

# EMPLOYMENT AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

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# Structure of the presentation

1. Gender and state socialism: policy and ideational legacies
2. General problems of research on gender policies in post-communist countries
3. *Varieties of familialism* - a comparative analysis
4. Taking a closer look at Hungary and Poland.
5. How to improve gender equality policies in CEE - discussion.

# State-socialism: myth about gender equality

- Mobilisation of female labour force, mobilisation of fertility:
  - ✓ gender equality as new principle written in the Constitution
  - ✓ Childcare facilities (1950s): labour force
  - ✓ ... and maternity benefits (1970s and later):
  - ✓ Women as a group treated instrumentally
- ...but no real effort to change values and beliefs
  - ✓ Socialist leaders not interested in equal division of domestic work
  - ✓ Often: low quality childcare facilities
  - ✓ Result: “double burden”



...While we had this idea of  
beauty before the War



... In early years of state-socialism the propaganda started to picture women as capable of physical work

Woman on tractor. One of the most famous posters in Poland. Soon it became the symbol of „forcing” women to work and the favourite target of the anti-feminist sentiments





A poster presenting women's new roles: as a worker, as a social activist. At the same time, her children are attending creche and kindergarten

# Communism falls and...

- Patriarchal values in the public sphere (“anti-feminism”)
  - ✓ Also as a result of “pseudo-emancipation” during state-socialism.
- Market austerity reforms, privatization, liquidation of many workplaces
  - ✓ Female employment goes down
- The existing safety net is removed
  - ✓ Decentralization of childcare facilities
  - ✓ Liquidation of some benefits and family support
  - ✓ Women at the risk of poverty

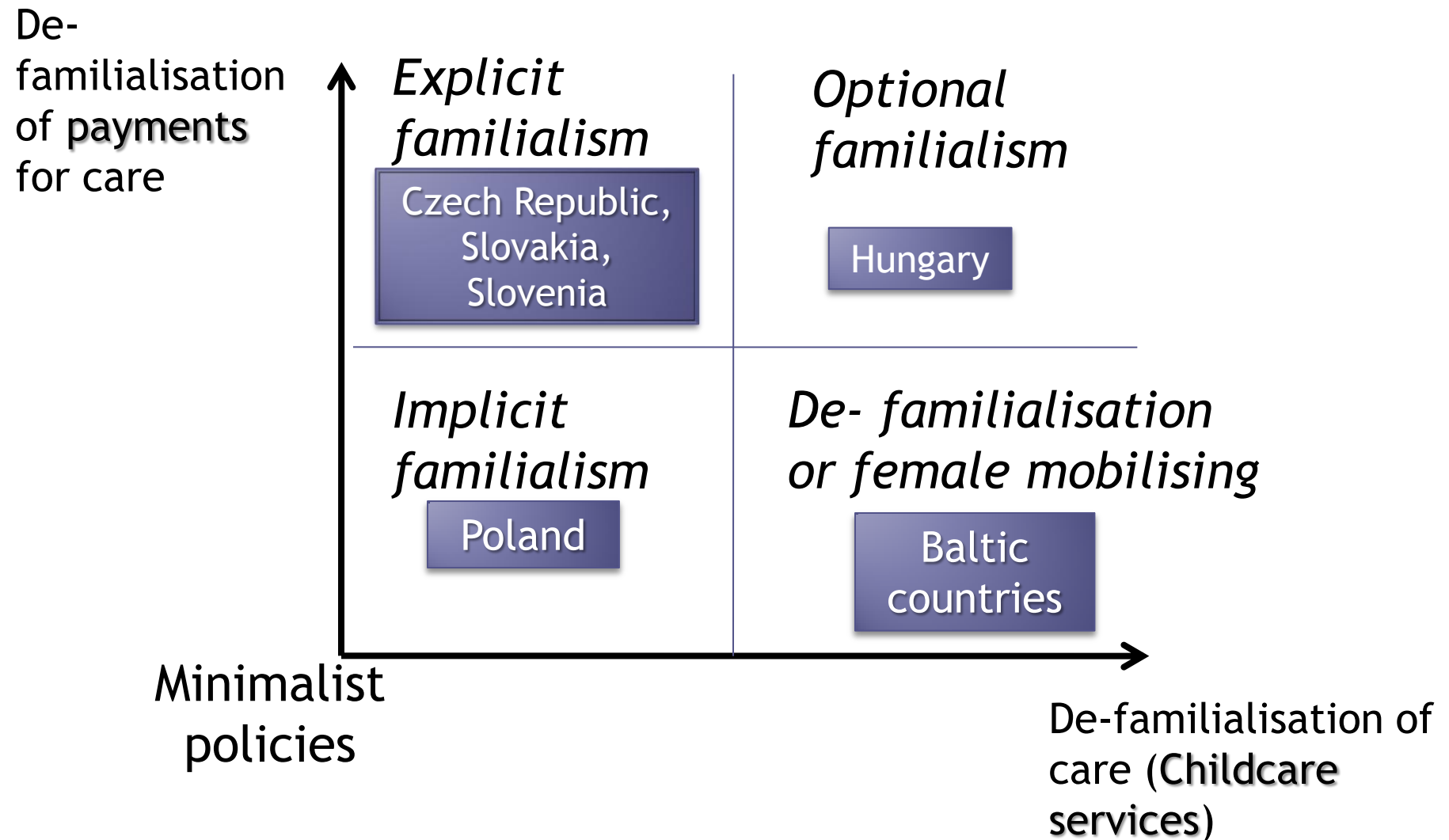
## Economic Activity of Women and Men in some CEE 1990, 1995, 2000, 2005, 2009, *Source: UNECE Gender Statistics*

Country	Sex	1990	1995	2000	2005	2009
<b>Albania</b>	Female	..	59,1	54,6	44,1	..
	Male	..	84,7	77,6	63,8	..
<b>Bulgaria</b>	Female	..	47,9	44,7	44,4	47,5
	Male	..	56,8	56,2	55,4	59
<b>Czech Republic</b>	Female	60,8	52,3	51,6	50,7	49,5
	Male	72,9	71,4	69,3	68,7	68,3
<b>Estonia</b>	Female	60,6	53,6	51,4	53,1	55,1
	Male	77,1	71,3	66,4	65,2	68
<b>Hungary</b>	Female	46,3	40,3	41,7	43,1	43
	Male	64,5	57,1	58,5	58,3	58,2
<b>Latvia</b>	Female	64,1	..	49	50,9	55
	Male	77,5	..	65	66,1	67,8
<b>Lithuania</b>	Female	60,2	55,1	55	51,2	53,2
	Male	74,7	72	66,5	63,1	63
<b>Poland</b>	Female	..	51,1	50,1	47,7	47,3
	Male	..	66,5	64,2	62,8	63,4
<b>Romania</b>	Female	54,9	60,4	58,2	46,9	46,6
	Male	67,2	74,4	71,2	61,5	62,8
<b>Russian Federation</b>	Female	..	..	..	47,2	..
	Male	..	..	..	56,3	..

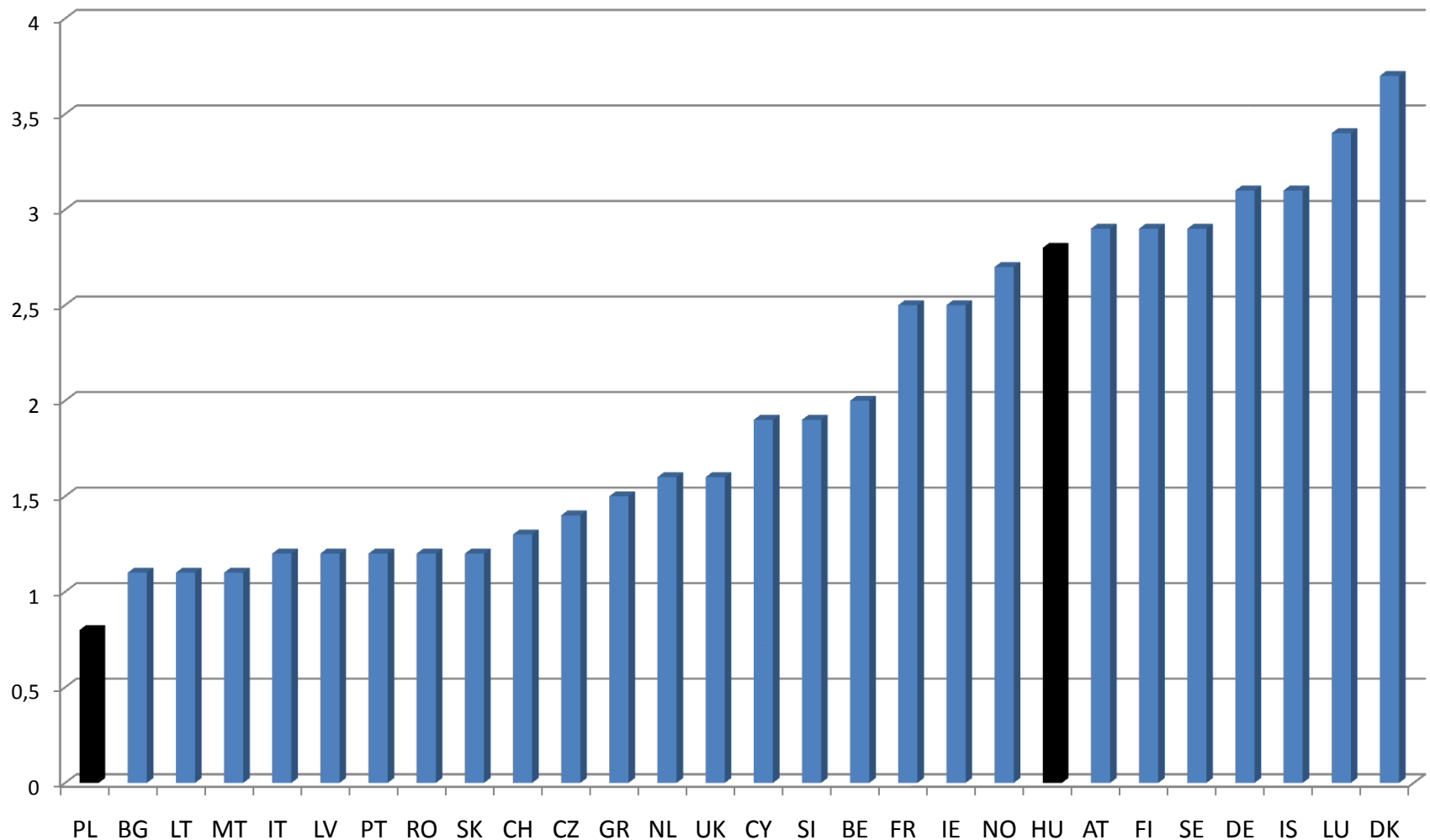
# East meets West: problems with modern theories as applied to the case of post-communist countries

- Concept of T.H. Marshall's sequence of rights (civic ->political ->social)
  - ✓ During communism no political and civic rights, but social rights developed
- Welfare state or gender policies typologies
  - ✓ Hybrid character of social policies
  - ✓ Formal gender equality as not followed by change in values.

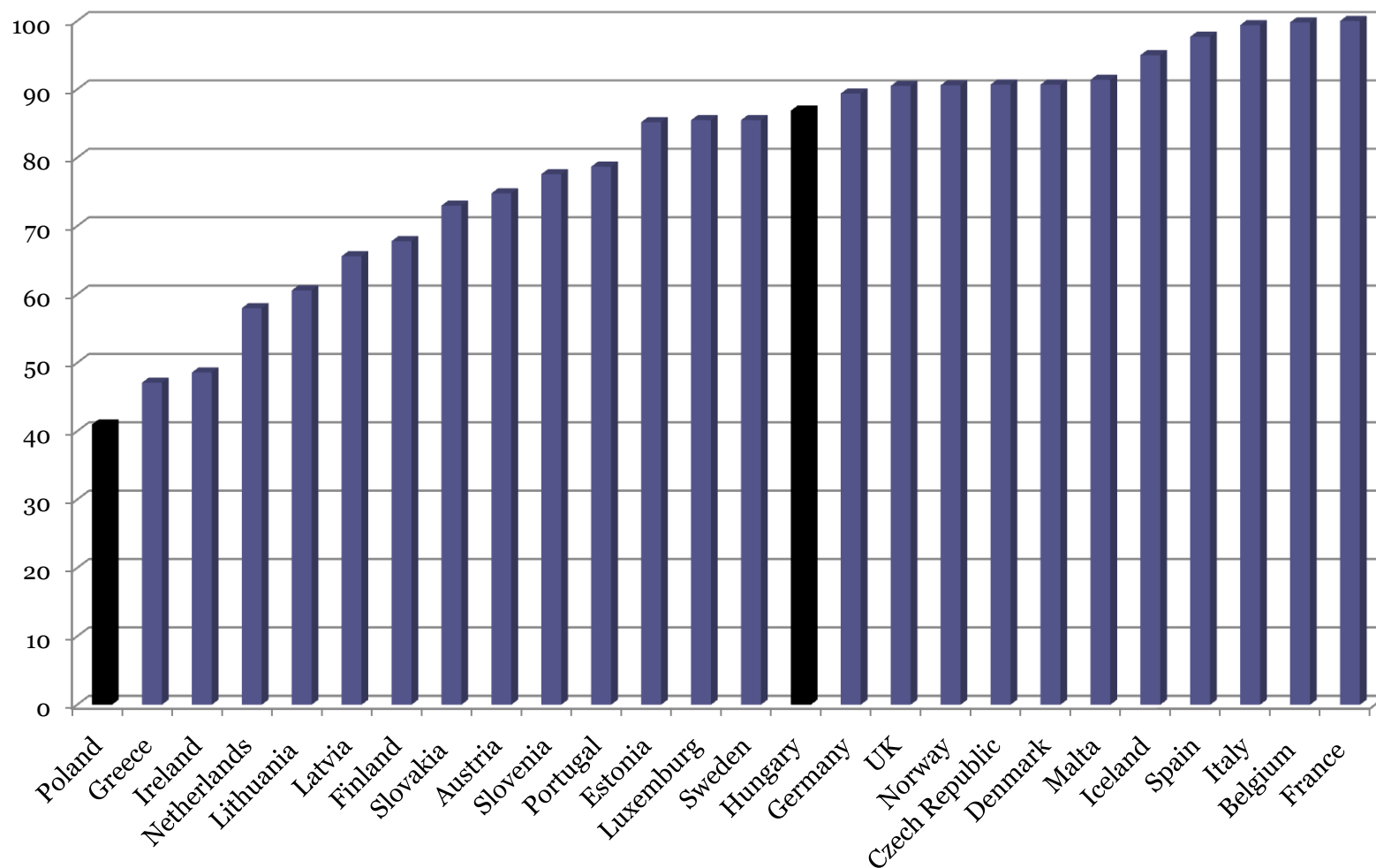
## „Varieties of familialism”



# Welfare expenditure for families/children as % of GDP in the European Union in 2006 (ESSPROS)



## Average enrolment rate of children aged three to five years of age in pre-school educational programs in the European Union (2006)



# Historical evolution of family policies

## HUNGARY

- ❑ Austro-Hungarian legacies,
- ❑ better performance of state administration,
- ❑ pioneering in family policy programs,
- ❑ care as a **public** issue

**State-socialism:** active role of social planners and demographic researchers

## POLAND

- ❑ not compatible welfare systems from three parts
- ❑ development of basic state functions,
- ❑ care as a **private** issue

**State-socialism:** the policies of 'ad-hocism'

# Family policy after transformation: Resistance to change

- ❑ Hungary late 1990s: *restrictions* in parental leave and family allowances not acceptable, short-lived;
  - ✓ Women's mobilisation: middle-class women for generous parental leave payments
- ❑ Poland late 1990s, early 2000s: *improvements* in family support did not survive.
  - ✓ Women's mobilisation: (early 1990s) feminist circles opposing restrictive abortion law

# Topic for discussion #1

**Gender East/West - comparative perspective on social policies and gender across the usual division. The role of ideas as driving force behind the policies.**

- HOW WAS IT POSSIBLE TO INTRODUCE MORE FEMALE-FRIENDLY POLICIES IN THE WEST? HOW CAN THE NEW EU-MS LEARN FROM THEIR EXPERIENCE?
- WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION IN THE PROCESS?
- ARE THE CONSERVATIVE IDEAS STILL PREVAILING AND FAVORING THE MALE BREADWINNER MODEL?
- HOW ARE THE WESTERN COUNTRIES DIFFERENT FROM EACH OTHER AND WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE DIFFERENCES/SIMILARITIES WHEN THEY ARE COMPARED TO THE NEW EU-MEMBERS?

# Topic for discussion #2

## Political and citizenship rights of women - quota systems?

- HOW TO OVERCOME POPULAR ANTI-FEMINIST SENTIMENTS AND WHAT KIND OF ARGUMENTS SHOULD BE USED IN THE PUBLIC DEBATE TO ATTRACT SUPPORT FOR THIS KIND OF ACTIONS?
- WHAT ARE THE EXPERIENCES OF THE WESTERN COUNTRIES IN THIS RESPECT?
- ARE THERE ANY OTHER INSTITUTIONAL MEANS FOR SOCIETAL AND POLITICAL MOBILIZATION OF WOMEN?

