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**Self-employed or employee, full-time or
part-time?
Gender differences in the determinants
and conditions for self-employment in
Europe and the US**

Henning Lohmann

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Abstract

Recent research on self-employment has emphasised the specific dynamic of the rise of female entrepreneurship. But self-employment is still predominated by men. Only about 25-30% of the self-employed are women and the female self-employment rate is often only half as high as the male self-employment rate. This ratio is rather similar and persisting in most European countries although self-employment is discussed as an attractive option of female labour since it is characterised by a high degree of autonomy and flexibility. In order to assess the flexibility which self-employment might offer, the paper regards the determinants and conditions for self-employment emphasising the differences between part-time and full-time work. The empirical analysis is based on the Labour Force Surveys from five European countries (France, Germany, Italy, Sweden and the UK) and the Current Population Survey from the US. The comparison investigates how the institutional framework, which is set by welfare state provisions to combine family and work, influences the assumed link between need for flexibility and self-employment. The results show that in fact self-employment seems to offer more flexibility to combine family and work, but also, that there is variation between countries with different institutional settings.

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1. Introduction

A recent review article on women's participation in self-employment concludes that "[t]he most important direction for new research is to investigate gender differences in self-employment" in other countries but the US (McManus 2001a: 90). In fact, regarding the latter there is a number of studies focussing on differences between male and female self-employment (Carr 1996; Heller Clain 2000; Lombard 2001; Boden 1996, 1999) while evidence on European or other countries is scarce.¹ One central argument in the available studies is that self-employment offers flexibility to combine family and work which is assumed to be mainly important for women. For instance, Boden (1999: 82) summarises "that women are indeed more likely than men to cite flexibility of schedule and other family-related factors as reasons for becoming self-employed". But, as welfare state policy measures to enable the combination of family and paid work set different constraints and opportunities for female employment it is likely, that flexible forms of work are not compelling in all countries or at least not to the same degree. However, concerning the general situation of self-employment in European countries and the US, broad commonality can be observed: Self-employment is clearly male predominated, although there is a catch-up in the number of female self-employed. Differences appear when regarding the development of the self-employment rate: While in Europe the increase in self-employment is mainly fuelled by the growth in female labour market participation, in the US there is also a catch-up in the self-employment rate of women, i.e. women's propensity of self-employment is increasing stronger than men's (see Meager 1993).

This paper will focus on differences between the US and a number of European countries, namely France, Germany, Italy, Sweden and the UK.² It takes up the aforementioned assumption that self-employment provides flexibility and enlarges the perspective of previous studies by comparing different countries which represent different welfare state models. It is argued that welfare state policies structure the need for flexible employment and therefore have a specific relevance for the structure of female self-employment. In order to give an encompassing picture, the paper investigates the relation between self-employment, part-time and full-time work and flexibility. There is evidence that self-employment offers more flexibility to combine family and work, but also, that there is variation between countries with different institutional settings.

¹ Research so far has mainly been concentrated on the question of female entrepreneurship (see Brush 1992). But see Jungbauer-Gans 1999; McManus 2001b and Hakim 1988 on specific conditions for female self-employment in single European countries.

² An earlier version of this paper was presented at the 5th European Sociological Association Conference, Helsinki, August 28–September 1, 2001. The author would like to thank the conference participants for helpful discussions. Furthermore, this paper has benefitted from comments and helpful suggestions from Silvia Luber and Walter Müller in response to early drafts.

2. Self-employment, flexibility and female employment

The need to combine work and family, is—due to the still predominant gendered division of labour—mainly regarded as a specific condition for female employment. In this connection self-employment is discussed as a possibility to achieve freedom of choice concerning the place of work³ and flexibility in schedule (Lombard 2001; McManus 2001a). A number of studies from the US (e.g. Heller Clain 2000; Boden 1999) shows that children living in the household, especially young children, increase the probability of being self-employed. This is interpreted as supporting the hypothesis that self-employment can offer the required flexibility to combine family and work. In this paper this hypothesis constitutes the starting point:

H1: Self-employment offers more flexibility to combine family and work than other forms of employment. Since self-employment allows for relative autonomy in schedule as well as in the choice of place of work it offers even more flexibility than flexible forms of dependent employment like part-time work.

However, as Jungbauer-Gans and Ziegler (1991: 723) remark, the gain of flexibility might be consumed by longer working hours which are a result of the higher effort required for running a business of one's own. Against this assumption there is evidence from the US that women are likely to work shorter hours in self-employment than in dependent employment. A higher workload can only be observed for men (Hundley 2000). But not only the actual workload differs between women and men, also the motivations to become self-employed vary by gender. While men often cite personal autonomy or being one's own boss as motivation to become self-employed, family-related factors—as mentioned above—are more important for women (Boden 1999). In addition to the differing working time patterns these attitudes towards self-employment mirror the consequences of the typical division of labour in households. Therefore, in addition to H1, we expect clear gender differences concerning the connection of self-employment and flexibility:

H2: The gain of flexibility in order to combine family and work is much more relevant for women than it is for men.

³ A US-study (Edwards and Field-Hendrey 1996) shows that 63.9% of all home-based workers are self-employed (for evidence on the UK see Hakim 1998: 217f).

Whereas—at least for the US—the evidence for the self-employment flexibility hypothesis is rather well established, evidence on the quality of these flexible self-employment jobs is scarce. In general, self-employment is seen to be related to tertiary education and previous work experience (see Blanchflower 2000; Luber et al. 2000). In contrast, the quantitatively most important form of flexible employment for women, part-time employment,⁴ tends to be related to poor job quality in terms of required skills and remuneration as well as in career opportunities (see Gornick, Jacobs 1996; Hakim 1997; Kalleberg et al. 2000). One reason for this is seen in the shortage of high-quality part-time jobs. In a comparative study Schulze Buschoff et al. (1998) show that in a number of European countries highly-skilled women work full-time although they would prefer a part-time job. In this connection the question arises if working on one's own can provide both, high quality jobs and flexibility in working hours. On the one hand self-employment can be regarded as a way to cope with the shortage of high-quality part-time jobs since it offers a path into jobs which allow for greater autonomy and often require higher skills. On the other hand, there is evidence that self-employment, especially female self-employment—often in combination with reduced working hours—is related to poor job quality and high insecurity in terms of health insurance, pension schemes and the stability of employment (see Kalleberg et al. 2000; Meager, Bates 2001). As Arum (1997) shows, female self-employment in the US has grown especially among unskilled women. Furthermore, the level of remuneration of these non-professionals developed negatively. A large proportion of self-employed women works in child care services, household-related activities or other rather precarious jobs which do not fit into the aforementioned positive characteristics attributed to self-employment. However, since part-time self-employment appears also as a viable option in various kinds of high quality work (e.g. in forms of freelance work), it can be expected that also part-time self-employment is of higher quality than dependent part-time employment:

H3: Part-time self-employment offers better opportunities for highly-skilled workers than does dependent part-time employment. It is based on resources as higher education and work experience.

While the preceding three hypotheses consider the general characteristics of self-employment, i.e. mainly that it offers more flexible jobs for highly-skilled workers, in the next step, we discuss the role of country-specific institutional settings..

⁴ This holds true for most European countries. Only the Southern European countries and Finland where temporary contracts or self-employment are more relevant forms of flexible employment deviate from this pattern (see Bettio et al. 2000).

3. Country differences: Conditions for self-employment and the role of the welfare state

In at least two respects, variation between countries in the conditions for self-employment can be expected. On the one hand, countries differ in the general opportunities and constraints for self-employment (in terms of the general structure of the labour market and regulations for self-employment), on the other hand different types of welfare states more specifically influence the opportunities for female employment and the structure of female self-employment.

Regarding the first aspect, studies have shown that the requirements for self-employment differ considerably by countries. This is particularly true concerning the relevance of education in the process of labour market positioning and specific qualifical requirements for self-employment. Education and work experience are not equally important for self-employment in all countries (see Luber et al. 2000). These institutional settings create differing opportunities for self-employment. Since these conditions act as general constraints their effects should not vary by gender. Therefore, the fourth hypothesis can be stated as follows:

H4: The country-specific institutional framework creates differing opportunities for self-employment and therefore structures the composition of the self-employed workforce. These conditions are effective at a general level. Therefore it is expected that the qualifical profile of the self-employed differs stronger by country than by gender in the single countries.

In contrast, welfare state provisions to enable (primarily) women to combine family and work have a large influence on gender differences in the labour market. Recent articles stress the connection between welfare state regimes and gender policy models (see e.g. Sainsbury 1999; Korpi 2000) and formulate—following ideal-typical classifications of welfare states—general expectations on gender-specific effects of policy measures: Conservative regimes are associated with the fostering of a traditional male breadwinner model with the effect of rather low female labour market participation rates and/or high part-time rates. In liberal welfare states women are forced to be engaged in the labour market but without offering public services like child care or other family related services. This constrains labour market opportunities for women, especially mothers. In contrast, social-democratic regimes follow actively dual earner policies resulting in rather high female participation rates and relative gender equality in the labour market.

However, despite general commonalities between countries which follow the same welfare state model, there are clear differences when regarding single policy measures which influence the compatibility of family and paid work.

A number of studies on welfare states and female employment offers detailed evidence on the differences in the provision of child care coverage, parental leave policies or in general in policies aiming at the employment of mothers (see e.g. Gornick et al. 1997; Thenner 2000). Some of these results are summarised in tables 1 and 2.

Table 1: Characteristics of childcare and index of policies that support employment for mothers

	Characteristics of childcare			Policy index values		
	Children in publicly funded childcare by age (in %)		School-hours (h per week)	Policies for mothers with children by age group (index value)		
	< 3 years	3-6 years		< 3 years	3-6 years	school-age
France	20	95	35	53.2	76.6	
Germany (West)	2	60	25	36.2	31.9	32.6
Germany (East)	16	87				
Italy	5	88	27	36.0	65.2	
Sweden	32	79	30	62.3	61.6	55.5
United Kingdom	2	38	33	22.0	21.3	54.6
United States	1	14	33	13.6	20.7	57.0

Sources: Gornick et al. (1997: 61), German figures on childcare: Engelbrech, Jungkunst (2001: 2).

Table 2: Public parental leave policies

	legislated job protection	paid maternity leave (weeks)	wage replacement rate (%)	coverage (%) employed women)	extended leave (weeks)	paternity benefits
France	yes	16	84	100	140	yes
Germany	yes	14	100	100	142 ¹	yes
Italy	yes	20	80	100	136	yes
Sweden	yes	52	90	100	26	yes
United Kingdom	yes	18	46	60	22	no
United States	no	6	60	25	-	no

Source: Gornick et al. (1997: 57) apart from 1) Based on Thenner (2000: 105).

The tables show that support for the employment of mothers is—as generally assumed—weakest in the liberal welfare states (UK, US). Parental leaves are relatively short and the coverage is incomplete. In the US (as the only country in this comparison) there is no legislated job protection. Child care coverage in the UK and especially in the US is rather incomplete. In contrast, France and Sweden rank high at the general index which mirrors a relatively broad coverage of public childcare and rather generous parental leave policies. Although being characterised as conservative welfare state French policies actively support female employment. Therefore, the employment structure in France (as in the social-democratic welfare states) shows clear patterns of a dual earner model while other conservative welfare states like Germany and Italy still follow a (only partly modernised) male breadwinner model (see Dingeldey 2000). However, in the German case one has to note that although East Germany has adopted more or less the Western system after re-unification, there are still large differences between East and West in the attitudes towards female employment and the provision of childcare even for the youngest children.

For the empirical analysis the crucial question is how these measures and policies affect the probability of being self-employed. It can be assumed that they influence the above discussed need for flexible employment and therefore, should reduce the probability of entering self-employment. Public child care enables a direct combination of family and work. Parental leave schemes keep parents, in practise mainly mothers, in the labour market and guarantee the re-entry into previous jobs. While the lack of the first should have a direct effect on the need for flexibility via self-employment, the availability of the latter clearly separates both spheres without forcing parents out of the labour market—at least for the first year(s) of family life. Taking both as central aspects of a dual earner orientation of welfare states, a hypothesis on the effects of welfare states on the gender structure of self-employment can be formulated.

H5: The need to achieve flexibility via self-employment depends on the degree of welfare state provisions which aim at facilitating the combination of family and paid work. In states with a strong dual earner orientation the influence of the family on the probability of self-employment should be lowest.

In the following the five formulated hypotheses will be evaluated empirically. Before the results are presented, the used data and some methodological problems will be discussed.

4. Data and variables

In the empirical analysis at least one country representing each welfare state regime will be regarded, namely France, Germany and Italy (conservative), the UK and the US (liberal) and Sweden (social-democratic). Results from East and West Germany will be reported separately since the conditions for self-employment are different (although the situation for self-employment in East Germany changed completely after re-unification) as well as the position of women in the labour market.

The analysis is divided into two sections. The first offers an overview on central indicators describing the labour market in the different countries. In the second section multivariate analyses are carried out to evaluate the influence of work experience, education and family obligations on the choice of a specific form of employment (full-time vs. part-time, self-employment vs. dependent employment). The analysis is based on microdata, namely the national Labour Force Surveys (1994-97, years differ by country) for the European countries and the March Supplement of the Current Population Survey (CPS) 1996 for the US.⁵

Since the European datasets are all part of the European Labour Force Surveys they share general concepts like self-employment status, labour market participation and industry classifications and therefore offer a good basis for comparative research. The CPS differs in various indicators, but in the major dimensions the microdata offers detailed information which allows for the implementation of concepts comparable to the European data.

One problem of comparability refers to the set-up of the dependent variable. In the US the group of self-employed usually does not contain incorporated self-employment while it does in European countries (see Bregger 1996). Therefore, the US data was re-classified according to the European definition. Hence, for all countries the self-employment variable used in the analysis includes unincorporated as well as incorporated self-employment. Furthermore, the dependent variable distinguishes between full-time and part-time work. Since the information on actual and usual hours of work was not available in all datasets the respondents' self-assessment is used as criterion.⁶

The main concepts to be considered in the analyses are family conditions affecting the need for flexibility to combine family and work, qualifications and work experience. For family conditions the presence of children living in the household is used as predictor (by age of youngest child: <6 years, 6-14 years). As having children is clearly influenced by the marital status we use a family status variable which combines having children and marital status (reference category: unmarried, no children). Qualifications are measured by the highest educational degree coded in accordance to the CASMIN classification (see Brauns, Steinmann 1999). We distinguish only three levels: no degree or

⁵ The European datasets in detail: Enquête Emploi 1994 (France), Mikrozensus 1996 (Germany), Rilevazione Trimestrale delle Forze di Lavoro 1996 (Italy), Arbetskraftundersökningarna 1997 (Sweden) and the Labour Force Survey 1996 (UK).

only compulsory education (1ab), compulsory education plus vocational training or other forms of upper secondary education (1c and 2abc), and tertiary degrees (3a and 3b). For work experience age is used as rough proxy. It is obvious that age as proxy is especially difficult when regarding gender differences because women's work histories are much more characterised by breaks and periods spent out of the labour force than men's. Unfortunately (like in other cross-sectional surveys) information on "real" work experience is not available.

Besides these main concepts some control variables will be used. The opportunities for self-employment differ largely by industrial branch. Thus, the analyses contain control variables for industry using a 10-branch classification. The classification is based on the NACE Rev.1 which is used in all European datasets. Again, the classification in the CPS deviates from the European one. But since the CPS contains 3-digit industry codes it was possible to create aggregate groups which are comparable to the classification based on NACE-codes. Furthermore, citizenship status is used as control variable since the opportunities for nationals and non-nationals might differ significantly.⁷

The analyses regard only people in employment outside agriculture in the age range 20 to 59 years. Family workers are excluded from the general analysis since they constitute only in Italy a relevant part of the non-agricultural workforce. Rather problematic is the issue of maternity and parental leavers which cannot be clearly identified in all datasets. In cases where an identification is possible, workers on temporal leaves are regarded as being part of the labour force.

5. General country differences

Table 3 contains an overview on self-employment and labour market participation rates in the countries selected for analysis. Regarding the self-employment rates on a first brief view it becomes clear that self-employment is—as expected—more frequent among men than among women. The male self-employment rate is about two times as high as the female one. Roughly, this relation (see male/female ratio in table) can be found in all countries. In detail, the ratio is lowest in the US and highest in Sweden. This variation is not related to the general level of self-employment which is high in Italy and much lower in the other countries. It is also not related to the general female labour market participation rates. The figures confirm the known picture of country differences in female labour force participation rates although the gap between conservative welfare states (West Germany and France) and the liberal ones (US, UK) is less pronounced compared to figures found for the age range 15-64

⁶ Only in the Swedish data the distinction is based on usual hours since there is no information on the self-assessment of working hours for the self-employed.

⁷ Especially for the US it would make sense to distinguish different races and ethnic groups instead of using the criterion of nationality. Since the Labour Force Surveys do not contain such detailed information it was not used in the case of the US either.

years which are usually reported.⁸ This is most likely due to the varying extent of early retirement which is less relevant in liberal welfare states but lowers participation rates in Germany and France. These effects are cut off in this analysis because of the age restrictions applied.

Table 3: Self-employment rates and labour market participation

	self-employment rate			labour market participation ¹			
			male/female ratio (self-empl.)	total		with child(ren) under 6 years	
	male	female		male	female	male	female
France	12.2	5.3	2.31	88.7	70.9	99.0	70.7
Germany (West)	11.4	6.3	1.81	88.2	67.3	96.4	54.9
Germany (East)	9.3	4.9	1.91	89.6	84.7	97.8	89.9
Italy	27.3	16.1	1.70	86.1	51.2	98.5	50.0
Sweden	12.6	4.8	2.61	87.0	81.3	94.1	83.9
UK	16.1	6.5	2.47	89.3	71.9	93.9	61.7
US	11.9	7.2	1.65	87.7	73.6	94.3	66.6

Note: 1) Unemployment defined following ILO-criteria.

Source: own calculations, data see section 4. Age range 20-59 years. Columns 1 to 3: excl. agriculture.

While there is only marginal variation in the level of male labour market participation the differences are more pronounced for women. Female labour market participation is highest in countries which follow(ed) a clear dual earner strategy, i.e. Sweden and East Germany. The rates are also relatively high in the liberal welfare states (US, UK) but the gap between these two and West Germany and France is rather small. Italy, however, where only about half of the women are part of the labour force, deviates rather strongly from the other countries. Strong country differences can be also observed in the influence of young children on female labour market participation. In countries where policies supporting the employment of mothers are rather weak (West Germany, UK, US, see table 1), female labour market participation rates drop strongest in connection with the presence of children while in the other countries female labour market participation is not negatively influenced by young children living in the household.

Table 4 describes the differences in working time patterns between men and women and between the six countries. In general, a rather small share of men works part-time, while the part-time share of women is higher. Variation by country is much higher for women. While only 12.3% of the Italian female employees work part-time, the respective share is 41.8% in the UK. The size of the part-time

⁸ The figures are higher than in OECD or other aggregate statistics since the present analysis regards only workers aged 20-59 years in order to grasp only processes going on in the core of the labour force.

share fits in the general structure of female employment, especially of mothers. It is high where policies aiming at the support of the employment for mothers are weak. A similar pattern can also be observed for the share of women working marginal hours (less than 16h per week).⁹ While this share is rather irrelevant in most countries, it is remarkably high in West Germany and the UK.

Table 4: Working time patterns of self-employed and employees

	part-time share ¹		< 16h per week ²		> 45h per week ²	
	s.-e.	empl.	s.-e.	empl.	s.-e.	empl.
male						
France	2.1	2.8	0.4	0.9	67.6	10.4
Germany (West)	5.0	3.5	2.7	1.7	66.4	9.4
Germany (East)	2.3	1.8	1.1	0.8	54.6	5.4
Italy	2.7	2.3	-	-	-	-
Sweden	8.1	7.5	2.4	2.2	54.1	3.0
UK	5.8	3.7	2.9	1.7	47.1	13.4
US	11.7	7.6	-	-	-	-
female						
France	11.6	22.8	2.5	5.9	46.1	4.0
Germany (West)	30.6	38.2	16.6	12.5	35.4	3.1
Germany (East)	7.8	20.4	3.4	2.7	48.1	2.2
Italy	11.2	12.3	-	-	-	-
Sweden	26.8	43.0	6.2	4.3	26.3	1.5
UK	47.4	41.8	27.9	18.8	20.0	2.4
US	36.7	21.7	-	-	-	-

Note: 1) According to respondents' self-assessment (except for self-employed in Sweden: based on usual working hours. Parttime: <=30h, Fulltime: >=31h). 2) According to respondents' usual working hours (except for self-employed in France: based on actual working hours).

Source: own calculations, data see section 4. Age range 20-59 years, excl. agriculture.

Comparing the working time patterns of employees and self-employed the clearest difference appears regarding the share of people working more than 45 hours per week. While about one half to two thirds of all self-employed men and a fifth to a half of all self-employed women are "over working", the respective share is rather small among employees.¹⁰ The fact that this share is also relatively high for women shows that the assumed gain in flexibility through self-employment is not generally due to a

⁹ This indicator could not be computed for US and Italy since no detailed information on working hours was available in the data. In France information on usual hours is only reported for employees since the self-employed are regarded as workers without fixed schedule. Therefore, the figures for France report actual hours (all other countries: usual hours).

¹⁰ On gendered patterns of over and under working see Bettio et al. 2000.

reduction of hours. This assumption is reinforced by the distribution of part-timers. Only in the countries which follow the liberal welfare state pattern, the US and the UK, women are more likely to work part-time when they are self-employed. The opposite is true in the other countries. While 47.4% of all female self-employed in the UK are part-timers, this share is only 11.6% in France and even lower in East Germany. This first figure is even more remarkable when taking into account that more than half of these self-employed part-timers in the UK (27.9% of all women) are working less than 16 hours per week. This means that a large part of the female self-employed are only partially integrated into the labour market and it is likely that these low hours are related to marginal activities like child caring or other household related work as already described in studies on female self-employment in the US.

6. Multivariate analysis

Tables 5 to 7 and the figures 1 and 2 contain the results from multinomial logit models which were estimated separately by gender and country. The reported estimates indicate which determinants increase or decrease the probability of being part-time employee, part-time self-employed or full-time self-employed in comparison to full-time employees. Partly, it makes sense to twist the perspective. In cases where all coefficients of one variable for the three multinomial outcomes are positive the respective determinant increases the probability of being part-time employed as well as being self-employed. In other words: it decreases the probability of being full-time employee.

The results for the control variables 'industrial branch' and 'citizenship' are omitted in the tables.¹¹ The omitted results mainly confirm previous findings. Part-time work as well as self-employment are more frequent in services in comparison to sectors like mining and manufacturing. Foreign women are less likely to work part-time or as self-employed. The latter holds true for foreign men while they are more likely to be part-timers. Besides citizenship and industrial sector all other results are reported in the tables 5 and 6.

¹¹ Tables with full models including standard errors and model statistics are available from the author on request.

Table 5: Coefficients of multinomial logit model (women, base category: full-time employees)

	FR	GER (W)	GER (E)	IT	SWE	UK	US
part-time employees							
age							
in years	-0.137 ^{***}	0.068 ^{***}	-0.041 [*]	0.022	-0.167 ^{***}	-0.079 ^{***}	-0.199 ^{***}
in sq. years	0.002 ^{***}	0.000 [*]	0.001 ^{**}	0.000	0.002 ^{***}	0.002 ^{***}	0.002 ^{***}
education (CASMIN, ref: 1ab)							
1c+2	-0.378 ^{***}	-0.160 ^{***}	-0.664 ^{***}	-0.450 ^{***}	-0.151 [*]	-0.436 ^{***}	-0.145 [*]
3ab	-0.564 ^{***}	-0.467 ^{***}	-1.189 ^{***}	-0.788 ^{***}	-0.286 ^{**}	-1.028 ^{***}	-0.022
family status: marital status/age of youngest child in years (ref.: unmarried, no children)							
married/no children	0.526 ^{***}	1.055 ^{***}	0.470 ^{***}	0.455 ^{***}	0.645 ^{***}	0.817 ^{***}	0.249 ^{***}
unmarried/under 6	0.775 ^{***}	1.876 ^{***}	0.713 ^{***}	1.081 ^{***}	0.815 ^{***}	2.330 ^{***}	0.383 ^{***}
unmarried/under 14	0.513 ^{***}	1.536 ^{***}	0.343 ^{**}	0.140	0.711 ^{***}	1.749 ^{***}	0.297 ^{**}
married/under 6	1.133 ^{***}	2.363 ^{***}	1.273 ^{***}	0.881 ^{***}	1.106 ^{***}	2.684 ^{***}	0.918 ^{***}
married/under 14	1.270 ^{***}	2.525 ^{***}	0.893 ^{***}	0.701 ^{***}	0.983 ^{***}	2.296 ^{***}	1.049 ^{***}
part-time self-employed							
age							
in years	0.100	0.140 ^{***}	0.006	0.042	0.139	0.008	0.113 ^{**}
in sq. years	-0.001	-0.001 ^{**}	0.001	0.000	-0.001	0.001 [*]	-0.001
education (CASMIN, ref: 1ab)							
1c+2	0.260	0.540 ^{***}	-0.136	-0.228	-0.113	0.092	-0.054
3ab	1.572 ^{***}	1.616 ^{***}	0.345	0.968 ^{***}	0.387	-0.061	0.233
family status: marital status/age of youngest child in years (ref.: unmarried, no children)							
married/no children	0.410	0.773 ^{***}	0.227	0.660 ^{***}	1.327 ^{**}	0.676 ^{***}	1.042 ^{***}
unmarried/under 6	0.527	1.781 ^{***}	1.461	-0.507	1.789 ^{**}	2.150 ^{***}	0.504
unmarried/under 14	0.910 [*]	0.941 ^{***}	-0.278	-0.035	1.390 [*]	1.691 ^{***}	-0.200
married/under 6	1.256 ^{***}	2.580 ^{***}	2.290 ^{***}	0.968 ^{***}	2.699 ^{***}	3.293 ^{***}	2.361 ^{***}
married/under 14	1.267 ^{***}	2.260 ^{***}	0.846	1.042 ^{***}	2.377 ^{***}	2.279 ^{***}	1.601 ^{***}
full-time self-employed							
age							
in years	0.167 ^{***}	0.303 ^{***}	0.274 ^{***}	0.076 ^{***}	0.193 ^{**}	0.236 ^{***}	0.180 ^{***}
in sq. years	-0.001 ^{**}	-0.003 ^{***}	-0.003 ^{***}	-0.001 [*]	-0.002 [*]	-0.002 ^{***}	-0.002 ^{***}
education (CASMIN, ref: 1ab)							
1c+2	0.423 ^{***}	0.525 ^{***}	0.481	-0.362 ^{***}	0.168	0.148	0.170
3ab	1.362 ^{***}	1.623 ^{***}	1.791 ^{***}	0.548 ^{***}	0.268	0.333 ^{**}	0.245
family status: marital status/age of youngest child in years (ref.: unmarried, no children)							
married/no children	0.151	0.134 ^{**}	0.131	0.404 ^{***}	0.534 ^{**}	0.162	0.290 ^{**}
unmarried/under 6	0.261	0.534 ^{**}	0.337	0.551 [*]	0.287	0.461	-0.122
unmarried/under 14	0.168	0.441 ^{***}	0.235	-0.279	0.203	0.141	0.061
married/under 6	0.373 ^{**}	0.658 ^{***}	0.428 [*]	0.540 ^{***}	0.813 ^{**}	1.153 ^{***}	0.590 ^{***}
married/under 14	0.387 ^{***}	0.793 ^{***}	0.232	0.436 ^{***}	0.364	1.015 ^{***}	0.465 ^{***}

Note: Significance levels: * 5%, ** 1%, *** 0.1%. All models include industrial sector (9 dummy variables) and nationality as control variables.

Source: own calculations, data see section 4. Age range 20-59 years, excl. agriculture.

Table 6: Coefficients of multinomial logit model (men, base category: full-time employees)

	FR	GER (W)	GER (E)	IT	SWE	UK	US
part-time employees							
age							
in years	-0.285 ^{***}	-0.163 ^{***}	-0.300 ^{***}	-0.050	-0.287 ^{***}	-0.385 ^{***}	-0.311 ^{***}
in sq. years	0.004 ^{***}	0.002 ^{***}	0.004 ^{***}	0.000	0.003 ^{***}	0.005 ^{***}	0.004 ^{***}
education (CASMIN, ref: 1ab)							
1c+2	-0.155	0.037	-1.616 ^{***}	-0.048	-0.326 [*]	-0.224 [*]	-0.377 ^{***}
3ab	-0.053	0.428 ^{***}	-0.892 ^{***}	0.160	-0.194	-0.091	-0.062
family status: marital status/age of youngest child in years (ref.: unmarried, no children)							
married/no children	-0.632 ^{***}	-0.792 ^{***}	-0.872 ^{***}	-0.380 ^{**}	-0.180	-0.670 ^{***}	-0.856 ^{***}
unmarried/under 6	-0.252	0.126	-0.099	-0.113	-0.355	-0.008	-0.549 [*]
unmarried/under 14	-0.774 [*]	-0.061	-0.311	-0.118	-0.896	0.728 [*]	-0.621
married/under 6	-0.678 ^{***}	-0.966 ^{***}	-0.265	-0.385 ^{**}	-0.099	-0.421 ^{**}	-1.041 ^{***}
married/under 14	-0.648 ^{***}	-1.061 ^{***}	-0.679 ^{**}	-0.477 ^{**}	-0.554 [*]	-0.464 ^{**}	-0.923 ^{***}
part-time self-employed							
age							
in years	0.072	-0.119 ^{**}	-0.072	-0.036	-0.124	-0.092	0.021
in sq. years	0.000	0.002 ^{***}	0.002	0.001	0.002	0.002 ^{**}	0.000
education (CASMIN, ref: 1ab)							
1c+2	0.384	0.713 ^{***}	###	0.197	-0.201	-0.192	-0.039
3ab	1.022 ^{**}	0.921 ^{***}	###	1.159 ^{***}	0.209	-0.020	0.139
family status: marital status/age of youngest child in years (ref.: unmarried, no children)							
married/no children	-0.954 ^{**}	-0.874 ^{***}	-0.634	-0.273	-0.797 [*]	-0.433 [*]	-0.108
unmarried/under 6	0.353	-0.096	0.657	###	0.009	-0.216	-0.012
unmarried/under 14	0.198	-0.577	0.761	0.407	-0.803	0.791	-0.058
married/under 6	-0.519	-0.883 ^{***}	-0.062	-0.151	0.236	-0.199	-0.307
married/under 14	-0.635	-0.862 ^{***}	-0.012	-0.462 [*]	-0.211	-0.430	-0.528 ^{**}
fulltime self-employed							
age							
in years	0.253 ^{***}	0.218 ^{***}	0.188 ^{***}	0.123 ^{***}	0.248 ^{***}	0.125 ^{***}	0.173 ^{***}
in sq. years	-0.002 ^{***}	-0.002 ^{***}	-0.002 ^{***}	-0.001 ^{***}	-0.003 ^{***}	-0.001 ^{***}	-0.001 ^{***}
education (CASMIN, ref: 1ab)							
1c+2	0.446 ^{***}	0.748 ^{***}	0.732 [*]	-0.025	-0.284 ^{**}	-0.088	0.224 ^{**}
3ab	0.850 ^{***}	1.119 ^{***}	1.396 ^{***}	0.497 ^{***}	-0.021	-0.328 ^{***}	0.488 ^{***}
family status: marital status/age of youngest child in years (ref.: unmarried, no children)							
married/no children	0.362 ^{***}	-0.032	0.265 ^{**}	0.163 ^{***}	0.363 ^{**}	0.067	0.150 [*]
unmarried/under 6	0.290 ^{**}	0.651 ^{***}	0.822 ^{***}	0.267	0.119	0.484 ^{***}	0.312
unmarried/under 14	0.231	0.195	-0.057	0.112	0.448 [*]	0.539 ^{**}	0.193
married/under 6	0.394 ^{***}	0.086 [*]	0.442 ^{***}	0.303 ^{***}	0.524 ^{***}	0.230 ^{***}	0.412 ^{***}
married/under 14	0.319 ^{***}	-0.001	0.241 ^{**}	0.132 ^{**}	0.370 ^{**}	0.197 ^{**}	0.352 ^{***}

Note: Significance levels: * 5%, ** 1%, *** 0.1%. All models include industrial sector (9 dummy variables) and nationality as control variables.

Source: own calculations, data see section 4. Age range 20-59 years, excl. agriculture.

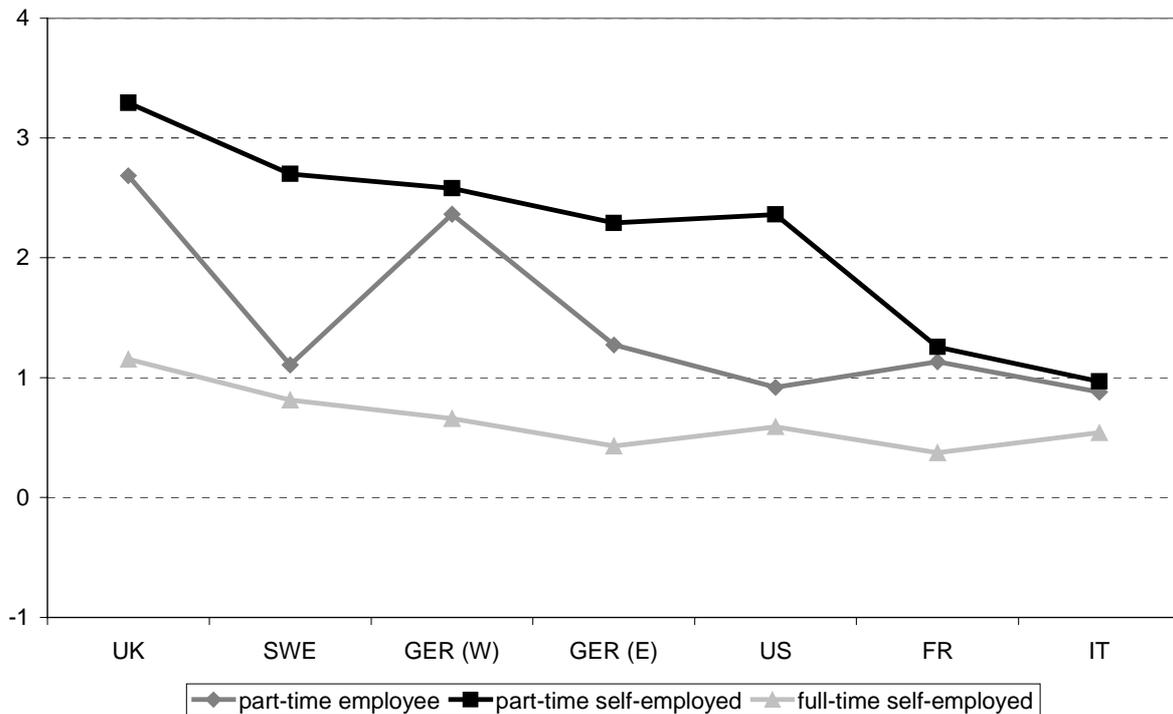
Clear age patterns can be observed for the different employment statuses which are related to the life-cycle and the need for work experience. The likelihood of part-time employment decreases with age in younger years and increases again with higher age. Part-time self-employment is in general less related to age. In contrast, the probability of being in full-time self-employment increases clearly with age, an effect which can be attributed to the need for work experience and capital accumulation. Roughly, these patterns can be found for women as well as for men, but in particular concerning part-time employment, the U-shaped age-pattern is much more marked for men. This means, that men mainly work part-time at the beginning and at the end of their careers, while this relation is less strong for women. As discussed above, female part-time work is rather frequent during the family phase, i.e. in the medium age groups.

Evidence for a clear influence of the family situation on the employment status of women is also found from the indicators for marital status and children in the household. Being married strongly decreases the likelihood of women of being fulltime employee—regardless having children or not—while it strongly increases the likelihood of part-time work, both in dependent employment and self-employment. For men, the situation is reverse. The probability of being part-timer is lowest for married men. Only full-time self-employment is positively related to being married. A similar pattern can be found with regard to the influence of children in the household. Not surprisingly, having children strongly decreases the likelihood of women of being full-time employees. Again, this relation tends to be reversed for men. If at all, children in the household increase the probability of full-time self-employment, in particular for married men.

Comparing the influence of having children on the different flexible forms of employment, for women a clear pattern evolves. This becomes obvious in figure 1 which shows the coefficients for the influence of children under 6 years and being married on the likelihood of not being full-time employee. The selected group—married women with young children—is probably most burdened by family obligations. As one can easily see in all countries children increase the probability of being self-employed or part-timer in comparison to being full-time employee: The coefficients are all positive. This supports the results of previous research on employment patterns of mothers. Further, there is a clear ranking by employment status. While children only slightly increase the probability of being full-time self-employed, the influence on the probability of part-time employment, especially self-employment is stronger (always in comparison to full-time employment). With some exceptions, the results for older children and unmarried women confirm this pattern (see table 5). As expected female part-time work and self-employment are connected to having children. A reduction of working hours contributes to the compatibility of family and paid work, however this effect is particularly strong in self-employment. Further, due to the fact that having children increases—although only slightly—the probability of full-time self-employment also a general flexibility in schedule (not necessarily connected

to a reduction of hours) seems to be connected to working on one's own.¹² Thus, the respective hypothesis that self-employment offers more flexibility to combine family and paid work could be clearly confirmed.

Figure 1: Coefficients (log odds) of multinomial model—women. Influence of being married/ having youngest child under 6 years on employment status



Source: own calculations, model parameters see table 5 and 6. Age range 20-59 years, excl. agriculture.

Concerning country differences, the results deviate from the expectations discussed in section 3. Figure 1 shows no systematic variation between countries following different welfare state regimes. But also taking into account the policy index ranking of the six countries does not result in a clear confirmation of the respective hypothesis. In the US, where policies supporting employment for mothers are weak, children in the household do not influence women's choice of flexible employment to a larger extent than in Sweden where the respective policies are followed rather strongly. The figure exhibits rather similar results for the UK, both parts of Germany and the US. Concerning self-employment, in contrast to our assumptions also Sweden does not differ from these countries. The expected influence of the comparatively strong dual earner orientation of Swedish policies could only

¹² However, a concurring explanation for this result could be that running a business does not allow for a reduction of hours or parental breaks and that for this reason self-employed mothers are rather likely to work full-time. However, a clarification of this question is not feasible on the basis of the data used in this paper.

be observed with regard to part-time dependent employment which seems to be less strongly influenced by the tension between family and work than in the aforementioned countries. In Italy and France, however, which also rank high in the respective policy index, the effect of children on the employment status in general is less marked. Also the differences between East and West Germany point in the expected direction. Mothers in East Germany are more likely to work as full-time employees compared to the West. These results are further illustrated in table 7. It contains probabilities predicted by the model presented in table 5 and 6 and shows the influence on the employment status of being married and having a child under six (holding all other variables constant). The left half of the table shows the predicted probabilities for the reference group (unmarried, no children). As already seen from the model parameters marriage and having children hardly influence the employment status of men. For women the table shows that the predicted probabilities for the reference group are rather similar in all countries. Comparing it to figures for married women with children, one clearly sees that part-time shares increase in dependent employment as well as in self-employment. The rise in part-time employment is especially strong in Germany and the UK, associated by a steep decline in the share of full-time employees. While the table mainly reproduces the results of figure 1 for part-time employment, it gives additional evidence on full-time self-employment. It shows that in most countries the positive effect of having children on being self-employed seen before is mainly due to the strong decline in the probability of being full-time employee (the model's base category). While in most countries the share of full-time self-employment is almost stable—regardless of having children or not—it even declines when regarding mothers in the UK and West Germany. However, the reduction of this share is not as strong as in full-time employment. Taking these results together, one can still come to the conclusion that full-time self-employed women are more likely to manage the combination of work and family in self-employment than their dependent counterparts.

Table 7: Predicted probabilities from multinomial model (in %)

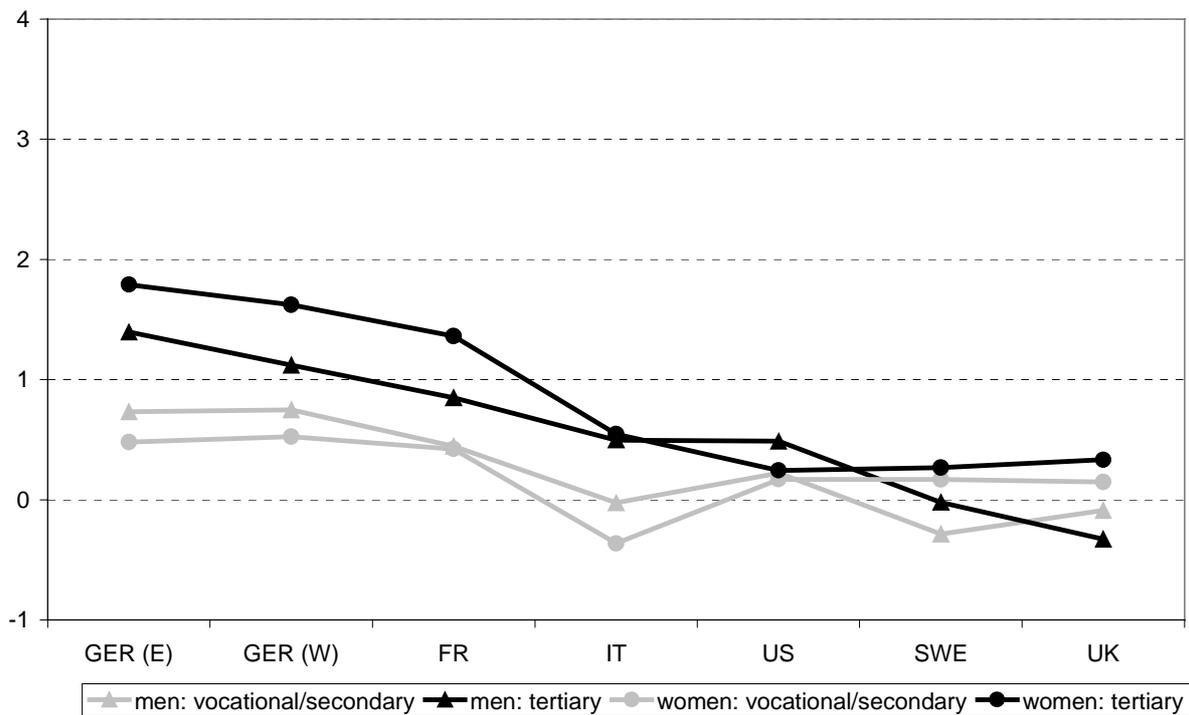
	unmarried, no children				married, youngest child under six			
	part-time employee	part-time self-empl.	full-time self-empl.	full-time empl.	part-time empl.	part-time self-empl.	full-time self-empl.	full-time empl.
men								
France	0.081	0.011	0.112	0.796	0.041	0.007	0.165	0.788
Germany (West)	0.078	0.039	0.157	0.726	0.032	0.017	0.181	0.770
Germany (East)	0.020	0.003	0.091	0.887	0.015	0.002	0.135	0.848
Italy	0.050	0.032	0.227	0.691	0.032	0.026	0.290	0.652
Sweden	0.099	0.010	0.079	0.812	0.085	0.012	0.128	0.775
UK	0.044	0.028	0.179	0.749	0.028	0.022	0.220	0.730
US	0.077	0.039	0.089	0.795	0.027	0.029	0.137	0.807
women								
France	0.225	0.006	0.062	0.706	0.460	0.015	0.060	0.465
Germany (West)	0.185	0.026	0.095	0.695	0.617	0.106	0.058	0.219
Germany (East)	0.147	0.003	0.071	0.778	0.364	0.022	0.075	0.539
Italy	0.149	0.032	0.173	0.646	0.259	0.060	0.215	0.466
Sweden	0.193	0.016	0.152	0.639	0.325	0.130	0.190	0.355
UK	0.190	0.043	0.105	0.663	0.564	0.234	0.067	0.135
US	0.215	0.020	0.089	0.676	0.339	0.133	0.102	0.427

Note: All other variables constant (age: 35 years, education: CASMIN 1c+2, nationality: not foreign, industrial sector: other services).

Source: own calculations, model parameters see table 5 and 6. Age range 20-59 years, excl. agriculture.

Going back to tables 5 and 6, we will briefly discuss the effects of education on the different employment statuses. First, for women all respective coefficients on part-time dependent work are negative. Thus, women working as dependent part-timers are most likely bearers of no or only a low educational degree. In contrast, both types of self-employment are related—in some countries strongly related—to tertiary education. In general, the educational profile of part-time self-employed is much closer to the full-time self-employed than to the part-time employees.

Figure 2: Coefficients (log odds) of multinomial model. Influence of education on probability of full-time self-employment



Source: own calculations, model parameters see table 5 and 6. Age range 20-59 years, excl. agriculture.

Figure 2 additionally offers a comparison of the relevance of education for full-time self-employment by gender. The figure shows a similar pattern for women as well as for men, indicating no strong differences by gender in the relevance of education for self-employment. Certain gender differences can be observed in the relevance of tertiary education. The probability of women's self-employment is slightly stronger influenced by tertiary degrees than self-employment of men. More marked differences than by gender evolve by comparing countries. While in Germany and France self-employment is strongly related to higher education, the relation is less strong in Italy and the US, and no clear relation can be observed in the UK and Sweden. As argued above, this result mirrors the general relevance of education in the labour market which differs by countries and the existence of specific qualificational requirements for self-employment (e.g. like in Germany). These differences evolve for both genders which strengthens the assumption of general institutional differences.

7. Conclusion

To conclude, the presented results will be discussed in the order of the hypotheses derived in the first part of this paper.

First, the hypothesis which assumed that self-employment offers flexibility to combine family and work (H1) could be clearly confirmed. Regarding the influence of children in the household a clear “ranking” evolved. The employment status which is influenced strongest by children living in a household is part-time self-employment which seems to be even more adequate than part-time dependent employment to gain the flexibility needed. But also full-time self-employment contributes to flexibility. Also among full-time workers children increase the probability of self-employment. However, we did not look at the attitudes towards self-employment. The question would be whether women cite flexibility as reason for self-employment (see e.g. Boden 1999) only when they are working part-time or if this can be seen as a general result.

Second, also the hypothesis on gender differences with regard to the need for flexibility (H2) could be confirmed. Children in the household hardly influence the employment status of men while they do influence the employment status of women. Further, being married increases the probability of working in flexible types of employment for women while this does not hold true for men. The result clearly confirms previous research on gendered employment patterns. While having a family forces men even stronger in the role of a full-time earner, women are likely to choose non-standard forms of employment which are often related to reduced working hours (see Bettio et al. 2000).

Third, clear qualifical differences between part-time self-employment and part-time employment could be observed. Women with low qualifications tend to work as part time employees while women with high qualifications are more often found among the part-time self-employed. This confirms the respective hypothesis (H3). However, this does not inevitably mean that part-time self-employment really offers employment opportunities which require high skills. But it confirms that highly-skilled women prefer to work on a self-employed basis rather than in dependent jobs and it is likely that one reason for this is that they can better make use of their qualifications when part-time work is required due to family obligations.

The last two hypotheses were directed to country differences. Forth, it was assumed that qualifical profiles would differ less by gender than by countries due to general institutional settings (H4). In fact, for women as well as for men self-employment is related to education in a similar manner. Concerning country differences, patterns which were found for male self-employment (see Luber et al. 2000) could be confirmed for women. The relevance of education differs more by country-specific conditions for self-employment than by gender. However, women’s self-employment is even stronger related to tertiary degrees than self-employment of men.

Fifth, the last hypothesis on the influence of welfare state measures on—especially female—self-employment, could not be fully confirmed. In all countries women living with children in the household are more likely to be self-employed than women without children. Thus, the general result that self-employment is used due to reasons of flexibility is only partly affected by welfare state measures. There is some variation between countries but it is not strongly influenced by general welfare state regimes. Taking into account an index which regards policies aiming at the employment of mothers more specifically results in stronger evidence for the assumed relation. However, especially Sweden does not fit into the expected pattern. The respective policies are strong but the influence of children on the probability of being self-employed is as high as in other countries. In contrast, there are clear differences between, on the one hand, the UK and, on the other hand, Italy and France which fit into our expectations. However, further research should tackle the reasons for the unexpected deviations from the assumed relation by regarding welfare state measures and its consequences for self-employment in detail.

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