

The 2030 Agenda and the Goal of Gender Equality : European Approaches in Comparison

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**Observatory for
Sociopolitical Developments
in Europe**

The 2030 Agenda and the goal of gender equality

European approaches in comparison

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Abstract

With the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the 193 member states of the United Nations committed themselves to gender equality as an important aspect of sustainable development. The responsibility for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals, SDGs, is at the national level. **The member states are confronted with the task of formulating national measures to translate the SDGs into concrete action.** This working paper provides an overview of the current developments in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in **Germany, Estonia and Sweden.**

The focus is on SDG 5 on gender equality and the target 5.4 on **recognizing and valuing care work**, since the gendered division of unpaid and time-intensive care is one of the main obstacles to gender equality. The target presents **two approaches** for how care work can be recognized and valued. They can be described as **reorganisation** – between the state, the market and the family – and **redistribution** of care work within families. The approaches must be substantiated on the national level by means of clear and quantifiable as well as time-bound targets so as to unfold their effect.

Since the national implementation processes commenced in 2016, the working paper provides a first overview of the national approaches and the progress in implementation:

- In **Germany**, the updated **National Sustainable Development Strategy** forms an integrated framework for the 17 SDGs; in **Estonia** existing strategies are used to achieve the individual SDGs. In **Sweden**, a national action plan is currently being drafted by an independent Committee of experts that specifies how the 2030 Agenda is to be implemented, nationally and regionally.
- The three European member states provide different **structural framework conditions** for a gender-equal division of care work and represent different **gender regimes**, which also influence how care work is divided between women and men.
- The **German updated National Sustainable Development Strategy**, encompasses the **goal of an equal partnership, i.e. a more equal division of responsibility for work and family life**, in German “partnerschaftliche Vereinbarkeit”. Existing and planned measures aim at a reorganisation and redistribution of care work. Clear and quantifiable, time-bound targets to recognize and value care work are, however, not part of the updated strategy.
- **Estonia** aims at a **change of traditional gender roles** to enable a redistribution of care work within families. The Welfare Development Plan 2016-2023 also provides for measures that aim at alleviating the care burden for family carers (reorganisation). Reform initiatives are expected to be presented in November 2017.
- **Sweden** is in a preparatory phase. It generally **has a positive development trend** toward a more gender-equal division of care work. A combination of measures for the reorganisation and redistribution of care work has so far supported this trend.

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List of abbreviations

ENUT	Estonian Women's Studies and Resource Center
EU	European Union
genanet	genanet Gender, Environment, Sustainability
HLG	High Level Group
HLPF	High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SEI	Stockholm Environment Institute
SWL	The Swedish Women's Lobby
UN	The United Nations

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1 Introduction

With the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the 193 member states of the United Nations, in the following UN, committed themselves to gender equality as an important aspect of sustainable development. The goal of gender equality is firmly established in the agenda: as a stand-alone goal, **SDG 5 – Achieve gender equality and empower women and girls to self-determination** – and as a cross-cutting theme throughout several other SDGs.¹

With a total of 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets, the 2030 Agenda sets an ambitious global framework. It combines the ecological, economic and social dimension of future sustainable development. Against the background that "no country has fully achieved gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls" (UN Commission on the Status of Women 2016: 10), the 2030 Agenda is a new impulse for the states. Especially, as the 2030 Agenda applies universally to all the UN member states and obliges them to attain SDG 5.²

The **gendered division of care** is one of the main **obstacles** to gender equality: "In many societies, even as women have entered the labour force, they have also retained primary responsibility for unpaid work such as caregiving and household chores" (WEF 2016: 31). With the care for oneself and for others, care work covers a wide range of (mostly) unpaid and time-intensive work, such as the care and education of children, the care of the elderly, care and attention to other people and self-care, as well as domestic work (Jurczyk 2015; Brückner 2011).³ Since time is an integral part of gender arrangements (Pascall/Kwak 2009), it plays an important role for the allocation and distribution of gainful employment and care work within families.

Target 5.4 of the 2030 Agenda addresses the question of a **gender-equal organisation and division of care work** (Leitner/Vukoman 2015: 98, Scambor 2015: 54) and unpaid care and domestic work shall be recognized and valued.⁴ *Recognize* means to perceive of unpaid care work as an important area of life, which, as well as paid work, is time-consuming. *Value* refers to the role that care for oneself and for others plays for the functioning of both society and economy, as it relates to the human dependency on the care by others (Jurczyk 2015). In the target, **two approaches** are presented for how care work can be recognized and valued: on the one hand, by way of the "provision of public services, infrastructures and social protection policies" and on the other hand, by way of the "promotion of shared responsibility within the

1 The SDGs 1, 3, 4 and 6 also encompass gender-related targets. They establish gender equality as a cross-cutting issue in the 2030 Agenda.

2 The SDGs apply to all UN member states alike. They distinguish themselves therein from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which applied for the period 2000 to 2015. The implementation of the MDGs was characterised by a development policy perspective. The universality of the SDGs now requires a national, regional and global implementation.

3 The OECD Development Centre (2014: 3) also defines care as "the activity [that] provides what is necessary for the health, well-being, maintenance and protection of someone or something".

4 Care and domestic work are two areas of unpaid work.

household and the family" (also see Esquivel 2016). These two approaches can also be summarised as **reorganisation** – between the state, the market and the family⁵ – and **redistribution** of care work within families⁶ (Beckmann 2014). In particular, the approach of redistribution relates to models, which argue that the integration of women into the labour market must be accompanied by the involvement of men in care work (Fraser 1994; Gornick/Meyers, 2003).⁷ Since the terms "recognize" and "value" are vague, they must be substantiated at national level by means of clear, quantifiable, and time-bound targets.

The overall responsibility for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and its SDGs is at the national level. **It follows from this, that the impact of the 2030 Agenda for advancing gender equality depends on the extent to which states successfully formulate national measures to translate the SDGs and their targets into concrete action.**⁸ In European countries, the European Union (EU) can coordinate and support the national implementation processes.

To this end, the European Commission presented its strategy for a sustainable European future in November 2016. The ten priorities which the Commission has set for its work shall also guide the implementation of the 2030 Agenda (EU COM 2016a). For SDG 5, the Commission stresses that gender equality is one of the fundamental values of the EU, which is firmly established in the *acquis communautaire*. The legislative and non-legislative measures, which shall work towards gender equality within the EU, are further stressed in a working document (EU COM 2016b). The only new measure to recognize and value care work, is the new start-initiative to address the challenges of work-life balance faced by working families (EU COM 2015a). The initiative has been launched in 2015. Herein, the Commission proposes measures, which shall aim at a **reorganisation**, e.g., availability, accessibility and quality of care infrastructure for child and dependent persons, as well as **a redistribution**, e. g. the introduction of paternity leave and/or care leave. The reconciliation package, was an outcome of the initiative, is expected to be launched in spring 2017.

SDG Watch Europe (2016), a civil society alliance of 90 European non-governmental organizations, however, criticized the EU strategy for a sustainable European future for not engaging with the individual SDGs and targets. Thus, there is so far no coherent European framework for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

In this working paper, the **national strategies of three EU member states are compared. SDG 5 on gender equality and the target 5.4 to recognize and value care work are the**

5 According to Esping-Andersen (1990, 1999), the state, the market and the family are the three actors of welfare production.

6 All the persons living in a community of shared responsibility can be involved in the redistribution of care work. This is regardless of gender, marital status and/or family status. In literature, it is, however, generally assumed that the redistribution occurs between women and men.

7 See Fraser's universal caregiver model or the dual earner/dual carer model (cf. Gornick/Meyers 2003).

8 The unequal division of unpaid care and domestic work is more pronounced in some EU Member States than in others (EIGE 2016a: 19), which is why it can vary which measures are considered appropriate in the specific national context.

central research interest of the analysis. Since the implementation commenced in 2016 and the states are at different points of the implementation process, the working paper provides a first overview of current developments. In a first step, the implementation approaches of **Germany, Estonia and Sweden** are analysed. In a second step, it is analysed, which measures the states aim for in their national strategies in order to recognize and value unpaid care work and spur the reorganisation and redistribution of it. In a third step, the national approaches are compared.

In detail, an overview of the approach applied and the progress of the implementation process in Germany, Estonia and Sweden is provided in the sections 2.1, 3.1 and 4.1. The section shows, on the one hand, which progress the member states have made in their individual implementation of the 2030 Agenda and, on the other hand, what level of importance the social dimension, especially gender equality, obtains in the respective national strategy. It is also outlined how non-state actors can participate in the overall process. The outline of the central features of the family and gender equality policy of each country – chapters 2.2, 3.2 and 4.2 – demonstrates how gender equality is established in the policy framework as well as care is organized in the three EU member states. Based on the previous chapters, the approaches to recognize and value care work are then compared in chapters 2.3, 3.3 and 4.3.

The comparison shows how Germany, Estonia and Sweden, which follow different approaches to organize care, address the 2030 Agenda and SDG 5 (Beckmann 2014). Good examples for the implementation of SDG 5 and the target 5.4 can be derived from these three national strategies. These good examples can inform ongoing implementation processes in other European member states as well as serve as a role model for the European level.

2 Germany

Germany strives for an ambitious implementation of the 2030 Agenda. In July 2016, the German Federal Government (2016a), presented a first voluntary progress report on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Germany.⁹ In the voluntary national report of the German government to the First High-Level Political Forum for Sustainable Development, in the following HLPF, gender equality is addressed as one of the central national challenges with regard to achieving sustainable development.

2.1 The implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Germany

The **National Sustainable Development Strategy** constitutes the essential **framework for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda** in Germany. Since 2002, Germany sets out national objectives to foster sustainable development by means of a national sustainability strategy.

9 The voluntary national reviews aim to facilitate the sharing of experiences, including successes, challenges and lessons learned, with a view to accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Germany and Estonia, together with 22 other countries, presented their first national reviews in 2016. Sweden will present its first review in 2017.

The strategy is currently being revised, in order to supplement an ecological focus by the economic and social dimension of the 2030 Agenda.

To this end, the draft of the updated National Sustainable Development Strategy (German Federal Government 2016b), as available in its version of May 30, 2016, also addresses new objectives. This includes the issue of gender equality. For all SDGs, on the one hand, the main contents and political priorities are presented from the point of view of the German Federal Government, and on the other hand, national sustainability indicators and targets, as well as national measures, are suggested. For each SDG, in addition, an indicator-based political objective is formulated. It indicates the need for action in the subject area. The draft aims at identifying new subject areas and their relevance for the further development of German policy (German Federal Government 2016b: 50). Finally, the status quo of each individual indicator is depicted in form of cloud and sun symbols, for instance indicating whether a "target is (almost) reached" or there is a "development in the wrong direction".

The German Federal Government has requested civil society to comment the draft strategy. Opinions could be submitted up until July 31, 2016. They are to be taken into account during the revision of the sustainable development strategy. The German Federal Government has also held dialogue conferences in various regions of Germany. An approval of the updated National Sustainable Development Strategy is scheduled for autumn/winter of 2016. It is still pending.

2.2 Family and gender equality policy in Germany

Beyond the state and the market, the family is the central supporting pillar for care arrangements in Germany (Schmidt/Schmitt 2016). In particular, West Germany has been characterized as a conservative welfare state with a strong breadwinner model and a mainly female responsibility for care work. In East Germany, the double-earner model was supported by public care services for children (Adler/Lenz 2016, Esping-Andersen 1990). To date, these different welfare state traditions continue to be reflected in empirical findings.¹⁰

The German Constitution stipulates equal rights for women and men and obliges the state to establish and promote equal rights and eliminate persisting gender-related disadvantages. The First Gender Equality Report by the Federal Government (BMFSFJ 2011) indicated that the division of gainful employment and care work is strongly unequal between women and men. The report provided a number of recommendations for action, in particular directed to policy makers, in order to achieve gender equality in Germany. As part of the Second Equality Report, which will be published in 2017, the German Federal Government will also demonstrate to which extent these recommendations have been implemented and/or achieved.

Two social developments affect current family and gender equality policy in Germany: the demographic change and the change of gender roles.

10 See for instance, the differences in the approval of early childhood care in East and West Germany (BMFSFJ 2015).

On the one hand, the **demographic change** and the effect it is expected to have for society advance the widely shared opinion that the integration of women into gainful employment is essential, especially from an economic point of view. The employment rate of women and men in Germany is relatively high, see table 2. In view of the working hours per week, it is, however, evident that significantly more women than men work on a part-time basis. This difference is even more pronounced where working hours of mothers and fathers are compared. As women at the same time spend more time with performing unpaid care work, see table 3, this indicates a (partial) gender-related specialisation within families (IfD Allensbach 2015). The unequal division is further supported by a gender pay gap of approximately 21 percent.

On the other hand, the **change of gender roles** is accompanied by a growing desire for a more equal division of gainful employment and care work among women and men (Eigenmann et al. 2016). For example, 60 percent of parents with children under three years of age prefer a situation in which both parents can participate equally in the domains of family and work (BMFSFJ 2015b). However, only 20 percent of parents are currently able to actually live according to this ideal conception (IfD Allensbach 2015).

With its **new goal to enhance an equal partnership in Families**, in German “partnerschaftliche Vereinbarkeit”, the German family policy strives for a more equal division of gainful employment and family life to enable both parents to spend time with the family while at the same time pursue their career (BMFSFJ 2015b).¹¹ Recent reforms and reform efforts entail **incentives for an equal partnership**. The introduction of the parental allowance, in German Elterngeld (2007), as well as the parental allowance plus, in German ElterngeldPlus (2014), provide for the opportunity of both parents to take a leave from work to care for their child, especially in its first year, without suffering financial loss. With the parental allowance plus, the allowance can be combined with part-time employment, the parental allowance is then granted for a longer period, on a pro rata basis (Eigenmann et al. 2016). Parents who simultaneously work for 25 to 30 hours a week during four consecutive months, get, in addition, four more months of parental allowance plus, i.e. the partnership bonus. In the summer of 2016, the German Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, in the following BMFSFJ, presented a Family Working Time model, which is intended to further support the parents of young children (Zeit Online 2016).¹² If both parents work up to 80 to 90 percent of a full-time position, that means, approximately 28 to 36 hours per week, they shall be granted a family allowance to the amount of 300 Euro, – 150 Euro per parent – , for up to 24 months.¹³ The concept of the Family Working Time model is currently under debate.

The legal right to child day care and more flexible hours, promoted by the Federal Programme “Day care centre PLUS”, shall also contribute to a better reconciliation of family and working life, see table 5. The regulations on leave from work to look after a dependent family member

11 Die OECD currently prepares the report “Dare to share - Germany's Experience Promoting Equal Partnership in Families”. The publication is expected for the first quarter of 2017.

12 The family allowance can be claimed until the child's eighth birthday.

13 The family allowance shall also be granted to single or separated parents.

at home, as specified in the Care Leave Act and the Family Care Leave Act, also create better framework conditions for employees to care for a dependent adult over a longer period of time.

A memorandum on family and the working world is to be the starting point for a modernisation of the work culture towards a more family-friendly organisation of working time; aimed for women and men at their different stages of life (BMFSFJ 2015c). The memorandum defines in ten guiding principles how companies can support an equal partnership. This also includes equal career opportunities for women and men and the associated income prospects. The most family-friendly employers in Germany are distinguished by way of the corporate competition "Success Factor Family", in German Erfolgsfaktor Familie. It allows to identify innovative practical examples of good models to reconcile family, care and work. As structural barriers, such as tax splitting for married couples, continue to exist, the German family and gender policy is considered to be contradictory in itself (cf. BMFSFJ 2011). Also, the repeated recommendation of the Council of the European Union to reduce disincentives to work for second earners, has so far not led to any change (EU Council 2016a).

The German debate is currently dominated by the question of how an equal partnership can best be supported and how state incentives need to be designed in order to enhance an equal partnership (Eigenmann et al. 2016). Family and equality policy objectives are widely supported by the population (Heinrich/Jochem/Seal 2016: 25).

2.3 Recognizing and valuing care work through reorganisation and/or redistribution?

The draft of the updated National Sustainable Development Strategy individually addresses each of the 17 SDGs. The designs are not exhaustive. They give a first insight into the issues which are important from the point of view of the German Federal Government; however, they also give a first impression of the importance that is assigned to the individual SDGs.

In the section referring to the main contents and political priorities for SDG 5, the German Federal Government stresses its commitment to establish gender equality and self-determination for all women and girls as a stand-alone goal and as a cross-cutting issue in the 2030 Agenda. As focal points of German equality policy, the equal participation of women in the labour market and the reconciliation of work and family life for women and men are highlighted **as measures to achieve an equal partnership in families**. On a national level, the unequal division of care work is acknowledged as to form an obstacle for women and girls to live a self-determined life and to contribute to society with their full potential. This is directly connected to the target 5.4, even if the target itself is not explicitly named. In the draft of the updated strategy, the national and international activities of the German Federal Government with regard to gender equality are listed. Regarding the national level, three activities are planned: firstly, favourable framework conditions for the equal participation of women and men in the labour market, secondly, better reconciliation of work and family life and thirdly, the proposal of a law establishing wage equity between women and men.

The unequal division of care work, as well as the previously formulated target of a more equal division of care and domestic work, are not directly addressed in the national sustainability

indicators and goals. For SDG 5, the indicator field "equality" is substantiated by two sustainability requirements: "Promote equality within society" and "Globally reinforce the economic participation of women". Two of three indicators refer to the national level: "Pay gap between women and men" and "Women in management positions" (Federal government 2016b: 52). Herein, activities of the German Federal Government are named, which (indirectly) refer to the target 5.4 and thus also refer to the division of care work between women and men. In the draft, it is distinguished between existing and planned measures. One of the existing measures, which works towards a **reorganisation** of care work between the family and the state/market, is the expansion of child day care services (also refer to the BMFSFJ 2016a).

The introduction of the parental allowance plus in 2015, the amendments to the Care Leave Act and the Family Care Leave Act, as well as the introduction of an income replacement benefit, in German Pflegeunterstützungsgeld, – as examples of existing measures – work towards a **redistribution** of care work, see table 5. Also, the minimum wage, introduced in 2015, and the planned implementation of the law establishing wage equity between women and men¹⁴ can contribute to a stronger positioning of women within the internal family negotiations about shared responsibilities and thus support an equal partnership and a redistribution of care work within the family.

With regard to target 5.4, the draft of the updated strategy appoints more existing than planned measures. As many of the existing measures have been implemented rather recently, it remains to be seen whether they unfold a long-term impact in terms of recognizing and valuing care work.

The division of care work is also indirectly addressed in the section on SDG 4. The SDG on education provides for the indicator field "Perspectives for families", in connection with the sustainability requirement "Better reconciliation of work and family life". The rate of all-day care for children is proposed as an indicator to measure progress. National targets are set for the quantities of extended half-day care¹⁵: approximately 37% of the 0 to 2-year-olds and 70% of the 3 to 5-year-olds by 2030.

Public comments on the draft strategy deal to a very small extent with SDG 5; most opinions focus in the environmental dimension.¹⁶ The opinion issued by genanet in cooperation with the Working Group Women of the German NGO Forum on Environment and Development (2016), relates directly to the target 5.4. Genanet and the Working Group Women criticise the fact that

14 On October 6, 2016, the coalition government agreed to a law establishing more wage equity between men and women.

15 In other words, more than five hours per day.

16 The opinions of the German Institute for Human Rights, the Association of German Cities, Women in Europe for a Common Future, genanet in cooperation with the Working Group Women of the German NGO Forum on Environment and Development and VENRO, refer to SDG 5; all of the opinions and information published by the German Federal Government are available in German at: <https://www.bundesregierung.de/Content/DE/StatischeSeiten/Breg/Nachhaltigkeit/Nachhaltigkeitsdialog-stellungnahmen/anregungen-zur-strategie.html>.

the activities and indicators comprised in the draft focus on paid work only and do not sufficiently take into account unpaid care work. Thus, the draft merely singles out national indicators, which refer to the economic situation of women, but do not display the unequal division of care work between women and men. Genanet and the Working Group Women therefore demand to make the fair division of care work and the upgrading of health-care and social work jobs the focal point of the implementation of SDG 5 (genanet 2016: 3). An additional indicator is suggested: the division of parental leave between mothers and fathers. It can provide an indication as to how care work is divided between women and men. Furthermore, the sectoral breakdown of the SDGs is subject to criticism and genanet and the Working Group Women demand, especially with regard to SDG 5, that all Federal Ministries make promoting gender equality an integral part of their work.

The way in which the German Federal Government will include the opinions in the updated strategy is still to see. Only after the updated strategy is launched it can be fully evaluated how SDG 5 and the target 5.4 are established in it. It can be noted, both on behalf of the German Federal Government, as well as in parts of civil society, that there is an awareness for the need to recognize and value unpaid care work.

3 Estonia

Estonia, as well as Germany, has presented a first HLPF-report on the status of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda (Republic of Estonia – Government Office 2016). The report is based on a comparison of existing Estonian strategies and objectives with the SDGs. The report notes that, in many areas, Estonia has already launched successful measures for achieving sustainable development, however, significantly more action is needed in other aspects, to meet the ambitious 2030 Agenda. Gender equality is one of the key challenges.

3.1 The implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Estonia

Existing coordination structures are used for the national implementation of the 2030 Agenda, such as the structures which were established for the implementation of the national sustainability strategy "Sustainable Estonia 21" (Estonian Ministry of the Environment 2005). Thus, the Government Office Strategy Unit, in Estonian *Riigikantselei*, will assume a coordinating role for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the inter-ministerial working group for sustainable development will enable the exchange of the ministries during the entire process.¹⁷ The Estonian Sustainable Development Commission, in Estonian *Eesti saastva arengu komisjon*¹⁸, consists of central associations of non-governmental organizations and meets several times a year to discuss various aspects of sustainable development. In the autumn of

17 Representatives of all the ministries, as well as Statistics Estonia, are represented in the working group.

18 In the spring of 2016, it was decided that the list of non-governmental organisations shall be extended to ensure that all dimensions of sustainable development are represented (Republic of Estonia – Government

2016, the commission presents the results of a review of the national sustainability strategy and provides recommendations for the revision in light of the 2030 Agenda. It will also suggest new indicators to account for all 17 SDGs.

Even if the **Estonian sustainability strategy** is revised, **it will not function as an overarching national strategy for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda**. The 2030 Agenda, it is envisaged, shall be implemented by means of existing strategies into which individual SDGs will eventually be incorporated. For the achievement of SDG 5, above all, the Welfare Development Plan 2016-2023 (Sotsiaalministeerium 2016), as well as the Gender Equality Act (Riigi Teataja 2013), are of primary importance. Additionally to the Gender Equality and Equal Treatment Commissioner, non-state actors, such as the Estonian Women's Studies and Resource Center, in Estonian *Eesti Naisuurimus- Ja Teabekeskus*, in the following ENUT, shall further contribute to the implementation of SDG 5.

3.2 Family and gender equality policy in Estonia

Estonia is a post-socialist welfare state with a strong dual earner-model. The dual earner-model is mainly based on the socialist understanding of equality and is, thus, focussed on the position of women in the labour market (Pascall/Kwak 2009: 128); while at the same time, a traditional gender-related division of care and domestic work continued to exist within the family (Klenner/Leiber 2009: 22). In Estonia, the employment rate of women and men is significantly above the EU average, see table 2. In comparison to other European countries, there are also very few women in part-time employment; this is also true for mothers with a child under the age of six. Focussing on the division of care work, it becomes evident that women in Estonia also today assume a much larger share of care and domestic work than Estonian men, see table 3. This is also reflected in the use of parental leave, in Estonian *lapsehool-duspuhkus*. It has remained approximately at the same level since 2007, at a ratio of 92 to 8 percent of mothers and fathers, see table 5. The generous rules for leave from work and the financial support during the parental leave period does neither include a father's quota, nor does it include additional "partner months", as, for instance, the German parental allowance does. As women and men have similarly high labour force participation rates, while a majority of unpaid care work is performed by women and women are primarily supported by state provisions (Järviste 2009), Karu and Kasearu (2011: 24) characterize Estonia as a "dual earner/state & female carer model".

Since the turn of the millennium, a trend is noticeable in Estonia, the gender-related division of gainful employment and care work and the persistence of traditional gender roles are increasingly questioned. In European comparison, the financial support during parental leave is generous and the parental leave model meets important features to spur a more equal division of paid and unpaid work within families (cf. Dearing 2016).

Office 2016). The new Commission does, however, not feature any NGOs, which deal with the social dimension of sustainable development at the national level, as well as the subject of gender equality. The ecological and economical focus persists.

For the better involvement of men into care and domestic work, almost half of the Estonians support more flexible working hours, see table 6. Also measures, which work towards a change in the attitudes of boys and men towards care work and a better protection against discrimination for men, who take parental leave from work, are considered to be important preconditions.

In 2015, almost half of the fathers used the possibility to take a paid paternity leave, in Estonian *isapuhkus*, of up to ten working days, see table 5. Paternity leave was reformed several times in the past years: As a result of the introduction of a financial benefit in 2008, the figures for take up rose to 50 percent, following the abolition of financial benefits in 2009 and the subsequent re-introduction in 2013, the figures increase again slowly. This development highlights how important available financial support during periods of leave from work is. In Estonia, the benefit amounts to 100 percent of the income for maternity and paternity leave alike. Also during parental leave 100 percent of previous earnings are paid for up to 62 weeks.

“[L]onger career breaks for women due to care responsibilities” (EU Council 2016b), however, continue to contribute to a comparatively high gender pay gap. In Estonia, it amounts to up to 28 percent, which is the highest rate among European member states. The career breaks also arise due to the legal obligation of the family to care for dependent family members. Again, more women than men take a leave from work to care for a dependent family member. At the same time, taking care of family members is less well supported by the state than caring for and educating children, see table 5. The Council of the European Union recommends that the Estonian government introduces measures to narrow the gender pay gap, including those measures foreseen in the Welfare Development Plan 2016-2023.

Social awareness for the issue of gender equality has increased, especially in the course of the transition process and the EU-accession process. Gender equality is established by law in Estonia. At the same time the **cultural conceptions, that also have an impact on the division of care work, are still heavily influenced by traditional gender roles** (Karu and Kasearu 2011; Järviste 2009). In consequence, the progressive national policy framework and the public attitudes partially contradict each other (Vsevirov 2016). As the change of gender roles is a prerequisite for a successful family and gender policy, the Estonian government tries to promote it; a public debate on issues such as the role of fathers and gender stereotypes has begun (Järviste 2009).

3.3 Recognizing and valuing care work through reorganisation and/or redistribution?

The Estonian HLPF-report provides national targets for each SDG and describes the general situation and starting point in Estonia, as well as possible measures to be taken in order to achieve the SDGs on national level. As Estonia does not use a comprehensive national strategy for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the individual strategies, which are considered relevant for SDG 5 in the HLPF-report, will be analysed.

The main area of concern with regard to SDG 5 is the gender pay gap. Therefore, the gender pay gap is proposed as the sole indicator for SDG 5 and a reduction to less than 20% by 2020 is indicated as a national target. The pay gap is seen as an indication, that women, who are

generally well educated, are not sufficiently represented on the labour market – and therefore in the realm of paid work. A connection to the unequal division of unpaid care work is, however, not addressed in the HLPF-report.

With regard to SDG 5, the Gender Equality Act (Riigi Teataja 2013) and the Welfare Development Plan 2016-2023 (Sotsiaalministeerium 2016) are the two relevant strategies on national level.

In addition to the constitution, the Gender Equality Act, adopted in 2004, forms the legal basis for the Estonian equality policy. It provides protection against discrimination on the basis of gender stereotypes, e.g. which stereotypes according to which care work is perceived of as a typical women's work and deny men the same level of participation in care and education of their children and/or for dependent family members. In this sense, **the legally-based discrimination protection could be used to further substantiate the terms "recognize" and "value" as used in target 5.4.** However, it remains open as to whether the Estonian Government adopts this option to substantiate the target on national level.

The Welfare Development Plan 2016-2023 foresees measures in three areas: Firstly, the economic and political equality of women and men, secondly, the provision of human and institutional capacities for the promotion of gender equality and, thirdly, the elimination of gender stereotypes and their negative impact on women and men. The measures in all three areas can contribute to create more awareness for unpaid care and household work. Measures, which are directed to facilitating access to care services for children and dependent people and aim at alleviating the care burden for family carers, act towards a **reorganisation**. A working group is expected to present reform initiatives in November 2017. To achieve a **redistribution** of care work, the Welfare Development Plan also aims to overcome gender stereotypes and raise social awareness for the negative effects of gender stereotypes. This may contribute to promote a more equal division of care work between women and men. The economic and political participation of women is also to be taken into account; it can provide women with a better negotiating position within the family.

The tasks of the Gender Equality and Equal Treatment Commissioner, Liisa-Ly Pakosta, include the securing of equal rights for women and men in all areas of society. With the 2030 Agenda, she will be provided with an additional basis for her own work. So far there is no information about how she will support the 2030 Agenda, the achievement of SDG 5 and target 5.4 on national level.¹⁹

The HLPF-report also assigns an important role to ENUT, especially when it comes to achieving SDG 5. As a non-state actor, ENUT contributes to disseminate information on gender equality and the 2030 Agenda into society. According to own information, ENUT already incorporates information about the 2030 Agenda in its events and deploys materials of the Estonian Roundtable for Development Cooperation for this purpose.²⁰ Additionally, ENUT developed a

19 A query was unfortunately not successful.

20 Information provided by Reet Laja, Estonian Women's Training Centre.

cooperation with the Stockholm Environment Institute Tallinn, to reinforce the importance of SDG 5 throughout the entire implementation process. So far, the target 5.4 has not yet been specifically addressed by ENUT.²¹

4 Sweden

The Swedish Government wants to assume a leading role in implementing the 2030 Agenda. To this end, the Swedish Prime Minister Stefan Löfven initiated a High-Level Group, in the following HLG, in September 2015. Sweden and Germany are the two European countries that participate in this group.²² The HLG member states committed themselves to an exemplary implementation of the SDGs. Sweden has a particularly good starting point for the national implementation, as it already achieved very good results with regards to all SDGs (Sachs et al. 2016).²³ This also applies to SDG 5 on gender equality. Gender equality already is an important policy goal in Sweden and an issue that is high on the political and social agenda.

4.1 The implementation of the Agenda 2030 in Sweden

For the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the Swedish government pursues an approach of broad participation. This provides state and non-state actors with the opportunity to contribute with their expertise. At the same time, this means that Sweden is currently in a phase, in which structures are designed and responsibilities are defined (Civil Society Group on the High Level Group on the 2030 Agenda 2016). Two members of the government are mainly responsible for the coordination of the implementation process: Isabella Lövin, Minister for International Development Cooperation and Climate, also Deputy Prime Minister, and Ardalan Shekarabi, Minister for Public Administration. Furthermore, the state chancellery, in Swedish *Statsrådsberedningen*, is involved in the process. In addition, an inter-ministerial working group was established to address the implementation of the SDGs. By the end of August 2016, all Swedish authorities were asked to address the SDGs which are relevant to them and state the reasons for it (Regeringskansliet 2016c). While SDG 5 is addressed by many authorities, only few authorities referred directly to the target 5.4 and its aim to recognize and value care work.

Since June 2016, an independent Committee of seven experts²⁴ is preparing the Swedish strategy for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda (Kommittédirektiv 2016:18). The main task of the Committee is to submit a gap analysis of existing national policy and its alignment with

21 Ibid.

22 The HLG consists of Sweden, Brazil, Colombia, Germany, Liberia, South Africa, Tanzania, East Timor and Tunisia.

23 Germany and Estonia are listed 6th and 21st, respectively, in the country ranking.

24 Parul Sharma (Chairman; Sustainability Officer, Law Firm Vinge and Director of the Academy for Human Rights in Business), Ida Texell (Director of the Attunda Fire Brigade Association), Mattias Klum (Nature Photographer), Ingrid Petersson (Director General of the Research Council for Sustainable Development Formas), Johan Hassel (Think Tank Global Utmaning), Johan Rockström (Professor of Environmental Sciences of Stockholm University and Stockholm Resilience Center), Johanna Sandahl (Chairman of the Naturskyddsföreningen).

the SDGs as well as indicate which critical goal areas require further action. On this basis, the Committee shall prepare an overarching national action plan for implementing the 2030 Agenda. Special consideration shall be given to possible synergies and conflicts of interest between the different SDGs and targets. The experts shall consult a large number of national actors and suggest innovative solutions on how information on the 2030 Agenda can be shared with the general public.

The composition of the Committee was strongly criticised in Sweden. The main point of criticism is that the social dimension is underrepresented with regard to the ecological dimension (Halkjaer 2016). In an open letter to Prime Minister Löfven, The Swedish Women's Lobby, in the following SWL, draws attention to the fact that the women's movement is not represented in the Committee and it, as a result thereof, lacks critical gender expertise (SWL 2016). Also Åsa Regnér, Minister for Children, the Elderly and Gender Equality, as well as her Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, in Swedish *Socialdepartementet*, have not been assigned a central role in the implementation process. There is the risk that SDG 5 will not be adequately embedded in the Swedish strategy.

On November 1, 2016, the Committee presented its first results in the form of an interim report, see section 4.3. The overarching national action plan is to follow on March 1, 2017. Non-state actors have not been involved in the preparation of the interim report²⁵ and the Committee is expected to start dealing with the individual SDGs and their targets in spring 2017.²⁶

In the future, the implementation of the 2030 Agenda will also be supported by a new national equality body. The establishment of it was announced by Equality Minister Åsa Regnér in September 2016 (Regeringskansliet 2016b). It shall, on the one hand, contribute to a more effective implementation of equality policy by bringing together existing knowledge, and, on the other hand, by being recognized as a central contact point. It will start its work in 2018 and is expected to play a central role in the achievement of SDG 5 and of all of its targets.²⁷

4.2 Family and gender equality policy in Sweden

As a social-democratic welfare state, Sweden offers comprehensive social rights to all citizens. The universalistic approach emphasizes the equality of all citizens and with a high degree of social security, it contributes to the elimination of gender-related inequalities (Borchhorst/Teigen 2015). The fundamental objective of the Swedish equality policy is to enable women and men to shape society as well as their own lives (Eigenmann et al. 2016). This also includes the equal division of unpaid care and domestic work between women and men (Eigenmann et al. 2016), which is a key aspect of Swedish gender policy.

Since the 1970s, the dual-earner/dual carer model is the starting point for all family-policy measures (Eigenmann et al. 2016). The introduction of a gender-neutral parental leave in 1974

25 Interview with Clara Berglund, The Swedish Women's Lobby.

26 Assessment by the expert, Johann Hassel, Think Tank Global Utmaning and member of the independent Committee of experts.

27 Ibid.

aimed at a double emancipation: with women being more involved in gainful employment and men taking greater responsibility for the care and upbringing of their children, as well as household tasks (Axelsson 2014). The individual taxation system, introduced in 1971, helps to ensure that the double-earner model is also economically attractive (Eigenmann et al. 2016). In 2015, the employment rates of women and men are almost on the same level and the participation of Swedish women in the workforce is well above the EU average, see table 2. However, more women than men work on a part-time basis and the gender pay gap amounts to not less than 15 percent. Care work is mainly reorganized by means of widely available public services in form of high-quality all-day care for children and widely accessible tax-funded formal care for older people.²⁸ Families, thus, benefit from the **reorganisation** of care work initiated by the state.²⁹

The approach of a gender-neutral parental leave was (on its own) not able to trigger substantial change with regard to the second aspect of the double emancipation, i.e. the **redistribution** of care work within the family (Bergman/Hobson 2002). From 1995 onward, non-transferable parental leave periods were gradually introduced, especially aiming at involving fathers more intensively in the care and upbringing of children. While the introduction of the first "daddy month" in 1995 "led to more fathers taking more leave" (Haas/Duvander/Hwang 2016), the extension to two months during the year 2002 had a less dramatic effect. In 2016 the number of non-transferable month is again increased to now sum up to a total of three month, which are exclusively reserved for respectively mother and father, in Swedish called *mamma- och pappamånader*. As a further incentive for a more equal division of care work, there is paid paternity leave and a Gender Equality Bonus, which is paid to parents who share the period of transferable parental leave equally, see table 5.³⁰

While the conservative-liberal coalition, in government from 2006 to 2014, attempted to establish a more traditional image of the family and to introduce elements which attributed a greater role to the market, the current centre-left government refers to itself as a feminist government. Gender equality is a priority of government action (Regeringskansliet 2016a). This priority is also supported by Swedish society at large, which regards gender equality as a fundamental right and an important prerequisite for a fair society, see table 6. At the same time, almost three quarters of Swedes believe that inequality between women and men continues to exist in their country. This evidences a high level of public awareness for gender-related inequalities.

28 The shift of reproduction work towards the public sector is also known as "reproduction going public" (Borchhorst/Teigen 2015:37).

29 However, in specialist circles, it is pointed out that this is no longer the case, especially due to the lack of availability of residential care services (see Schön/Johansson 2016).

30 The government proposes to abolish the Gender Equality Bonus from 2017 on. Since its introduction in 2008, the Gender Equality Bonus did not have the desired effect.

4.3 Recognizing and valuing care work through reorganisation and/or re-distribution?

The interim report submitted in November 2016 by the Committee of experts describes the initial conditions for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Sweden. The report mainly demonstrates how existing structures can be used and which new structures should be established for a successful implementation of the SDGs at national level (Statens Offentliga Utredningar 2016). The report highlights that Sweden – unlike, for example, Germany – cannot draw on an existing national sustainability strategy to implement the SDGs. The Swedish sustainability strategy has not been revised since 2006. Therefore, first of all, a comprehensive picture of existing policies, measures and strategies must be drafted to see whether and how the 17 SDGs and targets are already promoted by Swedish policy. The interim report stresses that, against the background of a good Swedish starting position for the implementation of the entire 2030 Agenda, it must be ensured that Sweden continues to further improve in order to achieve future sustainable development. For this purpose, the 2030 Agenda must be implemented at all levels – national, regional and local.³¹

The interim report itself does not address the individual SDGs and targets of the 2030 Agenda. However, it draws attention to the study of the Stockholm Environment Institute, in the following SEI, in which an assessment of the SDGs and targets of the 2030 Agenda relevant in the Swedish context is performed. The SEI-study indicates that the "SDGs are far from a marginal add-on to current policy and action" (Weitz et al. 2015: ii).

SDG 5 is not addressed in the SEI-study as one of the particularly critical goal areas for Sweden. However, at the same time, it is pointed out that Sweden has not yet achieved five of the six targets of SDG 5. This is in line with the results of the Swedish Commission on the Future, established in 2011, which considers achieving gender equality as one of the key challenges of the future (Framtidskommissionen 2013). Gender equality is an important policy goal in Sweden and "addressing remaining gender gaps is high on the political and social agenda" (Weitz et al. 2015: 7). Against this background, the SEI-study recommends to consider SDG 5 as an important part of the internal political implementation process and the final national action plan.³²

Regarding the target 5.4, the study states a positive development trend over the last few decades. However, Swedish women continue to be responsible for a larger share of unpaid care work – especially domestic work, child care and upbringing of children – and suffer the negative impact on their careers, remuneration, pensions and economic independence (Weitz et al. 2015). Despite the substantial improvements in terms of a more equal division of care work

31 The powerful role of Swedish municipalities contributes, according to the expert Clara Berglund, The Swedish Women's Lobby, to the fact that the government and the Committee until now have predominantly dealt with the structures and competencies and less with the SDGs of the 2030 Agenda.

32 Weitz et al. (2015) argue that the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, requires a domestic agenda, a cooperation agenda, as well as an international agenda.

between women and men, Sweden has not yet completely achieved the target 5.4. The existing measures and strategies are, however, considered appropriate. Separate taxation, a paid parental leave (**redistribution**) and state subsidies for child care services (**reorganisation**) are considered important instruments for the reconciliation of care work and gainful employment and are directed towards women as well as men.

The ambiguous wording "recognize", "value" and "promote", as well as the lack of an explicit time frame for achieving the target, are identified and criticised as shortcomings of the target 5.4. The target is therefore referred to as a „**zero visions**”-target (Weitz et al. 2015:10). In consequence, the SEI-study concludes, the target 5.4 could receive less attention in the domestic implementation strategy than those targets, which indicate clear and quantifiable goals and are time-bound.

The interim report does not indicate that less attention is paid to the target 5.4. However, so far the Committee rather dealt with establishing new structures than the individual goals and targets. The Committee has not yet engaged in the exchange with civil society organizations in the area of gender equality, such as SWL.³³ The first meetings are scheduled for the end of 2016.

Swedish government representatives have, however, already started discussions with non-state actors, including SWL. In talks with Ardalan Shekarabi and Åsa Regnér, SWL was able to contribute with its expertise in the field of gender equality and thus tried to further stress the importance of SDG 5 for the national implementation strategy of the 2030 Agenda. SWL recommended to accompany the state monitoring of the national implementation by shadow reports of civil society.³⁴ Also here, it is still open as to whether the proposals by SWL will be implemented in the further process by the Committee and the Swedish government.

5 European approaches in comparison

The comparison of the European approaches comprises three aspects: firstly, the approaches used by Germany, Estonia and Sweden to implement the 2030 Agenda nationally; secondly, the family and gender policies, which function as a national framework for recognizing and valuing care work, and thirdly, how the target 5.4 itself is referred to in the national implementation strategies.

5.1 National approaches for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda

All three European countries are currently in the process of drafting their national strategies and procedures for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Similarities can arise

33 Interview with Clara Berglund, The Swedish Women's Lobby.

34 Such shadow reports are, for instance, already published to monitor the national implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, short CEDAW.

due to common trends in social development in Europe³⁵, as well as due to the European framework for equality policy and the EU strategy for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda (EU COM 2016a, 2016b). Nevertheless, Germany, Estonia and Sweden have selected different approaches for the national implementation of the 2030 Agenda:

In **Germany**, the **updated National Sustainable Development Strategy** forms the framework for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Currently the sustainability strategy is revised, so that it also reflects the social dimension of sustainable development. A first draft has been available since May 2016. The German Federal Government suggests measures to be taken as well as national indicators for each SDG. For SDG 5, mainly existing measures are named. The target 5.4, is addressed as part of the new central goal of a more equal division of responsibility for work and family life, which shall enable a fair division of care work between women and men. However, the target 5.4 is not featured as a separate indicator area and/or indicator.

Non-state actors could comment on the draft and propose additions, changes and deletions. Solely the joint opinion of Genant and the AG Women referred to the target 5.4. It criticised the fact that the unequal division of care work among women and men is not adequately addressed in the draft. In the opinion, the ratio of shared parental leave between mothers and fathers is suggested to be included as a supplementary indicator.

Estonia uses already established coordination structures and strategies for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Even if the national sustainability strategy, similar to the approach in Germany, is revised to represent all 17 SDGs, it will not act as an integrated framework for the implementation. The Estonian HLPF-report on the status of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda refers to the **existing individual strategies**, which eventually need to be supplemented to encompass all SDGs and targets. The HLPF-report also describes the existing situation and the measures taken by Estonia to achieve sustainable development. For SDG 5, the focus is on the gender pay gap, which is particularly wide in Estonia compared to other European member states. The individual targets are not explicitly taken into account. Nevertheless, there are elements in the individual strategies – especially in the Welfare Development Plan 2016-2023 – which can enhance both a reorganisation as well as a redistribution of care work.

The Estonian government involves the Gender Equality and Equal Treatment Commissioner, as well as the non-governmental Estonian Women's Studies and Resource Center, in the national implementation of SDG 5. For both institutions, it is still open as to whether and how they will address the target 5.4.

A **Swedish** Committee of experts is developing an overarching **national action plan** for implementing the 2030 Agenda. In a first interim report, presented in November 2016, the Committee mainly focused on the structures and competencies which exist or need to be created for the implementation at national level. The composition of the Committee was heavily criticised in Sweden, as none of its members has a background in the gender equality field. The

35 These are, for instance, an increasing labour market participation of women, the demographic change and a new diversity of families.

detailed engagement with the individual SDGs and targets has however not yet started. It is so far mainly based on a preliminary study of the Stockholm Environment Institute, which identifies critical goal areas for Sweden. With regard to the target 5.4, the study highlights, in particular, that the ambiguous wording "recognize" and "value" and the correspondent vagueness of the target could cause that the so called "zero vision"-target 5.4 receives less attention in the national implementation process than those targets, which are clear, quantifiable and time-bound. For non-state actors, who are not included in the Committee but want to achieve that gender equality becomes a key issue of the national implementation strategy, the Swedish government is available as a contact point. Civil society submitted own recommendations to the Swedish government, such as the introduction of an additional monitoring report by civil society.

With its updated National Sustainable Development Strategy, **Germany** has taken crucial steps towards the national implementation of the 2030 Agenda. **Estonia** has established its own procedures for the national implementation and has already assigned relevant strategies to implement the individual SDGs. **Sweden** is in a phase of preparation, during which structures are reviewed, created and (new) competencies are assigned.

The three approaches have advantages and disadvantages: The German update of the national sustainability strategy offers an integrated framework for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and contributes to the consolidation of existing and planned measures. At the same time, the individual SDGs are still considered separately. The Estonian approach entails that there is no explicit confrontation with the wording of the SDGs and that there is no strategy on how to incorporate the SDGs into existing strategies. In the development of a national action plan for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the Swedish interim report shows how existing structures are used and which new structures should be created for a successful implementation of the SDGs at national level. An assessment of the SDGs and the targets, to identify which of them are relevant in the Swedish context, has so far only occurred in the SEI-study. It offers a good starting point, however, it provides little information about the significance which will ultimately be assigned to the individual SDGs and/or targets. Sweden has the option to learn from and draw on the implementation processes of other states.

The different approaches also reflect that – with the 2030 Agenda universally applying to all states – the EU member states are for the first time in the position to demonstrate that they are able to implement the SDGs on a national level. The Millennium Development Goals, MDGs, which applied for the period 2000 to 2015, were largely only included in the country's development policies.

5.2 Family and gender equality policy as a national framework

Germany, Estonia and Sweden have different starting points to recognize and value care work. Thus, on the one hand, they have different **structural framework conditions** and provide, with their welfare state system, for different support options for an equal division of care work (Esping-Andersen 1990, 1999; Beckmann 2014). On the other hand, there are different **cultural conceptions** in the three states about how care work and gainful employment

should be divided between women and men. The **gender regimes** influence, how care work is organized (Haas 2005; Beckmann 2014).

The Gender Equality Index (EIGE 2016b) measures the development in the EU member states since 2005 and depicts the different starting points of the three countries with regard to achieving SDG 5. The Gender Equality Index is based on six dimensions³⁶ and assesses to which extent gender equality has been achieved: Germany and Estonia present an overall positive development trend for the period 2005 to 2012. Sweden remains at consistently high levels since 2010 and is much more successful in reducing gender inequality than all other European states.

In **Sweden**, the family and gender policy aims to ensure that women and men have equal opportunities to shape society as well as their own lives. This includes an **equal division of gainful employment and care work**. Gender equality is an important policy goal in Sweden. The Swedish society considers gender equality to be an important prerequisite for a fair society and criticise the fact that gender inequalities continue to exist.

The **goal of a more equal division of responsibility for work and family life**, i.e. equal partnership, in German “partnerschaftliche Vereinbarkeit”, and the incentives introduced indicate that the question of a gender-equal organization of care work has become an important aspect of **German** family policy. Additionally, gender equality and with it also the equal division of unpaid care work is of great importance to a majority of the German population. However, so far only few parents have been able to put their wish to live an equal partnership into action.

In **Estonia**, the national framework conditions for the care and education of children, as one central aspect of care work, are favourable and comparatively generous. Especially the parental leave model meets important characteristics, which have been found to initiate and support a more equal division of care work between mothers and fathers.³⁷ Due to persisting **traditional gender roles**, women continue to be responsible for a larger share of unpaid care work. Public services mainly help women to reconcile work and care responsibilities. A public debate about traditional gender roles and their negative impact on women’s and men’s lives has begun. Approaches are being discussed as to how men can be better involved in care work.

5.3 The target 5.4 in the context of the national strategies

The question of a gender-equal division of care work is addressed in all three **national strategies** through a **combination of reorganizing and redistributing measures**. Due to the different starting points in Germany, Estonia and Sweden, the three countries choose different approaches and priorities as well as measures. **Germany and Sweden can draw on established measures in their family and gender policies for the redistribution of care work**, which already address the division of care work as an important aspect of gender equality.

36 The dimensions include work, money, knowledge, time, power and health.

37 With regard to the care for dependent family members there are hardly any approaches addressing at a more equal division of care between women and men.

These measures are, in addition, supported by a majority of the German and Swedish population. In **Estonia**, the national framework conditions, which support a more equal division of care work, have not yet spurred any substantial change; mainly due to the persistence of **traditional gender roles** in society at large.

In Germany, many of the measures referred to in the updated National Sustainable Development Strategy have been implemented rather recently and must now show if they in the long term ensure that care work is recognized and valued. There are only a few new measures in the updated strategy. The Estonian approach allows, similar to that of the German sustainability strategy, to build on previous strategies and measures. For Sweden, the measures highlighted in the SEI-study are listed in table 1. The overarching national action plan, which is to be presented in March 2017, could draw on these measures as well as add new ones.

The target 5.4 itself is most extensively discussed in the SEI-study; in the German and Estonian documents, the target is only indirectly addressed. In the draft of the updated National Sustainable Development Strategy, this is done for example by the concept of an equal partnership. The Estonian Welfare Development Plan 2016-2023 aims at reducing gender stereotypes and raises awareness for their negative impact on women's and men's lives.

Table 1: Recognizing and valuing care work: National measures³⁸

Approach	Germany	Estonia	Sweden
Reorganisation	<i>Existing measures:</i> Expansion of childcare	<i>Planned measures:</i> Better access to care services for children and people in need of nursing care	<i>Existing measures:</i> Publicly funded childcare
Redistribution	<i>Existing measures:</i> Parental allowance plus; care and family caring time; care support money; indirectly: Introduction of minimum wage <i>Planned measures:</i> indirectly: Law for more wage equity between men and women; the statutory right to temporary part-time work (right to return to previous working time)	<i>Planned measures:</i> Elimination of gender stereotypes; indirectly: equal economical and political participation	<i>Existing measures:</i> paid paternity leave period with non-transferable mother and father months; indirect: individual taxation

Sources: Federal Government (2016b); Sotsiaalministeerium (2016); Weitz et al. (2015).

Only the SEI-study deals critically with the **wording "recognize" and "value" as used in target 5.4**. The SEI-study assumes that the target 5.4, as a "zero visions"-target, runs the risk

³⁸ As stated in the national strategies with regard to SDG 5.

to be of relatively low priority in national strategies. Thus, it is all the more important that the target and the wording "recognize" and "value" are substantiated through clear and quantifiable as well as time-bound national targets. In the draft of the updated National Sustainable Development Strategy in Germany the target 5.4 is, however, not substantiated by a national indicator. It is, thus, not expected that a future state monitoring will devote special attention to the division of care work. It remains up to, for instance, non-state actors to hold the German Federal Government accountable on the basis of its general remarks with regard to target 5.4; i.e. in the draft of the updated strategy the German Federal Government acknowledges that the unequal division of care work forms an obstacle for women and girls, to live a self-determined life and contribute to society with their full potential. A confrontation with the wording of the target 5.4 is also not part of the Estonian approach to implement the 2030 Agenda through existing strategies. It remains to be seen, after the revision of the Estonian sustainability strategy is presented, whether or not the strategy – similar to the German strategy – will act as an integrated frame of reference for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and whether it will be applied by state and/or non-state actors as such a frame of reference. It is also still open whether the Swedish action plan will offset the weaknesses of the target, for example, through the definition of specific, national targets.

In all three countries, achieving gender equality is considered an important future challenge. **The target 5.4 is implemented in the national strategies of Germany and Estonia by the dual approach of reorganisation and redistribution, although it is not substantiated through national indicators and/or specified by national targets.** The way the German Federal Government incorporates civil society criticism into its final National Sustainable Development Strategy is still open at this point. In Estonia, the 2030 Agenda with its SDG 5 and target 5.4, will at least revive the current public debate about gender stereotypes and provide a further important impetus for a reorganisation and/or redistribution of care work. Since the Swedish national action plan is currently being prepared, it is also **open whether Sweden will stipulate concrete national targets to recognize and value care work** and become a leader in the implementation with regard to the social dimension of the 2030 Agenda.

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Annex

Table 2: Labour market participation and gender-related pay gap

	Germany	Estonia	Sweden	EU-28
Labour market participation, age 20-64 years, total (%)				
	78	77	81	70
Labour market participation, age 20-64 years, according to gender (%)				
Women	74	73	78	64
Men	82	81	83	76
Part-time employees, age 20-64 years, according to gender (% of total employment)				
Women	47	13	35	32
Men	9	6	12	8
Part-time employees, age 20-49 years, with a child under 6 years of age, according to gender (%)				
Women	57	22	33	33
Men	6	-	10	6
Gender-related pay gap (unadjusted, %)³⁹				
	21	28 (2014)	15 (2014)	17 (2014)

NB: Information for 2015, unless otherwise stated.

Sources: Eurostat – Employment rate by gender (31.10.2016); Eurostat – Part-time employment as a percentage of total employment by gender and age group (31.10.2016); Eurostat – Percentage of adult part-time workers according to gender, age group, number of children and the age of the youngest child (31.10.2016); Eurostat – Gender pay gap without adjustments; Destatis (2016a).

Table 3: Time use and care work: Gender discrepancies

	Germany	Estonia	Sweden	EU-28
Participation in child care/education (%)				
Women	32	53	34	45
Men	23	41	29	27
<i>Difference</i>	9	12	5	18
Participation in household work, cooking (%)				
Women	80	79	71	77
Men	20	42	50	24
<i>Difference</i>	60	37	21	53

Sources: EIGE (2016b).

39 The percentage of earnings difference in the average gross hourly salaries of full-time employed men and women is an indication of unequal treatment of women and men on the labour market.

Table 4: Time use: OECD Gender Data Portal

	Germany (2012/2013)	Estonia (2009/2010)	Sweden (2010/2011)
Participation in unpaid work per day, total (minutes)			
Women	190 559*	249	207
Men	115 507*	160	154
Household work, e.g. cooking (minutes)			
Women	171 390*	147	95
Men	106 372*	89	79
Supervision and care of family members (in the household; minutes)			
Women	19 169*	42	25
Men	9 135*	18	17
...the care and upbringing of children (minutes)			
Women	18 118*	42	21
Men	8 79*	18	13
... the supervision and care of adults (minutes)			
Women	1 51*	0	4
Men	1 56*	0	4

NB: *only performers. Information on household work for Germany is based on the accumulated values of the activity codes: 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46.

Source: Germany: Destatis (2015); Sweden and Estonia: OECD Gender Data Portal 2016 – Time use across the world (2016).

Table 5: Structural framework conditions for reconciling family and working life

	Germany	Estonia	Sweden
Care and upbringing of children			
Parental leave	<i>Elternzeit</i>	<i>lapsehoolduspuhkus</i>	<i>föräldraförsäkring</i>
Period entitlement	Up to 3 years; thereof, 24 months up to the child's 8th birthday	Up until the child's 3rd birthday; NB: Family entitlement; parents are not allowed to take the leave at the same time	240 days per parent (240+240 = 480 days) Legal entitlement of both parents to full leave until the child is 18 month old; regardless of financial benefits
Financial benefit(s)	a) Parental allowance for 12 months plus 2 partner months; income-dependent monthly payment; max. € 1 800 min. € 300 b) Parental allowance plus (children born after June 2015) for 24 months, plus 4 months of partnership bonus; income-related monthly payment (half of the parental allowance); max. € 900, min. € 150 Regardless of the leave, possible to combine with gainful employment of up to 30 hours a week	a) Parental benefit (<i>vanemahuvitis</i>); 100% of average income during the previous year for max. 62 weeks. After the child's 70th day, fathers are entitled (from 2007 on; previously first after child's 6th month), max. € 2 724/month, min. € 430/month for employees, otherwise € 390/month b) Child cash-for-care benefit (<i>lapsehooldustasu</i>); flat rate payment of € 38/month; subsequent to the parental benefit, up to the child's 3rd birthday; also for another caregiver, other than the parents Regardless of the leave from work in case of simultaneous gainful employment the financial benefit is reduced to max. 50%	195 days per parent with 77.6% of the previous income; max. € 47 501/year; thereof 90 days reserved for the mother (<i>mammamånader</i>) and father (<i>pappamånader</i>) (= non-transferable)⁴⁰ 45 days per parent, as a flat rate payment of € 19/day; transferable If one or both parents are unemployed, € 27/day will be paid for the total of 480 days Available until the child's 12th birthday; after the 4th birthday, merely for 96 days⁴¹; until the child's 1st birthday, possible for 30 joint days (<i>dubbeldagar</i>, cannot be part of the 90 non-transferable days) Can be combined with full and partial⁴² leave from work

40 Applicable for children born after 2016. Previously, two months were not transferable.

41 Since 2014; previously, the financial benefit could be claimed up to the child's 8th birthday, without restrictions.

42 Working time reductions by 50%, 25% or 12.5% are possible. The length of the remunerated exemption period is extended accordingly.

			Supplementary pension for the parent, who earns less during the first 4 years of the child's life (usually the caregiver) Gender Equality Bonus (<i>jamställdhetsbonus</i>): per day, during which the parent with so far fewer days provides care beyond the 90 non-transferable days, both parents are entitled to an additional amount of € 5, which is tax free; for max. 105 days
Claim, mothers/fathers (%)	a) Parental allowance (for children born in the year 2014): Mothers: 96% (whereof 87% claim 12 months) Fathers: 34,2% (whereof 97% claim minimum period of 2 months) b) Parental allowance plus: 17,4% of the parents (first quarter 2016)	a) Parental benefit (2015) Mothers: 92,5 % Fathers: 7,5 % This ratio has remained stable since 2007 b) Child cash-for-care benefit: no information available	Mothers: 55%; average 94 days (2014) Fathers: 45%; average 39 days (2014) Couples, who split the paternity leave period in approximately equal portions: 12.7% (for children born in 2010) Gender Equality Bonus: 56% of the parents, average 14,5 days (2012)⁴³ Shared 30-days (<i>dubbeldagar</i>): 1/3 of the parents (2013)
Maternity leave	Mutterschaftsurlaub	rasedus- ja sünnituspuhkus	graviditetspenning
Period entitlement	14 weeks; 6 weeks before the birth of the child, 8 weeks after the birth of the child	140 calendar days; between 30-70 days prior to birth	Mandatory 2 weeks prior to or after the birth of the child; unlimited exemption if there is a risk to the child's health
Financial benefit(s)	100% of previous income, self-employed persons are not eligible	100% of the average income in the previous calendar year; min. equivalent to the minimum wage (approx. €390/month); no upper ceiling; employees and the self-employed (it is not mandatory to claim the leave)	a) Parental benefit of up to 80% of the previous income; if employed at least 240 days prior to the calculated date of birth b) If the work activity represents a risk, up to 50 of the last 60 days of the

43 Both parents claim more than the 60 non-transferable days. After the reform of 2016, both parents must claim more than the 90 non-transferable days in order to receive the bonus.

			pregnancy will be paid with 77,6% of the previous income
Claim	100%	No statistical survey	22% claim on average 41 days prior to the birth (2014).
Paternity leave	<i>Vaterschaftsurlaub</i>	<i>isapuhkus</i>	<i>tillfällig föräldrapenning i samband med barns födelse eller adoption⁴⁴</i>
Period Entitlement	No legal claim	10 working days (up to 2 months before or after the birth of the child, in intervals of min. 1 day)	10 days during the first 60 days following childbirth
Financial benefits	/	100% of income; a maximum of three times the average income for the next to last quarter, from the quarter in which the exemption is claimed	77.6% of the income; max. € 35 611/year
Claim	/	46% claimed at least a share of the 10 days (2015)	75% of the fathers, same-sex parents or other related persons (for children born in 2014)
Formal child care			
Legal entitlement	From the child's 1st birthday (since August 2013)	From the child's 18th month	From the child's 1st birthday; full-time, if the parents are gainfully employed, part-time, if the parents are not employed
Gap between (well-) paid parental leave and legal entitlement	none	none	none
Claim			
- Younger than 3 years	33% (2016)	32% (2013)	76% (2015)
- Older than 3 years	94% (2016)	87% (2012)	94% (2015)
		There is, de facto, a deficit of public care services for children between 18 months and 3 years of age	

44 The description of paternity leave is retained here for reasons of comparability. The "temporary parental benefit in connection with birth or adoption" is, however, gender neutral in the concept and is directed toward the second parent or any other related person, if the second parent part is unknown.

Family care			
Financial benefit(s)	a) Cash-for-care benefit, if no public child care for a child aged between 15 and 36 months is claimed and <u>when application for the benefit was submitted before July 21, 2015</u> b) Regional care allowance, or educational allowance in Bavaria and Saxony; varying conditions at country level; max. € 300, min. € 150		
Claims	a) 455 321 persons in the first quarter of 2015; whereof 95% were women b) Regional cash-for-care benefit in Bavaria: 112 500 applications delivered (second half of 2016)		
Care of dependent family members			
Who provides care?	A large portion of the persons in need of care is cared for by family members – mostly women ⁴⁵ Principle: "at home first", home care and living at home as a priority solution for dependent people; More women (7%) than men (4%) in working age provide care during one hour or more per day (2014); 60% of the care-providers are simultaneously in gainful employment	Family members are legally required to provide care to relatives in need of care; Family care-providers provide a major part of the care, women form the majority of caring family members (69%); More women (14%) than men (10%) provide care one day or more per week to an elderly relative (2010-2011); Existing negative occupational incentives shall be removed by way of reforms ⁴⁶	Family care as a complement to comprehensive provision of care services by municipalities; Step-by-step reduction of municipal care services in the context of the state-priority of living and being cared for at home; increasing number of care-providing family members; More women (9%) than men (6%) reduce their working hours in order to provide care for a dependent family member (2012).
Leave	a) Short-term leave from work: up to 10 days;	a) Short-term leave (<i>hooldushüvitis</i>): up to 14 calendar days	a) Leave for palliative care: up to 100 days per seriously-ill individual

45 Eigenmann et al. (2016) assume that roughly two thirds of the non-remunerated care is provided by women.

46 A work-group deployed in the context of the Welfare Development Plan 2016-2023 shall elaborate reform approaches until November 2017.

	b) Care leave: full or partial exemption of up to 6 months; c) Family caring time: partial leave from work, reduction of working hours to a maximum of 15 hours/week, max. 2 years d) Leave for palliative care: max. 3 months⁴⁷		
Financial benefit(s)	a) Pflegeunterstützungsgeld: Income replacement benefit for the caregiver b) – c) Interest-free loan	a) Temporary care allowance (<i>hooldushuvitis</i>) for up to 14 calendar days in the case of full leave from work; Income replacement covering 80% of the previous income b) Care allowance (<i>hooldajatoetus</i>) for informal or formal carers, appointed by the municipality; approx. 1/10 of the minimum wage	a) Financial allowance for palliative care (<i>narståendepenning</i>): for up to 100 days, max. approx. € 4 700 b) Municipal employment of the caregiver: Remuneration corresponds to regular municipal employment c) Child-care allowance (<i>vårdbidrag</i>): for parents of a child with disabilities/serious illness: for max. 6 months, approx. € 980/month

Sources: Germany: Blum/Erler/Reimer (2016); BMFSFJ (2016d); Destatis (2016a; 2016b; 2016c); Koslowski/Blum/Moss (2016); Bäcker (2016); BMFSFJ (2016); Estonia: Pall/Karu (2016); Koslowski/Blum/Moss (2016); Võrk/Paat-Ahi/Biin (2016); Sweden: Haas/Duvander/Hwang (2016); Koslowski/Blum/Moss (2016); Schön/Johansson (2016); Skolverket (2015).

⁴⁷ (a) and (b) on the basis of the Caring Time Act (2008); (c) on the basis of the Family Caring Time Act (2011); (d) on the basis of the act to facilitate the reconciliation of family and professional care (2015).

Table 6: Public attitudes towards gender equality

	Germany	Estonia	Sweden	EU-28
Equality – General				
Equality is a fundamental right	95	84	98	94
Equality is necessary to establish a fairer society	90	80	98	91
Inequality between women and men persists and is widespread	62	51	72	62
Gender inequality is more widespread than 10 years ago	20	22	11	23
Equality – EU priorities				
Making sure women earn the same as men for the same work	68	54	76	53
Eliminating gender stereotypes	22	19	30	25
Support a more equal division of domestic work	7	12	8	14
Equality – Gainful Employment				
On the whole, family life suffers when the mother has a full-time job	60	56	32	60
A father must put his career ahead of looking after his young child	26	21	6	29
Equality – Care				
Men are less competent than women in performing household tasks	52	38	30	50
Measures for the integration of men into care work				
Change men's and boy's attitudes towards caring activities	37	41	66	41
Increase flexible working arrangements	50	47	41	40
Make sure men are not discriminated against if they take leave to care for dependents	40	31	43	35

NB: Approval as a percentage

Source: EU COM (2015b).

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