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Working and Mothering in Sweden and Ukraine.

The case of lone mothers.

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SIMT21 Master's Thesis (Two Years) in Social
Studies of Gender
Spring Term 2011
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Abstract

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This thesis discusses social welfare systems in Ukraine and in Sweden with focus on working and mothering reconciliation for the category of lone mothers. The theories applied in the thesis include welfare and care regimes, citizenship perspective, care culture and care packaging. Using analysis of interviews and of social policies in both countries, the author comes to some concluding remarks. While in the Swedish case it seems easier to categorize the country according to social welfare typology, the Ukrainian case is complicated and ambiguous with 'double burden' and 'child penalties' for women. The author shows that in Ukraine the role of the family in working and mothering reconciliation seems to be more important than the role of the state, when in Sweden is vice versa. The Ukrainian interviews point to an image of the 'absent father'. The citizenship entitlements in Sweden are based on employment, but full-time parenthood for one year still guarantees decent living standard. In Ukraine citizenship entitlements are based on motherhood to a greater extent, but it does not provide women with enough economic security, especially in the case of lone mothers.

Keywords: Social Welfare, Sweden, Ukraine, Lone Mothers, Working and Mothering Reconciliation.

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1. Introduction

Being a lone mother puts focus on the combination of working and mothering. This is the group of mothers who have most difficulties when it comes to combining childcare and paid employment. The way this group of citizens is treated in welfare states shows the extent to which the state is ready to undertake either caring or economic responsibilities; whether a woman is able to survive without a male-breadwinner and escape from an unsuccessful marriage or choose not to marry at all. In this study I will compare the situation of Swedish and Ukrainian lone mothers, as I consider it to be a fruitful field of inter-state comparison.

I have chosen Ukraine and Sweden for my research due to several reasons. Ukraine is my homeland, so I am very passionate about the well-being of its people, and Sweden is the country where I am currently living, so it gives me a lot of opportunities for research. But there are some other reasons worth mentioning. As I will underline several times throughout the thesis there is a lack of knowledge about the Ukrainian social welfare system, especially from a feminist perspective, while the Swedish welfare system is well-researched. Sweden is a stable society, while Ukraine is unstable, politically, economically and socially. These are the main reasons why I find comparing the two countries so fascinating.

Ukraine and Sweden differ in many aspects. Historically, the two countries have undertaken different paths with regard to social, economic and political development. Sweden has gone through both steady times of reforms and social changes (e.g. women's entry to labour market, development of a generous welfare state, social protection, gender mainstreaming) and through times of economical crisis. Although, the Swedish welfare state has experienced a series of expenditure cuts as well, all in all, one could argue that Sweden is a good example of a rather well functioning social welfare system.

Ukraine on the other hand, is a transitional society (Perelli-Harris, 2008), but it still seems hard to say where the transition is leading. Ukraine used to be a

part of the Soviet Union. Social welfare was then socialistic in its essence offering generous provisions. Most of women's traditional functions in the family and in the household, such as childcare and cooking, were assumed to be taken over by the state. Women's labour market participation was high. However in practice, women carried a double burden – both paid employment and unpaid care and household work, because men were almost not involved in any of these activities and all responsibilities for the family were lying on women's shoulders (Pascall and Manning, 2000; Pascall and Kwak, 2005). During the period of economic transition, the Ukrainian society and welfare system have changed dramatically. Both the state and the people have had to adapt to these changes. This transition period is characterized by high levels of economic insecurity and unemployment as well as by disruption of social values, deep political crisis, and by high levels of distrust, depression, alcoholism, suicides along with low birth rates (Pascall and Manning, 2000). Social changes have been fast and inevitable while social policy reforms have been incoherent and inconsistent. Different groups of people experience the transition in different ways, and women face it in a particular way because of their “traditional” responsibility for family welfare and children. A lot of women became the head of the households and the solo providers for themselves, their children and sometimes also their husbands. What came as a shock was an extreme change of the relationship between the state and the family, which resulted in disruptions, crisis, and anxiety. The social welfare system in the Soviet Union which used to be reliable and to provide a generous safety net, suddenly turned into a ridiculous masquerade with almost the same formal rights and services as in the past, but non-functioning in reality as inflation made benefits worthless (Perelli-Harris, 2008, Pascall and Manning, 2000).

However, much has changed since the 1990's both in the economic and the social sphere if one looks at numbers and indicators of people's well-being in Ukraine¹. Significant improvements of the living standard and employment rates took place until the economic crisis of 2008 happened. After the crisis there was again a decline in economic development and in social stability and welfare. In the light of these changes, social welfare becomes irrelevant under current conditions as social assistance is insufficient and

¹ <http://www.ukrstat.gov.ua/>

unregulated, while in other spheres, like education and medical treatment, the commercialization of the services is increasing very fast leaving large numbers of people without possibility to use them due to low income.

In this thesis my ambition is to compare the welfare states of Ukraine and Sweden focusing on the combination of working and mothering. As Trudie Knijn and Arnoud Smit (2009: 7) point out sarcastically: “Say ‘reconciling work and family life’ and everybody will nod ‘yes, that’s what we need’”. This subject is under the spotlight in welfare debates in Europe. The reasons for that are numerous: women’s labour market involvement is increasing constantly in all European countries (Boje and Almqvist, 2000), the population of Europe is ageing and in many countries birth rates are way beneath needed for reproducing the population². In Ukraine, women’s participation in the labour market has been high since the 1950’s and since then they had to combine mothering and working, using available resources for childcare.

I will apply a comparative perspective to see how mothering and working are combined and to find out which sector in society is the dominant provider, i.e. how it is arranged with the support of the family, the state and the market. As welfare is a complex term, which includes all the actors who provide welfare to the citizens (Kennett, 2001: 4), different institutions provide material and non-material resources and citizens are “pooling” from them in order to ensure their welfare (Knijn, Jönsson and Klammer, 2005).

In my research I will use theories of welfare and care regimes, which have been introduced and mostly used on the examples of west European countries. That is why comparing Ukraine and Sweden is especially interesting, as most of these theories have never been applied to analyze the Ukrainian welfare system in particular, although societies in transition have been in focus for quite a while (Havelkova, 2000; Mahon and Williams, 2007).

I am using Gøsta Esping-Andersen’s typology of welfare regimes as a starting point, but will definitely include feminist critique to his typology as a base for my discussion. Another perspective of my research interest is the world wide practice of women being predominately responsible for care, children and household labour – what is called unpaid labour. The way women manage to

² <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/eurostat/home/>

combine paid and unpaid labour is a result of family, state and market intervention. If none of these actors offers affordable and convenient provisions, then women take up a double-burden and face a range of disadvantages (health problems, economic deprivation, dependence on the breadwinner etc.). Sweden is one of the leading countries in the world with regard to equal division of unpaid work between men and women³. However, as Charlotte Nyman (1999) points out, although Sweden is “the most equal country in the world” there is still an unequal distribution of income and power in the household. In Ukraine women clearly carry a double burden. The division of unpaid labour has a profound impact on the reconciliation of working and mothering and when it is exclusively woman’s responsibility to do childcare, the possibility to participate in paid labour is decreasing. In Ukraine, where women have to work to survive, as there is no other way to support the family, the primary responsibility for childcare and other kinds of unpaid labour deprive women of leisure time and damage her physical and psychological health. I acknowledge that any research on this topic requires an intersectional approach, as the Swedish and Ukrainian population is very stratified and diverse.

Therefore, *my main aim is to find out how the Ukrainian and the Swedish social welfare systems are experienced by lone mothers with regard to working and mothering reconciliation.* What strategies do lone mothers use to combine working and mothering? What are the roles of the state, the market and the family in working/mothering reconciliation? How is the father’s role perceived and carried out in both countries? What is the ground for citizenship status of lone mothers in Ukraine and Sweden?

³ <http://www.weforum.org/issues/global-gender-gap>

2. Theoretical discussion

Starting with the gender aspect of my research, I would claim by the support of R.W. Connell (1990: 519, 523) that the state is “the central institutionalization of gendered power” and each state is seen as having a ‘gender regime’. Gender regime is defined as “a complex of rules and norms that create established expectations /.../ about gender relations, allocating different tasks and rights to women and men” (Sainsbury, 1999: 5). As gender regime is a very broad and complex term, which requires thorough analysis and profound research my ambition is not to identify the gender regime in each of the two countries of study, as this would require a much deeper analysis of the gender relations in each society. Nevertheless, it is very useful to keep in mind that all relations in society are gendered and that they make up an ultimate structure which makes up a gender regime. For my research it means that social policies concerning mothering and working are part of a bigger picture and that they are determined by the existing gender regime, welfare regime, culture, history, economic conditions, etc.

2.1 Esping-Andersen’s typology of welfare regimes

According to Sevil Sümer (2009: 32): “Even those who are not directly involved in criticizing the “Three Regimes” approach feel almost obliged to refer to this productive debate in this field”. So, although I do not base all of my research on Esping-Andersen’s theory, I think it is very useful to start with his ideas and to problematize them from the points lifted by the feminist critique.

Esping-Andersen’s (1990) typology is one of the most influential and controversial typologies of welfare regimes, which has led to highly fruitful discussions among feminist researchers.

Esping-Andersen's typology is built upon three "essential criteria" for defining welfare states:

- the quality of social rights;
- social stratification;
- state, market and family relationships (Esping-Andersen, 1990: 29).

Three welfare-state regimes are identified by Esping-Andersen. *The 'liberal' welfare state* characterized by minimal interference of the state, in turn the state encourages the role of the market. As a consequence social benefits are limited, associated with stigma and benefits are usually modest. This type of regime minimizes de-commodification. "The archetypical examples" are the United States, Canada and Australia (Esping-Andersen, 1990: 26-27).

In the case of *the conservative regime*, the state is 'corporatist' and the rights are attached to class and status. The state will interfere "when the family's capacity to serve its members is exhausted" (ibid: 27). In such societies religion plays a strong role and proclaims "preservation of traditional familyhood". Motherhood is encouraged by family benefits and public childcare is underdeveloped. This regime is represented by countries like Austria, Germany, France and Italy (ibid).

And finally, *the social democratic regime* is characterized by universal benefits based on citizenship and financed by taxes and "the principles of universalism and de-commodification of social rights were extended also to the new middle classes" (ibid: 28). As Esping-Andersen points out, these countries promoted equality "of the highest standards". The ideal is not to wait till the resources of the family get exhausted and not to increase the dependency on the family, but to increase the level of individual independence. What is particularly interesting about this type of welfare-state regime is "the fusion of welfare and work", the state is committed and dependent on full employment and "the right to work has equal status to the right of income protection" (ibid: 28). Scandinavian countries predominantly belong to the social democratic welfare-state regime. These welfare state regimes can be regarded as some kind of ideal types (no country can be a representative of one pure regime) and as Sümer (2009: 22)

underlines, “it is important to see these models as dynamic and as analytical tools”.

After the introduction of Esping-Andersen’s classification the debate around it has never settled down. Sümer’s (2009) analysis shows that some researchers end up with the same three regimes after using different dimensions, others argue for working out a fourth kind of regime for Southern European countries. Neither do Post-Soviet countries fit into this ready-made scheme. Others claim that there are no proofs that these regimes exist and that they are useful (ibid: 22).

2.2 Feminist critique on Esping-Andersen’s typology

A number of feminist researchers have contributed to this discussion. I will present some of the contributions here. Jane Lewis (1992) was one of the first feminists to criticize Esping-Andersen’s typology. She claims that his approach “misses one of the central issues in the structuring of welfare regimes: the problem of valuing the unpaid work that is done primarily by women in providing welfare, mainly within the family, and in securing those providers social entitlements” (Lewis, 1992: 160). Lewis ends up classifying countries based on whether they recognize women solely as wives and mothers or as workers - as strong, moderate (the term “modified” was used in the first article) or weak male-breadwinner models. Even if Sweden is an example of a weak male-breadwinner model, according to Lewis, this progressive country has still a long way to go to reach equal reconciliation of paid and unpaid work, equal payment for paid work and active and equal engagement of men in domestic labour and childcare. Lewis (1997(a): 173) gives special attention to defamilialization rather than to decommodification: “This would clearly encompass how far men and women were to be helped to reconcile paid and unpaid employment, and it leaves room for the idea that the right not to care /.../ might be as important as the right to care”.

Ann Orloff’s main points in the critique are as the following: she argues that “the state is woman-friendly to the extent that policies reduce the sexual division of labour by shifting the burden of domestic work to public services and

to men” (Orloff, 1993: 314). Another important contribution of Orloff to the general feminist discussion of the welfare state and to the criticism of Esping-Andersen’s typology is her expansion of the term “decommodification” to include not only freedom of workers from compulsory participation in the labour market, but also to identify the freedom of those who are doing most of the unpaid care work, to include “the capacity to form and maintain an autonomous household” (ibid: 319). She is arguing that Esping-Andersen’s vocabulary is male, exemplified by such concepts as “worker”, “citizenship” and “decommodification” (ibid: 308). Women’s unpaid caring and domestic work is not recognized in Esping-Andersen’s analysis, where social welfare system is pretty much based on the fact that unpaid care work is done at home mostly by women. This fact determines that access to paid employment is limited for women.

Diane Sainsbury is another influential feminist researcher of the field. In her book “Gendering Welfare State” (1994) Sainsbury develops a framework of three gender policy regimes as an attempt to formulate an alternative typology: *the male-breadwinner regime, the separate gender roles regime and the individual earner-carer regime*. For her, the concept of regime is embracing “a complex of rules and norms that create established expectations and a gender regime consists of the rules and norms about gender relations, allocating tasks and rights to the two sexes” (Sainsbury, 1999: 5). Sainsbury (1999(a): 79) based her analysis on four dimensions of variation:

- degree to which gendered differentiation in entitlement is based on the traditional division of labour between women and men;
- whether the rights are individualized or familialised;
- scope of state responsibility for caring tasks;
- women’s and men’s equal access to paid work.

Unlike Esping-Andersen’s approach, this typology focuses on gender relations and takes into consideration both caring and paid employment.

Another body of criticism towards Esping-Andersen’s typology and contribution into welfare state analysis from a feministic point of view derives from the cultural approach. Birgit Pfau-Effinger (2005, 2006) for example works on “care culture”. She is arguing that “the way care is organized in society is not

determined by welfare policies alone /.../ instead, the structures of care and the welfare mix are the result of the complex interplay of different factors in the societal context” (Pfau-Effinger, 2005: 22). The notions of “good motherhood” and “good childhood” are too influential and complex to be ignored when talking about welfare and care regimes.

Another influential feminist researcher Mary Daly investigates in one of her books, “The Gender Division of Welfare” (2000), how particular types of welfare state arrangements affect the distribution of resources and opportunities between men and women. She summarizes existing work on the relationship between welfare and gender and identifies three main approaches: centered on the concept of care, “employing it to uncover the characteristics of caring as labour and a set of relationships and to reveal the links between care and the gender dimension of welfare state provision” (Daly, 2000: 23) and centered on the concept of citizenship and centered on the typologies themselves especially on breadwinner models. Daly (2000) claims that these approaches need a reformulation which would allow creating a comprehensive framework combining all of them. It’s not my ambition to do so, but I will try to use all three approaches in my analysis of the two countries. Another important theoretical contribution of Daly and other feminist researchers is that they started to point out that paid employment especially for mothers is not equivalent to social inclusion, as it is not a guarantee for stable or sufficient income and definitely not a guarantee for social participation or equal treatment (Daly and Rake, 2003).

2.3 Citizenship perspective on working and mothering reconciliation

The organization of social welfare on a macro level and whether caring is recognized as any other kind of labour is closely related to the citizenship discourse. To what extent, caring responsibilities of lone mothers are regarded as sufficient or valuable contribution to their citizenship status is connected with the way mothering and working is reconciled: whether full-time mothering, combination of mothering and working or preferable full-time working is

encouraged depends on the normative image of a citizen in society. Thus, I would like to connect my discussion of the research question on reconciliation of working and mothering to citizenship debates. The concept of citizenship has been taken up by feminist researchers and developed into a useful framework for analysis of gender relations in the society.

I will use a so called “thick” notion of citizenship, which encompasses a broad range of social, civic, political rights as well as lived experiences of enjoying full membership in the community (Bosniak, 2009). Full inclusive citizenship would supposedly provide women and men with equal social, political and civic rights. It would satisfy various parties in society regardless of differences. Such an encompassing notion of inclusive citizenship has been out of reach so far. Definitions of citizenship seem to be very broad and vague when both status with a wide range of rights and practices with obligations, participation and membership are included (Lister, 1997: 41). Most of the time it comes down to paid employment being the most important and dominant way to access full citizenship. Feminist scholars tried to extend the definition “up to relations between state, family and market” (Lister *et al*, 2007: 50), as family was often previously kept out of the discussion:

“...they [feminists] have revealed that citizenship does not bear solely on rights (and duties) in the domain of economic activity and the real of democratic politics, but also on the private sphere of the family and on the tasks of care” (ibid: 50).

There is a question regarding how to reorganize the citizenship discourse to encompass both economic and private care activities at home. The answers could be different, and for example, in a maternalistic approach one would argue that women’s access to citizenship should be guaranteed through motherhood, while liberals instead recognize active labour market participation as the main gate for both women and men. But if one sticks to the very attractive definition used by Linda Bosniak (2009: 134), that full stature citizenship should guarantee “equal opportunity to aspire, achieve, participate in and contribute to society based on /.../ individual talents and capacities”, then citizenship solely based on paid labour in its traditional form should be challenged.

The way work is defined in the public discourse and in social policies means a lot for women. As long as unpaid care work is less valued than paid

employment, there is no chance that women will enjoy the same level of full citizenship rights as men. As Ruth Lister *et al* (2007) are emphasizing, paid labour could both provide women with more freedom and access to social citizenship rights, and simultaneously it could be experienced as a ‘disciplinary force’, a necessary condition for obtaining social security rights. Daly and Lewis (2000: 285) have defined social care as “the activities involved in meeting the physical and emotional requirements of dependent adults and children, and the normative, cost and social frameworks within which this work is assigned and carried out”. Feminist scholars tried to separate care from something essentially female and connected to “love” (Leira & Saraceno, 2002: 60). It is widely accepted that childcare and other types of care work in the family are undivided from woman’s identity and closely connected to her personal feelings towards the one who is getting the care, which makes it ‘natural’ and ‘moral’ to provide care. “To say that care is a gendered concept is to say much more than “women do most of the caring”, it means that caring is bound up with the construction of women’s social identities in a way that is simply not true to men” (ibid: 76). That is why I am focusing my attention on ‘mothering’ as one of the main expressions of female caring in the thesis.

2.4 The Wollstonecraft dilemma

The Wollstonecraft dilemma is closely connected with the citizenship discussion presented above about the grounds for citizenship status. The main question here is whether women should be granted rights and citizenship status based on sameness with men or on their difference “with respect to biological and social reproduction” (Lister *et al*, 2007: 112). Lister (1997: 94) claims that although this dilemma is “theoretically illuminating”, it is at the same time “politically paralyzing”. Lister (ibid) is arguing that equality and difference are opposite only if equality is understood as sameness, which does not have to be so. To overcome the discrimination and restrictions women could either become similar to men and fit into the social scheme that exists, into ‘the ready-made’ sample of supposedly gender-neutral spaces of traditional conceptions of citizenship, or claim the

importance of restructuring the whole system according to the new vision including a high appreciation of care work, biological and social reproduction. So, to sum up Lister's idea, 're-gendering of citizenship' implies 'three normative images': a 'gender-neutral' citizen, which is a false and non-existent notion; a 'gender-differentiated' citizen, which despite its intention to form a 'citizen-mother', who would be "validated in her role but would not be confined to it" "runs the risk of sinking into the sands of an essentialism..." (Lister, 1997: 93, 98); a 'gender-pluralist' citizen (Hobson & Lister, 2002: 36), which I would say can look good in theory, but in practice is highly difficult to construct.

Nancy Fraser (1994) has developed a slightly different classification. She is approaching the dilemma by looking at different ways to access citizenship. The 'universal bread-winner' model takes men's working life as the norm – in this case sameness is prioritized, meaning that women are supposed to be the same as men, not the other way around. I would say that this kind of access to citizenship is similar to Lister's 'gender-neutral' kind of citizenship, as 'neutral' actually means 'male'. Second is the 'caregiver parity model', which tries to make 'care costless' with help of different benefits from the state – childcare allowance for example. 'The problem' with this model is that although care might get closer to be costless due to strong state legislation and a generous welfare state, the division of labour in the family is not challenged, as women still tend to take up care responsibility whether they want it or not. This approach differs from Lister's 'gender-differentiated citizenship', although the result is more or less the same, i.e. untouched labour division in the families. And eventually, the 'universal caregiver model', which is supposed to promote women's life pattern as a norm, therefore men would take up care responsibility just as much as women. As Lister *et al.* (2007: 113) are saying, the last model was inspired by the Swedish welfare state and its attempt to reconstruct care work division.

2.5 Care culture

Another theoretical discussion which can help to illuminate the working and mothering dilemma is “*care culture*” (Pfau-Effinger, 2005) or “good” vs. “bad” citizens. If a ‘good’ citizen is supposed to be working full-time and pay taxes, which is the main contribution into citizenship, then it is impossible to be a full-time carer in such a society and still enjoy full social citizenship rights. In Sweden citizen—the wage-earner is privileged and participation in paid labour is the main contribution into citizenship status, although being a so called ‘women-friendly’ state Sweden is offering a wide range of options of how to combine paid labour (at least part-time) and care work (Lister, 1997: 177, 184). Although caring is rarely considered to be a sufficient contribution to citizenship status, but in combination with a particular ‘*parenthood culture*’, women could be expected to stay at home for a long period of time and take care of their child, receiving some compensation from the state.

In Soviet times it was widely acceptable to put children of very low age in public childcare in Ukraine (Pascall and Manning, 2000), so to be ‘a good mother’ you did not have to be a full-time carer. Although, today because of drastic cuts in financing of childcare institutions, another model of motherhood has crystallized in the public discourse – full-time caring for a baby under three, or a direct female kin taking care, but not unreliable and impersonal childcare services (although from 2001 the number of children in kindergartens is increasing, but has not reached the level of 1990 yet (State Statistics Committee of Ukraine, Preschool institutions)). Lister *et al.* (2007: 111) argue that childcare policies are influenced by “different national and cultural models of motherhood, fatherhood and childhood”, but I would say that another scenario is also possible. When social policies are influenced by a decreasing financial capability of the state, the population has no other choice than to reformulate to some extent the models of parenthood, just like in Ukrainian example.

As mentioned above, I will focus primarily on lone mothers and the way they manage to combine mothering and working. The position of lone mothers both in an economical and a social sense depends on many aspects. Whether lone mothers are expected to work in paid employment or whether they are expected to

stay at home and take up full-time care of the children shows what kind of family form is encouraged in the society. The financial situation of lone mothers is extremely hard. One could say that the absence of the male-breadwinner is 'punished' by society and as well one could talk about '*child penalties*' (Waldfogel, 1995), i.e. the economical disadvantages a woman is facing because of childbirth and childcare. I would like to bring a citizenship discussion into the research as well. In the case of lone parent households citizen-worker and citizen-carer come into clash and this situation could show which kind of citizen definition is prevailing depending on the strategy the welfare state is encouraging.

3. Overview of the previous research

There is plenty of scientific literature on social welfare, care regimes and work and family reconciliation, written by social scientists. Some of whom have been already mentioned above: Esping-Andersen (1990), Jane Lewis (1997, 1997(a)), Mary Daly (2000), Diane Sainsbury (1994, 1996, 1999), Barbara Hobson (2000). There are a number of research projects comparing European countries, where care arrangements and social provisions are taken into consideration. Sweden is one of the countries which very often participate in this kind of comparative studies, because of its special position alongside with other Scandinavian countries. The welfare system in Ukraine, on the other hand, is barely ever thoroughly analyzed and especially not in comparison to other European countries.

In this part of the thesis I will present a brief overview of the existing research literature connected to the topic of my thesis. First of all one has to say that the topic of work-family relations in welfare systems has been on the top of the research agenda at least for the last ten to twenty years. I have no ambition to analyze the entire amount of literature, but rather limit myself to researches which I found useful and relevant for my own topic.

The research done by Sümer (2009) is very interesting. It is case-oriented and comparative “which aims at understanding and interpreting the diverse historical experiences and institutional characteristics of societies as “macrosocial units” (Sümer, 2009: 12). The research question is “how young European men and women working in public and private sector manage work-family reconciliation in the context of different welfare state regimes” (ibid: 88). In this piece of work, the author is using welfare, gender and care regimes as a framework for her analysis and pays special attention to Scandinavian welfare models and to the Norwegian case more specifically. The main conclusion drawn from Sümer’s research is that there is a considerable gap between workplace formal policies and actual practices (ibid: 88). I would say that to analyze both

social policies and interviews about personal experience of different welfare systems is a way to identify this gap. I will apply a similar approach but focus on other countries and limit my research questions to lone mothers' reconciliation strategies.

One more conceptually useful research has been done by Daly and Rake for their book "Gender and the Welfare State" (2003). They also choose to focus on cross-national variations of welfare systems to understand the linkages between national welfare states and gender relations. The researchers are using a case-oriented comparative methodology with "a small number of cases" (Daly and Rake, 2003: 43) – eight national welfare states. They discuss three main concepts, which are significant also for my research: care, work and welfare. Variations and communalities among the cases are captured using these three concepts (ibid: 43). The countries selected are Sweden, Italy, USA, the UK, Ireland, Germany, the Netherlands, France. As Daly and Rake (2003) are underlining, the selection of countries departed from existing knowledge of welfare state variations and about relationships between the welfare state and gender. I am mostly interested in the conceptual discussion and in the results for Sweden. Although their research is geographically limited to Western countries, I am convinced that this framework can be used on other countries and, which is especially fascinating for me, on post-Soviet states.

The book "Working Mothers in Europe" (2005) edited by Ute Gerhard, Trudie Knijn and Anja Weckwert has collected several very interesting and insightful research projects, which I want to mention here briefly. Marie-Therese Letablier and Ingrid Jönsson (2005) are examining '*childcare regimes*', which depend not only on the relations between the state, the market and the family, but also on models of childhood and motherhood and normative principles of citizenship. So, childcare could be considered primarily the state's responsibility (the Nordic Childcare Regime), private responsibility (the UK), mother's responsibility (the former West Germany), an issue of family policy (France) or an issue of the family and kin (The Mediterranean Childcare Regime). One more useful concept developed by Constanza Tobio and Rossana Trifiletti (2005) in the same book is '*strategy*'. The authors are elaborating on the strategies used by working mothers which is closely related to the topic of this thesis. Strategy according to the researchers is a practice that characterizes the situation in which

new problems arise, which has no institutional solution yet. *Strategy* is not something exclusively rational and intentional. And finally, another chapter by Trudie Knijn, Ingrid Jönsson and Ute Klammer (2005) is also very close to the topic of my interest and deals with the way women combine work and care in Sweden, Germany and the Netherlands. The authors focused on ‘*care packages*’, referring to mothers’ pooling of resources offered by different agents, such as the state, the market, the family and the voluntary sector in these three countries to become or remain employed. The authors analyze the care arrangements in the three countries focusing on several most common kinds of arrangements, such as taking a break, part-time work or/and flexible working time, public childcare, unpaid childcare by kin.

Knijn (1994) and Knijn and Smit (2009), who are leading specialists on reconciliation of work and care and on lone mothers research, have a prominent opinion on these issues. In the working paper “The Relationship between Family and Work: Tensions, Paradigms and Directives” (2009) they point out that there are “three current paradigms dominating the discourse: the social investment state, the transitional labour market model and the personal responsibility perspective” (Knijn and Smit, 2009: 11). Each paradigm represents each welfare state: social democratic, corporatist and liberal welfare state respectively (ibid: 15). In another article by Knijn from 1994 she presents her idea of interdependence and argues that “it does not make sense to define one of these activities (caring and earning) as creating dependence and the other as creating independence, because each of these definitions neglects the interdependence of care and work” (Knijn, 1994: 103). She is arguing that single mothers will always be dependant no matter what and in need of support, because care and work are interdependent (ibid).

As I have mentioned, there is a lack of substantial research on the Ukrainian welfare system especially from a gender perspective. I can distinguish research by Brienna Perelli-Harris (2008), who is including a wide range of factors trying to answer the question why the fertility rate in Ukraine is so low. Her research is especially interesting because, analyzing gender equality and family policies, Perelli-Harris is using western concepts and approaches. She underlines ‘*the double burden*’ taken by women (Perelli-Harris, 2008: 1166) and points out the ironic situation of a social welfare state with one of the most

generous family policies in the world, but nevertheless, one of the least sufficient (ibid: 1169) and one with the lowest birth rates. One more research on post-Soviet countries which I find relevant and useful is done by Gillian Pascall and Nick Manning (2000). They are analyzing welfare regimes, gender and social policies in Eastern Europe and post-Soviet countries, using theories of Esping-Andersen, Lewis, Sainsbury and Orloff. The authors come to the conclusion that one can talk about a relatively similar welfare regime for the whole region before 1989 that differed from Western Europe. Although, “at first sight they may seem similar to the dual breadwinner families of Sweden” (Pascall and Manning, 2000: 260), the families in the region possessed some significant differences. “The position of women in Soviet societies was especially constrained” in the sense that family division of labour and political segregation led to limitations of women’s citizenship status (ibid: 261). When it comes to analyzing the development after 1989, the researchers had a lot of difficulties identifying a common regime, as all the states went in diverse directions: “We shall not therefore attempt to reconstruct the regimes into a typology” (ibid: 262). Though Pascall and Manning (2000) have reached some conclusions, such as that paid employment is still crucial for women’s survival, that inequality inside the household persists (they prove it with rates of violence) and that the state provision of childcare is scarce and social spending is low.

4. Methodological plan

I have chosen a qualitative methodology as a way to answer my research questions. As the focus of this thesis is on working and mothering reconciliation in the two countries, both on the institutional level (social policies) and on the level of the individuals (lone mothers), the purpose is not only to describe the existing situation with regard to social benefits, childcare and employment arrangements, but also to find out and understand the individual stories of work and care combination, using state and other types of resources. The only way to do it is by using qualitative methodology. Moreover, reflexivity is an integral part of qualitative research which is an essential advantage and useful contribution into this particular research (Flick, 2006).

4.1 Reflexivity

Reflexivity means awareness of one's specific social position (Sümer, 2009: 13). As I am from Ukraine, the situation in this country is very sensitive to me. I should be aware of my own position as a researcher and open about it. As an insider I sometimes tend to see the situation too pessimistically, showing mistrust in social bodies, such as government and ministries. Sweden is also a sensitive case for me, because I live here for two years and tend to see this country as having a progressive social welfare system. I will try to keep myself from being excessively positive about the Swedish state and being excessively negative about the Ukrainian welfare system.

I have to keep in mind the insider/outsider dichotomy and be conscious of the influence it might have on the findings. As I am an insider in the Ukrainian society (I know the language, share the culture and common values), I am an outsider for the target group – lone mothers. I am an outsider in the Swedish society (I have to conduct interviews in English, so my sample is limited to those

lone mothers who are willing to speak with me in English). Being an insider might give more competence in the subject or the setting and less distance to the respondents. Being an outsider, on the other hand, means less explanatory possibilities from the inside, but more space for a critical approach (Flick, 2006: 119-120).

4.2 Methods

Firstly, to answer my research questions and to map the institutional level concerning working and mothering in Ukraine and Sweden, I will analyze official social policy reports and publications by the ministries in both countries. In Sweden most of the documents come from the official web-site of the Social Insurance Office⁴. In Ukraine most of the documents are taken from the journal “Social Theme” (“Social’na Tema. Elektronnyj informacijno-analitychnyj visnyk dl’ja ZMI”)⁵ published by the Ministry of Social Policy in Ukraine.

Secondly, I will analyze how women themselves experience their situation and make use of social policies implemented by the state. This analysis will be based upon 11 in-depth semi-structured interviews with lone mothers. I am relying on the “subjective theory” of the interviewees about the research question, which is “a complex stock of knowledge about the topic under study” (Flick, 2006: 155). As Uwe Flick (ibid) writes, to capture this knowledge we have to make the interviewees express their thoughts spontaneously in answering open questions. That’s why the guide used in this research consists of open questions (Appendix 1): “Open questions may be answered on the basis of the knowledge that the interviewee has immediately at hand” (ibid: 156). I have chosen to limit my sample to lone mothers of child/ren under 12 years old. Although my main interest is the case when mothers are sole economical providers and caregivers I will not limit the target group to single mothers who have lone custody of the child/ren. The reason is more or less practical. In Ukraine, shared custody does not necessarily mean that the father participates in the child’s up-bringing. So, I

⁴ <http://www.forsakringskassan.se/sprak/eng>

⁵ http://www.mlsp.gov.ua/control/uk/publish/article;jsessionid=9350869F696DDFB6705520F760992D37?art_id=116298&cat_id=36392

would argue that the more usual presence of fathers in Sweden as both care providers and giving economical support could be regarded as one of the differences and one of the survival strategies used by lone mothers in Sweden, while it is often unattainable in Ukraine.

I gained access to interviewees through several key informants in both countries in the Skåne region of Sweden and Dnipropetrovs'k region in Ukraine. The sampling is based on the convenience design, using the 'snowball' method (Gubrium and Holstein, 2002: 87). I acknowledge that most of my interviewees in Sweden could be regarded as middle class and in Ukraine most of interviewees also have more or less the same income, but income or occupation was not criteria for sampling. I would not say that I had any difficulties getting access to the target group. Some interviews took place in the houses of the lone mothers and in some other cases we were talking in the cafes. The interviews were conducted during March 2011. Most of the conversations were held in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere. The interviewees opened up more towards the end of the conversation. All of them were very interested in the research itself and especially in the other country of comparison.

I made detailed transcription of the interviews omitting only the parts without any connection to the research questions. The Swedish interviews were made in English and the Ukrainian interviews were conducted in Russian (mother-tongue of the interviewees). The parts of the Ukrainian transcripts which are used in the analysis have then been translated into English. As I did not translate the whole text of the Ukrainian transcripts and as it would take too much space, I have not included full transcripts in the thesis. In Appendix 2 a short description of each interviewee is presented.

This research has comparative and cross-national characteristics. The differences between two cases make it necessary to give common definitions to some basic notions. Patricia Kennett (2001: 4) argues that welfare is one of the first concepts that needs a common established definition for the research and she proposes to define it as a complex notion including a mix of institutions that determine the welfare of the citizens – state, market, family, volunteer organizations and others. I will implement this broad definition of welfare into my research, especially in the interviews and find out all the possible ways how lone mothers are securing their position.

The material for analysis is made up by different kinds of texts – written policies and governmental reports, transcripts of the interviews. As Flick (2006: 83) underlines, “as soon as a researcher has collected the data and made a text out of them, this text is used as a substitute for the reality under the study in the further process”. But I would claim that it is very limiting to turn the interviews into texts, because the interaction before, during and after the interview is also very informative. I made small notes after each interview with a description of the atmosphere and conversation after the recorder was switched off. The analysis of the data received both from policies study and from the interviews is done by using qualitative content analysis. The advantage of this method is that it combines easily empirical and theoretical parts of the research. Flick (ibid: 312-315) claims that qualitative content analysis is reducing the material by working out categories for the analysis based on the applied theories. Moreover, it takes into consideration the setting of the research and conditions of data collection, which might have an important influence on the findings. So, “its essential features is the use of categories, which are often derived from theoretical models: categories are brought to the empirical material and not necessarily developed from it, although they are repeatedly assessed against it and modified if necessary” (ibid: 312). The research in the thesis is about using the theoretical lenses of the concepts mentioned in the first part of the thesis to analyze the interviews and the documents, but at the same time to be open to modifications that the empirical part can contribute, that is why this method fits best of all for the purpose of this research. Flick (ibid: 313-315) offers three main techniques of qualitative content analysis: summarizing, explicative and structuring content analysis. Simultaneously, to analyze interviews I will use several combined methods mentioned by Steinar Kvale (1996): interpretation, condensation and categorization of meaning, narrative structuring. The combination of these methods allows seeing the text from the different angles and at the same time to be led by the interview itself. Interpretation of the meaning leads the researcher “beyond structuring of the manifest meanings of a text to deeper and more or less speculative interpretations of the text” (Kvale, 1996: 193). So, in order to get more trustworthy conclusions, one should give trustworthy arguments. The context for these arguments may “be provided by the entire interview or by a theory” (ibid: 193). Condensation of the meaning means formulating shorter

statements out of paragraphs – “meaning units” (ibid: 194). Meaning categorization stands for constructing dimensions and subcategories out of the interview (ibid: 196). Narrative structuring attempts to create a coherent story out of the interview, which could simplify and clarify. Basically, this method brings out the meaning out of sometimes a messy transcript (ibid: 192).

4.3 Theoretical standpoint

I will try to take a phenomenological standpoint in my research and try to understand the findings using my personal knowledge of the cases, especially concerning Ukraine, which is my homeland. Although, it might be much harder in the Swedish case, it is hopefully not impossible. Excessive existing literature on the issue concerning Sweden will help filling the gap of personal experience. It is very important in comparative research not to assume the meanings and interpretations for one society and attribute them to another: “values and interpretations differ from society to society” (Kennett, 2001: 45). At the same time, acknowledging this, I am not striving to find “the truth”, I am arguing that my findings are subjective and could be challenged. However, I explain how I came up with these results, so one can trace my logic. As Kvale (1996: 54) points out: “Phenomenological reduction does not involve an absolute absence of presuppositions, but rather a critical analysis of one’s own presuppositions”. Thus, I am not claiming for validity, but rather hope for trustworthiness (Flick, 2006:376). I do not claim that the results that I receive could be generalized for any social community, except the one that I have researched. The logic of this study is to some extent to test already existing theories or typologies and to find new empirically grounded knowledge.

4.4 Ethical considerations

The interviews have been conducted with informed consent of the interviewees, who are fully aware of the research topic and of its purpose. The information

which I received is confidential. Moreover, I acknowledge that the topic is sensitive for the interviewees, so I bear in mind the principle of *non-maleficence* and *beneficence*. If I saw that some part of the interview guide was too sensitive to ask about I preferred not to ask. Two other ethical principles are *autonomy* and *justice*: I respect participants' values and decisions and I treat all the interviewees equally (ibid: 46). However, I would like to leave a space for a "hermeneutics of suspicion" (Kvale, 1996: 203) to what person directly says and to let myself be critical to what the interviewees have reported during the interview.

5. Analysis

In this section, I will use qualitative content analysis to study social policy documents and the interview transcripts. As mentioned in the methods section, I use several methods for the interview analysis: interpretation, condensation, categorization of meaning and narrative structuring. The combination of these techniques together with qualitative content analysis techniques allows making a thorough text analysis and connecting it to the theories discussed above. With the help of interpretation, condensation and categorization of meaning I will structure the information received from transcripts and policy texts according to seven themes and describe it consistently.

5.1 The role of the state in the reconciliation of working and mothering among lone mothers.

5.1.1 Social policies

In this section I will analyze the role of the state in working/mothering reconciliation via social policies and legislation. To do that, I will analyze the social policies itself, based on information from the official journal published by the Ministry of Social Policy in Ukraine, “Social Theme” (“Social’na Tema. Elektronnyj informacijno-analitychnyj visnyk dl’ja ZMI”), the official site of the Swedish Social Insurance Office, Ukrainian laws, and the interviews in the two countries.

In Ukraine a woman is entitled to 126 days of paid maternity leave (70 days before expected date of birth and 56 days after the birth of the child) and 14 additional days of paid maternity leave in case of complications of birth. In Sweden a woman is entitled to a pregnancy benefit if she has a physically strenuous job and her work capacity has been reduced by at least a quarter due to

pregnancy. In both Ukraine and Sweden this benefit is paid by the Social Insurance Office if the mother is state insured (Appendix 3).

After childbirth Ukrainian women receive one-time monetary help paid by the state to all mothers. The amount of the benefit depends on how many children the woman already has (Appendix 3). This benefit is spread in time either for one, two or three years. The childcare leave lasts for three years and the mother has the right to come back to her working place after this time. During these years, every family receives 130 UAH (10 UAH is approximately 8 SEK in June 2011) for a child a month. In case this family faces severe economic hardships, then a benefit corresponding to the minimum living wage (922 UAH) is paid (ST, September 2009). In Sweden the parental leave is 450 days. These days are paid either depending on your income or if you have low or no income you will get the basic level – 180 SEK per day paid by the Social Insurance Office (Appendix 4).

In Sweden every child under the age of 16 is entitled to child allowance from the state amounting to 1050 SEK per month (if you have two or more children, then you will also receive large family supplement) (Appendix 5).

In Sweden parents can receive temporal parental benefit for at most 120 days per child a year amounting to 80 percent of the sickness benefit qualifying income in case a child is sick. In Ukraine parents also have an official right to take care of their sick child, but this right is often denied due to unregulated labour market conditions. Moreover, in both countries employers are supposed to offer a part-time position on demand of a woman with a child, but in Ukraine this right is often denied (ST, November 2009).

In both countries families with severe financial hardships are eligible for social assistance. In Sweden it is means-tested and paid by the municipality according to the Social Service Act. In Ukraine social assistance is paid by the state and the amount is more standardized.

Lone mother in Ukraine is defined as a mother who is bringing up her child without a father (Law of Ukraine about Leave, 504, art.10, p.13/5). In practice it means that a lone mother is a mother who is not married, or who has no information of the father in the child's birth certificate, who is a widow, or a woman bringing up a child on her own without the father after a divorce, despite his payment of alimony. Lone mothers receive a specific social benefit, which is

income-related, but in most cases a mother gets 30 percent of the minimal living costs for a child of a certain age, which amounts to 240 – 287 UAH a month (ST, May 2010). In addition to this, lone mothers are entitled to 10 days of paid vacation (Labour Code of Ukraine, art.73). Moreover, if a father is not paying alimony, the state is paying temporal social help to the child, which is 30 percent of the living costs for a child of a certain age.

In Sweden in case of divorce or separation, there is a child support – a sum of money that a parent who does not live with his or her child has to contribute to the child’s maintenance, regardless if the parents have joint custody or not. If the child does not receive the child support, he/she may be entitled to maintenance support, which is a benefit for children whose parents do not live together. Maintenance support is at most 1273 SEK per child a month and it is paid by the Social Insurance Office. The parent who is not paying the child support will have to pay back the sum of money, depending on the income, to the state. Swedish welfare supports both parents participating in the childcare and even promotes fathers involvement with so called “daddy months” compulsory childcare leave with ‘use it or lose it’ logic behind it.

5.1.2 The mothers’ experiences of the implementation of social policies

During the interviews in Ukraine lone mothers mentioned most of the social benefits stated above, but the sum of the one-time monetary help was much lower 6-11 years ago, the time when all of the interviewees had their children. This benefit then varied between 34 UAH and 1600 UAH, before it was increased to 4800 UAH in 2008. The same variation is noticed with regard to the monthly child support given to children below three years old. One of the interviewees did not take maternity leave and started working in two weeks after the birth, leaving the child with a nanny. Two women took the three-year leave and one even stayed on prolonged leave for four years. Another single mother started working after 11 months, leaving the child with her parents.

In addition to the benefit for children under three, the mothers received either social help as lone mothers or temporal social help, because the father of

the child did not pay alimony. None of the mothers received economic support directly from the father:

It is easier for our state to pay me 220 UAH each month than to make him pay me the alimony. But at the same time, they say that there are no fatherless children in the country /.../ I cannot change the surname of the child, although there is no one in our family with such a surname. (Interviewee 6)

As the quotation indicates, the fact that the state is paying the replacement for the father's contribution makes lone mothers frustrated. First of all the sum is minimal and constitutes only 30 percent of the expenditures for the child of a certain age according to the state standard which is very low. Secondly, the state is doing nothing to actually find the father to make him pay.

As the childcare system is state subsidized (Appendix 6), parents only have to pay for food, to different kinds of funds (fund of the school, fund of the class for future expenses) and parents are required to donate some money to reconstruct the classrooms, renovate the furniture:

As I understand the maintenance of the school and kindergartens is on the parents. In junior school we made renovation, changed the floor, made some reconstruction, a wardrobe. It was 3 years ago, so I paid 250 UAH – I could feel it in my budget. The salary was 800 at that moment. In the middle school, we bought heaters. We had to change two kindergartens, and as you go there, right away you have to buy heaters. Here (in this school) we had to change the tables /.../ every parents' meeting is draining of money. (Interviewee 9)

So, although most childcare expenses are taken over by the state, for lone mothers the burden of such unofficial expenditures as told about above is quite heavy. There are no discounts or reduced fees for lone mothers in the childcare system:

No benefits for them (lone mothers). There are some benefits for families with many children, but not for lone mothers. It is as if you can say: "you wanted a child, it's your decision now!" No medical help, no discounts for the camps for children /.../ (Interviewee 6)

Some lone mothers also brought up the poor quality of childcare, especially the quality of food, as children come back home hungry. Thus they would like the

child to come back home as soon as possible and not to pay for the after school care.

Swedish lone mothers also referred to the mentioned social benefits both universal and specific for lone parents like maintenance support. One of the interviewees did not receive maintenance support, because she is the only mother who shared custody with the father of the child. Her two daughters are living half of the time with their fathers. The other four interviewees have sole custody due to different reasons (the father living abroad, court decisions due to personal disagreements or the father's behavior, mutual agreement) and receive maintenance support from the state.

Moreover, some mothers pointed out the possibility to get subsidies for housing costs or to pay less for childcare, but these benefits are income-based and some lone mothers have too high incomes. Another important detail related to the topic is the fact that not in every town there is 24-hour childcare. One lone mother had used it, while others appreciated the possibility or regretted that there are not enough childcare centers of the kind.

One of the interviewees was in a difficult situation after returning to Sweden from temporary residence abroad. She did not have a job or any income. The Social welfare office helped her, as she thinks, because a child was involved:

Social welfare office helped out with money because they had to, because the child was involved. They helped and because I didn't have a job they put me on the programme, but it's pretty useless. You do a job but you don't get paid and you spend time so you cannot look for a job. They have nice names for it but I think it is a way of getting people out of the unemployment list. (Interviewee 3)

So, as you can see she is referring to unemployment programmes, which seemed useless for her, but still she is grateful for the help at that moment. She could keep the apartment and keep on going without any serious consequences at least for the child:

/.../ not much. I had 2000 SEK to live for. They paid for the rent, so after the bills were paid I had around 2000 SEK. Then I had 1200 SEK from his father. I asked the Social Insurance Office to help me to pay the rent. But it's not much anyway. (Interviewee 3)

Some lone mothers in Sweden express their dissatisfaction with the way the system works. Two of the mothers were especially dissatisfied, claiming that:

They are sitting there in the office and have no idea what they are talking about. You must do this and this. They have their big salaries. (Interviewee 3)

The interviewee talked in this way about the social assistance officer, who tried to help her when she did not have any income. Another interviewee was also frustrated with the social insurance officer, who would not help her with her special case:

They are assuming that we will be abusing the system, so they make all the rules which eventually prevent people from using the system. (Interviewee 4)

5.1.3 Perceptions of the role of the state

In all Ukrainian interviews, I found that the state is regarded as something distant, non-intrusive and without relevance for family matters:

/.../ maybe somewhere else the state is taking care of lone mothers, but here family policy means that all the problems within the family are only the family's personal problems, no one will help you to solve them, even the police answers that it's your family business. (Interviewee 6)

None of the interviewees had asked for help or was hoping that the state would help them in hard times. In several interviews corruption and passivity of the police were mentioned.

In Sweden the perception of the state was more positive. Although, several interviewees mentioned excessive formalities and unwillingness to solve their problems by the staff, the state was regarded as a helpful institution for everyone. One of the interviewees had asked for help from the welfare office in hard times, while her close family did not know about her financial difficulties.

5.2 The role of the family in the working/mothering reconciliation

The findings in this part of the analysis were quite different between the two countries. Although, both in Sweden and in Ukraine lone mothers are using family help and support, the level and the character of this help differ. In Ukraine five out of six mothers are living with one or both of their parents. The parents of the lone mother living by herself had passed away. I would regard this communality in the Ukrainian interviews as one of the strategies for lone mothers to survive and a way to arrange childcare and to provide sufficient economic support for their children.

The fact that lone mothers in Ukraine share the same household with their parents gives several advantages. Mothers do not have to rent and pay for a separate apartment. During Soviet times most apartments were common property, but since then privatization has taken place. As a result, older generations have fewer problems with housing, while it is worse for younger ones. If young people want to leave their parents' home they have to rent or buy a new place, which is very expensive in Ukraine. Moreover, shared budget is an economic relief. One of the interviewees calls her mother "a back-up" in everything:

Katja (the daughter) was born. We were living with my husband. All three of us were hanging on the necks of my parents. My mom agreed to stay with the child, until I find a job and would stand on my feet /.../ what is your own garden?! My parents are feeding us and help us in everything. We only spend money on cloths, school, English classes /.../ (Interviewee 9)

Although some interviewees do not regard their parents as economic help, still the interviews showed that living together and combining resources makes it much easier for both parties.

Besides the economic relief there are a lot of childcare responsibilities taken over by grandparents (if the grandfather is alive than he is also participating in childcare). Grandmothers and grandfathers take the children to schools and kindergartens and pick them up, they stay with the children when the mother has

to work or to do other things. In one of the cases the grandparents take the child to the countryside for the whole summer every year.

It was difficult, but my mother helped me and still helps me. On this job I have a lot of free days, the child is with my mom otherwise. Only due to her I can work and don't take sick leaves when he is sick. Grandmother is the ultimate driving force! I cannot imagine how I would be able to do all of it without her. (Interviewee 11)

A general impression from the Ukrainian interviews is that the family is a much more influential and important factor in lone mothers' lives than the state. Help from the grandmothers and grandfathers enables them to combine working and mothering. In the case where the grandparents have passed away, the lone mother was using nannies to manage all of it, which I will discuss later.

In Sweden help from the family was much less used. First of all, none of the interviewees is living with their parents for the moment. One of them had to live with her parents right after she had got the baby:

/.../ when this child was born I moved in with my parents, because I have nothing else to do. (Interviewee 3)

At the same time all of the interviewees got help from their parents from time to time and usually with childcare. They sometimes pick up the child from the childcare service or when one of the mothers has to leave town she asks her parents for assistance. Though one of interviewees mentioned more substantial help from her parents:

They helped to look after him and pick him up, drop him off and also helped to do things with him /.../ going to the theatre, to the swimming pool. My dad gave me a car, they sometimes help me with material stuff, my mom cooks better food sometimes. (Interviewee 2)

Another interviewee underlined her concern about her parents being too much involved especially materially:

***Your family helps you?** - Not materially, I don't want to ask them, but they do give my daughter things, presents. If they ever come with food for me I would feel like they are controlling. And usually parents do not involve that much, my parents don't involve that much.* (Interviewee 5)

Friends were also mentioned several times, as people whom mothers contact in case they need some help.

5.3 The role of market solutions in the working / mothering reconciliation

In both countries some lone mothers had to use market solutions like nannies to manage the combination of working and mothering. Some have left their children with nannies only for shorter periods of time when it was especially needed while others had used this option more often. Only one lone mother from Ukraine had a permanent nanny taking care of her son until school age.

Grandma Nanny (that's how they called the nanny) took care of Danja (the son), now she is working with my grandchildren. She was looking after Danja till the school started, then she started working with my grandchildren. He went to kindergarten when he was three. Nanny picked him up and dropped him off, she was with him when he was ill. I never took sick leave. (Interviewee 7)

In the Swedish interviews every mother emphasized that to have a nanny would be very expensive and that was the reason why some of them never used this possibility. In Ukraine, none of the mothers said that it is too expensive, but the mothers who never had used this option said that they never have had a need. That could indicate how less caring work is valued in Ukraine.

5.4 The labour market and mothering: experiences of lone mothers

After reading through the transcripts I realized that I needed to look at the labour market and the experiences of how lone mothers were dealing with employers, which anticipates the combination of working and mothering.

In the Ukrainian interviews the working time turned out to be out of negotiation. Although, as I have noted above, employers have to offer a part-time

job if a woman with a small child is asking, but the employer does not have an obligation to arrange flexible working hours for the woman. As part-time means less money the lone mothers never asked for this option, but some of them were asking to come 30 minutes later for work and to leave 30 minutes later to be able to manage with childcare. The answer of the employer was “No”. The interviews clearly indicate that the mothers have to deal with their working arrangements as something undisputable. One of the interviewees regards her shift work as the best working time arrangement as she can be with her child for whole days sometimes and her mother stays with him when she is working during nights.

Most of the interviewees (except the one who is working in a school and can bring her daughter to the workplace) said that they have experienced some complications with the employer because they are mothers:

Working place doesn't allow children being around.

(Interviewee 8)

When I started working here, the chief-accountant told me:

“I understand that you have a small child, I am taking you for this job, although you're with a small child, but sick leaves are all your problems”. Our laws and our private firms /.../ they don't help us. Only big and state-owned firms and plants are really getting into our position, for example ZIP (big plant in the town) – they have normal paid sick leaves and normal social help. My firm is medium and it all depends on the person, because the chief-accountant would have to do the job for me. (Interviewee 9)

As one can see from several quotations in this thesis, sick leaves are a big problem. Although this is something regulated by the state as a social right of the employee, in reality many private companies and firms do not follow the law and refuse mothers to take leaves when their children are sick. That is why women with small children face discrimination in the labour market, as employers do not want to hire them, so that they do not take sick leaves or just days of absence because of their children being ill. This has an important consequence for working/mothering reconciliation, as in the case when a mother is not available to take care of a sick child, and the father is away, there must be a plan-B. Usually grandparents become this plan-B.

In Sweden, the experience of relations with employers was usually more positive. Most of the interviewees have reached a compromise in work-timing, which satisfies everyone: part-time, special working hours, own business. One of the interviewees is describing her combination of working and mothering in the following way:

I am so happy! I can work, interesting work and I can spend so much time with my child /.../ Only when I get sick or she gets sick then it gets messier. That is like the strongest side of my life.

(Interviewee 5)

However, there were two cases, where the negotiations had not been so smooth. One of the mothers had been working in another country. She asked for part-time and to work from home some days of the week after the child was born. She was refused and had to quit. Another lone mother is going from one temporary low-paid job with irregular hours to another. She had to take her child with her many times:

To some of the jobs I took my son with me. People didn't like it all the same. They thought it is unfair. How could I do this to my child /.../ I think people got jealous, that I could spend my time with a child and they didn't. Then I got kicked out of there as a recreational leader.

They said that I don't have education. (Interviewee 3)

On some other jobs, like bartending, she was allowed to have the child around. This particular story describes an unstable work history. This kind of employment does not bring any security in life:

There was the time when everything just f... up. I had no money, I couldn't pay the rent. The bills knocked on the door, then people started to knock, they wanted money. The jobs didn't give me enough money. I didn't get paid good enough, not too good jobs I guess. It was hard to have money to live on. I went to some kind of depression. I had a lot of debts to pay after that. One and a half years ago I finally paid back all the money and I wish never go back.

(Interviewee 3)

So, my interviews suggest that while white-collar jobs in Sweden have a good labour regulation policy, with flexible rules, women in part-time low-paid jobs,

have more difficulties with irregular working hours which requires additional help in childcare.

5.5 The role of the father

One of my presuppositions before going into the field was that the role played by the father would be the biggest difference between lone mothers' situation in Ukraine and Sweden. This hypothesis came true only partially. On the one hand, fathers do play a much more active role in the children's and mothers' lives in Sweden than in Ukraine, but on the other hand, in my sample in Sweden there was only one case where the parents had shared custody and children were living with the father for half of the time. The rest of the mothers had lone custody and received child maintenance from the state. But I will start with a detailed analysis of the Ukrainian cases.

The role of the father in the Ukrainian interviews is the most disturbing part of the research personally for me. None of the fathers in the stories, that I listened to, plays any role in their children's lives. Some of them have never met their children while others had left the family shortly after the birth. Currently, none of the mothers receives any economic help from the father and none of the fathers is paying back the temporary help that the state is paying to the family instead of him. Three mothers have no record of the father in the birth certificate, which means that the father has no rights or obligations towards the child. The others, although having some social benefits as lone mothers, still have shared custody with the father. The shared custody does not put any obligations on the father except paying alimony, which all of them have successfully avoided. Fathers seem to step out of parenthood in all cases. The state is supposed to look for the fathers to extract the money or to confiscate their properties:

The state cannot make him work. Confiscate the properties /.../ they (fathers who don't pay alimony) are not idiots – all of the property is under the name of their mothers or someone else. So if he doesn't pay any alimony, it secures the child. (Interviewee 6)

By “securing the child” this interviewee along with most of the other mothers in the Ukrainian sample is expressing her anxiety that the fathers still have some rights towards the child, while not performing any obligations:

The most important for me is that when the child grows up, if the father never took care of him, so that he cannot have any rights, any possibility to play the pity card. I think I did the right thing; I was worrying about the child's security. (Interviewee 8)

Here the mother is explaining her decision not to ask for alimony from the father and to be satisfied with the lone mother benefit. She hopes that this will save her child from the obligation later in life to support his father in case he gets sick, disabled or just poor. This is the reverse rule according to the Ukrainian law that the children have to support their parents when they grow old or to pay alimony (Law of Ukraine about Pension, art.47).

Another striking detail, which I would like to mention, is the fact that all of the lone mothers, except the one who never lived with the father of her child, consider disrupting the relations and leaving the fathers of their children as a relief:

I started to live better (after she got divorced) /.../ they (men) know their rights, but don't know their obligations. We divorced with him and I bought computer and furniture /.../ I can afford everything, of course I save money. I couldn't do that with him. My friends have the same situation. A man is not earning enough for himself. He got money, he needs some beer, some cigarettes, only to feed him costs so much! (Interviewee 6)

I do not claim that the information from these interviews could be generalized, but it is one of the possible scenarios in industrial towns in Ukraine at the end 1990's and the beginning of the 2000's. A lot of men became unemployed or had low-paid temporary jobs, which did not give stable incomes. Most of the lone mothers said that it got much easier and less chaotic to live without a man. Another reason is that destructive behavior, which accompanied these kinds of jobs and lifestyle:

Men are irresponsible. On the level of self-preservation, I realized that it will be better without the husband, so that he doesn't attract “beasts” to my “hole”. (Interviewee 6)

The husband of this interviewee was playing on gambling machines with borrowed money. The people he had borrowed money from came to her house to get the debts paid. Another lone mother had an alcoholic husband without a stable job:

But morally it was very hard to live with him. It got easier for me after the divorce. I am my own master now. Economically, I wouldn't say that it got worse after divorce. (Interviewee 9)

This interviewee had some hard times in the past when being still married:

I remember that once we had milk powder for the child, but besides that – nothing! I had a jar of apples and that's it - diet (laughing). My friend saw it and she brought some macaroni and porridge the next day. (Interviewee 9)

The lone mothers from my sample felt relief after they got divorced, because being married did not bring any economical security or stability. On the contrary, men's irregular employment made life more chaotic. Additionally, alcoholism, gambling, borrowing money made men "unprofitable".

The fathers' relations with their children were far from close in all of the cases. Two of them have never seen their children, because they decided to leave before the child was born. One of them left right after the child was born, without leaving any traces behind. One of the fathers was playing a more or less active part in his daughter's life as long as he had stable job – he called from time to time and came for birthdays. Since he lost his job he started drinking again and finally his daughter stopped calling him. One of the stories is especially terrifying:

Even if he (ex-husband) wanted to come I wouldn't let him in anymore after he stole the money from me, last time he was here. I am making money for the child and the father came and took it. (Interviewee 7)

The sad picture of the fathers appearing in the interviews can of course not be extended to all males in Ukraine.

As mentioned above, only in one of the Swedish cases parents had shared custody after the divorce. In this case, the lone mother was repeating throughout the interview that her husbands are good men and good fathers. Although most of the Swedish fathers in my interviews do not have custody over their children, all of them see their children at least from time to time. Three of

the fathers live abroad which makes it more complicated and one of them has never seen the child (now he is applying for visa to come in summer). In two cases the decision about custody was reached through the court: the reason for one was “kidnapping by detention” – the father tried to keep the child in Australia against the mother’s will; the reason for the second one was very bad relations between the parents which resulted in a series of court accusations.

One interesting detail is that in both countries I have heard mothers’ worries that the father could harm the children. In Sweden some of the mothers had this kind of concerns:

This child doesn’t meet his father /.../ maybe once a year, not much. So, he doesn’t have two separate homes. I have seen effects of that, it’s not good. (Interviewee 3)

The interviewee is worried that she could share the custody with a father and the child would have two homes. She is sure that this would leave negative effects on the child. While the mother of the children who do have two homes did not have any worries about it and was very happy with the way things are. While in Ukraine mothers have expressed their relief that father does not come to see the child because:

I didn’t forbid him to see the child /.../ now I am grateful to him (the father doesn’t come to see the child). I don’t tear the child in two. If he (the father) was coming regularly /.../ but he wouldn’t /.../ the child doesn’t need to wait for him all the time. (Interviewee 6)

So, while in Sweden the mother might not want her children to live with their father for half of the time, in Ukraine some mothers would prefer the fathers not to come at all, rather than to come sporadically.

Another exciting difference between the Ukrainian and Swedish interviews in gender relations is the fact that while the Swedish women realize that it would be easier with a husband or a partner, because he would help her with childcare, none of the Ukrainian women mentioned that. In contrast, some lone mothers in Ukraine were saying that in the case they were still married they would have to care for both a child and a husband:

Why do I need a husband then? Communication with a child is limited to – Go away, I want to play the game (referring to computer games) /.../ I have a question to a woman then! – the money that the

man is bringing is not enough, he is almost never at home – either fishing, or hunting, or in the garage; he is yelling at the child, he didn't teach the boy to do anything! I don't understand why would I need a husband? (Interviewee 6)

This question seems rather fair. Lone mothers whom I have interviewed do not think that it would get easier if they had a husband in any way: economically or in childcare. It does not mean that these women do not want to have a man in their lives:

I would like to have a full family, to have a man by my side, but where can I take him from? Not everyone is lucky. (Interviewee 9)

5.6 The economic situation of the households

I decided to include this question into the interviews and analysis in order to see how lone mothers' households are managing in the two countries. To my surprise, none of my interviewees said that they experience harsh economic difficulties, which could be explained by the fact that I am a stranger to share this information with or that they do not want to complain. Nevertheless, all of the lone mothers seem to be getting by, although some of them have had difficult times in the past. In the Ukrainian interviews, most mothers noticed improvement in their situation for the last 7-10 years, compared to the end of 1990's and the beginning of the 2000's, which could be explained by the economic development in the country and some minor social improvements since that time. Most of the lone mothers in the Ukrainian sample have approximately the same salary – around 1800-2500 UAH. Only one of the mothers is able to live on a considerably higher living standard and says that her older daughter helps her economically. All of the women are saving money for buying clothes or more expensive things and try to use them carefully in order to make the ends meet:

My child has everything she needs and everything she wants. Maybe I have to limit myself in something /.../ but anyway life teaches and I learned how to use money in that way so I can save something. (Interviewee 6)

So, although Ukrainian mothers are saying in the interviews that they are not poor and some of them even regard themselves being in the middle, but most probably it is because they have something worse to compare to and most of them have had worse times in their own lives as well. They have to save money to buy clothes. Some of them sew the clothing for themselves and their children at home. A lot of the products come from their gardens. Another reason why they refuse to admit their economic difficulties might be that they do not want to consider their children as lacking something.

The Swedish interviews showed different results. The lone mothers who had previously lived in stable relationships with a man said that their economic situation had become worse as lone mothers. And all of them admitted that they cannot give their children what they would receive in a two-adult household.

No! It's not enough. I find that as a single mom I cannot give to my son as much as I could give if I were in relationships. Studies show that single moms are closer to the poverty line than the couples.

(Interviewee 2)

So, it is very tempting to make a suggestion that perception of your own economic situation in many ways depends not on your actual income but on the previous situation, being worse or better.

5.7 The personal perception of the situation and what could be changed according to the lone mothers.

This part of the interviews gave me a possibility to see what kind of working/mothering combination would seem perfect for the mothers and what they would change in the system to improve their own situation. The answers are very insightful.

In the Ukrainian interviews all the mothers said that they would appreciate more financial help:

If I had a material base and state help, I would decrease the number of hours (at work). (Interviewee 6)

The lone mother benefit should be increased /.../ medicine, books are very expensive. I have to limit ourselves in many things for the everyday needs, like go somewhere, circus for example.

(Interviewee 11)

None of the lone mothers wanted to stop working all together.

The mothers came up with some suggestions and one of them was to reform temporal child help which substitutes the alimony from the father:

Every half a year I have to confirm (that she doesn't get any help from the father). Even if he sends me 50 UAH, I have to bring the document about it in the social office and they take away the state's help. I am grateful that he doesn't send anything and doesn't show up.

(Interviewee 6)

This rule seems very unfair and illogical. Even if the father sends some sum of money once every half a year, the mother according to the law has no right to apply for the temporary child help for the next half a year.

In the Swedish part of the interviews the lone mothers also would like to get more money and some of them offered the idea of introducing a specific lone mother's benefit. Most of the lone mothers would like to work part-time, so that they could get more time to spend with their children, but at the same time a decrease of working hours means less money, so they would like some compensation:

I think that the support should come from the state when you are a single mother and you have to pay rent /.../ it would be nice if you could go down in time /.../ Yes, I think it would be nice if you could work 75 percent as a single mother and the state could pay the rest of the 25 percent. (Interviewee 1)

Swedish lone mothers brought a new kind of disadvantage into the discussion. Most of the interviewees experienced different kinds of discrimination and negative attitude towards them as lone mothers:

I don't think that's the biggest problem with single parents in Sweden (working and mothering reconciliation). More it's about attitude /.../ how they look upon lone parents, attitudes in the kindergarten! How you feel outside /.../ for example now I am interviewed. It kind of pushes you outside. (Interviewee 5)

In society we should think and lift everything which is for two people. Everything is based on two people. It costs for me single and my child like for two adults and two children to take train to Stockholm. I am also a family! And they have two incomes. So, more perspective! /.../ You have to let go things /.../ you have to look at families and start dealing with reality. (Interviewee 4)

So, lone mothers have experienced negative attitudes towards them in hospitals (doctors did not take their complains seriously about the child's health), in the kindergartens (i.e. the workers demanded the picture of the father on the child's locker). Besides that, the lone mothers would like to see the 24 hours childcare to be more available.

I would like to mention here one of the suggestions pointed out in the interviews:

I would love to connect other people to my child. If it doesn't work with the father, maybe there are other people interested in my child, I would be glad to share a little bit of responsibility with someone. I don't know what it takes for society to make this work. It doesn't have to be love with me and another person, it has to be respect and love with a child. Then it would help a lot /.../ the attitude would change. (Interviewee 5)

In her wish for another person to share the responsibility with, I view loneliness and desire to connect someone else to the child. The same person was saying in the interview that she feels excluded and pushed aside, as the traditional way of being friends implies that couples want to be with couples, and that her parents do not involve that much.

6. Discussion

In this section of the thesis, I will analyze the findings of my research using the theoretical approaches being discussed in previous sections. I will compare the situation of lone mothers in Ukraine and Sweden. As the main aim of the research is to find out how the social welfare systems in these two countries are perceived by lone mothers with regard to working and mothering, I will focus on the interviews and on social policies.

Ukraine is a transitional society, so its *gender regime* is also in transition (Frejka, 2008; Perelli-Harris, 2008). During Soviet times the question of gender inequality and male oppression was discussed as a class issue. In the public discourse women were regarded as liberated due to the abolition of class oppression and interventions of the socialistic state. But in reality, women were carrying heavy *double burden*. According to Janet Johnson and Jean Robinson (2007: 7) “women were men at work, but women at home”. Women had to fulfill both responsibilities simultaneously without men’s help and only with the help of public provision of childcare. Nevertheless, they were facing disadvantages in the labour market and stress by working “two shifts” – at work and at home. Still, I have to mention the tremendous advantage during Soviet times for women: they reached the same level of education and employment as men. Highly-professional jobs as doctors, engineers, etc had a substantial percentage of female employees (Kuehnast and Nechemias, 2004: 5).

After breakdown of the Soviet Union, the family was revived (Zhurzhenko, 2004). It became the symbol of “traditional” Ukraine, with its old values and rules. As Tatiana Zhurzhenko (2004: 24) underlines, “the rise of neofamilialism became one of the most striking tendencies in the changing gender ideology of post-Soviet societies”. So, particularly in Ukraine “traditional family” with its norms and values became a base for “renovation” of Ukrainian society (ibid). Women in such families are depicted as:

They are strong and independent, but at the same time family oriented, committed to their maternal duties and respectful to their husbands. Typically, they are wiser and more responsible than men and assume real leadership in their families (ibid, 2004: 29).

This kind of family framing is convenient if state provision is scarce. The family becomes responsible for its own well-being and has to be self-sufficient. So, the role of the family increased while state provisions became not as generous and universal, which had a negative influence on women's ability to combine employment and childcare.

Sweden has a relatively long history of promoting gender equality and. Sweden also has a long history of policies enabling family and work reconciliation, encouraging women's participation in the labour market (Björnberg, 2006: 92), and has one of the highest rates of female labour force participation in the EU (Eurostat, Employment rate by gender). Public childcare has been a widespread practice and care ideology in Sweden since the 1970s, and the provision of childcare is considered a shared responsibility between the family and the state. The number of children in childcare is quite high (Appendix 7). Nevertheless, especially in the private sphere, unreconstructed gender relations still leave women with the main responsibility for children and household work, and the number of men who take advantage of parental rights remains low compared to women (Lister, 2007: 154).

So, in both countries women's employment has been extremely important and on the political agenda. Both in Sweden and in Ukraine female employment rates are high. In Sweden reconciliation of working and mothering is perceived by improving public childcare and labour market regulations, but in Ukraine women carry double burden.

When it comes to classifying Sweden and especially Ukraine as having certain *welfare* and *childcare regimes*, I would like to follow the words of Pascall and Manning (2000: 262), who think that there is no use trying to fit countries into a regime typology. These researchers have tried to identify *gender* and *welfare regimes* in Eastern European countries before and after the Communism collapse. Eventually, as I have underlined in the literature overview, they recognized the diversity of regimes which appeared after the Soviet breakdown and also their difference from the regimes in Western European countries.

Sweden could be characterized as having a *social-democratic welfare regime* with a broad range of citizenship entitlements and state provisions. From a feministic standpoint, Sweden is regarded as a country with a *weak male-breadwinner model* (Lewis, 1992) or an *individual earner-carer regime* (Sainsbury, 1994). It means that gender relations in this country have been transformed towards gender equality not only in employment outside of the home, but also inside of the home. The social rights are individualized. Men are supposed to take more active role in childcare and the introduction of “daddy months” is a proof for that. Also it means that the state takes up a leading role in implementing these transformations. The Swedish social welfare system is securing an individual’s right to combine employment and childcare. It provides cheap childcare of high quality, protects both men’s and women’s rights to care for children.

When it comes to Ukraine, it does not fit into any specific regime type, because it was not taken into consideration when all these typologies were developed. But, nevertheless, there is a way to analyze social welfare without pulling it to the typologies. The Ukrainian social welfare system is closer to *the social-democratic regime* in Esping-Andersen’s understanding than to *the conservative* or *liberal* regime type, but it still differs in many aspects from the Swedish type of regime. Regardless the social benefits, which seem to be very extensive on the paper, in reality the amount of social assistance or social security payments is very low compared to the actual costs of living in Ukraine. Despite the fact that the state still plays an important role in social provision (education, childcare and medicine are heavily state-subsidized), family support is very important. Moreover, as it becomes obvious from the Ukrainian interviews, unofficial payments for childcare and education made by parents come to a considerable amount for the family budget sometimes. One more reason for the ineffective social welfare system is the black economy, which means that high percentages of employees receive unofficial salaries without paying taxes. In general, I would say that instability and disorder in the public sector of social provision is to a large extent the result of economic instability in the country.

Another big distinction between these two countries is different gender roles in the families. Ukraine could be classified as having a *separate gender role regime* according to Sainsbury, except that women undertake both the role of the

earner and the role of the carer, while men stick to the earner role almost exclusively. As I have underlined several times before, women's employment is relatively high (52 percent of female over 15 in 2009 according to the World Bank data⁶) and at the same time as most childcare and household labour is undertaken by women. It results in a *double burden* for women and absence of childcare responsibilities for men, as the analysis of the Ukrainian interviews has shown.

Coming to *the childcare regime* classification, I would say that in Ukraine women are supposed to both take care of the child until the age of three and actively participate in the labour market later on. As the childcare leave is very long with a flat-rate social benefit (for the first child), it automatically presumes having incomes from some other resources. Usually this kind of economical support is supposed to come from the husband, but in the case of lone mothers it usually comes from their parents. The low level of state support jeopardizes the ability of a woman to form her own household. One more important factor is that after three years of leave woman has the right to return to the previous work, but the labour market legislation is not always enforced. In Sweden parental leave is shorter; the monetary compensation is much higher and allows a woman to keep a decent living standard when she is out of the labour market and without male support.

I would say that the biggest difference between the two countries is the fact that in Ukraine women face extensive economic *child penalties* (Lister *et al.*, 2007: 113), while in Sweden it is relatively limited. In Ukraine a woman usually stays outside of the labour market for a longer period of time and has bigger troubles coming back to the same work compared to Sweden. Moreover, difficulties in getting sick leaves and leaves of absence make it more complicated for Ukrainian women to keep up with their careers, even if they have husbands. Men's involvement in childcare is much less in Ukraine than in Sweden (Zhurzhenko, 2004). Although, in Sweden, as I can see from the interviews, lone mothers face some penalty for absence of the husband. One of my interviewees describes herself being like "old mothers from the 1950's", as she has to take care of her child all on her own, as supposedly mothers back in 1950's did, when

⁶ <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.TLF.CACT.FE.ZS>

husbands did not participate in the childcare to the same extent as they do nowadays. The lone mothers I interviewed in Sweden felt that they have much less economic possibilities compared to mothers living with partners, so they are getting “punished” for choosing not to have a partner. But in Ukraine the situation not always changes to the worse economically when women stay alone with a child.

One more side of the discussion that I want to pay attention to is *care culture* (Pfau-Effinger, 2005, 2006). This aspect has a direct connection to working and mothering reconciliation. Depending on whether a mother is the one to take care of a child and until what age, it has an implication on her labour market participation. Sweden has a tradition of public childcare, which is state-subsidized and of high quality (Korpi, 2007). There are both public and private childcare institutions, which have limited opening hours, but in some municipalities there is a possibility of 24 hours childcare for some groups of employees. There are enough of available places in the kindergartens for very small children, which presumes that it is acceptable to leave a one year old child to the kindergarten, although actual percentage of children one year old in the public childcare is 43 percent (ibid). Another part of the picture is that everyone should work, at least part-time, which means relatively long hours in Sweden (Knijn, Jönsson, and Klammer, 2005). In Ukraine the situation is different. A three year long childcare leave implies that no one else can care for the child in a better way than the mother. Public childcare is acceptable after the child reaches a certain age. While the Swedish *care culture* assumes that a child needs a father just as much as a mother, in Ukraine fathers avoid childcare responsibilities more often, even when they actually share the same household with the child. As I can see from the interviews the idea of extensive family is more present in Ukraine than in Sweden. As I have already indicated in the previous sections, the help of the grandparents is very important in the lives of lone mothers. So, both in Sweden and in Ukraine the necessity of public childcare is acknowledged but to different extent and in Ukraine the role of grandparents is more prominent, while in Sweden the role of the father is much more important.

I would like to apply the concept of *care packages* used by Knijn, Jönsson, and Klammer (2005) in the analysis of the interviews. “Care packaging” means that “working mothers will have to make a personal mixture of available

resources provided by the three institutional pillars of the ‘welfare mix’; the state, the market and the family” (Knijn, Jönsson, and Klammer, 2001: 4). The authors offer several main *care packages*. In Sweden and Ukraine lone mothers usually interrupt their employment after child birth. Only one of the interviewees returned to work a couple of weeks after having a child. As I have underlined above, the length of this break varies between the two countries. In Ukraine, it is exceptional that a woman takes shorter leave than three years. In the Ukrainian interviews mothers tended to excuse why their childcare leave was shorter, as a three year long break is assumed to be the “normal” choice which needed no explanation. In Sweden all lone mothers took one year long break.

Another part of the *care package* is reducing the working hours and/or flexible working time. Swedish lone mothers use both of these options, and as pointed out, Swedish part-time is “long part-time” (Knijn, Jönsson, and Klammer, 2005: 106). Only one of interviewed lone mothers was working full-time, with regular hours and she had problems with childcare because of it:

No, I am not (satisfied)! I wish they had longer opening hours. I can leave her there from 7.30 till 17.30, if it was till 18.00, I would never ask anyone to pick her up, if I am traveling. I don't know if this daycare is special or something, but if I pick her up after 16.00 she is the last. The crew wants to get home /.../ I get to hear every time that it's a long day for her /.../ I didn't have enough days for vacation this year, so they feel sorry for my daughter, but for her it seems to be ok. They try to make me feel guilty /.../ It's not fair if they see that the child is doing well. I had a lot of fights with them, but it doesn't change their attitude. (Interviewee 5)

As you can see from the interviewee's words above, although she should be on time for the childcare when working full-time, the childcare staff makes her feel guilty everyday because her child is the last one to be picked up.

In Ukraine none of the lone mothers is working part-time or flexible hours, which is the result of the labour market situation and no tradition of part-time job (Zhurzhenko, 2004). Moreover, the income from full-time employment is sometimes insufficient (the phenomenon of *working poor* (Volochkova and Minina, 1999)), so part-time would not provide enough for survival in most cases.

Another part of the care package which is highly important in both Ukraine and Sweden is public childcare. All lone mothers that have been interviewed used one or another type of childcare provided by the state. In both countries childcare is heavily state-subsidized. In Sweden some lone mothers were not satisfied with opening hours or with the attitude among the staff, but everyone acknowledged that in general childcare is of high quality. In the Ukrainian interviews the biggest concerns were about the low quality of childcare, especially food and about opening hours which do not correspond to working hours.

In both countries lone mothers have to use help in childcare from other people. In Sweden it might be the fathers, the grandparents or friends. In Ukraine it is foremost grandparents and friends in some rare cases. The difference between the countries is that in Sweden the help from the grandparents is additional, while in Ukraine it is very often regular and the grandparents are sometimes the most important care-givers for the children.

As Knijn, Jönsson, and Klammer (2005:116) write, “childcare is above all a mixed economy of welfare”. So, I would like to draw a general picture of care packages in Ukraine and Sweden, which shows how lone mothers manage working and mothering at the same time. In Ukraine, the conditions of inflexible working hours and unregulated working conditions make lone mothers turn to the state for childcare provision. But in none of the cases the mothers could manage only with regular childcare (kindergarten, school, after-school care). In most cases grandparents filled in the gap between the closing hours of the childcare institutions and the finishing of the mother’s working day. When the child falls sick, the grandparents step in instead of the mother who usually has no possibility to take sick leave as often as she needs to. In some cases the lone mothers were also using the help of nannies. In Sweden lone mothers have fewer problems with not corresponding opening hours and working hours, but still they need help from the kin – grandparents, siblings, older kids or friends. The flexible working conditions help lone mothers to form the strategy for combining working and childcare. I would like to underline that in both countries mothers were the ones responsible for organizing the care for her children. Only in one case in Sweden, where the mother shares the custody, the father of the children takes up all the responsibilities half of the time, which makes it possible for the mother to

organize the care in the most optimal way the rest of the time. In the Ukrainian and in other Swedish interviews mothers are responsible for packaging care when she is employed.

As I have mentioned previously in the theoretical part, full citizenship comprises of status, rights and practices. I would say that both in Ukraine and Sweden the status of a lone mother has lost its negative and exclusive meaning. Social rights interest me the most when I am looking into working and mothering reconciliation from a citizenship perspective. Lewis (1997: 2) states that the gendered social right around category of lone mothers is “the right to form an independent household without the risk of poverty”. Can we claim that lone mothers’ households in Sweden or Ukraine could be regarded as independent? I would answer negatively.

In Ukraine households of lone mothers are not independent. As I have stated before, only one of my interviewees is living apart from her parents, the rest are sharing household with their parents. All of the interviewees are above the poverty line in Ukraine due to their jobs, but while on childcare leave most of them had to apply for social assistance. So, these households are not enjoying the social right of being economically secure or independent. In Sweden, the financial situation of lone mothers is in general better and they are able to form an independent household, although also sometimes using social assistance from the state.

Talking about a practical component of full citizenship, most of lone mothers in both countries agreed that they have time poverty. I believe that time is essential for participation and membership. Paid employment is not a guarantee for social inclusion and full social citizenship. Moreover, some of the interviewees directly underlined that they are excluded from the social life around them, because they are single, because they have children and have no time:

Also if you get new friends they want to be with a couple. It's a traditional way, you cannot get in there. /.../ For me it's difficult when you have all these nuclear families, it feels like closed society.

Would it be harder for you to find a partner? – *It is difficult to find the time /.../ (Interviewee 5)*

The main question of the citizenship debate around lone mothers is whether to treat them as mothers or as citizens first. I have described this

contradiction in detail in the theoretical chapter of the thesis. Now I will see if the citizenship status of lone mothers in Ukraine and Sweden are based on their motherhood or on the employment.

Lewis (1997) defined three main principles of social welfare in Sweden, which according to her are organized in hierarchical order. The first one is that all citizens must work; the second one is that workers have citizen's rights on social services and the third one is an official commitment to sharing unpaid work (ibid: 10). As one can see, the first two principles coincide with the interviews: all lone mothers work and enjoy the rights of citizens based on employment. But the third principle is out of reach for lone mothers. These mothers sometimes have no partner to help them both economically and with childcare. Lewis (1997) also calls the Swedish model – a two-parent model, underlining the fact that shared custody with a father who is actively participating in the child's life is more common.

Lister's (1997) idea is that there is no chance that a woman can have a full citizenship unless her unpaid labour is recognized. In the Ukrainian interviews women are responsible for the household labour and for the childcare in most of the cases, while in Sweden the redistribution of unpaid labour is more equalized, although it is contested by recent research.

Sweden can probably be characterized as having *a universal caregiver model* of social welfare more than any other country (Fraser, 1994). Both men and women are supposed to care and to work. In this case citizenship status is based on both being a carer and being a worker. But as my research is focused on lone mothers, there are almost no men equally involved in childcare. As I have mentioned before, most of the interviewed mothers have lone custody and have to be lone carers and workers at the same time. Their citizenship status as a base for acquiring social rights is grounded in the parenthood (note that not in motherhood) for the first year after the birth and in their employment later on. At the same time, they have to combine employment and caring, using only their limited resources. So, according to the findings of my research Sweden seems to have *a universal caregiver parity model*. The main goal of the welfare seems to be making care costless during the first year after the childbirth and providing decent life standards to the parents without their participation in the labour market. After that, as everyone has to work and this contribution to the citizenship

status is the most prominent, the state is ensuring that mothers can combine working and mothering. As a result Sweden has both generous child allowance, benefits connected to childbirth but at the same time the childcare arrangements are well-developed, cheap and of high quality, so that parents can work and leave their children there.

Ukraine cannot fit into this classification without some considerable clarifications. Although, employment is compulsory both for men and women, it is not *a universal breadwinner model* because of its very long childcare leave. For three years citizenship of women is based on their motherhood (although officially fathers also have a right to take the childcare leave) (Law of Ukraine about Leave, art.18). Their survival depends to a large extent on the husbands or in the case of the lone mothers I interviewed on their parents and income-related social assistance. Thus, for three years the citizenship is based on motherhood, but it does not provide sufficient means for a decent life and includes many disadvantages for further employment and career. Later on, although lone mothers keep some social benefits entitled to them based on their motherhood, usually they start working full-time and bring their children to public childcare.

7. Concluding remarks

The main aim of the thesis is to find out how the Ukrainian and the Swedish social welfare systems are experienced by lone mothers with regard to working and mothering reconciliation. To answer my research questions I applied several theoretical approaches to analyze the interviews with lone mothers in Ukraine and Sweden. In the concluding remarks I will briefly present the findings of my research.

To analyze the social welfare systems in Ukraine and Sweden, I studied social policies in connection to childcare and employment. In order to put the findings in the theoretical frame, I used Esping-Andersen's (1990) typology of social welfare and certain feministic critical views. Sweden represents *the social-democratic welfare regime* with extensive citizenship entitlements and state provisions. According to Lewis (1997) Sweden has *a weak male-breadwinner model* of social welfare and *an individual earner-care regime* according to Sainsbury's (1994) classification. Ukrainian social welfare, despite having a broad range of social benefits both universal and specific for lone mothers, cannot be characterized as an example of *a social-democratic welfare regime*, due to its actual ineffectiveness. I would say that Ukraine has *a separate gender role regime* (Sainsbury, 1994), but women have to be both economically active and undertake most of the caring responsibilities, so it results in *the double burden*.

I used *care packaging* as the best theoretical approach to find out which strategies lone mothers used to combine working and mothering. The interviews from both countries showed that lone mothers are the ones responsible for arranging the care, but they use different agents to different extent in Ukraine and Sweden. The Ukrainian interviews suggest that labour conditions in the country are less flexible than in Sweden and that part-time job is not an appropriate option because of low economic reimbursement. As a result, Ukrainian lone mothers need some help to manage with public childcare opening hours and grandparents

usually help out a lot. In the Swedish cases lone mothers also use the help of grandparents, but usually not on a regular basis, compared to Ukraine, where most of the interviewed mothers shared the same household with their parents. So, in the Ukrainian cases lone mothers used a strategy of working full-time, brought their children to public childcare and relied to a greater extent on their parents both economically and for childcare. In the Swedish cases lone mothers had a wider range of employment options (full-time, part-time, self-employed), used public childcare and seldom had to rely on their parents or friends for temporary childcare help.

The interviews in both countries combined with analysis of social policies gave a clear picture of the role played by the state, the market and the family in the working/mothering reconciliation. In Ukraine the state provides officially free childcare and social benefits connected to childbirth and to lone motherhood. But in reality most of the interviewed lone mothers underlined the low quality of childcare facilities and numerous semi-official payments that all parents have to contribute. Moreover, the social benefits are not sufficient even for minimal living standard. In Sweden public childcare is relatively cheap and of very high quality. The state guarantees mothers' possibility to combine working and mothering with labour market legislation and generous social benefits. But at the same time in the case of lone mothers who have no economic and childcare support of a partner, the state support turns out to be insufficient. Some lone mothers in both countries had to ask for social assistance from the state based on their low income.

In both countries some lone mothers turned to private nannies for help, but this solution was not very popular among Swedish mothers because of its high price and among Ukrainian mothers because their grandparents usually take this responsibility.

The role of the family in working and mothering reconciliation is one of the biggest differences between the two countries. The Ukrainian interviews suggest that the family is a very important care-provider. Most Ukrainian lone mothers shared the same household and the same budget with their parents, who cared for the grandchildren when mothers were at work. The Swedish lone mothers also depended on the occasional childcare help from the family members or friends but to the lesser extent.

I wanted to focus my attention on the role of the father in the interviews from both countries. As my research suggests, the role of the father in Sweden could be more active (shared custody, when half of the time children spend with their father). But at the same time most of the Swedish lone mothers I interviewed had lone custody and the fathers met their children only occasionally, which means that the mothers did not get any support from them except the amount of maintenance support established by the state. The Ukrainian interviews on the contrary offered an image of absent fathers. None of the fathers played any role in the lives of their children, not even economically, as none of them paid alimony or paid back to the state for the temporal support that the children received. So, in the Ukrainian case the lone mothers could not rely on any help from their ex-partners and had to manage childcare by themselves and with the help of their parents. In the Swedish case fathers played some role, mostly limited economical support, although one could expect more involvement in actual childcare than the interviews showed.

Finally, my last research question concerned the citizenship debate and its connection to the position of lone mothers in Ukraine and Sweden. One of the main citizenship rights of lone mothers is their right to form an independent household on their own. The Swedish interviews show that it is possible for lone mothers in this country, although they still face the danger of economic and time penalties for choosing to raise a child without a partner in the country of the “two-parent family model”. Nevertheless, in Ukraine the lone mothers face child penalties in general and fail to maintain independent households, end up being dependent on someone who can provide childcare on a regular basis (especially when the children are small), usually grandparents.

In Sweden, although the image of citizen-worker is prevailing, the state through its generous social provisions tries to make care costless, so this country could be characterized as having *a universal care-parity model* with regard to lone mothers. The case of Ukraine seems to be more complex with many inner contradictions. On the one hand, there is long paid childcare leave and social benefits specific for lone mothers, which assumes that citizen-mother is socially recognized. But, on the other hand, the childcare leave and the rest of social benefits connected to childcare are poorly paid, which deprives citizen-mothers from social right to provide for themselves economically. At the same time, when

a woman comes back from the childcare leave and starts working full-time, she has to deal with low quality childcare and unregulated labour market legislation, which again deprives her from the right to care for her child while working. That's why one could raise the issue of child penalties in Ukraine.

Eventually, I would like to emphasize that these research questions need further investigation and could be developed in future research projects.

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Appendix 1

Interview guide (English):

I. Demographical block:

1. What is your name?
2. What age are you? How old is/are your child/ren?
3. What are you doing now? Working, studying?
4. What is your education?

II. Employment:

1. Could you please tell me your employment history? How long have you been working? Which position have you taken?
2. What is your current work situation (full-time, part-time, flexibility) ?
3. How childbirth and childcare have influenced your paid work and work arrangements? Do you think it could be different if you were not a single mother, but had a constant partner?

III. Childcare:

1. What kind of childcare arrangements have you been using?
2. Would you say that all the arrangements have satisfied you and met the requirements for combining work and childcare?
3. Are you satisfied with quality of childcare arrangements?

IV. Social benefits:

1. What kind of social benefits have you received (on every stage, through the life of the child/ren) or are receiving now (parental leave, child allowance, income-based support, lone-parent support...)? Which of them are specific for lone mother?
2. Have you been receiving any kind of non-material benefits from the state or private organizations (discounts, free lunches at school, reduced fees, priority in queues etc.)? Which of them are specific for lone mother?
3. Would you say that these benefits and services are of sufficient level and amount for you and your child/ren? Would you be able to have a decent life standard with these material and non-material resources provided?

4. Are there any difficulties you experience receiving these benefits and services entitled to you? Are they available and easily accessible?

V. Help of family kin:

1. Have you been using or are you using now some kind of family kin support – either economical or childcare support? Why yes or no?

- If yes – Is it appropriate / common to ask for this kind of help from kin family? Would you get along without this help?

VI. Usage of market solutions:

1. Have you been using or are you using now private child minders, nannies, private childcare arrangements etc.? Why yes or no?

VI. The role of the father:

2. Does the father of your child/ren have any legal rights or obligations towards your child/ren? Why yes or no?

3. What kind of custody do you have?

4. Do you receive any kind of support from the father? How the agreement has been achieved?

VII. Economical situation of the household:

1. How would you describe economical situation of your household?

2. What kind of difficulties do you have if any?

3. Would you say that you experience time poverty?

VIII. Personal perceiving of the situation:

1. What kind of working and mothering combination do you consider to be perfect?

2. What kind of arrangement do you think is better for a child? Better for a mother?

3. What would you change in the way you combine childcare and work if you could and had all necessary resources for it?

IX. Any suggestions for improvement:

1. What could be improved in the system to make the life of lone mothers easier and more enjoyable?

Гайд для интервью (русский):

I. Демографический блок:

1. Как Вас зовут?
2. Сколько Вам лет? Сколько лет Вашему ребенку?
3. Чем Вы сейчас занимаетесь? (учитесь, работаете, в отпуске по уходу за ребенком);
4. Какое Ваше образование?

II. Работа:

1. Давайте поговорим про историю Вашей занятости. Кем и как давно Вы работаете начиная с того как Вы закончили Ваше образование? Какие должности Вы занимали?
2. Какие Ваши нынешние условия работы – полный рабочий день (какие часы), неполный рабочий день, гибкие условия и т.д.?
3. Как рождения ребенка и забота о ребенке повлияли на Вашу работу и условия труда? Как Вы думаете, сложилось ли бы это иначе, если бы Вы не были одинокой матерью?

III. Забота о ребенке:

1. Как Вы организовываете заботу, уход за ребенком? (детский сад, школа, Ваши родители и т.д.)
2. Вы довольны как организован уход за Вашим ребенком и как это помогает Вам совмещать работу и материнство?
3. Вы довольны качеством ухода за Вашим ребенком? (в детском саду или в школе)

IV. Социальная помощь:

1. Какую социальную помощь Вы получаете сейчас и получали в прошлом? (выплаты после рождения ребенка, социальная поддержка по уходу за ребенком, выплаты как одинокой матери, выплаты как малообеспеченному домохозяйству)
2. Получали ли Вы какую-либо не материальную помощь от государства, государственных или негосударственных организаций как мать и как мать-одиночка? (бесплатные обеды в школе, сниженная оплата за школу, детский сад или квартиру и т.д.) Что из этого Вы получали как одинокая мать?

3. Встречались ли Вы с какими-либо трудностями получая эту помощь? Приходилось ли Вам бороться за эти права или испытывать какие-либо неудобства на пути к их получению?

V. Помощь семьи:

1. Пользуетесь ли Вы помощью членов Вашей семьи для ухода за Вашим ребенком – будь то экономическая помощь или исключительно забота о ребенке? Почему да или нет?

- Если да, то считаете ли Вы что это принято пользоваться помощью семьи в таких случаях? Обошлись бы Вы без такой помощи?

VI. Приватный уход за ребенком:

1. Приходилось ли Вам когда-нибудь пользоваться приватными нянями или приватными детскими садами? Почему да или нет?

VI. Роль отца:

1. Отец Вашего ребенка (детей) имеет законные родительские права? Почему да или нет? В чем выражается его роль как отца?

2. Получаете ли Вы какую-либо поддержку от отца Вашего ребенка – материальную или не материальную? Как было достигнуто соглашение между Вами и отцом ребенка о том, какую роль он будет играть?

VIII. Материальное положение Вашей семьи:

1. Как бы Вы описали материально положение Вашей семьи?

2. Испытываете ли Вы какие-либо материальные трудности?

3. Могли бы Вы сказать, что Вы испытываете недостаток времени для чего-то? Для себя или для ребенка?

IX. Личное восприятие ситуации:

1. Как Вы себе представляете идеальное сочетание работы и материнства?

2. Как организация этого сочетания лучше для ребенка, лучше для матери?

3. Если бы у Вас были все возможные ресурсы, как бы Вы изменили то, как Вы сочетаете материнство и работу?

X. Предложения:

1. Что можно изменить во всей системе, в государстве, чтобы улучшить положение одиноких матерей, сделать его легче и приятней?

Appendix 2

Description of lone mothers in Sweden (1-5) and Ukraine (6-11)

Interviewee 1

Swedish woman 36 years old with two daughters 18 and 7 years old. She is working as a social worker in the emergency social service and besides that has part-time jobs as a contact person for psychiatric patients. She works full-time, but only evenings and weekends (from 14.30 till 24.00 or till 2.00 in the morning). During day time she works on other jobs. She has shared custody with the fathers of her both children. So, she is trying to minimize the time spent on work during the week when her daughters are living with her and work as much as possible when her children stay with the fathers. She used to study full-time and work 50-60 percent. The interviewee underlines throughout the whole interview that she has got a lot of support from her family – two fathers, the ex-husband, her older daughter and to some extent her parents. She felt that things have become more difficult after the divorce with her last husband three years ago, as she stays on her own and has to manage everything with the help of her older daughter. The interviewee is not satisfied with her economic situation and with the time arrangement – she would like to work less, but would not manage economically.

Interviewee 2

Swedish woman 29 years old with a nine year old son. She has her own business in pregnancy counseling and studies full-time at the university. She had chosen to study instead of working full-time, as she finds it more difficult to work and be a mother at the same time. She became a lone mother when the child was two and a half years old. Now, she has lone custody due to a court decision because the father tried to keep the child in another country against her will. The interviewee has used help from nannies at some point and both material and non-material help from the grand-parents. The interviewee is not satisfied with her economic situation and underlines that she cannot provide her son with the same kind of life as couples can. She is not satisfied with the childcare services and especially not with the treatment of children with special needs like her son.

Interviewee 3

Swedish woman 31 years old with a seven year old son. She is studying for the moment and has several part-time, low-paid jobs as e.g. cleaning lady. She also used to work in a bar, in call-centers, in tele-marketing and so on. Right now, she has to clean the call-centre twice a week in the night, after her son has fallen asleep. She broke up with her cohabitant (“sambo”) several months ago, who used to help her with the child. She has lone custody of the child as a result of a court decision. The interviewee gets help from friends and parents. She used to take her son with her to several work places. She has experienced times of extreme economic need, when she almost lost her apartment because of a rent debt. Currently, she also feels economic hardships though to lesser extent. She has been unemployed for a while and has been living on social benefits exclusively. The interviewee has experienced negative attitude towards her as a lone mother and discriminative practices from childcare and medical staff.

Interviewee 4

Swedish woman 42 years old with a 4 year old child. The interviewee was refused to cut down the number of working hours and to work from home at the previous job (because of long-distance commuting) after the childbirth, which was the reason for quitting. Now she works 80 percent and manages on her own with childcare opening hours. Her parents and her sister help with childcare, when the interviewee is away. Although, she thinks that her financial means are sufficient, it still does not mean that she is able to keep the same standard as couples. The interviewee has experienced discriminative attitudes from the childcare services. She has lone custody, as the father lives abroad and as they have agreed upon this together. She underlines the time-poverty which many lone parents experience. The interviewee reports that for her the compulsory labour force engagement as a contribution into society, while giving her child over to the state childcare to be socialized in the way that society wants it to be, is the biggest oppression of women of all times.

Interviewee 5

Swedish woman 31 years old with a daughter two year old. She works full-time in a research project. Before, she used to study and to work part-time. The

interviewee is very unsatisfied with the childcare: with its opening hours, which could be longer and with the attitude towards her, because she cannot pick up the child earlier. Moreover, she underlines that a discriminative attitude is also found in the medical system and in interpersonal communication. The interviewee sometimes gets help from her parents to manage childcare. She has lone custody of the child, because the father lives abroad and has never seen the child. The interviewee feels very satisfied with her working/mothering arrangements, but feels socially excluded, pushed aside, because of her family situation.

Interviewee 6

Ukrainian woman, 31 years old with a six year old daughter. She is working as a teacher in primary school. The interviewee is living with her mother and her child in their own house. She divorced when her daughter was one and a half years old. The father was gambling and got into debts. She has shared custody, although the father does not see his child and the child does not know him. He is not paying alimony and the state is paying for him. As she is working full-time, her mother is helping out a lot and they have a common budget. To get by economically she gives private lessons to children and products from their own garden outside of the house are very helpful.

Interviewee 7

Ukrainian woman 51 years old with an eight year old son. She is working in a factory as an economist. She got divorced after the birth of the child. The father does not see the son and does not pay alimony. She gets material help from her older daughter and she has hired a nanny to bring the child to school in the mornings. In her work place she was refused to come half an hour later in the mornings to be able to get her son to the school herself. When the child was small the interviewee had a nanny who was with the child the whole day. Her economic conditions are quite good with the help of her older daughter.

Interviewee 8

Ukrainian woman 39 years old with an eight year old daughter. She is working as a secretary. She is working full-time and has no time to bring her child to school or to pick her up, so she has to ask someone all the time to bring her back from

school (school is very far away from where they live). The interviewee lives together with her father and shares a common budget with him. He also helps her out with childcare sometimes. She was not married to the father of the child and has lone custody of the daughter.

Interviewee 9

Ukrainian woman 36 years old with a 10 year old daughter. She works as an accountant. She lives with her parents, has a common budget with them and they help her with childcare. The grand-father has replaced the father. She divorced her husband when the child was two years old. He was drinking and unemployed for long periods of time. She has shared custody, but during later years the father does not contact her daughter. The financial situation of the household is better than it used to be when she was married. She does not get any alimony, because she knows that she will get only a minimum amount from the state, as the ex-husband has no job, no money, no property. To apply would require a lot of time and energy, so she does not bother applying.

Interviewee 10

Ukrainian woman 31 years old with a 10 year old son. She works as a kindergarten teacher. The father is written down as a father in the birth certificate, although he has not seen his son for long time. The mother receives social help as a lone mother. The interviewee lives with her mother, who helps her with childcare and they share a common budget. She perceives her economic situation to be below medium and reports financial difficulties when it comes to buying clothes for the child.

Interviewee 11

Ukrainian woman 41 years old with a seven year old child. She works shifts as an administrator at a hotel, which makes this workplace so attractive, as she can stay with her child for long time and does not have to take sick leaves. She lives with her mother who helps out a lot. She has lone custody, as she never got married to the father and they have broken up before the child was born. The interviewee hired a nanny for a short period of time at some moment.

Appendix 3

Table 1. Social benefits connected to childbirth.

| | Sweden | Ukraine |
|--------------|---|--|
| Income-based | <p>Pregnancy benefit (graviditetspenning) in case a woman has a physically strenuous job, at most 60 days before and 11 days after the birth; paid by the Social Insurance Office (state agency)</p> <p>Parental leave benefit (föräldraförsäkring) (480 days); paid by the Social Insurance Office;</p> <p>Temporary parental benefit (tillfällig föräldraförsäkring) for care of a sick child (maximum 120 days a year); paid by the Social Insurance Office</p> | <p>Pregnancy and birth leave benefit (126 days); paid by the work place if the mother is insured, if she is not – paid by the state.</p> <p>Alimony (not less than 30% of living costs for a child of a certain age and not more than 50% of the father's income); paid by the father.</p> |
| Flat-rate | <p>Child allowance (barnbidrag) (1,050 SEK per month for first child); paid by the Social Insurance Office</p> <p>Childcare allowance (vårnadsbidrag) 3,000 SEK, tax-free; paid by the municipality</p> <p>Maintenance benefit (underhållsstöd) (full maintenance support amounts to 1, 273 SEK) in case a parent cannot pay the alimony by himself; paid by the Social</p> | <p>Childcare leave benefit (130 UAH per month for 3 years);</p> <p>One-time monetary help after childbirth (depends on how many children a mother already has: first child – 4,800 UAH at birth and another 620 UAH per month during the first year; second child – 4,840 UAH at birth and 840 UAH per month for two years; third child – 5,000 UAH at birth and 1,250 UAH every month for three years);</p> <p>Social benefit for lone-mothers (240 – 287</p> |

| | | |
|--|------------------|--|
| | Insurance Office | UAH a month); Temporal social help instead of alimony (240 – 287 UAH a month). Paid by the state |
|--|------------------|--|

Source: Social Insurance Office in Sweden

(<http://www.forsakringskassan.se/sprak/eng>);

Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine

(http://www.mlsp.gov.ua/control/uk/publish/article;jsessionid=9350869F696DDFB6705520F760992D37?art_id=116298&cat_id=36392)

Appendix 4

Length of paid parental leave in Sweden

- A total of 480 days with 390 days at 80 % of income (60 days are exclusively for another parent);
- 90 days at a flat rate of 180 SEK (\$ 28) per day.

Appendix 5

Table 3. Child benefit in Sweden

| No of children | Sum per child | Additional benefit due to number of children | Sum in total |
|----------------|---------------|--|--------------|
| 1 | 1.050 | - | 1.050 |
| 2 | 2.100 | 150 | 2.250 |
| 3 | 3.150 | 604 | 3.754 |
| 4 | 4.200 | 1.614 | 5.814 |
| 5 | 5.250 | 2.864 | 8.114 |
| 6 | 6.300 | 4.114 | 10.414 |

Source: Social Insurance Office in Sweden,

(<http://www.forsakringskassan.se/sprak/eng>).

Appendix 6

Table 2. State childcare

| | Sweden | Ukraine |
|-------------------|--|--|
| Pre-school care | The pre-school is part of the educational system and a social right from the age of one. | Pre-school education of a child is the responsibility of either the family or the family in cooperation with pre-school educational institutions. 56% of children of respective age in pre-school care (2010) |
| School | Compulsory | Compulsory |
| After-school care | Municipalities are obliged to organize after-school care (social right) | Municipalities should organize after-school care (possibility) |

Source: State Statistics Committee of Ukraine, 2010 (<http://ukrstat.gov.ua/>); Korpi, 2007; Law of Ukraine about Education, art. 33.

Appendix 7

Table 4. The rate of children aged 1–5 attending preschool in Sweden in 2009.

| Age | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|-----|----|----|----|----|----|
| (%) | 50 | 91 | 95 | 98 | 98 |

Source: Skolverket, 2009.