

Institutional and private childcare

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Family based on Partnership – a Public Good?

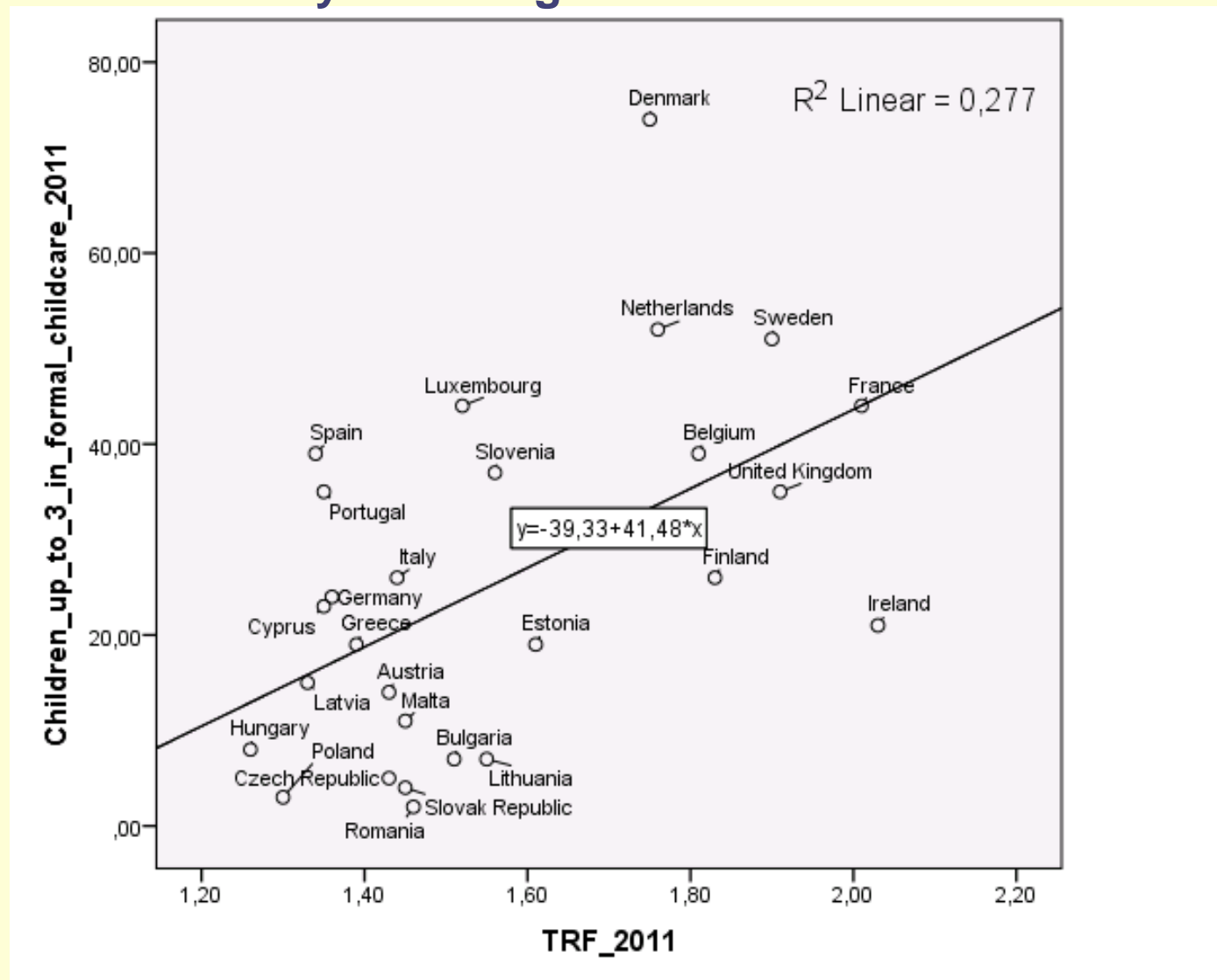
Budapest, 14.11.2014



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

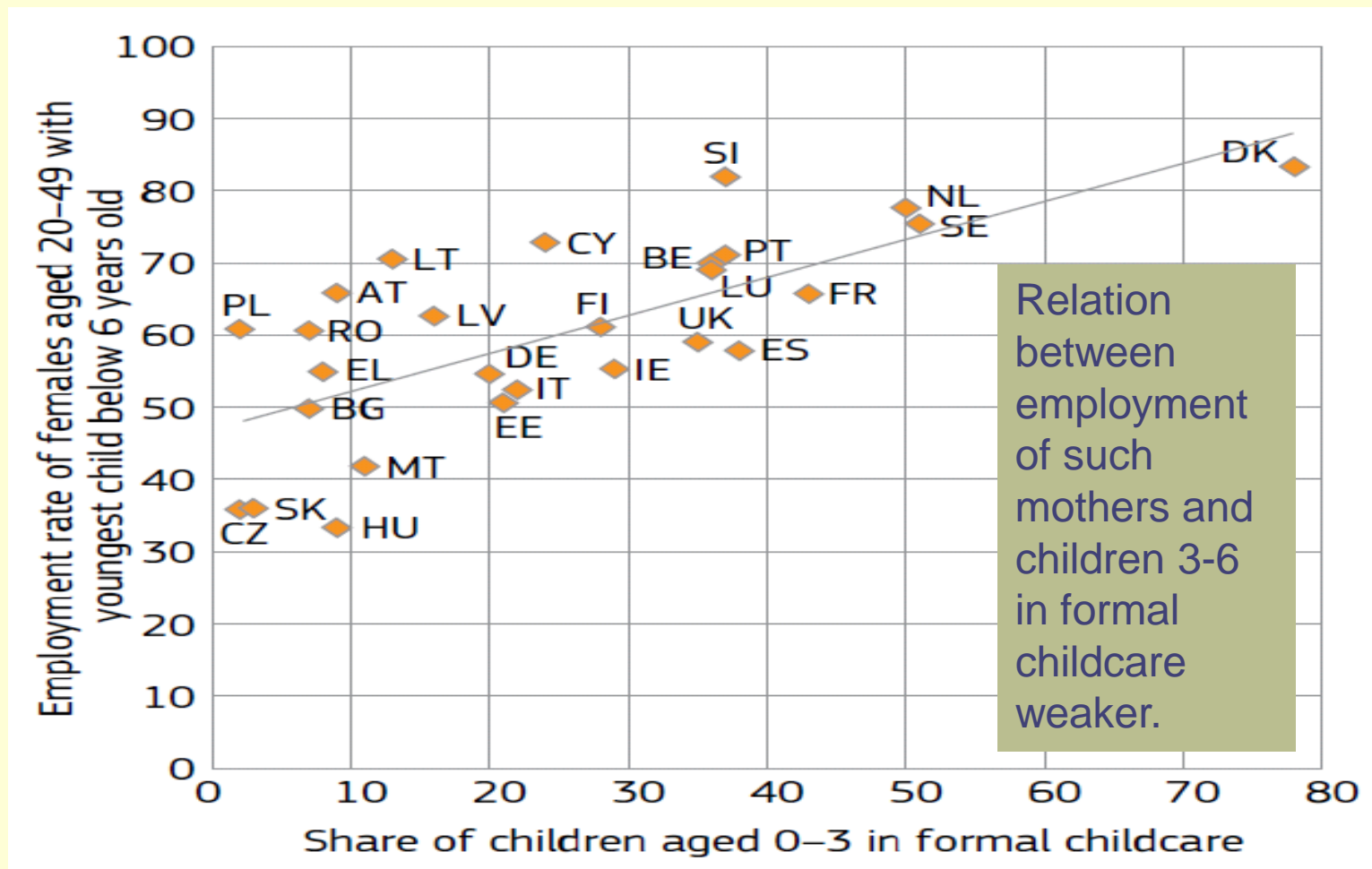
- investment into children
 - work-life balance
 - increase mothers' labor market participation
 - tackle women's poverty
 - increase gender equality
 - decrease gender pay gap
 - opportunities for children from minority groups and disadvantaged children
 - tackle low fertility rates → tackle ageing 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



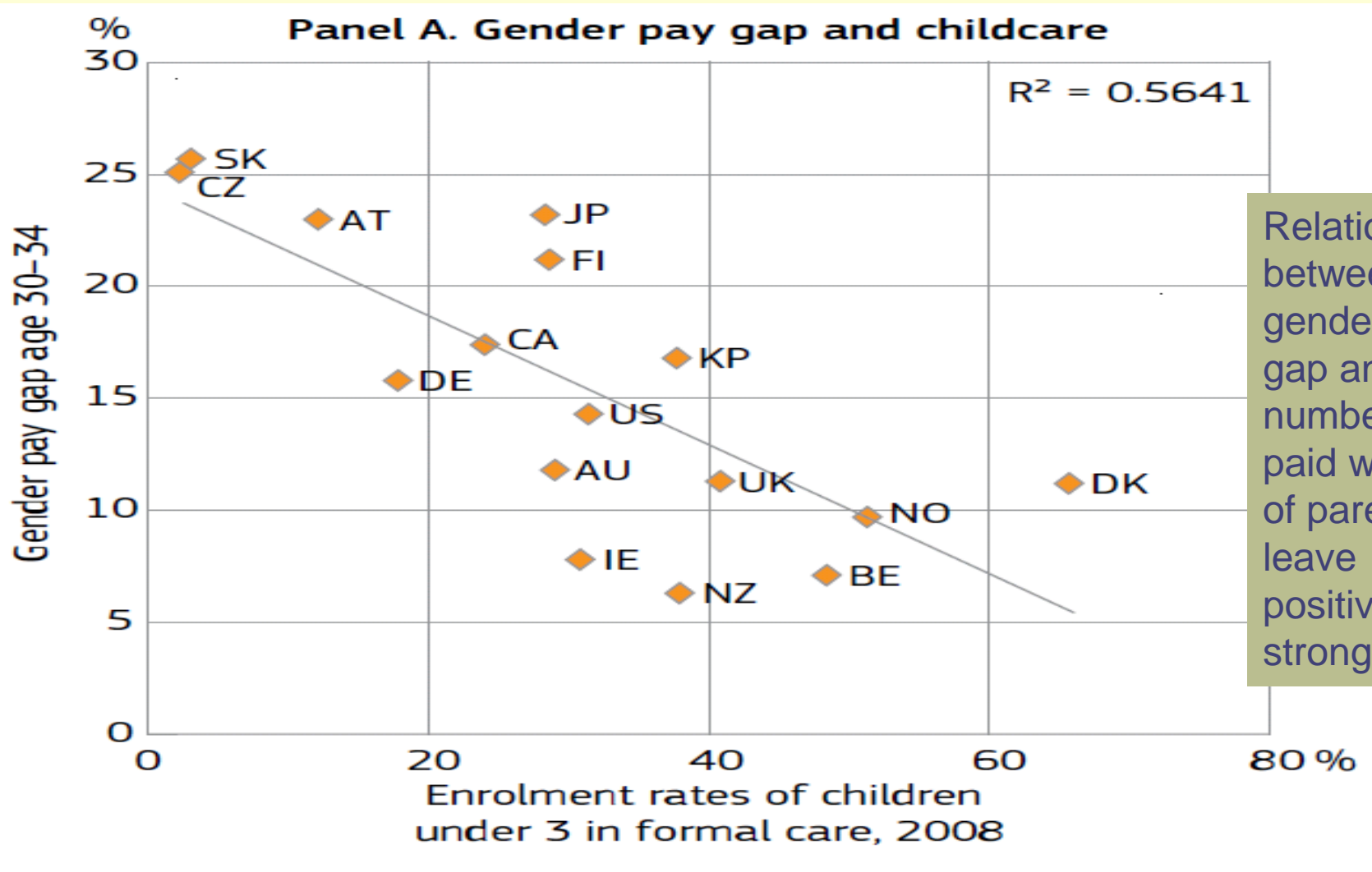
Source: Eurostat, EU-SILC.

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

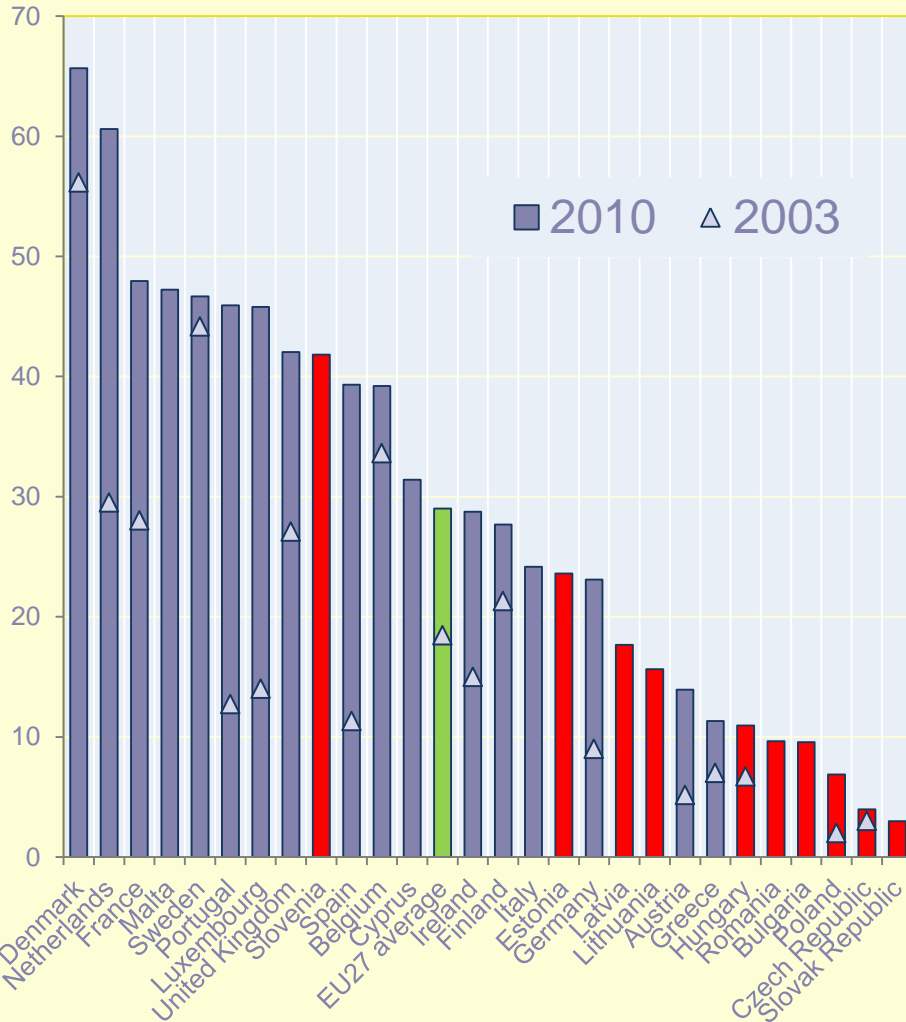
- Dropping early school leaving
 - Better school performance
 - High quality ECEC → disadvantaged children benefit more → helps reduce transmission of inequalities
 - Investments have the highest returns in the pre-school stage and decline exponentially thereafter
 - Later interventions – more costly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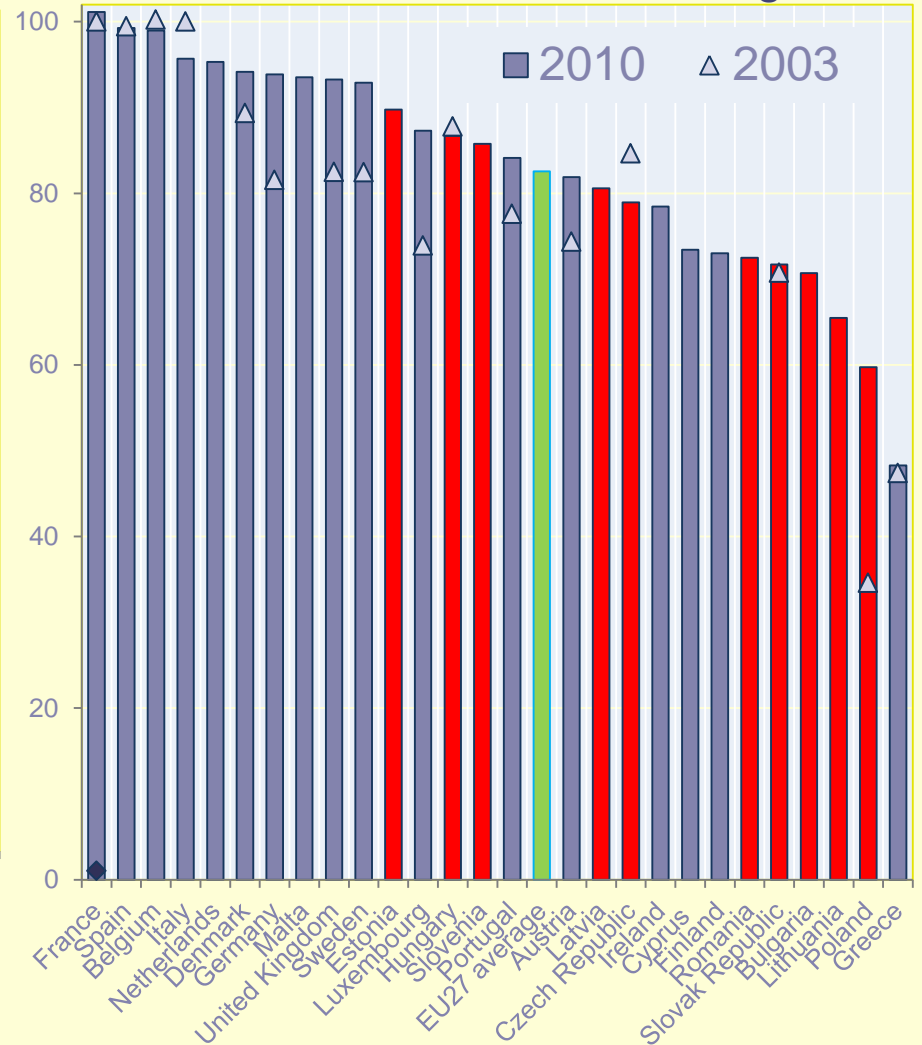
Towards Barcelona targets

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**
- 



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**
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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!

