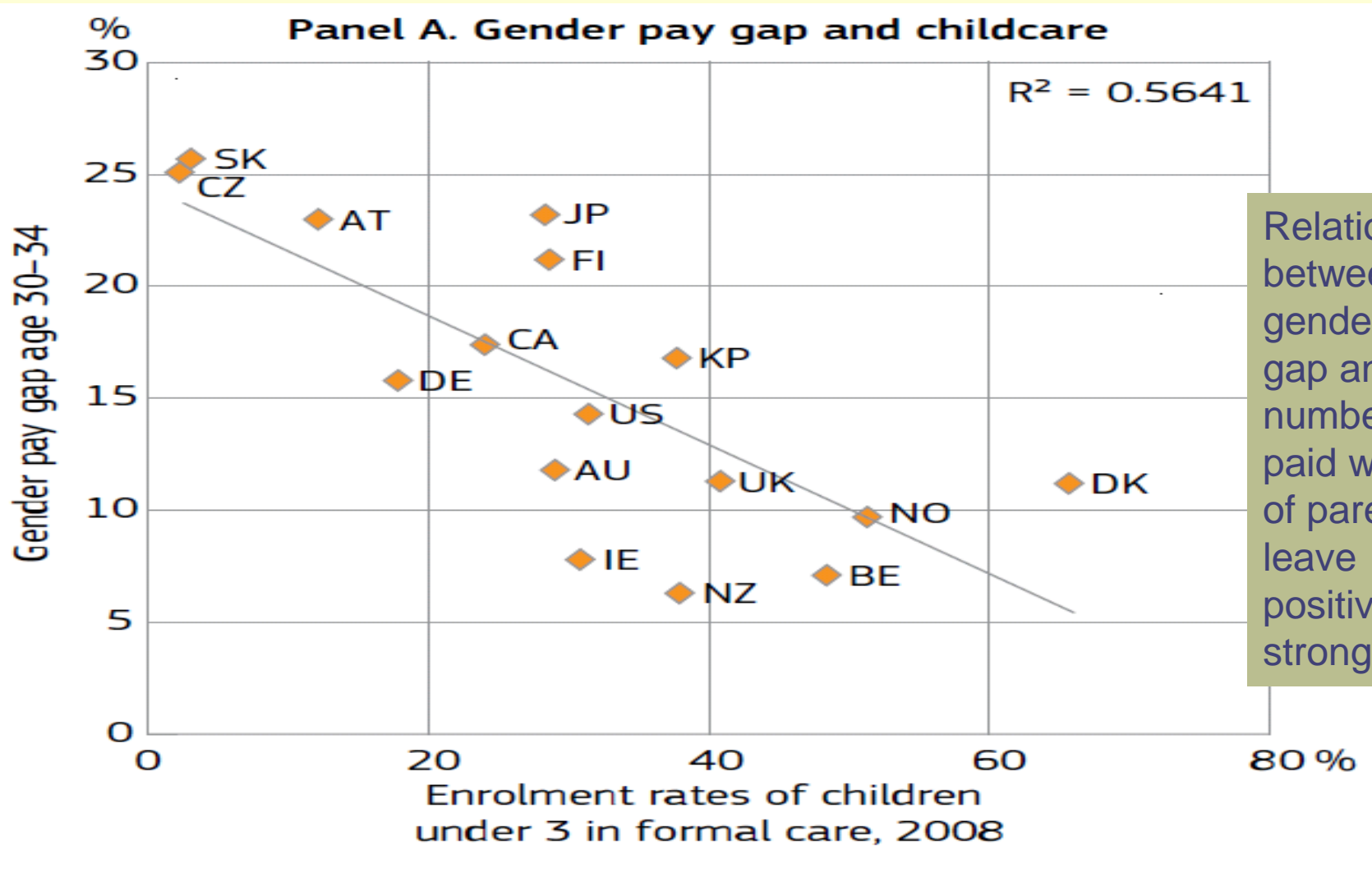
Source: Eurostat, EU-SILC.

Relation between the employment rate of mothers 20-49 with at least one child below 6 years of age and the proportion of children below 3 years of age in formal childcare in 2010 ( $R^2=0,504$ )



Source: EU-SILC and Labour Force Survey.


## Relation between the provision of formal childcare services and the gender pay gap



Relation between gender pay gap and number of paid weeks of parental leave positive and stronger.



# ECEC services as investment into children

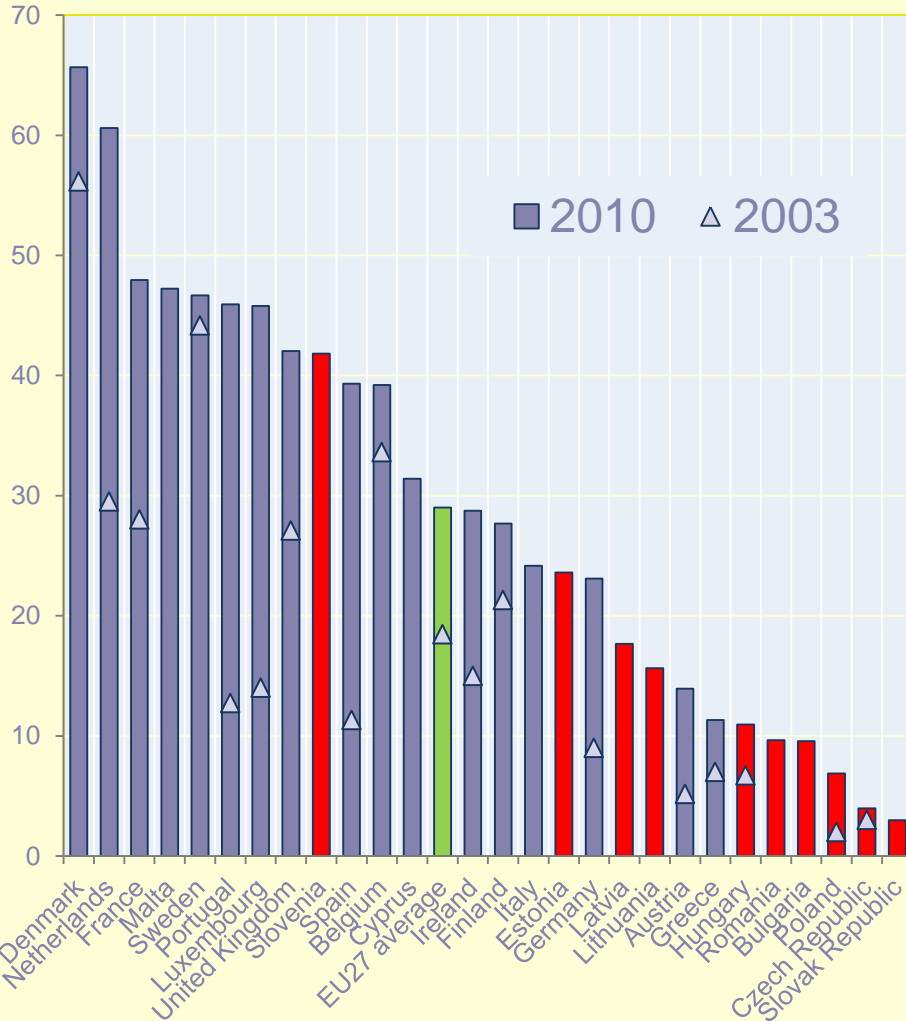
- Dropping early school leaving
  - Better school performance
  - High quality ECEC → disadvantaged children benefit more → helps reduce transmission of inequalities
  - Investments have the highest returns in the pre-school stage and decline exponentially thereafter
  - Later interventions – more costly and of limited benefits
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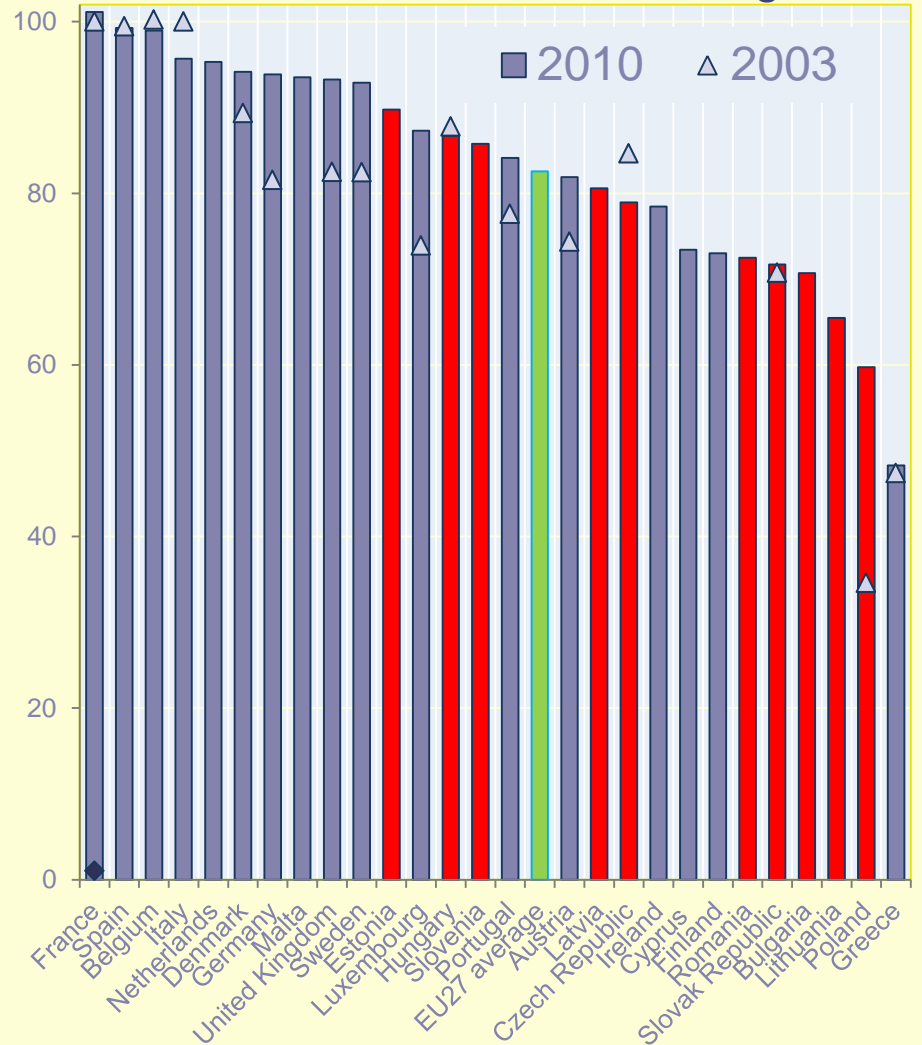
# Towards Barcelona targets

## Percentage of children in formal childcare services in 2003 and 2010

Children < 3



Children from 3 to school age




Source: Eurostat, EU-SILC.






# How countries performed on Barcelona targets in 2011

- Both of the objectives **achieved**
    - Belgium, Denmark, France, Sweden, **Slovenia**, United Kingdom
  - **Close** to achieve both objectives (+ one of the objectives achieved)
    - Spain, Netherlands
    - Germany, **Estonia**, Italy, Luxembourg, Portugal
    - Austria, Finland, Ireland
  - **None** of the objectives achieved (< 25 % and < 80 %)
    - **Bulgaria**, Cyprus, **Czech Republic**, Greece, **Hungary**, **Croatia**, **Lithuania**, **Latvia**, Malta, **Poland**, **Romania**, **Slovakia**
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# Some factors contributing to higher enrolment rates in formal childcare services

- **Integrated** rather than split model of ECEC
    - Moreover, split models more often suffer from less continuity; and less quality of services for the younger children.
  - **Universal services** (or low fees combined with income related fees) rather than high fees
    - With rising household income, the share of those who use childcare services gets larger.
    - Those families whose children benefit most from high quality ECEC services tend to respond to rising fees by drop-outs.
  - **Guarantee (right) to a place for all children**
- 



# Non-profit or for-profit providers to increase quality of ECEC services?


## ● For-profit providers

- **H 1: increase quality** by the means of competition
  - do not bid up quality automatically because parents lack adequate information
  - if quality ratings published → social segregation increases
- **H 2: decrease quality** by the means of reducing investments into quality
  - regulations needed such as price caps and standards for all settings over key drivers of quality
  - large for-profit providers of ECEC services may have great power to resist regulatory attempts to improve standards
- **more choice BUT less continuity**

## ● Means of quality promotion

- bonus funding to centers that improve quality + regulations and standards for all


## ● Trade-offs between expanding access and improving quality

- lower-income families priced out of generally high quality formal childcare
  - cheap but low-quality formal childcare leading to poor child outcomes
    - invest at least 1 % of GDP to ECEC
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# Central European post-communist countries

## ● Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary

- long history of split model of ECEC
  - long history of allowances to support mothers to stay at home with small children
  - low participation of men in care-work
  - low employment flexibility in favor of work-life balance
  - strongest negative impact of motherhood on women's employment in Europe → engagement in precarious forms of work
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## Experience from the Czech Republic

### From gender conservative discourse on „threeness“ towards „children groups“

- belief that childcare **services for children below 3** years of age **endanger** secure **attachment** with the mother + **impair** cognitive and emotional children´s **development**
    - **no support** from up to date longitudinal empirical **research**
    - supported by gender **conservative attitudes** and **historical developments**
      - incentives for mothers´ to stay at home up to child´ age of 3 to 4
      - against formal childcare services for children below age of 3
      - informal non-maternal childcare arrangements and „more family-like“ alternatives to public childcare increasingly accepted
  - **2014 – turn in the discourse:** feminist and social democrat minister of labour and social affairs advocates for:
    - expanding access to formal childcare for children from 1 year of age till school age
    - setting minimum standards to all providers of childcare
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# Conclusion

- benefits of ECEC services to societies
  - post-communist countries laggards in formal ECEC services
  - invest at least 1 % of GDP to ECEC
  - universal access or low fees in general combined with income related fees
  - bonus funding to improve quality + regulations and minimum standards for all providers
  - guarantee (right) to a place for all children
  - towards integrated model of ECEC – more continuity for children
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**Thank you for your attention!**

