

THE SECOND WAVE OF ANTI-FEMINISM?

POST-CRISIS MATERNALIST POLICIES AND THE ATTACK ON THE CONCEPT OF GENDER IN POLAND /

DOROTA SZELEWA

Abstract: This article argues that, despite Poland's better situation during the economic crisis, the long-lasting rationalisation of permanent austerity overshadows and hinders any alternative solutions in the field of social policies. In this sense, the crisis that hurt the economies of many other countries represented a reference frame for adhering to the path of austerity policies in Poland. The neoliberal track in social and economic policies was accompanied by the strengthening of their conservative pillar: any slight improvements in family policies took a maternalist direction, with a well-paid maternity leave prolonged to one year without the same individual rights being granted to fathers. Finally, the crisis served as a background for the Catholic Church's attack on the category of "gender", an example of moral panic. The policy changes as well as the stronger anti-feminism in public discourse were in line with the institutional and ideological legacies of the period of transition, while the crisis served as a direct and indirect reference point for the actors behind these developments.

Key words: gender, crisis, austerity, Poland, childcare, Catholic Church, moral panic

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.13060/12130028.2014.15.2.129>

Poland has long been regarded as a laggard in the provision of social policies, including financial childcare support policies for families (Szelewa, Polakowski 2008; Saxonberg 2013; Glass, Fodor 2007). The neglect of important programmes in support of women's financial autonomy exacerbated the increase in gender inequalities in society and within the family (Mahon, Williams 2007; Pascall, Lewis 2004; Haney 2003; Fultz, Ruck, Steinhilber 2003; Balcerzak-Paradowska et al. 2003). At the same time, Western European countries exhibit a tendency to depart from the male breadwinner model (Ray, Gornick, Schmitt 2010; Gornick, Meyers 2008, 2003; Orloff 2009), although for sure there are still varieties of childcare policies that structure work-life balance opportunities differently for men and women.¹

In Europe, the sources of the development of work-life balance policies have a political (mobilisation of left-wing political parties) or an ideological (gender-equality-friendly attitudes of the population) character. Moreover, important path dependencies might be observed (Morgan 2008). Recently, the evolution of work-life balance policies has been threatened by the world economic crisis that hit almost all of the European countries quite severely, leaving some of them in a state of serious fiscal crisis, and leading to cuts in social spending (Karamessini, Rubery 2014). Especially in the long run, cuts in programmes supporting childcare might have gendered effects such as weaker support for childcare services. This tends to suppress employment rates for women and, in turn, decrease female financial autonomy and increase the gender pay gap and inequalities in employment (OECD 2011; Hobson 2014; Villa, Smith 2014).

The Polish case is special in this regard for at least two reasons. Firstly, Poland went through the crisis relatively smoothly, and thus, the budgetary constraints and the pres-

sure towards austerity policies were smaller in comparison to other EU countries. Secondly, Poland is faced with rapidly decreasing fertility rates and the outflow of working-age population via emigration. This is a typical set of new social risks that were the basis for reforming the welfare state in other countries with conservative gender regimes such as Spain or Germany (Fleckenstein, Seeleib-Kaiser 2011; Leitner 2010; Escobedo, Meil, Lapuerta 2014; Baizan 2009). Thus, as a response to the shrinking working-age population, Germany invested significantly in the development of childcare services and introduced special incentives for shared parental leave. The justification for these changes was that both the availability of childcare services and a more equal share of parenting responsibilities contribute to an increase in fertility (Leitner 2010; Fleckenstein, Seeleib-Kaiser 2011). With few signs of a major economic crisis in the Polish case, there is a capacity to invest in social policies in line with the politics of departure from the male breadwinner model. However, the capacity is a necessary, but not sufficient condition for introducing work-life balance policies following the example of Germany and others. The additional conditions needed include the political will to conduct these reforms in the first place, as well as an ideological shift in the dominating discourse on gender roles. The goal of this article is to investigate whether there has been a political determination to transform work-life balance policies and whether ideological shifts with regard to gender roles have taken place. This is done in the context of the global economic crisis (in general) and the better economic performance of Poland (in particular).

The argument of this article is that, despite Poland's better financial situation during the economic crisis, any alternative solutions in the field of social policies have been overshadowed and hindered by a long-lasting set of justifications for

permanent austerity. In this sense, the crisis that hurt the economies of many other countries represented a reference frame for an even more intensive adherence to austerity policies in Poland. The neoliberal track in social and economic policies has been accompanied by the strengthening of their conservative pillar. Any improvements in family policies such as extending the maternity leave or limited investment in childcare services have taken a maternalist direction, because a well-paid maternity leave has been prolonged to one year without granting the same individual rights to fathers. As I will argue, though, an analysis of the possible gendered effects of the crisis should reach beyond the effects on employment or immediate policy responses. Therefore, I will also analyse a shift in public debate on gender equality, and especially the recent backlash encouraged by the Catholic Church. In my analysis of these policy and discourse shifts I will use the framework of incremental institutional transformation (Streeck, Thelen 2005; Thelen, Mahoney 2010), arguing that the development of Polish childcare policies is path-dependent, with important legacies from the period of state socialism (inheriting the childcare policy regime of “implicit familialism”) and the period of transition (austerity measures and the return of conservatism). In accordance with Jill Rubery (2014), I will complete the neo-institutionalist framework with the gender perspective to examine any assumptions on gender roles the reformers of the institutional framework of childcare policies continue (or cease) to exhibit. Both the institutional and discursive path dependencies turn out to be the main factors behind the maternalist face of the recent reforms of Polish childcare policies. While my goal is to describe and understand and analytically grasp the institutional and ideological evolution of policies and the discourse on gender, it is beyond the topic of this article to propose an alternative explanatory framework with casual relationships between the variables.

As a whole, although the crisis did not hit Poland directly, both the austerity policies and the increased conservatism in the public debate seem to be the signs of the direct and indirect gendered effects of the economic crisis. The next section briefly describes the concepts that this article follows while presenting the empirical material, i.e. austerity, conservative attitudes and discourse. The empirical analysis is organised in three sections 1) characterising the institutional and ideological legacies of the periods of state socialism and transition; 2) reviewing the reforms of childcare policies, where I am mostly interested in childcare services for children under the age of three and changes in the system of parental leaves; and 3) describing the anti-gender (equality) campaign encouraged and partly organised by the Catholic Church in Poland.

Recession, austerity and conservatism: a framework for analysing gender and the crisis

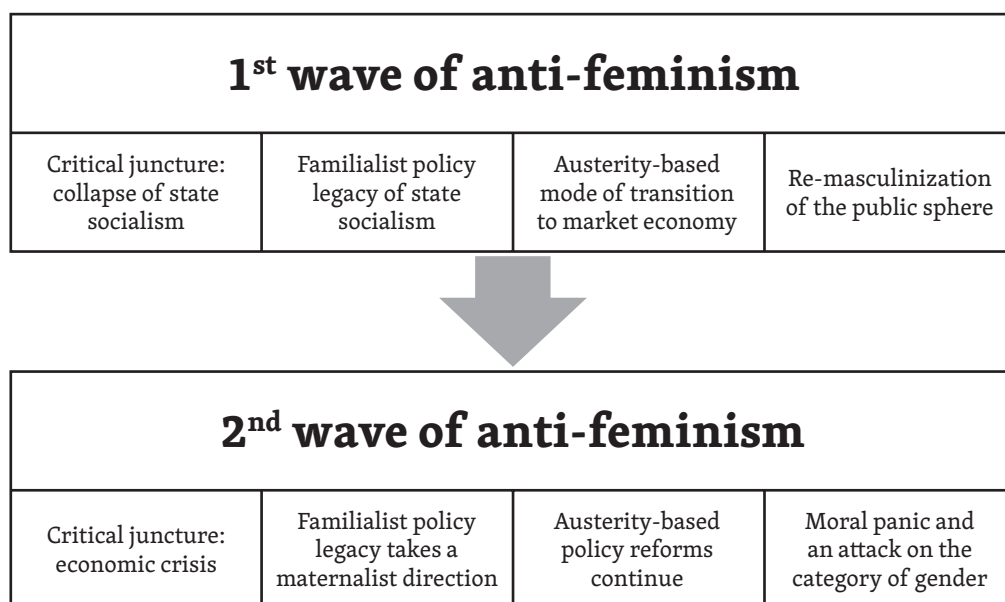
There are several examples of early- and late-crisis research that have emphasised its possible impact on an increase in

gender inequalities. Thus, for example, Sylvia Walby (2009) pointed at a variety of national responses to the crisis. The author advocated for a gender audit of these policy responses with regard to their possible impact on men and women of different social classes, races and ethnicities. More recently, a group of scholars analysed the effect of the economic downturn and the short- and long-term effects of the crisis on gender relations (Karamessini, Rubery 2014). The authors identified some common tendencies, including developments in female and male employment, as well as divergent trends among European countries.²

Using the framework of incremental institutional evolution (Streeck, Thelen 2005), Jill Rubery (2014) stresses the importance of even small reforms and cuts in social benefits and services. These may eventually lead to transformative institutional changes, disfavours dual-earner policy models and representing an overall backlash of policies aimed at the enhancement of female autonomy. As argued by the author, the “institutionalist” approach “links the analysis to both cyclical and longer-term changes in national employment and social models and to the social construction of gender relations within a specific institutional and political context” (Rubery 2014: 17). In other words, even if the macro-economic indicators, when comparing the financial situation of men and women show little difference, we might be more interested in the government’s strategies towards social spending and support for vulnerable groups and, in particular, in how these policy responses might affect female economic autonomy.

Applying Rubery’s approach to analysing Polish policies towards childcare and gender equality during the economic crisis, I present a case of path-dependent institutional change. I base my argument on the literature within the institutionalist approach, and in particular, on path dependency and incremental institutional evolution (Streeck, Thelen 2005; Mahoney, Thelen 2010). According to this approach, institutions evolve gradually, adhering to the path of development marked by a critical historical event. Figure 1 summarizes the elements of the analytical framework.

The literature on path dependence and historical processes unfolding over time is relevant for studying the post-state-socialist welfare states. Neither could short-term factors account for the shape of these developments, nor could the outcome be directly linked to structural conditions. Applying the classical political science explanations to policy outcomes in Eastern Europe had been problematic long before the crisis. As noted by Saxonberg and Szelewa (2007), in the case of post-state-socialist countries it is hard to link the shape of childcare policies to the political affiliation of the governments. This is due to the fact that neither left-wing nor right-wing parties were in support of gender equality, both in the Czech Republic and in Poland, after 1989. Moreover, the feminist movements were hardly ever strong in terms of their organisational power, and when women’s NGOs were visible, as in the case of Poland after 1989, they were mostly interest-

Figure 1: The first and second waves of anti-feminism: elements and path dependencies constituting the framework for analysis.

ed in reproductive rights. Glass and Fodor (2007) as well as Szikra and Szelewa (2010) have a similar argument about Poland, emphasising the importance of state-socialist legacies and the continuities of institutional solutions with regard to childcare policies. The mix of childcare policies in Poland has been referred to as “implicit familialism” (Szelewa, Polakowski 2008) or “private maternalism” (Glass, Fodor 2007). However, in fact, the roots of implicit familialism in Poland come from the period of state socialism, when the most important features of the Polish (minimalist) welfare state were established. In other words, the transition to market economy did not mean *transformative* institutional change in the case of Polish childcare policies (Szikra, Szelewa 2010).

However, although the state of family policies represented an initial condition for reformers after the collapse of state socialism, the transition period might represent a critical juncture for the emergence of important institutional and political constellations. In this sense, it is useful to distinguish the familialist *policy legacies* of the period of state socialism from the *transition legacy* that could stem from the direction and the mode of the reforms. Important studies suggest that initial experiences with the market economy and social policies could have critically affected the shape of social policies during transformation to market economy (Nelson 1997; Bruszt and Stark 2001). In other words, continuities could be explained by the fact that a certain country was set on a path of development during the transition on which it tended and tends to remain afterwards. In Poland, the process of transition from the command economy to market capitalism was often characterised as an austerity-based “big bang” or “shock therapy” (Balcerowicz 1995; Bohle, Greskovits et al. 2012).

The policy legacies of the period of state socialism and the austerity-based mode of social policy reform inherited

from the transition period together provide my framework for understanding the recent developments in gender policies in Poland. The Polish version of “implicit familialism” was reformed during the phase of transition. Even though these policies were not generous in the first place, the state’s withdrawal from financing them led to the shutdown of one-third of all crèches available in the first half of the 1990s (Balcerzak-Paradowska 2004). Thus, one cannot refer solely to the state-socialist policy legacies to understand the evolution of family policies in Poland after 1989. Firstly, from a theoretical point of view, the literature on path dependency and institutional evolution has made it clear that legacies by themselves do not reproduce institutions (Streeck, Thelen 2005). Thus, path dependency needs complementary elements such as ideas (Blyth 2002) or, more fundamentally, the actors involved (Thelen, Mahoney 2010). Secondly, empirical observations inform us that the transition from state socialism to capitalist democracy is associated with at least the following two elements: 1) shift in the main political actors and decision-makers as a result of the establishment of representative democracy and 2) change of the main ideological framing of policy reforms. Following Szacki (1995), a neoliberal ideology of policy making is understood here as the promotion of liberal values and goals by presenting policy solutions as something natural for the development of a country.

Vivien Schmidt and Mark Thatcher (2014) argue the following. Once established in mainstream political discourse, neoliberal ideas about the need for austerity measures are very much resilient, especially during the crisis. In this sense, Poland’s smooth way through the economic crisis represented an opportunity for investing in the heavily neglected social services on the one hand, but pointing at the crisis in other countries reinforced the “old” argument

about the need for even stricter austerity in order not to “share the fate of Greece”, on the other hand.³

However, the economic context of austerity and the strength of neoliberal ideas in sustaining the policy regime in Poland are not a sufficient explanation for the absence of more progressive policy instruments. More importantly, the effects of the crisis go beyond cuts in spending and the immediate climate of austerity. In particular, the situation of the crisis might facilitate certain social anxieties and fears. Economic hardships might be a trigger for populist political mobilisations that aim at channelling current frustrations against scapegoats. Adherence to stable social values might also cement existing gender relations and relationships of power and hierarchy (Mackay, Kenny, Chappell 2010). While the crisis provides a good justification for austerity policies, it also often serves as a background for re-enforcing popular moral values and reassuring the existing social order. This includes gender norms. In these circumstances, moral panics often appear in opposition to an imagined and portrayed enemy (Krinsky 2013). Examples provided by the literature on the moral panic range from panics over gay marriage as a way of strengthening the national identity after 9/11 in the USA (McCauley 2007) to panics over children’s “gay education” (Luzia 2008) or day nurseries (Chimonas 2005). A recent attack by the Catholic Church on the concept of gender in Poland, its extensive application and portrayal of “gender” as a fundamental enemy and a threat to the family and to the nation, meets most of the criteria of a moral panic. Although the economic crisis was not its main trigger, it resembles a case of induced moral panic, when “rule creators and moral entrepreneurs launch crusades. These occasionally turn into panics, to ensure that certain rules take hold and are enforced” (Krinsky 2013: 8 quoting Good, Ben-Yehuda 2009: 67). One of the main arguments of this article is that the moral panic over gender in Poland represents an important pillar of the second wave of anti-feminism. This could, over the long term, further influence policy choices with regard to the work-life balance and gender equality. As the moral panic started in 2013 and its peak occurred in 2014, it is still too early to research the impact of this anti-gender-equality campaign. Nevertheless, in the longer run, it might have important consequences for shifts in public attitudes towards gender and, in general – for the public debate with regard to the direction of reforms in childcare policies. As noted by Diane Elson (2010), there is a need to focus more on the possible change in gender norms. These include the ideas influencing popular attitudes, choices, and ultimately – the impact of ideas on the shape of institutions.

In methodological terms, I use a single case study guided theoretically by the aim of tracking policy legacies and the role of different actors (individuals and groups) in pursuing their ideas. With regard to the institutional evolution of childcare policies, I take into account the policy instruments with regard to childcare services (children under

the age of 3), as well as the legislative changes regarding the maternity, paternity, parental and childcare leaves. I take into account the duration of leave in each scheme, the replacement rates of the benefits attached to these schemes, as well as the principles of entitlement. I discuss the most important regulations to assess the extent and the direction of any institutional change – whether it has a transformative character or represents only a change in degree. In order to assess the direction of the development of childcare services, a focus is placed on state policies with regard to the mode of financing of these services: the distribution of responsibilities for establishing and maintaining the centres; the costs incurred by parents, as well as the structure of services (private or public), all in a dynamic perspective. Though I have no ambition to provide a comprehensive explanatory framework for analysing these developments, I will focus on the timing of the economic crisis as a critical point in assessing the meaning of change in both the qualitative and quantitative indicators listed above. Furthermore, I will also trace the most important political debates surrounding the policy reforms and the nature of arguments and policy frames that dominate and justify the reforms. I will place a special focus on the discursive path dependencies in the neoliberal ideas used by the most important political actors with reference to the economic crisis. Finally, I will apply a broader framework for understanding the possible long-term effects of the crisis on the discourse concerning gender roles while analysing the basic features of the new moral panic. The theoretical traits for linking moral panics to the crisis are outlined above. The most general hints for analysing the emergence of moral panics come from Critcher’s (2008) discussion of Cohen’s (2002) “processual model”. According to Cohen, moral panics tend to start with a definition and a naming of the problem or threat that is followed by stylised and stereotypical presentation in the mass media by moral entrepreneurs. It is also possible to actually identify a sequence of events that cumulate towards and into the moral panic. Therefore, I will use media sources and pastoral letters, as well as moral entrepreneurs’ most characteristic (and most often repeated) media appearances, to illustrate the moral panic over the concept of gender in Poland. My goal is to investigate whether there is any congruence between the most significant symbolic references used in the public debate on gender issues during the crisis and the conservative ideological legacies. This allows for an assessment of the direct and indirect impacts of the crisis on the general discourse on gender roles in Poland.

The study uses various sources of data to illustrate its main argument. For the description of changes in policies I refer to legislation and government documents. In addition, I also provide a basic summary of official statistics on benefit levels and enrolment in childcare services coming from the central statistical office. For a general overview of the policy debates, I review the official, “communicative”

Table 1: Availability of crèches in the first decade after the collapse of state socialism in Poland, 1989–1999.

Year	1989	1991	1993	1995	1997	1999
Number of crèches	1 553	1 033	694	591	506	469
Places in crèches (in thousands)	106.0	66.4	43.9	37.9	33.7	32.0
Number of children enrolled in crèches as a percentage of all children under the age of 3	4.4	3.1	2.3	2.3	2.5	2.3

Source: Statistical yearbooks of Poland, years 1990–2000.

discourse of the government justifying the direction of the policy reforms (i.e. media appearances, meetings, short comments to the press, etc.). The sources of the empirical material depicting the sequence of arguments used by the moral entrepreneurs orchestrating the moral panic on gender also come from the media, public appearances, and the Catholic press. Finally, a reference to the basic structural indicators during the crisis (GDP growth, employment levels) is necessary to provide the background for discussing the policy reforms that took place during the crisis.

Institutional and ideological legacies: a short history of childcare before the crisis

The unique situation of Poland stems from historical developments which led to the overall negligence of care and early education services in Poland. State socialism left Poland with the legacy of underdeveloped policies of implicit familism.⁴ Thus, the rates of enrolment of children under three in formal childcare never exceeded 5%, even during state socialism (with 4.4% in 1989) (Heinen, Wator 2006). In other words, the provision of childcare services in Poland has never been particularly impressive in comparison to other countries in the region. For example, the same enrolment rate was as high as 80% in the GDR, 16% in Czechoslovakia or 12.6% in Bulgaria for the years 1989/1990 (Makkai 1994, p. 193). Moreover, maternity and childcare leave schemes were less generous than in other countries of the region. Until the mid-2000's Poland offered 16 weeks of paid maternity leave and 3 years of childcare leave. The latter was unpaid, save for an income-tested flat-rate allowance (less than 20% of the net average wage). Small family allowances were paid per child.

Even though the childcare policies were already underdeveloped, they were further retrenched during the period of transition to market economy after 1989. When the state withdrew from the financing and maintaining of existing childcare centres at the beginning of the 1990s, running childcare centres for under three's became the municipalities' task, but municipalities never received any regular funds devoted to this particular purpose. Additionally, it was left exclusively up to each municipality whether or not to maintain or start crèches in the first place and how much funding to direct towards them. As a result, the number of places available as well as the overall level of enrolment decreased rapidly (see Table 1). Furthermore, access to family

allowances was restricted in the mid-1990s when the government introduced an income test for each family.

These and other cuts in social spending were associated with the prevalence of market-oriented or neoliberal attitudes towards the role of the state (Lelkes 2000; Gal, Kligman 2000; Szacki 1995). There was a particular reason for this attitude. As noted in the previous sections, Poland underwent a rapid mode of transition from state socialism to market economy – often labelled as the “big bang” or “shock therapy”. For social policy, one of the most important features of this approach to transition was to limit the role of the state in order to provide space for providers on the free market and free individual entrepreneurship. In ideological terms, the approach rejected everything that was connected with the previous state-socialist reality and headed for just the opposite (Szacki 1995). In sum, the policy legacies of state socialism and the subsequent cuts in spending on childcare policies contributed to a generally weak support for working mothers in Poland.

Finally, privatization of care was supported by conservative attitudes towards gender roles. The Polish version of conservatism received special attention not only because the policy of gender equality was perceived as imposed by the old regime. Polish anti-feminism also strongly relied on institutional and ideational strength of the Catholic Church, reflected by the religious affiliation of most Poles: approximately 93.1% of Poles declare themselves to be Catholics (CBOS 2012). The Catholic Church also played an important role in fighting the state-socialist regime. Catholic priests were often the central actors in the opposition movement. Therefore, the status of the Church as an actor in the public debate has been crucial for the country's governments after 1989. A ban on abortion was introduced in the early 1990s, and since then there was little chance to liberalise the legislation. The Church also opposed, for example, subsidising contraception, or any discussions about civil unions, not to mention gay marriage. The Church holds a traditional view on motherhood, and the spiritualist figure of the Polish Mother is inspired by the cult of the Virgin Mary (Titkow 1995).

To sum up, during the first decade after the collapse of state socialism, the policies that were weakly developed, as compared to other countries in the region, became even more retrenched when the state withdrew its financial support of childcare services and access to family benefits was restricted by income testing. Cuts in social spending on

childcare policies were in line with the neoliberal ideology treating austerity measures as a natural response in the process of transition from state socialism to market economy. Finally, the austerity-driven privatisation of care was strengthened by the conservative views towards gender roles, the sources of which came, to a large extent, from the Catholic Church.

The abovementioned factors continued to influence the policies and discourses on gender roles in Poland. "Feminism" became a dirty word, and Poland witnessed the first wave of anti-feminism and re-masculinisation of the public sphere (Watson 1993). The developments with regard to work-life balance and gender policies during the recent crisis will become more visible after analysing the interplay between these institutional and ideological legacies.

Economic recession, austerity, and maternalist policies during the crisis

Before presenting the recent developments in childcare policies in Poland, I will provide a quick overview of the basic macroeconomic indicators during the period of the crisis. This will be followed by a presentation of policy changes within two separate areas: childcare services for children under the age of three and the system of parental leave.

Basic macroeconomic indicators

Presenting the map of Europe with falling GDP levels in almost all European countries, in 2009 Prime Minister Donald Tusk called Poland a "Green Island", the only country with GDP still growing, only subject to a slight slowdown. In other words, while most of the countries noted an at least 2–5% of decrease in their GDP (17.7% in the case of Latvia), Polish GDP still increased by 1.6% in 2009. That figure was used as a reference point for gaining political credit. Similarly, the Polish public debt (as a percentage of GDP) increased rather inconsiderably, from 45.0% in 2007 to 58.2% in 2013, marking one of the smallest increases in Europe. This has often been contrasted with Ireland's debt skyrocketing from 24.9% of GDP in 2007 to 124.4% of GDP in 2013. The employment rate for men slightly increased – from 66.1% in 2008 to 66.6% in 2013. At the same time, the female workforce increased by one percentage point, from 52.3% in 2008 to 53.3% in 2013,⁵ still quite low compared to EU's average female employment rate of 58.6% in 2013.⁶

There are many other possible indicators characterising the dynamics of changes in gender gaps in the economic status. Authors of a Polish report analysing the crisis from a gender perspective noted that new jobs were more available in typically "male" workplaces, suggesting that men were more desirable as employees (Łapniewska 2010). Other reports showed discrimination in the workplace on the basis of gender and semi-legal dismissals of mothers after returning from maternity or childcare leave. A recent survey among working mothers revealed that 10% of women

returning to work were affected by these dismissals (CBOS 2013a). Collectively, the situation of women who considered or already decided to give birth to a child was economically vulnerable and the lack of adequate state support with regard to childcare services represented a challenge for policy makers. Low female employment rates combined with the low accessibility of childcare services for small children were the declared reasons behind a new law which introduced changes to childcare services for children under the age of three and to the system of parental leave. The following two sections provide a review of these changes in more detail.

New policies with regard to childcare services for children under the age of three

Major changes with regard to childcare services for children under the age of three were introduced by a new law which was adopted in February 2011. The law established the following forms of childcare centres for these children: crèches, "children's clubs", "daily carers", and "nannies".⁷ It does not guarantee any permanent financial state support. Instead, the Ministry established the "Maluch" [Toddler] Programme to provide the municipalities which would like to establish a new childcare centre with the opportunity to apply for financial support from state funds (Szelewa 2011). The first results of this programme were disappointing. Therefore, the government increased the level of co-financing to 80% of the costs of starting the centre and allocated 100 million PLN to the programme in 2013. The effects of the programme are still quite limited, with the Ministry of Labour spending only 70 million PLN out of the 100 million promised, and with most of these funds co-financing already existing centres. Altogether, though, more than 1000 new childcare centres for children under the age of three have been established since the beginning of the programme (see Table 2).

Thus, judging by the basic indicators presented in Table 2, the new law and the government programme indeed seem to have increased the availability of childcare services for children under the age of three. Nevertheless, the reform seems much less successful with regard to the details of the implementation process. Above all, the enrolment rate of 4.8% still represents one of the lowest figures in the EU (Eurostat). Secondly, the progress of one percentage point per year is very slow and it would take almost three decades to reach the Barcelona target of 33% of children under the age of three enrolled in formal childcare. Thirdly, there are remarkable regional disparities in the provision of childcare services.

In particular, the programme's implementation was limited due to inadequate funding and cost containment, on one hand, and the voices of conservative circles, on the other. The most important feature of the government programme is the continued absence of stable financing from the central budget. Funding is available only on the basis of

Table 2: Changes in the availability of childcare services, 2010, 2011, 2013.

Year	2010	2011			2013			
	Crèches	Crèches	Children's clubs	Total	Crèches	Children's clubs	Daily carers*	Total
Number of crèches/ childcare centres	511	523	48	571	1 243	212	56	1 511
Number of places (in thousands)	32.50	31.9	0.29	32.19	53.00	2.89	0.12	56.01
Number of children enrolled in crèches as a percentage of all children under 3	2.5%	3.1%			4.8%			

Sources: Statistical Yearbook of Poland 2011 for 2010, data provided by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy for 2011 and 2013.

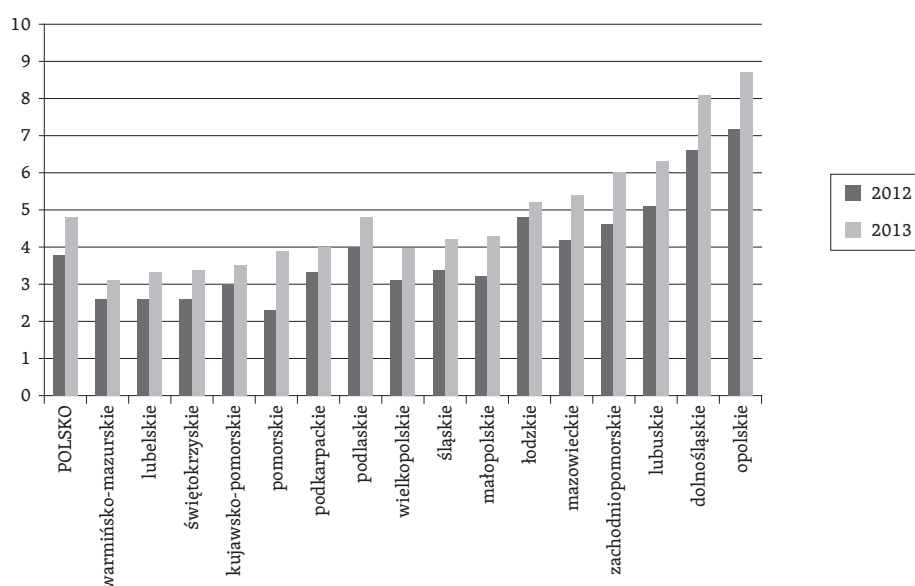
*Daily carers were not included in the statistics for 2011.

a successful application for co-financing. The applying entity (private or public) needs to provide its own funds in the first place (50% up until 2013, and 20% now). Thus, the new childcare centres emerge only when there is a will and financial capacity to establish and maintain them. In practice, this leads to the concentration of crèches and children's clubs in big cities, in municipalities that have a better financial situation and where conservative views do not prevail among policy makers. 80% of municipalities still do not provide any form of care services for children under the age of three. Only 9% of rural municipalities have any form of institutionalised childcare, as compared to 66% of urban municipalities (MB 2014). Additionally, there are contrasts between bigger cities and smaller towns and between various regions of the country. In cities like Warsaw, Wrocław, Łódź and Cracow, the coverage rate exceeds 10% of children (ibid.). However, even in big cities that provide various childcare services there has been a shortage of places: in Warsaw there were 2700 places available in 2013, while twice as many parents were on the waiting lists (Ćwiek 2013).

The deficiencies of the reform's implementation are also reflected in regional disparities with regard to the increase in childcare availability. Between 2012 and 2013, the enrolment rate grew by one percentage point (from 3.8% to 4.8%), however, with the biggest increase in regions with already higher enrolment rates. For example, the enrolment rate for children under the age of 3 increased from 6.6% in 2012 to 8.1% in 2013 in the Lower Silesia Voivodeship (South-West of Poland), and from 7.2% to 8.7% in the Opolskie Voivodeship (between Upper and Lower Silesia) (GUS 2014). At the same time, in most Eastern regions the increase was about half a percentage point, with the lowest enrolment rate (3.1%) in the Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodeship in the North-East of the country (ibid.). If the coverage is further disaggregated into sub-regions, it occurs that most of the central and Eastern sub-regions offer fewer than ten places per 1000 children under the age of three living there (ibid.). Figure 2 presents the regional disparities

with regard to the dynamics of changes in the availability of childcare services between 2012 and 2013.

Moreover, as both public and private entities receive the funding, the prevalence of private childcare centres for children under the age of three was recently noted for the first time. Private companies ran 42% of all crèches in 2012 and 57% in 2013. Altogether, non-public childcare centres represented 63% of the total in 2013. These included the newly established "children's clubs" that are almost entirely run by private companies or third-sector organisations. Although "providing a more diversified structure of the services" (MPiPS 2011) was in fact announced as one of the goals of the government programme, it was not clear from the beginning that it would mean marketization of care services, possibly increasing the prices of the services (costs carried by the parents). Though no reliable data exists to illustrate this trend, it seems enough to mention that several local authorities in big cities announced raising the attendance fee by as much as 50% or even 100%. This happened just after the start of the programme in 2011.⁸ Although not all of these plans to raise the fee were actually implemented, a great majority of the municipalities did not find sufficient funds to apply even when the maximum level of co-financing increased to 80% (MB 2014). There is a considerable difference between the fees in public crèches and in private childcare services. While parents in Warsaw need to pay on average about 500 PLN (119 euros) monthly for using the municipal crèche, private childcare services cost about 1500–1800 PLN (356–428 euros) per month (Ćwiek 2013). At the same time, prices for childcare services in other big cities are 50% lower than in Warsaw. Everywhere, parents need to pay much higher prices for private services than for those offered by the public sector (ibid.). The growing share of the private sector in the overall provision of childcare services is accompanied by the threat that only the "better-off" parents will be able to afford these services. Even if new centres emerge, the high costs might represent a critical barrier for many women returning to work after maternity or parental leave. This may

Figure 2: Enrolment rate of children under the age of three in formal childcare institutions, by regions (Voivodeships), 2012 and 2013.

Source: GUS 2014, author's own compilation.

cement gender pay gaps and the discrimination of mothers on the labour market.

The contradiction between the major goal of the programme (which was to increase the accessibility of childcare services) and the austere mode of the programme's implementation can also be demonstrated on the government's communicative discourse. Thus, the government frequently emphasised the need to strengthen childcare services as an important part of its work-life balance policies, on the one hand. On the other hand, it repeatedly underlined (especially through the Minister of Labour) that the development of childcare centres "did not burden" or "had no negative consequences" on the state budget thanks to EU funding.⁹ In other words, while the government shows signs of recognising the problem of the shortage of childcare centres, the ultimate result of the policy practice does not match the expectations due to the perceived lack of funding.

Changes in the system of parental leaves

In Poland, the basic maternity leave is available for 20 weeks plus 6 additional weeks of leave. There is also a new paid paternity leave of two weeks, yet only 14% of fathers decide to use it. This is also due to weak awareness of the possibility to take this leave among the fathers. The most significant change in parental leave arrangements took place in 2013, when the government introduced 26 weeks of additional parental leave. This, in fact, extended the maternity leave to one year, as no special incentives for fathers were included. Several women's organisations as well as the media tried to campaign for reserving a month or two of the new leave for the fathers (the second parent), yet without any success. While justifying the final version of the reform, the government, and especially the Minister of Labour, explained that

it was more important to let the parents decide and not to intervene in family issues. At the meeting "Forum for the Family" organised for several hundreds of NGOs representatives at the Prime Minister's Chancellery in October 2013, the Prime Minister dismissed the idea of special daddy months arguing that once fathers are forced to stay at home, mothers would do the housework, while the fathers would "sit still in the armchair and drink beer".¹⁰ Table 3 summarizes the legislative changes in the system of parental leaves in Poland between 2008 and 2013.

The maternalist direction of the reforms has therefore been quite apparent. The entire first year after a child is born can be spent on maternity leave together with the new parental leave. After the leave expires, each insured mother has the right to 36 months of childcare leave which is paid only to those who meet the income test. This is a flat-rate benefit of 400 PLN (about 95 euros) per month. The scheme is not new. However, now the entitlement starts after one year of maternity leave, which means that the entire possible duration of the leave after giving birth to a child now extends to four years. Given the scarcity of childcare services for small children, the incentives are for women to take longer breaks from employment. There are also incentives for the municipalities to limit the funding of the places for children younger than one year. This is because almost all women are expected to take their leave at least for the first year of the child's life. This has been the case of the municipality of Warsaw that shut down centres for the youngest children (several hundred places) arguing that maintaining the centres was too costly.¹¹ This example illustrates how the lack of direct co-financing from the state budget and the austerity discourse seriously undermine the development of such work-life balance policies that would support more equal gender roles.

Table 3: Main features and legislative changes in the system of parental leaves in Poland between 2008 and 2013.

Scheme	Main features	Main changes 2008–2014
Maternity leave	20 weeks plus six weeks of additional leave (insurance-based, fully paid)	Six weeks of additional leave were introduced gradually: 2010: two weeks 2012: extended to four weeks 2014: extended to six weeks
Paternity leave	Two weeks of the leave (insurance-based, fully paid)	One week of paternity leave was introduced in 2010, extended to two weeks in 2012
Parental leave	26 weeks, paid at the level of 60% of previous earnings	Newly introduced in 2013. No special entitlements for fathers
Childcare leave	36 months, paid for 24 months for those who meet an income test	No major changes. In 2013: one out of the 36 months of the leave as an individual entitlement (unpaid)

Source: Author's own compilation.

The recent plans of the government do not include additional support for childcare services. This means that the burden of childcare is placed even more on women, thus becoming more gendered. While it is still hard to say to what extent the current policy constellation would strengthen conservative ideologies of gender roles, the anti-feminist discourse that appeared in the public domain in the form of a moral panic might further enhance the traditionalist direction of Polish social policy.

A moral panic? The attack on gender ideology in Poland

While austerity plays a more immediate role in limiting the effort to improve childcare policies in Poland, the recent attack on gender studies and on the use of the term “gender” in Poland resembles a moral panic aimed at strengthening traditional gender roles and gender norms. Interestingly, popular attitudes towards gender equality are quite stable, according to the most recent survey from 2013 (although it is impossible to assess the impact of the recent anti-equality campaign from that data). 77% of the respondents support the idea of gender equality in public life (as compared to 76% in 2006) (CBOS 2013b). Gender is the most important factor differentiating the responses: for example, 75% of men as compared to 58% of women think that there is gender equality in their family life (*ibid.*). At the same time, government policies on gender equality are more often positively evaluated by men (41%) than by women (29%). In general, the percentage of respondents who witnessed an act of gender-based discrimination increased from 16% in 2006 to 21% in 2013, and 71% of all such acts, according to the respondents, occurred in the sphere of employment (*ibid.*). Notably, a relatively large share of the youngest age group (18–24) explicitly opposed gender equality in family life (6% as compared to 2% on average).

Recently, during the late phase of the economic crisis, the conservative rhetoric about gender roles reached its peak with the Catholic Church's attack on a “gender ideology”. Al-

though the signs of launching a new offensive were present earlier, a major coherent and organised attack came early in the winter of 2013. The timing of this attack, according to some commentators, came just after a series of widely criticised media appearances of the Head of the Polish Bishops' Conference Józef Michalik. He blamed the victims of paedophilic abuse and their parents. Earlier, the Polish Church had been hit by the child abuse scandal, after child abuse charges against a Polish priest and a bishop working in the Dominican Republic appeared in the late summer of 2013. According to Michalik, neglected by their parents, children seek the contact and love of “the other man” (Szelewa 2014). Even after Michalik tried to withdraw from this statement, he and other Church officials and conservative journalists referred more and more explicitly to family and changing gender roles as the sources of child abuse. One of the conservative journalists even blamed it on the feminists as their supposed goal is “to destroy the family”, and “the children from broken families are more prone to paedophilia” (Tomasz Terlikowski as quoted by Kościński 2013). In other words, the Church together with conservative intellectuals tried to shift the attention away from child abuse charges to a new enemy which they labelled “gender”.

A pastoral letter on “gender ideology” was read in churches on 29th of December 2013, entitled “Threats to the Family Stemming from the Ideology of Gender”.¹² Gender (as a word, concept, category) was explained as “deeply destructive” to “the person, interpersonal relations and all social life” and “deeply rooted in Marxism and neo-Marxism as endorsed by some feminist movements”. Another version of the letter extended the attacks to the Council of Europe's Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence, the WHO, and organisations/initiatives of the LGBT movement.

The battle against gender was waged, among other things, in order to compromise the idea of gender education at schools and kindergartens by simplifying it as “forcing boys to wear girls' clothes”.¹³ More serious accusations

were formed against the programmes of sexual education at schools and kindergartens. A number of high-ranking Church officials started to denounce the “gender ideology” as harmful and recommended that the Ministry of Education removed any equality-oriented elements from school curricula. This inspired a wave of parents’ protests and a kind of watchdog campaign that was to detect whether children’s education was under the “destructive” influence of “genderists”; the parents demanded removal of any gender-related content.¹⁴ Sexual education was discussed under the label of “sexualisation of our children” or, more dramatically, as “organized, collective rape of the child’s soul”¹⁵. Dariusz Oko, a priest and one of the strongest opponents of “gender ideology” was frequently present in the media, and was also the architect of this social campaign. Its label was: “NO to the sexualisation of youth and children: hands off our children!” and the parents and priests organised the “No to Gender” website at www.niedlagender.pl.

The possible influence of “gender ideology” was also traced in family policy and women’s professional work. During one of the meetings describing the dangers of “gender ideology”, another priest suggested that gender equality increases women’s employment (perceived as something wrong) and to “keeping the small children forcefully in crèches financed by the state.”¹⁶ Yet it is too early to judge whether these allegations are contributing to the neglect of childcare policies over the longer term. In future, the existence of a strong negative connotation of the use of childcare services by the mothers of small children might influence the public debate about reforms in childcare policies for children under the age of three.

Although so far the Church officials and the Catholic circles among politicians and some academics are not directly associating the economic crisis with the “spread of gender ideology”, they are talking about gender (equality, perspective) as one of the most important factors leading to “the crisis of ethics (...), the crisis of anthropology. Which is, in fact, the crisis of the person.”¹⁷ In other words, the advocates of the attack on the category of gender often link the word “crisis” to “gender” (equality, category, perspective). Gender, according to these commentators and Church officials, leads to the crisis of family and society, the demographic crisis, the crisis of the nation, the crisis of values, the crisis of womanhood and the crisis of manhood, the crisis of marriage or the crisis of humanity.¹⁸

To sum up, the attack on the category of gender and gender equality in Poland has been quite remarkable. It has been wide in scope and has had the features of a moral panic: finding and labelling an enemy served as the reference point to re-organise moral values and strengthen traditional views on family and gender roles. The campaign seems orchestrated, but also in line with the processual model, with all the stages of establishing the panic (naming the threat – analysis – engaging media – blaming those responsible for the threat), and including the crucial actors and moral en-

trepreneurs. Gender was portrayed as the source of all destruction, especially with regard to the most innocent – children. Though not directly and explicitly linked to the economic crisis, the moral panic aims at something more general and far-reaching such as the crisis of humanity, where the only cure lies in a traditional and strong religious attachment with clear attitudes towards the roles of men and women. A post-crisis (or late-crisis) moral panic together with the policies of austerity and maternalist reforms in the sphere of family and childcare might serve as the basis for further reforms to re-traditionalize gender roles.

Conclusions: a second wave of anti-feminism?

The goal of this article was to examine the developments in childcare policies and the discourse about gender issues in Poland during the recent economic crisis. While the governments of several European countries introduced cuts in work-life balance policies, the situation of Poland was more nuanced and difficult to analyse. This is because the government in fact invested more, both in the development of childcare services for children under the age of three and in new solutions with regard to parental leave. Thus, in order to assess the possible influence of the crisis on gender relations, it was necessary to examine in more detail the implementation of the new policies as well as the public discourse about gender in Poland. Moreover, I placed the developments in these policies and discourses in the historical context of the policy legacies of state socialism and the ideological legacies of the period of transition, when Poland was set on the path of austerity and public discourse was dominated by conservative views on gender roles.

My argument is that the recent developments in these policies and discourses are in line with the conservative and at the same time neoliberal climate for the development of social policies that emerged during the period of transition. While the first wave of anti-feminism in the 1990s was triggered by the decentralisation of responsibility for care and the policies of austerity, as well as by the second wave of conservative discourse on gender roles, which coincides with the economic crisis. The maternalist direction of work-life balance policies and the strengthening anti-gender equality discourse in Poland can be understood in terms of gradual institutional transformation. This has been demonstrated on conservative discursive legacies with regard to gender roles, on the one hand, and neoliberal ideas about the policies of austerity, on the other.

Furthermore, although the economic recession did not immediately affect gender gaps in Poland, and in fact, female employment rates increased slightly, the gendered effects of the crisis should be examined beyond short-term policy changes. It is too early to formulate a coherent and complex model of the impact of the economic crisis on the situation of men and women in the long term, especially with regard to the future consequences of the moral panic started by the Catholic Church. And yet, I would argue that

Table 4: The crisis and the second wave of anti-feminism in Poland: summary of the argument.

	Austerity policies and maternalist reforms	Moral panic/attack on gender
Link to the economic crisis	Direct: conceptual support for market-oriented reforms, budget cuts, comes hand-in-hand with the conservative rhetoric of the government	Indirect: “crisis” as one of the keywords of anti-gender campaigns (crisis of the family, demographic crisis, crisis of humanity)
Impact on gender equality	Indirect: in the long term, maternalist policies and underfunded childcare services might further impede women’s economic autonomy	Direct: immediate disregard of any progressive ideas in public discourse and compromising the category of “gender”. In the long-term, support for conservative policies reinforcing the traditional division of gender roles

it is possible to distinguish between the direct and indirect effects of the crisis. This can be done in the short and long run, since it is important to have a broader view on the possible and long-term effects of the crisis. Table 4 summarises the findings.

Thus, the second wave of anti-feminism might have direct or indirect links to the crisis as well as different effects on gender relations in Poland. Firstly, the direct link of the crisis comes in the form of maternalist policies accompanied by limited investment in childcare services for children under the age of three. Though the statistics on childcare services for children under the age of three show some increase in the availability of services, the increase is very limited. It is regionally diversified, leaving 80% of all the municipalities without any form of formal childcare for children under the age of three. Additionally, the government reform leads to the privatisation of care services, with the first signs of rising attendance fees. Thus, access to these services might be further stratified in favour of wealthier citizens. There is a problem with funding: the reforms of childcare policies were subject to budget cuts, as well as the usual argument about the lack of funding and the fear of “excessive spending”. Since the co-financing is provided by the EU structural funds to a large extent, there is a danger that the newly established childcare centres will be shut down once the funds phase out.

Secondly, introducing the new parental leave might seem as an improvement of family support. Without giving any incentives for fathers to share the leave, though, the reform might contribute to strengthening the traditional gender division of labour within family and society. Both the direct and indirect effects of the crisis are path-dependent with respect to the institutional legacies of implicit familism and the discursive legacies of the period of transition. None of the policies were transformative, resulting in incremental institutional changes. One could, for example, interpret the introduction of a new parental leave as another policy layer that slightly strengthened the gendered character of the Polish childcare policy mix. In the long run, this might have a negative impact on women’s economic auton-

omy – extending the duration of the leave without special incentives for fathers might reinforce the division of gender roles and the perception of women as primarily mothers. If this is accompanied by the slow development of childcare services for children under the age of three, the situation of working mothers might become seriously worse over the long term.

Thirdly, the Catholic Church battles and rejects any modernization efforts and orchestrates a backlash against gender equality in Poland by inspiring a moral panic about the dangers of accepting the concept of gender (socially constructed, unnatural) and “gender ideology”. While linking gender only indirectly with the crisis (via the crisis of humanity, family, society, etc.), this moral panic represents the frontline of the second wave of the anti-feminist movement and might contribute to a long-term backlash against gender egalitarian and modernising tendencies in Poland. Importantly, the attack on progressive policies goes beyond gender equality. While talking about “gender ideology”, the Church and conservative party leaders/journalists use homophobia, xenophobia or euro-scepticism. In other words, gender is being used as a new empty signifier in political battles.

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- Notes**
- 1** Following Hobson, Fahlén, and Takács (2011), I understand work-life balance policies as "flexibility in the organization's working times, hours of work, and leaves for taking care of children, the disabled, and the elderly" (Hobson, Fahlén, and Takács 2011: 169), while this article focuses mostly on leave policies and childcare services, together labelled as childcare policies.
- 2** Interestingly, the gender gap in employment started to close, especially immediately after the outbreak of the crisis: employment rates for men fell more rapidly as sectors traditionally staffed by men suffered a lot, construction being the most obvious example. While Karamessini and Rubery called this male dimension of the crisis *he-cession*, they were more interested in the long-term results of the crisis caused by cuts in public spending, a trend they labelled *she-austerity*.
- 3** See, for example, the discussion in *Gazeta Wyborcza* quoting economists from the "Adam Smith Centre" think tank, available at http://wyborcza.pl/1,75248,8067396,Jesli_Polska_nie_zacznie_oszczedzac_podzieli_los.html (last visited on 31st of March 2014).
- 4** It should be noted that the state-socialist period was not homogenous. For example, after an explicit mobilisation of women to join the labour force in the 1950s, socialist reformers attempted to withdraw part of the female labour force, suppressing female employment rates in the late 1960s and on (Heinen and Wator 2006 and Javornik 2014). A similar argument for Hungary was presented by Lynne Haney (2002).
- 5** Source: OECD Short-term labour market statistics, data from Q2 2008 as compared to Q2 2013, population aged 15–64.
- 6** Ibid.
- 7** Ustawa z dnia 4 lutego 2011 r. o opiece nad dziećmi w wieku do lat 3 [Law of the 4th of February 2011 on care for children under three], Journal of Laws no 45, item 235, 2011.
- 8** „Opłaty za żłobki martwią minister” [The Minister is worried by the fees for crèches], *Rzeczpospolita*, 27/04/2011, available at <http://www.rp.pl/artykul/649393-Oplaty-za-zlobki-martwia-minister.html>, last visited 10/09/2014.
- 9** Several government statements or Ministry of Labour documents.
- 10** Prime Minister Donald Tusk during the meeting "Forum for the Family" that took place on the 23rd of October 2013 in the Chancellery of the Prime Minister, Warsaw, Poland.
- 11** „Warszawa likwiduje miejsca dla niemowląt w żłobkach”, PAP agency news 20/05/2014, available at <http://wiadomosci.wp.pl/kat,1342,title,Warszawa-likwiduje-miejsca-dla-niemowlat-w-zlobkach,wid,16619468,wiadomosc.html?ticaid=113716>, last visited 10/09/2014.
- 12** „List pasterski na Niedzielę Świętej Rodziny 2013 roku”, available at http://episkopat.pl/dokumenty/5545.1,List_pasterski_na_Niedziele_Swietej_Rodziny_2013_roku.html, last visited 25/11/2014.
- 13** This interpretation of egalitarian education was presented mostly by the right wing media. See for example the article entitled "Are boys still forced to dress up like girls?" <http://www.frona.pl/forum/czy-w-przedszkolach-chlopcy-nadal-sa-przymuszani-do-przebierania-sie-za-dziewczynki,53542.html> (last visited on the 31st of March 2014).
- 14** *Gazeta Polska Codziennie*, 03/01/2014.
- 15** Dariusz Oko, "Obrona dzieci przed zboczeńcami! Gender w szkołach – zorganizowany, zbiorowy gwałt na duszy dziecka" ["A defence of our children against the perverts! Gender at schools – organized, collective rape on the child's soul], published on the official website of the Department of Pastoral Care of Families, Archdiocese of Cracow. Available at <http://translate.google.com/translate?client=tmpg&hl=en&langpair=pl|en&u=http%3A%2F%2Fwdr.diecez-jakrakow.pl%2Fproblemy-zwiazane-z-ideologia%3Fshowall%3D%26limitstart%3D>, last visited 22/11/2014.
- 16** P. Bortkiewicz, "Gender, czyli wskrzeszanie Engelsa" [Gender – bringing Engels back in life], *Frona* vol. 70/2014.
- 17** Janusz Królikowski, „Maryja nie jest matką gender!” [Mary is not the mother of gender!], *Tygodnik Niedziela* 25/03/2014. Available online <http://www.niedziela.pl/artykul/111264/nd/Maryja-nie-jest-matka-gender>, last visited 22.11.2014.
- 18** Interview with Bishop Wojciech Polak: "Dlaczego gender jest tak niebezpieczne?" ["Why gender is so dangerous"], published on 22/12/2012, available at <http://info.wiara.pl/doc/1403501.Dlaczego-gender-jest-tak-niebezpieczne>, last visited on 22/11/2014. In one of the more recent versions of alleged negative effects of gender ideology on the economy, the "gender ideology", along with environmentalism,

is a kind of destructive alternative to the “Judeo-Christian order” of naturally self-regulating market and society. See: <http://wpolityce.pl/gospodarka/194272-w-klubie-ronina-o-kryzysie-monetarnym-zachodu-spowodowany-jest-gigantyczna-iloscia-zgromadzonego-dlugu-na-plecacach-wszystkich-spolczenstw-europejskich-i-swiatowych>, last visited on 22/11/2014.

Dorota Szelewa, PhD, is an Assistant Professor at the Institute of Social Policy, Warsaw University, and a social policy expert at the ICRA Foundation, Warsaw, Poland. Szelewa has published internationally on the issues of gender, family and childcare policies and the institutional evolution of social policy in East and Central Europe. E-mails should be directed to dszelewa@icra.pl.



Hasmanová Marhánková, Jaroslava. 2013. *Aktivita jako projekt. Diskurz aktivního stárnutí a jeho odezvy v životech českých seniorů a senierek*. Praha: SLON.

Pojem „aktivní stáří“ v současnosti působí jako zaklínadlo téměř všech vládních dokumentů věnujících se problematice stárnutí, stejně tak jako populárních obrazů „obdivuhodných“ seniorů. Koncept aktivního stárnutí představuje seniorský věk jako období, jež má být naplněné aktivitou ať již ve formě prodlužujícího se pohybu na trhu práce, celoživotním vzděláváním nebo sportem či dalšími nově se rozvíjejícími zájmy. Tato kniha usiluje o kritické zhodnocení tohoto konceptu a zároveň o zmapování způsobů, jakými se idea aktivního stárnutí promítá do konkrétních životních stylů českých seniorů a senierek. Kniha mapuje diskurs aktivního stárnutí skrze analýzu dokumentů věnovaných problematice stárnutí a především prostřednictvím tříleté etnografické studie center nabízejících volnočasové aktivity pouze pro seniory, která se k ideji aktivního stárnutí silně vztahují. Představuje přitom aktivní stárnutí jako techniku biomoci. Zároveň vyzdvihuje roli aktivity jako výrazného mechanismu konstrukce normativního obrazu „dobrého stáří“, který na jednu stranu slouží seniorům jako prostředek vymezení se vůči stereotypním obrazům stárnutí, na druhé straně se ale jeho prostřednictvím konstituují nové nerovnosti založené na možnosti/ochotě „aktivně stárnout“.