FLOWS WORKING PAPER SERIES

NO. 11/2014

Funded under Socio-economic Sciences & Humanities

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Degree and structures of women´s labor market integration: the case of Székesfehérvar, Hungary

FLOWS: Impact of local welfare systems on female labour force participation and social cohesion

FLOWS Working Paper

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Aalborg 2014
ISSN 2246-4840

About the FLOWS project:

The FLOWS project has been funded under the EU FP7 program, grant Agreement no: 266806. The project started January 1 2011 and ended April 30 2014.

The FLOWS project analyses the causes and effects of women's labour market integration, which is an issue that represents a major challenge for the European Union and its member states, and is supposedly also a precondition for the sustainability of the European social model. The overall aim is to analyse (1) how local welfare systems support women's labour market participation, as well as (2) the extent to which (and under which conditions) female labour market integration has contributed to the strengthening social cohesion. The project focuses on how public and private welfare services such as care and lifelong learning intended to support women's labour market integration have been designed; on how women of different classes, qualifications, ethnicities, and geographical locations have grasped and made use of such policies, and on how the increase in women's labour market integration has affected structures of inequality and social cohesion.

The study is based on in-depth analysis of eleven cities, i.e. one city in eleven different countries. The cities/countries are: Brno/Czech Republic, Aalborg/Denmark, Tartu/Estonia, Jyväskylä/Finland, Nantes/France, Hamburg/Germany, Székesfehérvar/Hungary, Dublin/Ireland, Bologna/Italy, Terrassa/Spain, and Leeds/UK.

The FLOWS project is composed by 6 academic work packages:

WP 1: Degree and structures of women's labour market integration
WP 2: Local production systems
WP 3: The local welfare system
WP 4: Local policy formation/local political actors
WP 5: Survey questionnaire
WP 6: Women's decision making
WP 7: Social structures: cohesion or cleavages and segregation

This working paper series reports work conducted in the seven work packages.

Explanation of the selection of the city

The city we have chosen for the analysis is Szekesfehervar, located in Fejer county (NUTS 3) in Central-Transdanubia (NUTS 2). It is a medium-sized city of 102 thousand inhabitants, one of the ten largest cities in Hungary. Although it is a historic settlement, the city underwent intensive industrialization under state socialism and became an important centre of the metal, electronic and automotive industries. Following the collapse of state socialism, in the 1990s several of the companies were closed or privatized by international businesses. The strong influx of foreign direct investment into the local economy transformed the city into one of the fastest developing areas in the country by the second half of the 1990s. However, by the 2000s the city and the surrounding county lost its leading position. In 2008 the GDP/person indicator in the NUTS 3 area where the city is situated was 9900 Euros at current prices, while the national average is 10 600 Euros/inhabitant (Eurostat).

Manufacturing is the most important economic sector both in terms of production and employment. One of the specialities of the city is that the rate of people employed in manufacturing is higher than the national level, while the proportion employed in services is lower. When comparing the distribution of employees in indifferent economic sectors, we must bear in mind that the city is the administrative centre of the county (NUTS 3), which means that there are more offices related to public services, as well as courts of justice, hospitals and schools than in an 'average' settlement.

Table 1. Distribution of employees in economic sectors at urban and national levels in 2001 (%)

	Agriculture	Manufacturing	Construction	Services
Szekesfehervar	1.44	30.73	5.29	57.83
Hungary	6.29	24.84	7.02	59.43

Source: Census 2001, Hungarian Central Statistical Office 2003

I. Size and pattern of women's labour market integration and non-integration in the city

Women's employment rate[1]

Women's employment rate under state socialism was rather high: 72 % of women aged 15-64 were employed in the city in both in 1970 and 1980 (Table 1). As unemployment did not officially exist under state socialism, the employment rate and activity rates cannot be distinguished. The high figures can be explained by the fact that paid work was compulsory for all adults in state socialist Hungary, in line with the policy of full employment. Another factor that explains the high employment rate of women in the state-socialist period is that women on maternity and parental leaves were categorized as employed.

By 1990 women's employment rate fell to 64.40 %, and the unemployment rate was at 0.90 %. By 2001 women's employment rate had dropped even further to 56.18%, while the economic activity rate was at 59.39%. This shows that unemployment among women in the city stayed at a low level, while inactivity was rather high at 40.61%. This signals the general trend of the Hungarian post-state socialist transformation: women who dropped out of the labour market mostly became economically inactive, and did not return to paid work. Given the lower retirement age of women, more women could take advantage of early retirement schemes than men[2]. Early retirement was supported by the government as a way of reducing the social tensions associated with high levels of unemployment (Fultz and Steinhilber 2003).

[1] Note: almost all the data used in this report come from the 2001 census. If the source of data is different, we specify it.

[2] In 1990 women's retirement age was 57, men's 61.

Next, I examine how women's employment rate changes with age, educational attainments, family status and ethnicity. Looking at the relationship of **age** and women's labour market integration, we find that the highest employment levels are characteristic of the 40-54 age group: 81.03%, while the lowest in the 55-64 group at 15.41%. This is explained by women's low retirement age. The youngest age group of 15-24 is characterized by an employment rate of 32.01%, which is most explained by the high rate of students in this age group. The employment and activity rates are very close to each other in every age group, that is, unemployment rates are low and economic inactivity is the most typical option for women out of the labour market .

As it is shown in Table 6.1, women with level 4-5 education attainments are employed at the highest rate at 79.29 %. The employment rate of those with level 2 educational attainment[3] is 67.74 %, and among women with level 3.2 education it is 67.51 %. The employment rates are much lower among women at level 1 (33.43 %) and level 3.1 (58.45 %). These lower rates are explained by the high rates of students in these two groups.
In sum, there is no significant difference in the employment rates of women at level 2 and level 3.2 – these women graduated from vocational schools, but moving from level 3 to level 4-5 the employment rate increases the employment rate by 10 percentage points.

Looking at the data presented in Table 1, we can see how children impact on women's employment rate. Women with children under the age of 2 are practically missing from the labour market, as the employment rates show: 4.59 % among women whose youngest child is under 1, and 7.71 % among women whose youngest child is under 2. Although women whose

[3] We adapted the classification used in the report template to better fit the Hungarian education system and the data collected by the Hungarian Central Statistical Office. In our report level 2 refers to people who graduated from a vocational training school which does not provide a high school degree. This school is three-year-long and typically follows the eight-year primary school.

youngest child is older than 2 are present in the labour market (employment rate at 23.40 %), it is the third birthday of the youngest child that is a clear boundary: the employment rate for women with children aged 3-5 is 67.09 %. This rate is actually higher than the average employment rate for women in the city.

Table 7 shows the differences between partnered and single mothers' integration into the labour market in our city. We find that 35 % of partnered mothers and 45 % of single mothers with pre-school children are employed, that is, single mothers are more likely to be employed in our city.

Finally, we find that Romani women are significantly less integrated into the labour market than women of the ethnic majority. As Table 8.1 shows, in our city the employment rate of Romani women is 24.86 %, which is approximately half of that among the ethnic majority at 56.33 %.

In sum, age and ethnicity show the strongest relationship with women's employment rate: women's employment rate over the age of 55 is very low and so is Romani women's employment rate. The presence of children affect women's employment rate only in the first two years, but then the effect is very strong. Relationship status and educational attainments do not have a very strong effect on women's labour market integration in our city.

Work hours

Women in our city tend to work long hours. As it is shown in Table 2, 89,41 % of employed women work at least 40 hours a week, 5.89 % work between 20 and 40 hours a week, and 3.56 % work less than 20 hours a week. Thus, we can see that the full-time work pattern is the dominant and only a small group of women (9.5 %) work less than 40 hours a week. Work hours are somewhat different in different *age groups*. As it is shown in Table 5.1, women

aged 40-54 work the longest hours: in this age group 92.35 % of employed women work at least 40 hours a week.

As mentioned above, *mothers* of children under 2 are practically missing from the labour market. Interestingly, among the few women who work for pay when their children are very young, full-time employment is the norm: as Table 4.1 shows, 3.64 % of women with a child under 1 work full time, and 0.40 % work part time. For those with a youngest child aged 1-2-year-old, 6.12 % work full-time and 1.54% work part-time. The proportion of mothers working part-time is significantly higher when the youngest child is aged 2-3 (8.22 %), and especially when the child is aged 3-6 (9.98 %) and 6-10 (9.16%). If we calculate the rate of mothers employed part-time as a percentage of *employed* women with children of a given age, we find that the highest rate of part-time work is characteristic of mothers with children aged 2-3, as 35,71 % of employed mothers work less than 40 hours a week in this group (Table 4.1). For mothers of both younger and older children the proportion of part time workers is lower.

Work hours are also influenced by mothers' *family status*, as it is shown in Table 7.1. However, the influence is relatively small: among employed mothers 76.75 % of partnered, and 82.28 % of single mothers work full-time, which proves the dominance of the full-time work pattern.

Education has a small effect on the length of work hours among women in our city. Around 90 % of employed women work full-time in all educational categories, but those at level 4-5 work somewhat shorter hours: 84.31 % of employed women in this category work full-time (App. Table 6.1).

The impact of *ethnicity* on work hours is also weak. Although the employment rate is significantly lower among Romani women, there is no difference in the pattern of work hours. If we calculate the proportion of full-time (at least 40 hours a week) employment within

employed women, we find that the rate is 89 % for Romani and non Romani women (Table 8.1).

Non-employment

In 2001 43.82 % of women in our city were out of formal employment. As shown in Table 3, 3.21 % of all women aged 15-64 were registered unemployed and 11.62 % were students. 2.27 % of women were on the earnings-related, insurance based parental leave that lasts up to the child's second birthday, while 4.22 % of women were on the universally available, flat-rate parental benefit that is available until the child's third birthday.[4] 13.21% of women in the city were retired in the standard scheme, and 3.50% were retired because of disability.

Finally, 5.80 % of women fall into the 'other inactive' category, which includes those who do not fit into any categories of non-employment. They may be looking after their children, elderly or sick relatives and/or the household or working informally, but they do not qualify for any welfare benefits. Thus, the largest group of non-employed women is old-age pensioners, followed by students and women on child-care/parental leave.

I would like to highlight another piece of information to reinforce the statement that economic inactivity among women is rather high: the rate of registered unemployment among women in our city is lower than the rate of those on disability leave.

Educational attainment and non-employment

Among women with level 1 educational attainment the level of unemployment is 3.17 %, a further 24.43 % of them receive an old-age pension and 22.48 % are students. The high proportion of retirement can probably be explained by the fact that such low level of

[4] There are three cases when the flat-rate parental leave can be longer. 1) Women/men who raise at least three children (under 18) can stay on this leave until the youngest child reaches their 8th birthday. In other words, they can lenghten the flat-rate parental leave by five years. 2) The mother/father of twins can stay on the flat-rate parental leave until the children start school or until their 10th birthday at the latest. 3) If a child is seriously ill/disabled the parent can stay on the leave until the child's 10th birthday.

education is more common in older generations of women. The rate of women receiving a disability pension is the highest in this group (level 1 education) at 5.96 %. The group of women with level 2 educational attainment is characterized by the highest level of unemployment at 5.50 %. 11.55 % of them are on parental leave, with the flat-rate parental leave being the more typical (8.20 %). The proportion of those classified ‘other inactive’ is also the highest in this group at 7.30 %. Only 2.98 % of them are studying, which may be a sign that the kind of qualification they obtained does not enable them to continue with their education.

Among women with level 3.1 educational attainment 3.05 % are unemployed, 11.44 % are studying, only 5.99 % are on parental leave and 14.90 % are retired. The rate of those classified as ‘other inactive’ is also fairly high at 6.17 %. Those with level 3.2 educational attainment are equally likely to be studying (7.85 %), to be on parental leave (7.77 %) or to be retired (7.3 %). The level of unemployment is at 4.4 %, which is higher than the average, while the level of ‘other inactivity’ is around the average at 5.18 %. Finally, the group with level 4-5 educational attainment is characterized by not only the lowest level of non-employment, but also by the lowest level of unemployment (1.64 %) and ‘other inactivity’ (3.19%). The proportion of those on parental leave is similar to the other groups at 7.27 %.

In sum, the highest rate of non-employment is characteristic of those with level 1 education, but this is mostly explained by the high proportion of students in this group. Graduates of higher education are less likely to be non-employed, while those with level 2 and level 3 educational attainments are integrated into the labour market to almost the same extent.

Motherhood and non-employment

Among women with young children the most typical activity is being on child care/parental leave. According to Table 4.1, approximately 90 % of women with children under the age of 2 are on some kind of parental leave in the context of a welfare state programme. Among those women whose youngest child is aged 2-3, 72.84 % are on childcare/parental leave in our city. The smaller proportion is probably explained by the fact that for parents of children aged 2-3 only the flat-rate childcare/parental leave benefit is available, which is a rather small sum[5]. Among mothers whose youngest children are aged 6-9, the proportion of those on childcare/parental leave drops further to 12.30 %, while the proportion of those on unemployment benefit (6.85 %) and those classified as 'other inactive' (12.85 %) increases. It seems that women who lose eligibility for the childcare/parental benefit, but cannot return to the labour market either register as unemployed, or drop out of the official labour market and become 'other inactive' who do not to receive any social benefits.

As children get older (6 to 9-year-old), the proportion of unemployed and 'other inactive' women decreases to 5.64 % and 9.06 %. Among women with older children (16 to 24-year-old) the proportion of unemployed and 'other inactive' drops even lower, however, the proportion of those on old age pension (5.12 %) and disability pension (5.68 %) starts to increase.

The most surprising finding is that raising children and studying are not combined at all: although on average 11.62 % of women aged 15-64 are students, the rate of students do not reach 1 % among mothers.

[5] Appr. 100 Euros/month

Family status and non-employment

Table 7.1 shows how relationship status influences the patterns of non-employment among mothers whose youngest child is under 6. While the majority of partnered non-employed women are on parental leave (54.46 %) and only 2.97 % of them are registered unemployed, the corresponding proportions for single mothers are 41.54 % and 6.83 %. It is most likely that single mothers who cannot return to their old jobs after the end of the parental leave register as unemployed, while partnered mothers can more easily afford to stay at home with their children for the third year of paid parental leave. It is interesting to note that the rate of 'other inactivity' is very similar in the two groups: 7 % of partnered and 6 % of single mothers are out of the labour market without receiving state benefits.

Ethnicity and non-employment

As we discussed above, the non-employment rate is significantly higher among Romani than of ethnic majority women. As the data presented in Table 8.1 show, 75.14 % of Romani women, and 43.67 % of ethnic majority women are non-employed in our city. A larger proportion of non-employed Romani women are unemployed than ethnic majority women: 10.81 % and 3.17 % respectively. The proportion of women on parental leave is also higher among the Romani minority: 22.16 % compared to the 6.41 % characteristic of the ethnic majority. Finally, significantly more Romani than ethnic majority women are classified as 'other inactive': 23.78 % and 5.72 % respectively. The rate of those receiving a disability pension is almost the same in the two groups: 5.95 % of Romani women and 3.48 % of ethnic majority women are retired because of a disability.

To sum up, parental leave and retirement provide alternatives to unemployment among women. This supports the arguments of other researchers (for example Balint and Kollo,

2007) that parental leave policies in Hungary play an important role in reducing the level of poverty. The most important finding is related to the impact of ethnicity: the rates of unemployment and 'other inactivity', as well as being on parental leave are shockingly high among Romani women.

II. Gender differences in the patterns of labour market integration and non-integration in the city

Gender differences in employment and work hours

Men's employment rate was higher than women's even in the state socialist era: while women's employment rate was around 70 %, men's were above 80 %, as it is shown in Table 1 for 1970 and 1980. Men's employment rate also declined dramatically at the beginning of the 1990s, and in 2001 it was 69.47 %, which is 13 percentage points higher than women's employment rate. As the unemployment rate is very low among men at 4 %, we can state that similarly to women, men's labour market position is also characterized by a high level of economic inactivity.

Looking at the different age groups (Table 1) we can see that in the 40-54 age group there is a very small difference in men and women's employment rate: it is 85. 4 % for men and 81.03 % for women. In all other age groups men's employment rate is significantly higher than women's. As men's educational attainment increases, so does their employment rate: among those with college or university degree the employment rate is 88.36 %, however, the impact of a college/university degree seems lower among men than among women.

Gender differences in work hours

Although employed men work longer hours than women in our city, gender differences in work patterns are small. The largest gap is in the 25-39 age group, where the rate of full-time workers within employed is 8 percentage point higher for men than for women. If we look at very long work hours (more than 40 hours a week), we still find a small difference: 92.69 % of employed men and 89.41 % of employed women fit this pattern (Table 1). Even if we look at employed mothers and fathers of small children, there is a very small gender difference in work patterns (the employment rates are very different, of course, as discussed above): 77 % of partnered employed mothers and 84 partnered employed fathers worked at least 40 hours a week. Thus the full-time rate is only 7 percentage points higher among fathers than mothers of young children.

Men's work patterns change very little with their age, educational attainment or family status: men are even more homogeneous than women (Table 5.1, 6.1 and 7.1). The impact of ethnicity however seems stronger here than among women: 99 % of employed Romani and 93 % of non Romani men work 40 or more hours a week. That is, among Romani men longer work hours are somewhat more common than among ethnic majority men.

In sum, ful-time employment is even more dominant among men than among women, and men's age, education, family status and ethnicity have a very small effect on work patterns, even smaller than on women's.

Gender differences in non-employment

The rate of non-employment is 30.53 % among men compared to the 43.82 % among women. As it is shown in Table 3.1, there are two major gender differences in non-employment: 1) hardly any man are on parental leave in the city compared to women's 6.49 % rate; 2) women

retire earlier, thus 13.21 % of women but only 6.33 % of men aged 15-64 rece an old age pension. The rates of other forms of non-employment, such as unemployment, retirement because of disability and ‘other inactivity’ are very similar among men and women.

Age

Somewhat more women than men take part in education in the 15-24 age group (52.23 % of women and 46.30 % of men). Gender differences can be found in the rates of women and men on parental leave and in retirement, as we mentioned above: non-employment because of being on parental leave mostly affects women aged 25-39, at 17.50 %, while only 0.2 % of men are on parental leave in the same age group (Table 5.1). The gender difference in the rate of retirement affects the 55-64 age group: 77.63 % of women, while only 42.6% of men are retired in the standard scheme. The rate of retirement because of disability is higher among men in this age group: 11.56 % compared to 5.23 % of women. It is most likely that women who have serious health problems do not choose retirement for health reasons as men do, because they can retire earlier anyway.

Educational attainment

As it is shown in Table 6.1, the relationship between educational attainments and unemployment is very similar among men and women. A slightly higher proportion of men than of women study full-time among those with level 1 and level 3 educational attainment. This is a surprising finding, as women’s participation rates in education on average higher than men’s. As men’s educational attainments increase, they are less likely to stay on parental leave, although the rates are extremely low. As for retirement, a higher proportion of women are retired at every educational level, except at level 4,5, where the rates are the same: 6.59 % of women and 6.48 % of men with higher education degrees are non-employed because they

receive an old-age pension. This means that women with degrees tend to retire at an older age, that is why the gender difference in the rate of retirement disappears.

Family status

As expected, the most important gender differences are related to parental leaves. While 54.46 % of partnered mothers with pres-school children are on parental leave, only 0.47 % of partnered fathers are, as shown in Table 7.1. There is a great difference between single mothers and single fathers as well, but somewhat smaller than among partnered ones: 41.51 % of single mothers and 8 % of single fathers are on parental leave. Looking at it from another angle: 8 % of single, while only 0.47 % of partnered fathers are on parental leave.

Another difference is linked to unemployment: 6.83 % of single mothers of children under 6 are unemployed, but for single fathers the rate is 12 %: this is a much greater gender difference than between the average unemployment rates of women (3.21 %) and men (3.88 %). It is most likely that for single fathers the unemployment benefit is a better option than staying on parental leave, as they are more likely than women to have previous employment history. Another possible reason for the difference is that men are less likely than women to raise several children, which would enable them to extend the period of parental leave.

Ethnicity

In the previous section we have seen that the rate of non-employment is significantly higher among Romani women than among women of other ethnic groups. If we compare men, we also find a large difference: 61.98 % or Romani men and 30.37 % of non-Romani men are non-employed in the city, as shown in Table 8.1. It means that there is an even stronger relationship between ethnicity and non-employment among men than among women: Romani men are twice as often non-employed than ethnic majority men. The other important

difference between the two groups of men that although only 0.52 % of Romani men are on parental leave, this is still much higher than the 0.07 % among non-Romani men.

If we compare Romani men and women we find that women's non-employment rate is 1.21 times higher, while among non-Romani women and men the ratio is 1.44, which means that there is no gender difference in non-employment between the two ethnic groups.[6] The case of unemployment is different: the gender difference in unemployment is much greater in the Romani community: 18.23 % of men and 10.81 % of women are unemployed, while in the ethnic majority these figures are 3.81 % and 3.17 % respectively.

In sum, there are two major gender differences regarding non-employment: men's significantly lower retirement rates in the 15-64 age group, and the almost complete absence of men from parental leaves. Single fathers and Romani men are two special subgroups, as these men are more likely to be on parental leave than the 'average' Hungarian men.

III. Size and pattern of women's labour market integration and non-integration in the city in comparison with the national level

In our city women are better integrated in the labour market than the national average. As Table 1 shows, the employment rate of women aged 15-64 has been higher in the city than the national average at every census since 1970, and at the latest census in 2001 it was 56.18 % in the city and 47.30 % in the country as a whole.

[6] The non-Romani group includes other ethnic minorities, however there size is much smaller than that of the Romani group.

Age

The employment rate was higher in the city in every age group, the largest difference is in the 40-54-year-old group: 81.03 % of women are employed in the city compared to the national average of 67.5 % (Table 1).

Motherhood

Women living in Szekesfehervar return to the labour market somewhat earlier after childbirth and parental leave: the employment rate of mothers with a youngest child aged 2-3 year-old is 23.40 % in the city, compared to the 17.85 % national average rate (Table 1).

Family status

The employment rate of mothers with children under 6 is higher in the city than in the country: in the city it is 35 % among partnered mothers and 45 % among single mothers, while in the country these figures are 29.48 % and 34.90 % (Tables 7.1 and 7.2). The employment gap between partnered and single mothers[7] is 0. 78 in the city and 0.84 in the country, that is, the family status has a stronger effect on mothers' employment in the city than in the country as a whole.

Education

Women with lower educational attainments (level 1-2) are better integrated into the labour market in our city than in the country in general: their employment rates are 33.43 % and 67.74 % in the city, while 26.31 % and 58.52 % in the country as a whole. There are no significant differences between better educated women (level 3 and higher) in the city and in

[7] I calculated the gap by dividing partnered mother's employment rate by single mothers' employment rate.

the country (Tables 6.1 and 6.2). It is likely that in our city there are more jobs for lower educated women than the national average.

Ethnicity

Romani women's employment rate is much higher in the city than the national average: 24.86 % compared to 11.63 % (Tables 8.1 and 8.2). Thus, the employment gap between Romani and ethnic majority women is much smaller in the city than the national rate: 0.44 in the city and 0.24 in the country.[8]

Work hours

The proportion of employed women work full-time (40 hours or more a week) in the city is the same as the national average, as it is presented in Table 2: 89.41 % in the city and 87.58 % nationwide. In terms of mothers' work patterns the city is somewhat special. As described above, a higher proportion of mothers of children aged 2-3 are employed in the city than in the country. However, among those who are employed, the rate of part-time work is higher: 35.71 % in the city (Table 4.1), and 27.7 % in the country (Table 4.2). Among mothers of children aged 3-6 the employment rate is still higher in the city than the national average (67.09 % compared to 56.08%), but the proportion of part-timers is approximately the same in the city and the country: 15.93 % compared to 16.70 %. These figures show that the labour market of the city is more flexible for mothers of young children than nationwide: for mothers of young children part-time work is more easily available. This may contribute to mothers returning earlier to paid work after the parental leave in our city.

[8] I calculated the gap by dividing Romani mother's employment rate by non-Romani mothers' employment rate

Family status

If we look at the effect of family status on mothers' work hours, we find that in the city 76.75 % of employed partnered mothers and 82.28 % of employed single mothers with pre-school children work full-time. In the country these rates are 89.75 % and 90.24 % as shown in Table 7.1 and 7.2. That is, in the country as a whole there is practically no difference between the work hours of partnered and single mothers of young children, while there is a 5-percentage-point difference in the city. This finding shows that mothers' relationship status has a stronger negative effect on their employment status in the city than in the country.

Education

Comparing the length of weekly work hours we find that women in our city work slightly shorter hours in every educational category than the national average (Table 6.1 and 6.2). In the group of highly educated women the difference is larger: in our city is 84.31 % of women work at least 40 hours a week, while the national rate is 92.60 %.

In sum, women's employment at the urban level is different compared to the national level in two respects: all women, including mothers of young children and Romani women are employed at a higher rate than the national average. At the same time, the work pattern of employed women is different from the national average: the rate of full-time workers is lower than nationwide.

Non-employment

As the data presented in Table 3 show, women's non-employment rate in the city is lower than the national average: 43.82 % compared to 52.70 % in the country. If we look more closely at the categories of non-employment, we find that the rates of women on disability

pension (3.50 %) and ‘other inactivity’ (5.80 %) are lower than the national figures at 7.18 % and 8.80 % respectively. Other forms of non-employment – unemployment, student status, parental leave and old-age pension - are approximately as common in our city than in the country as a whole. This finding also supports the argument that there are probably more jobs available for women in our city than the nationwide.

Non-employment and age

The most important age-related urban vs national difference is that in the 15-24 age group only 5.44 % of women are on parental leave in our city, while the national level figure is almost twice as high at 9.17 %. In the 25-39 group there is no significant difference between the urban and national rates (Table 5.1 and 5.2). Thus, women in our city tend to have children later than the national average. The other major difference is in the rate of disability pensioners: in the 40-54 age group 6.97 % women are retired because of disability in our city, which is a much lower than the national rate at 14.28 %.

Non-employment and education

Data presented in Tables 6.1 and 6.2 allow us to compare the relationship between women’s non-employment and their educational attainments in our city and in Hungary. In the city a higher rate of women participate in post-elementary education (22.48 %) than the national average (15.68 %).

The rate of women on parental leave is lower among those with level 1 and level 2 educational attainments in the city than then the national average. The same is true about disability pension rates: at level 1 the rates are 5,96 % in the city and 11,46 % nationwide, while at level 2 they are 3.35 % in the city and 5,81% in Hungary as a whole. The same pattern can be seen if we focus on the ‘other inactive’ group: in the city only 6.25 % of

women with level 1 education belong to this group, while in the whole country the rate is 11.09 %.

Non employment and motherhood

The national average unemployment rate of mothers of children aged 3-5-year-old is 9.01 % (the difference of the activity rate and employment rate presented in Table 1), while in our city this rate is somewhat lower, at 6.85 %. The rate of 'other inactivity' in the same group is 12.85 % in the city and 15.97 % in Hungary (Table 4.1 and 4.2), which means that in our city women find it easier to return to paid work after the parental leave. This may be explained by the fact that there are more childcare places available in the city than in rural areas, and that travelling to and from work usually takes less time in urban areas, making it easier for employed mothers to adapt to the opening hours of the childcare places.

A higher proportion of mothers take the insurance based, earnings related parental leave in the city than in the country compared to those taking the universal, flat-rate parental leave: in the city 54 % of women on parental leave take the insurance based version, while in the country the proportion is 41.5 % (App Table 3). This is explained by 1) women's better integration into the labour market in the city: a higher rate of women are entitled to the insurance based leave because they had previous employment status and 2) the fact that in the city more mothers return to paid work after the two-year-parental leave than in the country as a whole.[9] Thus, a higher rate of women on parental leave receive a higher benefit in the city than in Hungary on average.

[9] After the second birthday of the child only the flat-rate parental leave is available, even if the parent was entitled to the insurance based leave.

Non-employment and family status

Single mothers in the city are less likely to be on parental leave than the national average (41.51 % in the city and 46.64 % in the country) as shown in Tables 7.1 and 7.2. There is another small, but interesting difference: in the city the rate of 'other inactivity' is higher among partnered than among single mothers: 6.98 % and 5.78 %. In the country it is the other way around, and a slightly higher proportion of single mothers (9.21 %) than partnered mothers (8.50 %) are 'other inactive'. That means that in our city a higher rate of single mothers have a (formal) paid job or receive a parental leave benefit, and thus are less likely to be poor than in the country as a whole.

Non-employment and ethnicity

A slightly smaller proportion of Romani women take part in education in the city (6.49 %) than in the country as a whole (7.82 %). Interestingly, among non-Romani women it is the other way round: 11.64 % are students in the city and 10.09 % in the country.

In the city a smaller proportion of Romani women are on parental leave than in the country (22.16 % compared to 29.17%) as data presented in Tables 8.1 and 8.2 show. However, in the city a smaller proportion of Romani women on parental leave receives the insurance-based parental leave benefit (7.3 %) than in the country (11.9%).

The rate of disability pensioners among Romani women is much lower in the city than in the country: 5.95 % compared to 10.27 %.

To sum up, a higher rate of women participate in post-elementary education, and women tend to have children later in the city than the Hungarian average. This is probably linked to the finding that a higher rate of women receive the insurance-based parental leave benefit in the city than the national average.

The main conclusion of the report is that women, including Romani women are better integrated into the labour market of our city than the national average. Women's employment rate in the city is higher, and the proportion of non-employed women who do not receive welfare benefits is lower than the average Hungarian rate. As a result of these two factors, women are less likely to be poor in our city than nationwide. Given the fact that there are no special programmes aimed at improving women's/mothers' inclusion into the labour market at the urban level, it is most likely that the difference lies in the number and type of jobs available.

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