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**Policy responses to partnered women outside the
labour market
What can Britain learn from Australia and Denmark?**

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Philosophy

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Abstract

This thesis compares policies in Australia and Denmark relevant to assisting women from workless couples into work, with a focus on policy learning for Britain. The research uses case studies comprising of documentary analysis and 52 elite interviews with policy actors to create a contextual analysis based on the notion of 'hard' policy learning (Dolowitz, 2009). It also develops the idea of 'policy as translation' (Lendvai and Stubbs, 2007) rather than as 'transfer'. In so doing, it examines the cultural and political underpinnings of the policy developments in each of the countries and how these impact on the translatability of policies and programmes to Britain.

The concept of 'welfare recalibration' (Ferrera and Hemerijck, 2003) and its four sub-dimensions (functional, distributive, normative, politico-institutional) is used both as a theoretical basis, as well as a framework for the analysis. It is argued that the normative aspects underpin policy change in the other sub-dimensions. Policies for partnered women in both Australia and Britain have recalibrated their access to social assistance, informed by a normative shift in conceptualising them as 'workers' rather than as 'wives/partners' or 'mothers' (Sainsbury, 1996). In Denmark policies have been restructured in response to perceived challenges resulting from immigration.

The thesis argues that policy change, as well as policy learning, for partnered women in all three countries is incremental. It suggests that activation for partnered women as a reflection of welfare recalibration wrongly assumes that the labour market and families have similarly adjusted and that childcare provision in Britain is a missing core foundation for activation for this group, reflective of stalled functional and normative recalibration. The analysis also argues for the incorporation of welfare recalibration as a framework for assessing the possibility of policy learning, as well as in considering whether policy translation has taken place.

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List of abbreviations

General

ALMP/s Active labour market policy/ies

Britain

BOC Better Off Calculation

DWP Department for Work and Pensions

ESA Employment and Support Allowance

IB Incapacity Benefit

IS Income Support

JSA Jobseeker's Allowance
Two types: income-based and contribution-based

NDLP New Deal for Lone Parents

NDP New Deal for Partners

NDPU New Deal for Partners of the Unemployed (renamed NDP)

POEM Partners Outreach for Ethnic Minorities

WFI Work-Focused Interview, consisting of advice and guidance from a
Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser

WFIP Work-Focused Interview for Partners

Australia

AWT Australians Working Together

DEEWR Department for Education Employment and Workplace Relations

FaCS Department of Family and Community Services

FaHCSIA	Department of Families Housing Community Services and Indigenous Affairs
JN	Job Network
JSA	Job Services Australia
NSA	Newstart Allowance (equivalent to Jobseeker's Allowance)
PP	Parenting Payment
PPIP	Parenting Payment Intervention Pilot
PPp	Parenting Payment Partnered
PPs	Parenting Payment Single
WFP	Workless Families Pilot
WTW	Welfare to Work

Denmark

ADIR	Directorate of Labour, Ministry of Employment
AK	Unemployment insurance fund
AMS	National Labour Market Authority (similar to Jobcentre Plus)
BM	Ministry of Employment

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Chapter One - Introduction

Since the mid-1990s active labour market policies and the concept of activation have become increasingly significant across many OECD countries. Such policies have gradually been extended from unemployed people to other groups outside the labour market, such as disabled people and lone parents. Internationally, partnered women have rarely been a specific target for such policies, however in 1999 the Labour government in Britain introduced the New Deal for Partners of the Unemployed¹ which offers employment assistance on a voluntary basis to partners (mainly women) of unemployed people (mainly men). The programme was designed to address the policy problem of worklessness and poverty amongst couple households, particularly those with children. In 2008 there were 277,000 workless couple households with dependent children and 658,000 workless couple households without dependent children (National Statistics, 2008) and approximately 350,000 partners receive support through the benefits system (Department for Work and Pensions, 2008: 126). However, the New Deal for Partners has had little success in engaging partnered women or in moving them into work (House of Commons Committee of Public Accounts, 2008). Taking the perceived policy failure of the programme as its starting point, this research compares policy responses to the 'problem' of partnered women outside the labour market in Australia and Denmark, with a focus on policy learning for Britain. The project is a CASE studentship funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) in collaboration with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP),² which in Britain has responsibility for social security and labour market policies. The research is both a conceptual and comparative analysis, as well as a project focused on practical policy learning, commissioned by policymakers.

¹ Subsequently renamed the 'New Deal for Partners'.

² In Britain, benefits and employment services are delivered by Jobcentre Plus, an agency of the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) created in 2002 by merging offices of the Benefits Agency and the Employment Service.

Section 1.1 of this chapter provides a short introduction to the study and sets out the research questions, Section 1.2 describes the innovative contribution of the research to existing literature, Section 1.3 the limitations of the study and Section 1.4 sets out the structure of the thesis to follow.

1.1 The research

The research examines policies and programmes associated with assisting non-working partnered women into work. Policies are “broad statements of intentions which represent the direction in which policy makers wish to go”, whilst programmes are “the specific means or course of action used to implement policies” (Dolowitz et al., 2000: 23). The first stage of the research was an evidence review of OECD countries, from which Australia and Denmark were selected as comparators for in-depth case study research. The case study method comprised documentary analysis and 52 elite interviews with policy actors (31 in Australia and 21 in Denmark) conducted both face-to-face and by telephone. Governmental policy actors were interviewed to gain an understanding of the drivers behind the policies and programmes and policy critiques were obtained by interviewing non-governmental policy actors such as academics and campaigning organisations. Documents were used to inform the case studies in relation to partnered women’s constraints on working in each of the countries, as well as the construction of the policy problem ‘representations’ (Bacchi, 1999), responses and goals. The documents acted as triangulation for the interviews and vice versa. The research questions posed at the start of the research were:

1. What are the most relevant benefit (and service) policies and labour market interventions within a range of OECD countries that relate to the situation of partnered women in non-working households of working age?³
2. How and for which groups of partnered women have these policies been effective at facilitating labour market participation, and to what extent are elements of these policies likely to be transferable to Britain?
3. What have been the driving factors and social and economic contexts behind the introduction of such policies and what lessons follow regarding transferability to Britain?

These questions were addressed at different stages of the research process: the first by the initial evidence review of relevant policies in OECD countries and the second and third questions during the case study construction and analysis stages. These key research questions were supplemented by further, detailed questions devised during the fieldwork planning stage (see Appendix 1).

As stated at the beginning of this chapter, the starting point of this comparative research was the New Deal for Partners programme in Britain (since 1999), but also took into account Joint Claims for Jobseeker's Allowance (since 2001) and the Partners Outreach for Ethnic Minorities (POEM) pilots (2007-2009). In Australia the research examined reforms specifically relating to couples claiming income support (beginning in 1994 with *Working Nation*) and subsequent reforms targeted at parents receiving income support: *Australians Working Together* (2003) and *Welfare to Work* (2006). The approaches to assisting partnered women into work in Britain and Australia were

³ This is the age when individuals are expected to be in paid work, before statutory retirement age. The OECD defines working age as 15-64 for both men and women, however not all countries use this definition. In Britain, working age is currently defined as 16-64 for men and 16-59 for women, although Britain intends to adopt the OECD's definition by 2020.

conceptualised as targeted approaches specifically focused on partnered women, or sub-groups such as parents. Denmark's approach was considered to be encompassing in relation to the activation paradigm of 'all must be active' (Rosdahl and Weise, 2001) since 1994, but this was viewed through the lens of the *300 timers reglen*/300 hours rule (since 2006) targeted at (immigrant) married couples.

The research examined the policy 'stories' in both Australia and Denmark in terms of the specific policy trajectories, focusing predominantly on active labour market policies. However, the case studies revealed the importance of other policy areas, namely access to benefits and childcare provision. The interviews with policy actors focused on their representation of the policy 'problem' and the perceived successes and failures of the policy responses. The focus of the research was on policy learning for Britain, centred on understanding the context of the programmes in each of the countries to assess the possibility of policy 'translation' (Lendvai and Stubbs, 2007). The research considered policies already implemented or under consideration in Australia and Denmark until the cut-off date of September 2009. More recent policy developments are considered in Britain, particularly relating to the change of government in May 2010.

1.2 Innovative contribution of the research

The contribution of this research is in its specific focus on partnered women in non-working households. The majority of existing literature concerning women, employment and social protection has focused on standard family formations, on mothers or lone parents. This research therefore fills a gap in knowledge relating to partnered women in non-working households and in particular provides an important reference source for information concerning the needs and support for this group in relation to access to paid work. The research also contributes a conceptual analysis to the policy transfer literature, which has predominantly focused on theoretical

approaches to policy transfer, or on studies which assess whether policy transfer has occurred. Its wider contribution is to comparative social policy research as well as to literature on policy change and policy learning.

The study links the adaptation of contemporary welfare states to global transformation on the one hand, with family and household employment behaviour in relation to partnered women on the other. In the past four decades there has been considerable structural change in all societies and new forms of stratification have arisen in both families and the labour market. Changes in family structure include rising divorce rates, increasing cohabitation and an increase in the number of children born outside marriage (O'Connor et al., 1999): couple families comprise spouses as well as cohabiting partners and these family forms may be fluid, rather than static.

Female labour market participation has increased relative to men's across OECD countries. The 1980s saw a collapse in manufacturing industries in countries such as Britain and the withdrawal of working class men from the labour market, contributing to an increase in the number of families in which no one is in paid work. However, another important structural change is that many women have moved from being housewives or secondary workers supplementing family income to key dual or sole earners. Employment opportunities for women in particular have opened up in the increasing number of service industries, facilitated by new technologies (Esping-Andersen, 1999).

This study is concerned with how the welfare states of Australia, Denmark and Britain have responded to these structural challenges in respect of partnered women. As different constellations of states, markets and families, the institutions and structures of welfare states shape gender relations, but are also shaped by them. Esping-Andersen (2009: 9) argues that ongoing changes in women's roles and demographics render multiple societal 'equilibria' as unstable, or create societal 'disequilibria'. It is

within this context that the overarching analytical framework of 'welfare recalibration' has salience, highlighting how welfare states respond incrementally to 'new' social risks such as the reconciliation of work and family, being fine tuned to restore some kind of equilibrium.

The data were analysed using Ferrera and Hemerijck's (2003) framework of 'welfare recalibration' which is both a descriptive and prescriptive metaphor for incremental policy change (p. 89). Although the focus of recalibration is on "institutional reconfiguration and re-balancing" (Ferrera and Hemerijck, 2003: 89), this research is not concerned with questions of whether and how institutions change. Rather, the recalibration framework in the form of its four sub-dimensions (functional, distributive, normative and politico-institutional) permits a truly comparative piece of research as an alternative to accounts divided into country-by-country chapters. The four sub-dimensions are each complemented by related theoretical concepts, which are described in Chapter Two and set out in Section 1.4 below. The thesis' originality is two-fold. Firstly, in its use of recalibration to analyse policies relating to a specific group of women (partners outside the labour market) in a gender-sensitive way. Secondly, by extending Ferrera and Hemerijck's analysis outside the European context by investigating the Australian case in addition to Denmark and Britain. Through the four-sub-dimensions, the thesis demonstrates the shift from welfare to workfare states in all three countries in relation to this group of women.

Although the research focuses on policy learning, there are key differences between the approach taken here and that adopted by policymakers in searching for policy lessons. The timescale for this study is longer than the fast policy learning required by policymakers and, by examining the context surrounding the programmes, the research has engaged in 'hard' rather than 'soft' policy learning (Dolowitz, 2009). In soft learning, "nothing new is incorporated into the existing knowledge structure" (Dolowitz, 2009: 323), whereas harder forms require a deeper understanding of the

contexts within which programmes operate. Further, the research contributes to the literature on policy learning and is innovative in its focus on the *possibility* of policy learning and policy translation from other countries, rather than on examining whether policy transfer has occurred and whether it was successful. The research thus moves beyond merely making policy recommendations to consider how such recommendations can be employed by policy actors in the British context. As such, the research has been grounded in both the theoretical literature, as well as the policymaking process. By using elite interviews, the research has examined how the policy problem representation has informed the policy responses in Australia and Denmark and how these representations differ between the various policy actors. Focusing on 'what works' in active labour market policies does not take into account wider factors relating to *what does not work*. Policies and programmes are informed by ideological constructions such as the problematisation of particular policy issues; such constructions inform the policy responses and also frame the conceptualisation of policy 'success'.

The research was conducted during an important stage of welfare reform in Britain⁴ and the findings consider policy learning in this context. This thesis suggests that Britain can learn three major lessons from the examination of policies relating to partnered women in Australia and Denmark. Firstly, many partnered women in Britain have not been claiming (means tested) benefits in their own right as individuals, but via a derived access⁵ principle of main claimant and dependent partner. Based on the experiences of Australia and Denmark, partially individualising access to social assistance benefits is an important precursor to engaging directly with partnered women through active labour market policies. Secondly, alternative care and in particular both pre- and post-school age childcare is a prerequisite for

⁴ The research commenced in October 2006 and the fieldwork took place in 2009 whilst the Welfare Reform Act was progressing through Parliament.

⁵ This term has similarities with Jepsen and Meulders' concept of 'derived rights' - see Jepsen, M. & Meulders, D. (2002) The individualisation of rights in social protection systems, in Sarfati, H. & Bonoli, G. (Eds.) *Labour market and social protection reforms in international perspective*. Aldershot, Ashgate, 97-116.

activation policies relating to partnered women. Thirdly, individually responsive employment assistance is likely to be the most effective approach to assisting this heterogeneous group into work.

1.3 Limitations of the study

The study has a number of limitations. Firstly, it does not include a quantitative analysis of factors which impact on the labour market participation of partnered women. This is partly a result of the paucity of statistical data relating to this specific group in both Australia and Denmark, but it also reflects the focus of the research on contextual policy learning and policy translation. Secondly, the research does not make specific recommendations concerning which interventions (or the sequence of interventions) are the most effective in assisting partnered women into work, although some indications are given in Chapter Seven. This reflects the heterogeneity of the group and the difficulty of recommending one approach for all, but highlights the importance of the policy recommendation of individually tailored employment assistance. Thirdly, the research generated less interview data for the Australian case study than for the Danish one (discussed in Chapters Three and Eight), however this was countered to some extent by the availability of more documents in Australia than in Denmark.

1.4 Structure of the thesis

Chapter Two sets out the theoretical framework of recalibration and discusses why welfare regime theory has provided a backdrop to the research, but has not been its predominant focus. It also considers gendered aspects of regime theory and in particular the salience to the analysis of Sainsbury's (1996) concepts of eligibility and entitlement to benefits. Recalibration has been used as a tool to analyse aspects of the policies relevant to partnered women outside the labour market in the three countries

in Chapters Five, Six and Seven and to underline the importance of incremental policy change (and policy translation) in relation to this group. This framework has also been used as a way of examining the possibility of policy 'translation' (Lendvai and Stubbs, 2007), drawing on the work of Dolowitz (Dolowitz and Marsh, 1996, Dolowitz, 2009, Dolowitz et al., 2000).

Chapter Three discusses the methodology for the research. Linking to the theoretical framework, it sets out how the limitations of regime theory have shaped the research design in not selecting countries according to regime typologies. Instead, countries were selected to provide a comparison of 'targeted' and 'encompassing' (Korpi and Palme, 1998) approaches to assisting partnered women into work. The chapter considers the different stages of the research: the evidence review, selection of cases and the case studies themselves. The methodology is considered in more depth through discussion of the case study method, the use of documents, access to respondents and ethical considerations, and elite interviewing as the core method for the research, but one which is under-utilised in social policy.

Chapter Four analyses the evaluation evidence for the programmes examined in Britain, Australia and Denmark. This begins with the constraints on paid work in structural and normative terms (McRae, 2003). The policy 'story' for each of the three countries is set out and the chapter concludes by considering evidence relating to the 'effectiveness' of the programmes examined, assessed against the success criteria defined within each of the countries and linked to the problem representation as set out in the documents analysed. It is argued that although the governments in both Australia and Denmark have suggested that the programmes are successful on the basis of decreasing welfare caseloads, these claims can be challenged by both lack of evidence of more qualitative considerations and of resultant increased poverty.

Chapter Five begins the analysis of findings using the recalibration framework by focusing on the functional and distributive sub-dimensions. The functional sub-dimension is constituted here as the function of the three welfare states in providing social security, employment, employment assistance and alternative care, including childcare. The thesis argues for the importance of looking beyond activation policies in isolation to include these other functions. Drawing on Sainsbury (1996) the chapter argues that partnered women's entitlement to benefits in Australia and Britain has changed from the bases of dependent wives/partners and mothers to that of worker, which is predominantly the basis of entitlement in Denmark. The chapter highlights the similarities in the social contracts of activation across the three countries, drawing on Serrano Pascual's (2007) concept of *quid pro quo* and the changing balance of the rights and duties of the state and the individual. Distributive recalibration relates to social groups and in this chapter this is discussed in relation to targeted activation programmes for partnered women in Australia and Britain as an extension of policies for lone parents, arising from benefits based on categories of incapacity for work. The targeted approaches in these two countries are compared with the Danish encompassing approach, whilst also accounting for the anomalous targeting of immigrant women by the 300 hours rule. The chapter considers the advantages and limitations of the implementation of individually tailored assistance in both Australia and Denmark as a component of policy learning for Britain.

Chapter Six focuses on normative recalibration: values, norms and discourses. There is interdependence between the four sub-dimensions of recalibration, but this thesis argues that the normative sub-dimension underpins policy change in the other three. In particular this chapter argues that policies relating to partnered women outside the labour market are a reflection of the complex dynamics of 'work', 'family' and 'nation' (Williams, 1995, Williams, 1989). The Danish case highlighted the importance of 'culture' to the policy problem representation; although this was critiqued by non-governmental policy actors, it is argued that this aspect has salience to the case of

partnered women outside the labour market in both Britain and Australia. Activation for partnered women assumes that caring responsibilities are transferred elsewhere and the Australian and British policies assumed that partners had the capacity to swap roles. This was undermined in the latter case in particular by inadequate alternative care and in both countries by gendered roles within couples and by individual preferences for work and caring as reflections of 'gendered moral rationalities' (Duncan and Edwards, 1999). In Denmark an increasingly diverse population resulting from migration is a challenge to universalist policies contributing to the attainment of the universal breadwinner model (Fraser, 1989), including day-care. In all three countries the normalisation of 'work' is important and it is argued that this aspect cannot be considered without also accounting for the dimensions of 'family' and 'nation,' the latter being of particular importance to the Danish case.

Chapter Seven incorporates the final sub-dimension of recalibration (politico-institutional) as a facet of policy translation (Lendvai and Stubbs, 2007), using the work of Dolowitz (Dolowitz et al., 2000, Dolowitz and Marsh, 1996) and Rose (1993, see also Rose, 1991). It argues for a hybridization, or synthesis of policies from Australia and Denmark to Britain in relation to partnered women outside the labour market. It suggests that institutional and ideational differences between Britain and Denmark do not preclude policy learning from the latter and that the contextual approach of policy translation highlights the differences as well as the often-stated similarities between Britain and Australia. However, ideological as well as institutional 'stickiness' is a constraint on the translation of policy learning from both countries. The chapter considers in detail the possibility of, and constraints on, policy translation of the three policy recommendations from this research: partial individualisation of benefits, alternative care and in particular childcare and individually responsive employment assistance.

Chapter Eight draws together the findings from the research and brings the thesis to a conclusion. It highlights that consideration should be given to the longer term implications of policies and programmes, beyond the immediate impact on decreasing income support caseloads. It also highlights that partnered women's own cultural norms or preferences to care for their children (or for other adults) is a persistent concern for policymakers in both Britain and Australia (and to a lesser extent Denmark), particularly in the context of precarious and low-paid employment. As well as the three policy recommendations arising from this research, the chapter argues that attention should be paid to other complementary policies, such as parental leave and skills development. In the final conclusion, the thesis argues that activation for partnered women as a reflection of welfare recalibration wrongly assumes that the labour market and families have similarly recalibrated. Further, it argues that childcare provision in Britain is a missing core foundation for activation for this group, reflective of stalled functional and normative recalibration.

Chapter Two – Theoretical framework

2.1 *Introduction*

This chapter sets out the theoretical framework for this comparative study. Section 2.2 begins by considering how recalibration (Ferrera and Hemerijck, 2003) with its four sub-dimensions is utilised as a frame for this analysis. Section 2.3 discusses regime theory and its gendered variants and explains why it was used as a broad basis for the research, but not the overarching framework. This section also considers Sainsbury's (1996) bases of entitlement to benefits and Williams' (1995) interrelated concepts of 'work', 'family' and 'nation'. Section 2.4 examines Serrano Pascual's activation regimes (2007) and Section 2.5 provides an account of how the policy transfer literature will be used to assess the possibility of policy learning for Britain from the policy responses to partnered women outside the labour market in Australia and Denmark. Section 2.6 summarises the chapter and the theoretical framework to be used.

2.2 *Recalibration*

Institutions are meso-level entities devised by individuals, but which also constrain and structure the actions of individuals (Hudson and Lowe, 2004: 148). Path dependence (see Pierson, 2000) suggests that institutions are stable and persistent. Each step along a policy path produces consequences which make that path progressively more attractive and raises the costs of shifting to an alternate path. Sticking with established paths produces increasing returns, but exits are subject to increased costs, or decreasing returns (Pierson, 2001b: 312). Radical departure from a policy path may entail prohibitive costs, particularly if it involves institutional change, such as changes to legislative systems or welfare delivery systems (for example benefit administration systems). Although path dependency does not preclude particular types of policy reform, it may suggest that radical reform to policies relating to

partnered women outside the labour market is less likely if such reform constitutes marked divergence from a well-worn policy path.

The premise of Hall and Soskice's (2001) varieties of capitalism thesis is that "many of the most important institutional structures – such as systems of labour market regulation, education and training and corporate governance – depend on the presence of regulatory regimes that are the preserve of the nation-state" (p.4). Firstly, this is because a nation's political economy is "inextricably bound up with its history" (Hall and Soskice, 2001: 13). Secondly, because institutions should not be considered as single entities, but reinforce one another: there is 'institutional complementarity' (Estévez-Abe et al., 2001: 146). Pierson (2001b: 9) warns that it is a mistake to treat institutions as independent variables which have similar effects in different settings. Instead, institutions are linked to an individual country's history: they are 'cultural products' (Freeman, 1999: 91), which both constitute cultures and are constituted by them. OECD countries are currently faced with managing similar social risks, such as ageing populations and increasing numbers of sick and disabled people outside the labour market. 'Divergent convergence' (Leibfried and Obinger, 2001: 5), or 'contingent convergence' (Hemerijck, 2006: 38) highlights that, whilst there may be converging policy trajectories, there is also diversity amongst welfare systems. Although some degree of convergence resulting from globalising forces can be observed across countries, divergence is also seen at the level of the nation-state. For Pierson, a key aspect of path dependency is that the effects of globalisation are mediated by domestic institutional arrangements within nation states.

In this context, most welfare state commentators agree that welfare is being 'recalibrated', 'recast', is 'adapting' or 'restructuring' (Taylor-Gooby, 2001: 2-3). Ferrera and Hemerijck suggest (2003) that "a completely new welfare architecture" is out of the question, but "recalibration is very much on the agenda" (p.121). The notion of welfare recalibration is derived from Pierson's (2001a: 455) concept of welfare state

'adjustment'. For Pierson, this represents restructuring in an era of 'permanent austerity', rather than dismantling, as suggested by those who argue that there is welfare state 'retrenchment', or a 'race to the bottom' in response to global economic pressures (see Castles, 2004). Pierson sets out 'three worlds of welfare reform' linked to Esping-Andersen's (1990) regime types which together constitute a 'new politics of the welfare state'. In liberal welfare states adjustment is in the form of re-commodification, or cost containment; in conservative states, reforms involve cost containment, or recalibration in terms of rationalisation; and in social democratic states reform involves cost containment, or recalibration in the form of updating (Pierson, 2001a: 455). Cost containment is primarily motivated by the urgency of reducing debts and deficits; rationalisation refers to modifications of existing programmes in line with new ideas about how to achieve established goals; and updating constitutes specific initiatives in response to newly recognised social needs (Ferrera and Hemerijck, 2003: 89). Whereas de-commodification involved services and income maintenance as a matter of right, re-commodification effectively reverses this process, restricting "alternatives to participation in the labour market, either by tightening eligibility or cutting benefits" (Pierson, 2001a: 422).

As Esping-Andersen (1999: 72) has acknowledged, welfare regime typologies are 'inherently static' but regime theory (discussed in Section 2.3) treats regimes as if they are 'unified or coherently structured' (Clarke, 1999: 83). By contrast, Clarke (2004) suggests that the political-cultural underpinnings of welfare systems are 'settlements' which are only ever temporary, "however deeply embedded, institutionalised and naturalised they might appear" (p.29). Clarke highlights the importance of examining how these settlements become unsettled, which leads to conceptualisation of welfare states as constructed, contested, contradictory and constitutive (pp. 29, 147). They are constructed, rather than natural or inevitable; contested because they are sites of conflict; contradictory in that they manage contradictory pressures; and constitutive in that they not only reflect social divisions, differences, identities, inequalities,

relationships and resources, but also create them (p.147). Clarke's notion of policy change as 'unfinished' (p.29) and the metaphor of recalibration suggest that policy change is incremental and constrained by path dependency. The concept of 'recalibration' suggests that incremental policy changes are made in response to new social risks: fine tuning to restore equilibrium, or something approaching equilibrium. This theory also indicates that policy change is slow and gradual, as opposed to a stagnant/punctuated equilibrium based on exogenous shocks, such as economic instability or war. Recalibration is characterised by three elements:

1. The presence of a set of constraints conditioning policy choices and developments, stemming from the interaction between new external pressures and domestic challenges
2. The interdependence between additions (or upgradings) and subtractions in the social policy menu, as a consequence of such constraints
3. A deliberate shift of weight and emphasis among the various instruments and objectives of social policy, in the wake of complex dynamics of social and institutional learning (Ferrera and Hemerijck, 2003: 89-90).

Constraints conditioning policy choices and developments reflect globalising processes. Although such processes are not the immediate concern of this analysis, changes in the instruments (means) and objectives (ends) of social policy (Titmuss, 1974: 16) can be seen as products of them. This study examines how policy choices and developments are products of historical policy decisions (path dependence) by tracing back the 'policy genealogies' (Bacchi, 1999: 40-1) from the most recent programmes examined. The interdependence between additions and subtractions in the social policy menu are visible between policy areas (such as active labour market policies and childcare), as well as in the interaction between the welfare state, the market, the

family and civil society. The further value of the four sub-dimensions of recalibration is that they are interlinking, but allow for highlighting of contradictions across policy areas. Shifts in weight and emphasis of policy instruments and objectives include changes in the role of welfare, such as increased targeting and marketisation, as well as re-commodification.

The recalibration framework has four sub-dimensions (functional, distributive, normative and politico-institutional) and is used in this study to describe and attempt to explain variance across the three countries in the policy responses to partnered women outside the labour market. The framework is further complemented by the work of Sainsbury (1996) in relation to access to benefits, of Serrano Pascual (2007) in relation to aspects of activation regimes and of Williams (1995) in relation to the dynamics of work, family and nation reflected in social policies. The analysis utilises the framework in a practical, as well as a theoretical way by using politico-institutional recalibration to complement the policy learning literature and to assess the possibility of 'translation' (Lendvai and Stubbs, 2007) of policies relevant to partnered women. In particular use of the framework facilitates exploration of the context of policies in order to engage in 'hard', rather than 'soft' policy learning (Dolowitz, 2009) (see Section 2.5).⁶ Softer forms do not involve redefinition of normative aspects governing policy paradigms, or redefinition of policy goals. By contrast, harder forms of learning require in-depth understanding of the contexts within which programmes and policies operate in both originating as well as borrowing countries. We now turn to consider the four sub-dimensions of recalibration, how they relate to this research and how they will be used in the analysis.

⁶ This journal article was published after the fieldwork for this research had taken place, but the precursor to this article was Dolowitz's paper of the same name at the *Policy and Politics* conference 'Policy transfer in a globalising world' held at the University of Bristol, 3-4 July 2008.

2.2.1 *The four sub-dimensions of recalibration*

Women's revolutionary role-change in the labour market is key to the dynamic of functional recalibration: "The financial viability of the welfare state in the twenty-first century depends critically on the revenues generated by high...levels of women's labour force participation" (Ferrera and Hemerijck, 2003: 90). For Ferrera et al (2000) functional recalibration reflects the historical 'congruence' of welfare states "with the population, family and labour market structures," such as high fertility, shorter life expectancy, Fordist employment, low rates of female employment, a male breadwinner model and traditional gender relations (p.72). However, as Esping-Andersen highlights, the 'revolution' of women in the labour market is incomplete and does not extend to women in all strata of society (Esping-Andersen, 2009). As this thesis will demonstrate, the policy goal of encouraging the labour market participation of partnered women (specifically mothers) links with normative recalibration as it involves the re-conceptualisation of women's roles in relation to labour market participation, which are also reflected in functional changes in terms of access to benefits (Sainsbury, 1996) and the provision of childcare.

Functional recalibration concerns how welfare states respond to social risks⁷ in the provision of welfare by taking on new functions, or recalibrating existing ones: in this analysis such functions include the provision of social security, employment and childcare. 'Old' social risks in the 20th Century included poverty, unemployment and illness; 'newer' social risks result from labour market and family change and include the reconciliation of work and family and skills deficits in a knowledge economy. However, as is argued in Chapter Six, the reconciliation of work and family is not a new social risk, but one which has become more visible in policymaking. Ferrera and

⁷ See Bonoli, G. (2005) The politics of the new social policies: providing coverage against new social risks in mature welfare states. *Policy and Politics*, 33(3):431-50, Taylor-Gooby, P. (2004) *New risks, new welfare: the transformation of the European welfare state*, Oxford, Oxford University Press. The concept of 'social risks' has been critiqued – see for example Schmid, G. (2006) Social risk management through transitional labour markets. *Socio-economic review*, 4:1-33.

Hemerijck (2003) suggest further examples of new social risks as being social exclusion, family break-up, chronic illness and disability (p.72). Family break-up is important in relation to the 'fluidity' of transitions between partnered parent and lone parent statuses (see Chapter Five) and to the capacity of benefits systems and labour market policies to respond to this. This also relates to the distributive sub-dimension in focusing on specific groups viewed by policymakers as 'distant' from the labour market, discussed in more detail below. As we will see in Chapter Four, their own or their partner's sickness or disability constitute constraints on partnered women's capacity to undertake paid work. A further functional change is in precarious employment subsidised by benefits which transforms the role of social protection from straightforward income replacement, as well as the 'revolving door' of short-term work and unemployment.

Activation is an illustration of functional recalibration, understood in this thesis as referring to the conversion of labour market policies from 'passive' to 'active,' making receipt of benefits conditional on demonstration of active job search and willingness to improve employability (Daguerre and Etherington, 2009: 5) and the increasing role for sanctions for non-compliance. Active labour market policies are generally defined by their goal of helping people of working age into work by increasing the employability of individuals, but not the number of jobs available (Daguerre and Etherington, 2009: 5). A further example of functional recalibration in this analysis is the shift from 'welfare states' to 'workfare states', 'workfarism' being defined as "the imposition of a range of compulsory programmes and mandatory requirements for welfare recipients with a view to *enforcing work while residualising welfare*" (Peck, 2001: 10 emphasis in original). This policy change also relates to politico-institutional changes, such as the merging of government departments and the creation of new agencies conjoining benefit payment and employment service functions, which also reflects ideological unification of work and welfare within policy. This example illustrates how this welfare state change pervades each of the sub-dimensions of recalibration.

Distributive recalibration relates to social groups, to labour market segmentation and emerging skill-based cleavages (Ferrera and Hemerijck, 2003: 91) which impact on the capacity of individuals to enter the labour market, remain within it and to progress. In this analysis it concerns the ways in which the distribution of benefits within welfare states may change in response to the social risks articulated in the functional sub-dimension. Ferrera et al (2000: 73) highlight the growing gap between 'insiders' such as dual-earner families without children and 'outsiders' such as one-earner or no earner families with children, the latter including workless couple households. In addition to workless households, Ferrera et al (2000: 73) suggest that lone parents and ethnic minorities are particularly affected by skill-based cleavages and outsider status. In this study, distributive recalibration also considers the focus on partnered women in activation policies, both as an extension of policies for lone parents, as well as in ideological distinction from them. Activation policies in Britain and Australia are targeted at particular groups, reflecting conceptions of incapacity for work constructed through the benefit system. Such targeting is contrasted with the Danish (encompassing) approach of 'all must be active' (Rosdahl and Weise, 2001) and within this the anomalous 300 hours rule. These facets of the distributive sub-dimension also reflect aspects of normative recalibration.

Normative recalibration pertains to symbols, norms, values and discourses (Ferrera et al., 2000: 74). This sub-dimension links with the functional and distributive by responding to "dilemmas of the *status quo* and the future directions of policy" articulated within them (Schmidt, 2000 cited in Ferrera and Hemerijck, 2003). Normative recalibration is a key underpinning of policy change in the other sub-dimensions, such as in the functional recalibration of access to benefits for partnered women. Pfau-Effinger (2005) suggests that social security and labour market policies are reflective of the 'welfare culture' (p.4) of a given society, defining this not in the sense of a 'dependency culture' but "the relevant ideas in a given society surrounding the welfare state and the way it is embedded in a society" (p.4). These ideas may be

seen as reflections of the dynamics of 'work', 'family' and 'nation' (Williams, 1995, see also Williams, 1989) (see Section 2.5). In this thesis it will be demonstrated that these three interrelated dynamics demonstrate changes in the conceptualisation of partnered women's roles in societal institutions in all three countries. For example, Ferrera and Hemerijck (2003) argue that current normative debate "is no longer exclusively concentrated on issues of distributive justice and income maintenance, but increasingly...on work-related values and aspirations...the division of labour between men and women in and outside the family" (p.92). In particular they point to "the greater salience of economic independence, and the spreading conviction that labour market participation is a demonstration of gender equality" (p.92). In Denmark the universal breadwinner model (Fraser, 1997) has been achieved, facilitated by the model of day-care, reflective of both the functional and normative sub-dimensions. However, legacy breadwinner models in both Australia and Britain are a challenge to the extension of paid work to all women. Further, women's own preferences and cultural models may constitute 'normative constraints' on undertaking paid work (McRae, 2003), but may also reflect labour market opportunity. In Chapter Six analysis of the normative sub-dimension is complemented by Serrano Pascual's (2007) concept of hegemonic regulatory assumptions (see Section 2.4) in order to examine the normative drivers behind the policy responses, which intersect with policy change in the functional sub-dimension.

Politico-institutional recalibration concerns "the levels and actors that are or should be involved in the governance of social protection" (Ferrera and Hemerijck, 2003: 93). This sub-dimension has two aspects. Firstly, "reforms that re-configure the division of labour between levels of government in the provision of welfare and the promotion of employment" (Ferrera and Hemerijck, 2003: 93). For example, in Denmark trade unions have to an extent balanced these two welfare state goals within the flexicurity model. The second aspect concerns the multi-level and multi-actor nature of governance, which is seen in the degree of decentralisation (as in Denmark) or

centralisation (as in Britain and to an extent Australia). The politico-institutional sub-dimension also considers the actors delivering policy at the frontline, as well as how machinery of government changes to policy responsibility constitute administrative as well as symbolic (normative) change. Welfare pluralism can be seen in the marketisation of employment services in all three countries and in the most extreme case of the privatised employment service in Australia. Politico-institutional recalibration also relates to who provides the alternative care in the functional sub-dimension which can facilitate partnered women's labour market participation. In this analysis, it also informs consideration of the possibility of policy learning from Australia and Denmark for Britain. It will be argued that the demonstrated similarities and differences in each of the countries reflected in this sub-dimension may facilitate or block policy translation.

The recalibration framework has some similarities with Trickey's (2001) framework for comparing welfare programmes, which includes aims and ideology, target groups, universal versus selective provision and the administrative framework. However, recalibration provides a more useful framework for this study in highlighting the dynamic and incremental nature of interdependent policy change across more than one policy area and how this relates to the possibility of policy translation. The basic character of welfare recalibration is "as a form of institutionally-bounded policy innovation" (Ferrera and Hemerijck, 2003: 121). In identifying policies in Australia and Denmark which encourage non-working partnered women's labour market participation, this research considers the context of the economic, historical, social, political and cultural factors which led to the creation of current policies and programmes affecting this group. Assessing the translatability of policies first requires explanation of reasons for similarities and variance in the conceptualisation of partnered women's worklessness in the three countries and the four sub-dimensions of recalibration are used to explain the similarities and differences in the policy response. In particular, it can be hypothesised that cultural factors impact on the

decisions of non-working partnered women to enter paid work. Culture may be defined as a “field or domain of social life in which meanings are produced and reproduced...[and] in the process, some sets of meaning may...[become] the ‘way of life’ of a social group” (Clarke, 1999: 73). Pfau-Effinger (2008) suggests that culture consists of “constructions of sense to which people orient their behaviour,” which includes values, models and stocks of knowledge. Consideration of cultural aspects raises a key question as to whether the welfare state, by means of its structures, can be an agent of cultural change, or whether the welfare state predominantly responds to cultural changes. Functional recalibration may reflect the historical congruence of welfare states with societal change, or it may highlight welfare states’ attempts to promote such change; both of these aspects, it could be argued, are illustrated by the example of the policy goal of encouraging the participation of partnered women in paid work. Such a goal is underpinned by normative recalibration and also reflected in the distributive and politico-institutional sub-dimensions.

2.3 *Welfare regime theory*

Daly and Rake (2003: 24-31) provide a useful summary of different approaches to comparative studies of the welfare state. These approaches are: explanations of welfare state development; regime theory; evaluative studies; and feminist comparative work. Each of these is briefly considered below. Regime theory has superseded studies such as Wilensky (1975) which sought to provide explanations for the origins and development of welfare states by focusing on expenditure. The focus is now on explaining responses to new developments, rather than their origins (Hill, 2006: 38). Esping-Andersen’s welfare regimes (liberal, conservative-corporatist and social democratic) broadly correspond to Titmuss’ (1974: 30-1) models of social policy: the residual welfare model, the industrial achievement-performance model and the institutional redistributive model. In the residual welfare model the ‘natural’ or ‘socially given’ channels through which individuals’ needs are met are through the

private market or the family and only when these break down do other institutions such as the state come into play. In the industrial achievement-performance model social needs are met on the basis of merit, work performance and productivity; and in the institutional redistributive model social welfare is a key integrated institution, providing universalist services outside the market on the principle of need.

Regime theory uses typologies to explain similarity and difference between countries, with regimes being defined as the welfare systems resulting from the different constitution and interaction of welfare agents: the state, the market, the family, or the voluntary/third sector (civil society) (Esping-Andersen, 1999: 129). Regime theory helps to answer the question posed by Esping-Andersen: "Why is it that nations respond differently to a set of social risks that, all told, are pretty similar, whether you are an American, a Spaniard, or a Swede?" (1999: 170). Social problems are not unique to particular countries but welfare systems have developed from different historical paths so both the construction of policy 'problems' as well as the responses to them will vary across countries. One aim of this research was to illuminate the policy 'problem' of partnered women outside the labour market in the familiar British context by viewing it in the unfamiliar settings of Australia and Denmark. The comparison of 'targeted' (Britain and Australia) versus 'encompassing' (Denmark) approaches to assisting partnered women in this analysis borrows from Korpi and Palme's (1998)⁸ evaluative study of the effects of different institutional welfare state types on poverty and inequality in 18 countries, although the Danish case study is also a comparison of a targeted labour market programme (300 hours rule) within the context of encompassing activation policy. The research aimed to explore how policies change and how easy they are to change, in relation to the possibility of policy

⁸ Although Korpi and Palme label Britain and Denmark and Denmark as 'basic security' models in terms of old age pension and sickness insurance, for this research Britain may be considered as a 'targeted' model in terms of labour market policies aimed at non-working partnered women. Australia is labelled as 'targeted' by Korpi and Palme.

learning. The relevance of regime theory in the context of this analysis is discussed further below.

Feminist comparative studies developed to an extent in response to the shortcomings of Esping-Andersen's regime typology and in particular its omission of gender⁹ and family in relation to the concept of de-commodification (Esping-Andersen, 1990). Similarly, Williams (1995: 129) critiques Esping-Andersen's omission of race and ethnicity. Within this genre are derivatives of regime theory, such as Lewis' typology of male breadwinner regimes (Lewis, 1992). Sainsbury's (1996, see also Sainsbury, 1999) work is most relevant to this study in relation to access to benefits. However, before discussing such aspects, a number of points will be made about regime theory in relation to this research. The first stage of the research (the evidence review) aimed to identify the most relevant policies and programmes relating to partnered women outside the labour market and to select two countries for case study analysis; one way of identifying cases was to utilise regime theory. The shortcomings of regime theory are well-documented and will not be rehearsed in full here.¹⁰ However, the first point to be made is that categorisation of countries is contested and, secondly, that typologies over-emphasise differences *between* regime types, but that variations *within* types may be more important (Daly and Rake, 2003), particularly to a gender-sensitive analysis.

In relation to the first point, categorisation of all three countries studied here is contested. Gough (2004: 242) rightly argues that the welfare regime paradigm cannot take into account dynamic changes and shifts within a regime. Ellison (2006) suggests that there is a global trend towards liberalisation, although this drift is slow and gradual, or incremental. To some extent, Castles' (1993) 'families of nations' concept

⁹ In this thesis, gender is defined as a socially constructed differentiation between women and men. See ACKER, J. (1989) The problem with patriarchy. *Sociology*, 23, 235-40.

¹⁰ See Arts, W. A. & Gelissen, J. (2002) Three worlds of welfare capitalism or more? A state-of-the-art report. *Journal of European Social Policy*, 12(2):137-158.

overcomes regime theory's classificatory problems, as it acknowledges the interconnectedness of commonalities between nations.¹¹ Such commonalities can be geographical, linguistic, cultural or historical (Castles, 1993, Castles, 1998) and they may facilitate policy translation, such as between Australia and Britain which share histories and language. However, as Chapter Seven argues, even such similarities may be insufficient for successful policy learning, if the context in both the borrowing and lending countries is not taken into account. The notion of 'mongrel' and 'thoroughbred' regimes (Bolderson and Mabbett, 1995) and the 'hybridisation' of regime types (Hemerijck, 2007: 26 see also Driver and Martell, 2006: 106) highlight that current policy trajectories are themselves the products of previous policy learning between countries.

Secondly, Daly and Rake (2003: 27) argue that regime classifications over-emphasise the differences *between* types at the same time as over-emphasising similarities amongst countries *within* types. Regime typologisation is based on ideal-typing and there are no pure cases. In fact, the 'analytical parsimony' (Esping-Andersen, 1999: 72) which typologies permit may in fact result in policy analysis which is too simplistic. The other extreme is that every country, or even every region or locale is unique, with its own unique context. In relation to political or cultural formations, Clarke (1999) argues that expecting, or trying to impose, coherence "detracts attention from more difficult, but possibly more important, questions about the internal and external contradictions" (p.83). In the context of policy learning, it is crucial to pay attention to such contradictions. Similarly, Daly and Rake (2003: 167) argue that context and complexity are necessary for a gender-focused analysis and this may render typologisation unsuitable. There is also a danger that welfare regime theory becomes deterministic, promoting assumptions that countries within a particular welfare

¹¹ Castles suggests four 'families of nations' (English-speaking, Continental, Scandinavian and Southern) and this has particular salience to this analysis in Castles' focus on explaining the distinctiveness of the Australian 'wage-earners' welfare state'. See Castles, F. G. (1985) *The working class and welfare: reflections on the political development of the welfare state in Australia and New Zealand, 1890-1980*, London, Allen & Unwin.

regime type will have similar policy responses. Regime theory provides the terms of reference within which to approach this comparative study; a hypothetical guide as to the kinds of policies which might be expected from a particular regime type at the outset of the research. However, "The classification of a country as belonging to a particular type of welfare regime is of limited use in predicting the nature of particular policies, especially those related to gender equity" (Brennan, 2002: 108).

A number of typologies have been put forward as gender-focused alternatives to regime theory. Lewis and Ostner (1991, see also Lewis and Ostner, 1994) focus on the strength of the breadwinner model across welfare states, based on two bases of entitlement: breadwinner or earner and breadwinner dependents. Sainsbury (1994: 168) argues that Lewis and Ostner see the extent to which women are recognised as workers as the essential variation between welfare states, but that this downplays the principle of care for children or adults. In her study of Britain, Ireland, France and Sweden, Lewis (1992) suggests that the male breadwinner model was the basis for all modern welfare states, but that this has been modified in divergent ways. She highlights the conceptualisation of women as wives and mothers in these four welfare states in relation to benefits, services (particularly childcare) and married women's labour market status. Lewis' model has been critiqued by Sainsbury (1996: 43), who argues that it does not allow for sufficient variation. In particular she argues that the concept of a 'weak' male breadwinner state (which Lewis and Ostner suggest applies to post-1970 Denmark) is problematic and that too many diverse countries may be classified as 'strong' male breadwinner states (Sainsbury, 1996: 43). Millar (1996) also suggests that more attention should be paid to how male breadwinner earnings are replaced, whether by social insurance or social assistance and whether women's claims to welfare are on the basis of wives, mothers or workers, an aspect central to Sainsbury's (1996) analysis.

Sainsbury (1996: 3) focuses on welfare state variation, rather than similarities and critiques existing approaches in two respects. Firstly, she criticises the focus of welfare state comparison on country-by-country descriptions; secondly, she highlights the skewed focus on models or typical recipients. Sainsbury (1996) examined social security and gender equality reforms in Britain, the US, Sweden and the Netherlands, focusing on the bases of entitlement to benefits, the stratifying effects of benefits and benefit inequalities, and gender equality reforms. Sainsbury's bases of entitlement to benefit are important for this research in highlighting that women and men have different relationships with the welfare state (see Daly, 1994: 114-5). The welfare state genders access to benefits, creating gendered dualism in entitlements (Sainsbury, 1996: 223), whereby men are more likely to receive contribution-based benefits and women are more likely to receive benefits as a result of their caring roles. Orloff (1993: 308) suggests that men make claims as worker-citizens but that women make claims both as workers and as members of families. Sainsbury's bases of entitlement consider women as wives, mothers (or caregivers), or workers. In this thesis, gendered dualism is part of functional recalibration, but also reflects normative dimensions. The thesis argues that the conceptualisation of partnered women as workers rather than as dependent wives, mothers or carers is an important axis for comparison across all three countries, but in Australia the principle of care is particularly important in relation to access to benefits, activation and childcare. Using welfare recalibration as a framework for analysis for this research offers a truly comparative analysis based on thematic aspects and echoes Sainsbury's (1996) departure from the approach of country-by-country comparisons.

In addition to Sainsbury's work, Esping-Andersen's (1990) concept of de-commodification and its gendered equivalent 'de-familisation', or 'de-familialisation' (Lister, 1994: 31, McLaughlin and Glendinning, 1994: 65) are useful in illustrating how the three countries conceptualise partnered women outside the labour market within policymaking. De-commodification refers to "the degree to which individuals, or

families, can uphold a socially acceptable standard of living independently of market participation” (Esping-Andersen, 1990: 37). In highly de-commodifying welfare states (such as Sweden) Esping-Andersen (1989) argues that “citizens can freely, and without potential losses of job, income or general welfare, opt out of work under conditions when they, themselves, consider it necessary for reasons of health, family, age or even educational self-improvement” (p.22). In its purest form, de-commodification constitutes citizen’s income, a policy path pursued in Denmark until the early 1990s (Goul Andersen, 1996, Goul Andersen, 2002: 66).¹² De-familialisation refers to “the terms and conditions under which people engage in families, and the extent to which they can uphold an acceptable standard of living independently of ‘family’” (McLaughlin and Glendinning, 1994: 65). Family dependency is the functional equivalent of market dependency (Esping-Andersen, 1999: 44-5). Orloff’s (1993: 311-318) conceptualisation of de-commodification includes the addition of access to paid work and the capacity to form and maintain an autonomous household. Of particular relevance to this research is Orloff’s (1993) suggestion that the interest of feminists in welfare state comparison is predominantly to ask the question: “Can the welfare state alter gender relations?” (p.307).

One drawback to the concepts of both de-commodification and de-familialisation is, as Esping-Andersen (1999: 45) has argued, that in reality it is more a matter of degree than ‘either-or’. He also acknowledges that the concept of de-commodification presupposes that individuals are already commodified in the labour market (1999: 45). O’Connor (1993) notes that a precondition of de-commodification is access to the labour market and that “limitation of access...may be the result of systemic discrimination or inequality of condition, such as that associated with caring responsibilities” (p.513). In Britain and Australia, women have a higher propensity towards part-time work and endure more interruptions to employment (McRae, 2003)

¹² A further example is the Danish leave schemes, now curtailed. See Etherington, D. & Jones, M. (2004a) Welfare-through-work and the re-regulation of labour markets in Denmark. *Environment and Planning C: Government and Policy*, 22:129-148.

as a result of undertaking caring roles within the household. This challenges Hakim's (2000) static typology of work-centred, home-centred and adaptive women. Thus, women who care for dependants instead of engaging in paid work, or who work for fewer hours in order to care, are not de-commodified, but familialised, with their dependence tied to the family. For some women their preference may be to care for their family, although such a preference may be constrained, such as by labour market opportunities. Duncan et al (2003) suggest that "people do not view care simply as a constraint on paid work. Rather they feel morally obligated to care, and often wish to do so" (p.310). 'Gendered moral rationalities'¹³ inform decisions about work and care for both lone and partnered mothers in terms of 'good motherhood' and 'the right thing to do' (Duncan et al., 2003, Duncan and Edwards, 1999). Such rationalities are influenced by class, ethnicity, networks and cultural values.

Williams (1995: 129) highlights Esping-Andersen's omission of race and ethnicity from his regime typology; furthermore, Sainsbury (2006) suggests that comparative welfare state studies have largely ignored immigrants. Williams argues that 'a new politics of the welfare state' has emerged which attempts to reconcile "the old concepts of universalism, equality, and citizenship with new understandings of difference and diversity" (1995: 129). Building on her seminal work incorporating the interaction of race, gender and class in social policy (1989) she suggests a framework for understanding the dynamics underpinning the development of welfare states: family, nation/race and work (Williams, 1995: 149). 'Nation' relates to national identity around race; 'family' refers to familial divisions of labour around gender; and 'work' relates to class. These three terms reflect socially constructed meanings "constituted through various conditions, institutions, and forms of organisation, as well as through social relations of power, processes of inclusion and exclusion (which also involve forms of mobilisation of interests), identities, and political actors" (Williams, 1995: 148).

¹³ In their study, Duncan et al constructed types of 'primarily mother', 'primarily worker' and 'mother/worker'. See Duncan, S., Edwards, R., Reynolds, T. & Alldred, P. (2003) Motherhood, paid work and partnering: values and theories. *Work, Employment and Society*, 17(2):309-330.

Although this analysis does not specifically consider class, in the normative sub-dimension ethnicity is considered in relation to how family is conceptualised as a constraint on working, particularly in Denmark but also in Britain. Work and family are also considered to be important aspects of activation in relation to the normalising of paid work as a policy goal for partnered women and how unpaid care work is devalued within this. Williams argues that the state's relationship to these three interrelated dynamics, evidenced through social policy, are illustrative of "the diverse configurations of multilayered welfare settlements in different countries" (p.148).

Daly and Rake's (2003) framework for comparative analysis¹⁴ relates to the interaction of the welfare state and gender relations, with the latter understood as access to resources, social roles and power relations. In their analysis, the welfare state has two key activities. Firstly, resource distribution in terms of both time as well as material resources; secondly, the welfare state has agency: it "is not a neutral or passive participant, but is active in both shaping and negotiating power relations" (p.46). Welfare systems are not gender-neutral and the welfare state is a site of stratification in terms of gender. "The basis of entitlement constructs the framework in which individuals and/or collective units are granted access to income support" (Daly, 1994: 114) and there is variation in this across different welfare states, demonstrated in this analysis by examining a range of policy areas relating to partnered women.

Daly and Rake's suggestion (2003) that they were not "especially interested in identifying regimes...it is too constricting...Complexity and configuration interest us" (p.30) is also true of this analysis. By using the framework of recalibration in conjunction with Sainsbury and others, the aim of the analytical framework is to capture and reflect the complexity and configuration of policies relating to partnered women outside the labour market in the three countries.

¹⁴ Based on a study of France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Sweden, Britain and the US.

Having considered the critiques of both mainstream and gendered regime theory, similar shortcomings may be attributed to Serrano Pascual's (2007) typology of activation regimes. Although this analysis does not focus on assigning the three countries studied to Serrano Pascual's typology, the value of her typology to this analysis is two-fold. Firstly, it specifically focuses on activation policies; secondly, her concept of hegemonic regulatory assumptions is useful in not merely describing what activation policies do in terms of the recalibration of functional and distributive dimensions, but also in highlighting the normative bases for the policy responses:

“Activation regimes are the outcome of the fragile balance of power between the different actors involved in the design and implementation of these activation policies and of all the hegemonic regulatory and cognitive benchmarks that shape a community's understanding of the social exclusion problem” (Serrano Pascual, 2007: 276)

Serrano Pascual defines activation regimes as “different ways of organising the policies and actors that deal with the problems of social exclusion and economic activity” (2007: 294). Her typology moves on from Barbier's (2001) binary of activation regimes, which characterises Britain as liberal and Denmark as universalistic. The universalistic type provides “complex and extended services to all citizens and simultaneously guarantees relatively high standards of living” (Barbier, 2001: 9); the liberal type focuses on individual relationships with the labour market to produce social equity and efficiency. In this context, active labour market policies (ALMPs)¹⁵ are restricted to inciting individuals to seek work, providing quick information and

¹⁵ Bonoli argues that ALMPs is too broad to be used analytically and suggests four dimensions: incentive reinforcement, employment assistance, occupation, and human capital development. See Bonoli, G. (2010) *The political economy of active labour market policy. Working papers on the reconciliation of work and welfare in Europe*, Edinburgh, Reconciling work and welfare in Europe (RECOWE).

matching services, as well as investing in short term vocational training” (Barbier, 2001: 9). The value of both Barbier’s and Serrano Pascual’s approaches is in linking the activation policies with the broader welfare state: “The semantic field of the activation concept...goes beyond the strict meaning associated with employment policies, as it also includes the Welfare State’s intervention and reproduction logic and principles” (Serrano Pascual, 2007: 276).

Serrano Pascual’s activation regimes are distinguished by two key factors: (i) governance structures and institutional setting and (ii) hegemonic regulatory assumptions. The former is not utilised in this analysis, but is instead considered by employing politico-institutional recalibration. The concept of hegemonic regulatory assumptions is used to analyse functional and normative aspects of the policies in the three countries and this has four aspects: (i) the meaning of work, (ii) the meaning of citizenship, (iii) who or what is considered to be responsible for the jobless situation of the individual and (iv) the duties of jobseekers and the duties of the state in terms of a social contract (*quid pro quo*). These all “act as cultural frames that not only influence policy design, but also serve as a regulatory justification/foundation for these policies” (Serrano Pascual, 2007: 278). This includes the prevailing understanding of the individual as competent and responsible, or as dependent and passive (Serrano Pascual, 2007: 278); the latter, it could be argued, is how policies in Britain and Australia have historically viewed partnered women outside the labour market. Serrano Pascual argues that community values relating to work and worklessness influence the social representation of policies. Although it is not made clear how such community values are articulated and mediated through policymaking elites, she cites examples of such representations (2007: 278-9). A moralistic concept of unemployment favours activation in order to discourage dependency and promote responsibility. A political understanding of unemployment linked to national identity and the viability of the welfare state may lead to activation focusing on national citizenship. An economic concept of unemployment may lead to a focus on adaptation to new

economic challenges through investment in human capital or through more coercive strategies to ensure a reserve army of workers.

Serrano Pascual identifies five types of activation regimes (economic springboard regime, civic contractualism regime, autonomous citizens regime, minimalist disciplinary regime and fragmented provision regime) (p.294). Denmark reflects both the civic contractualism regime and the autonomous citizens regime and Britain reflects the economic springboard regime. This typology is based on two aspects. The first is the modes of managing individuals and within this the two extremes of: (i) the moral-therapeutic management of behaviour and (ii) adaptive skills management.¹⁶ The second aspect is a 'new social contract' and within this the two elements of: (i) the *quid pro quo*¹⁷ between unemployed people and the State and (ii) the balance, or imbalance between the two. In considering the first aspect of modes of managing individuals, Serrano Pascual suggests that both the moral-therapeutic management of behaviour and adaptive skills management draw on the concept of 'autonomy,' but with different underlying interpretations. The moral-therapeutic intervention is 'paternalistic,' assuming that individuals are passive by nature and that it is necessary to force them to fulfill their moral duty to take responsibility for their lives. There are two main variants of this assumption. The first variant views individual behaviour as a consequence of a rational decision - that individuals do not wish to work or believe it is not worthwhile to work; in this analysis this is labelled *homo economicus*. Examples of activation interventions which exemplify this include legally binding requirements to seek work, constant assessment and economic incentives. The second variant assumes

¹⁶ Indicators for managing individuals are: (i) regulation of behaviour by: benefit sanctions, limiting income replacement, reducing entitlement period, conditionality, less generous unemployment benefit and a stricter benefit regime, (ii) tax-benefit reforms, (iii) definition of a 'suitable job', (iv) extension of measures to all economically inactive people, (v) attitude towards clients, including the role of the individual and a top-down approach, (vi) client supervision, (vii) marketisation and (viii) degree of discretion/formalisation. Although these indicators have not formed the basis for the analytical framework of this research, these aspects are accounted for in the analysis.

¹⁷ Latin meaning 'something for something' but as Goodin argues, there can be asymmetries within this supposed reciprocity. See Goodin, R. (2002) Structures of mutual obligation. *Journal of Social Policy*, 31(4):579-596.

that individual behaviour is a result of personality failings rather than rationality and interventions aim to improve self-esteem, or provide career guidance and job application skills. These hegemonic regulatory assumptions concerning the reason/s for worklessness are reflected in the policy responses. The second aspect of Serrano Pascual's modes of managing individuals (adaptive skills management) views individuals as autonomous and requiring certain resources to make use of their autonomy, such as education and training.

The two approaches to managing individuals form the first aspect of Serrano Pascual's activation regime typology. The second aspect is the social contract between the State and the unemployed individual and the balance or imbalance this *quid pro quo* relating to the rights and duties of individuals and of the State (p.299).¹⁸ The moral-therapeutic approach focuses more on the duties rather than the rights, whereas adaptive skills management is a more balanced form of social contract between the individual and the community (p.299). Serrano Pascual suggests that the moral-therapeutic approach is found in Britain but that Denmark incorporates both approaches. The drawback of Serrano Pascual's approach is not only its complexity, but also its singular focus on activation in isolation from other policy areas. Dingeldey's (2007) three country study identifies two mutually constitutive paths to welfare state transformation (workfare and enablement) and her concept of enabling policies includes childcare, which this thesis argues is an important underpinning for activation policies, visible in both the functional and normative sub-dimensions, as well as in terms of policy translatability in the politico-institutional sub-dimension. Despite the shortcomings of Serrano Pascual's approach, her concept of hegemonic regulatory assumptions is employed as a tool for analysing data from the case studies in the normative recalibration sub-

¹⁸ Indicators for this second aspect include: (i) the extent of entitlement (coverage of income replacement, comprehensiveness, generosity), (ii) the amount of government spending, (iii) the degree of individualisation, (iv) the participation of the recipient in the activation process, (v) the range, type and quality of options for participation, (vi) labour market segmentation. Although these indicators have not formed the basis for the analytical framework of this research, these aspects are accounted for in the analysis.

dimension and this is complemented by Williams' (1995) work, family and nation (see Section 2.3).

2.5 *Policy as transfer and policy as translation*

Policy transfer can be defined as “the process by which actors borrow policies developed in one setting to develop programmes and policies within another” (Dolowitz, 1996: 357). Stone (1999) highlights that ‘policy transfer’ as utilised by Dolowitz and Marsh (1996) encompasses a range of related concepts. Firstly, lesson-drawing (Rose, 1993) in the sense of being voluntaristic rather than coercive. Secondly, ‘policy convergence’ and ‘policy diffusion’ suggest that policy transfer arises as a consequence of structural forces (Stone, 1999: 52). Thirdly, ‘social learning’ or ‘policy learning’ where “the emphasis is on cognition and the redefinition of interests on the basis of new knowledge which affects the fundamental beliefs and ideas behind policy approaches” (Stone, 1999: 52). May (1992) suggests that “Learning implies improved understanding, as reflected by an ability to draw lessons about policy problems, objectives, or interventions” (p.333). For Hall (1993) there are three types of social learning, based on three orders of paradigmatic policy change. First order change involves changes in the instrument settings, but the policy goals and instruments remain the same. In second order change policy instruments as well as settings are changed, but the normative legitimacy of the central policy goals remains unquestioned. Third order changes are more radical, involving a change in the hierarchy of goals, or a paradigm shift. First and second order change do not automatically lead to third order change (Hall, 1993: 279), but Hall cites the shift in British macroeconomic policy from Keynesianism to monetarism as an example of a change of all three orders. First order change is likely to be incremental, but second order change may move one step beyond in a strategic direction. Third order change is likely to be more sociological than scientific, involving changing views of experts; for

example, there may be a shift in the locus of authority and policy experimentation and policy failure are likely to play a key role (Hall, 1993: 280).

Hall's three orders of policy change have some similarity with Dolowitz's (2009) distinction between 'hard' and 'soft' policy learning. In soft learning "nothing new is incorporated into the existing knowledge structure" (p.323). Harder forms require individuals to recognise the importance of context within countries from which policy lessons originate and, further, require that they actively pursue information, analyse it and "actively develop a deeper understanding of how and why the object under consideration operates in the observed system" (Dolowitz, 2009: 323). This has similarities with May's (1992: 336) distinction between instrumental policy learning, involving a focus on policy instruments and designs, and social learning, which incorporates an improved understanding of policy problems, goals and dominant causal beliefs. Dolowitz (2009) argues that:

"It is likely that most instances of policy transfer actually involve much softer processes. In fact, more than a few instances of learning appear to involve little more than policy makers going on vacation, seeing something they like, and then coming back and attempting to mimic it within their own system, with little or no analysis being undertaken of either the foreign model or the specifics of the context in which it is to be transferred" (p.323)

This research differs from such 'touristic' policy learning by engaging in an understanding of the wider policy contexts in both Australia and Denmark in order to draw policy lessons for Britain as well as to anticipate, avoid, or attempt to mitigate the possibility of policy transfer failure. In this analysis this process begins with both the perceived policy failure of the New Deal for Partners. For Rose (1991) dissatisfaction with policy (whoever articulates such dissatisfaction) is the impetus for policy learning. This analysis also considers the policy problematisation of partnered

women outside the labour market. Different countries problematise the worklessness of non-working partnered women in a variety of ways, or may not problematise this at all. Drawing on Foucauldian discourse theory, Bacchi (1999) argues that 'problem definition' considers policies to be 'out there' waiting to be discovered and solved by the policy community, whereas her 'What's the problem', or 'problem representation' approach acknowledges that policy problems are constructed. Taking account of such representations contributes to hard learning and may overcome potential constraints on transfer by examining the normative foundations of policies and programmes. By utilising the recalibration framework, this research will consider whether and how the policy responses to partnered women outside the labour market are consistent with existing policy trajectories in Australia and Denmark.

Dolowitz et al (2000: 23) specify different aspects¹⁹ of policies which may be transferred: policy goals, content and instruments, programmes, institutions, ideas and attitudes, and negative lessons. Rose (1991: 21-2) identifies a number of ways in which programmes may be utilised during policy transfer.²⁰ A programme may be (i) copied, (ii) emulated, (iii) hybridised, (iv) synthesised, or (v) serve as inspiration. Copying "occurs when a country adopts a programme in use elsewhere without any changes" (Dolowitz and Marsh, 1996: 351); this may be done within the same country, for example from a local or federal level to national level. Emulation requires adaptation to national circumstances (Rose, 1991: 21). Hybridisation may combine elements from programmes in two different places (Rose, 1991: 22) and synthesis combines elements in several different programmes into a distinctive whole. Rose treats hybridisation and synthesis as two separate methods, however others (Dolowitz and Marsh, 1996, Dolowitz et al., 2000) combine these two processes. Inspiration views a familiar problem in an unfamiliar setting, but it constitutes speculation rather than lesson-drawing as it does not demonstrate how a particular programme actually

¹⁹ Or 'objects of transfer'. See Evans, M. & Davies, J. (1999) Understanding policy transfer: a multi-level, multi-disciplinary perspective. *Public Administration*, 77(2):361-385.

²⁰ This may be referred to as the 'degree of transfer'. See Evans and Davies (1999).

works (Rose, 1991: 22). This research views the policy 'problem' of partnered women outside the labour market in Britain in the two different settings of Australia and Denmark. This to an extent de-familiarises the familiar. However, in engaging in hard policy learning it goes beyond simply looking for inspiration, but provides analysis of the policy responses in the two countries, with reference to the British case.

Path dependency highlights that policy is not made on a blank sheet, but is often a product of what has gone before. "Policy makers are inheritors before they are choosers...new programmes cannot be constructed on green field sites...they must be introduced into a policy environment dense with past commitments" (Rose, 1993: 73). In terms of policy transference, Dolowitz and Marsh (1996) suggest that past policies "constrain agents as to both what can be transferred and what agents look for when engaging in policy transfer" (p.353). Thus, past policies, or history, set limits on the parameters of search for policies in other settings. Path dependency should not be construed as presenting an insurmountable barrier to innovative welfare policies, but it must be considered as one of the constraints on successful policy transfer, as policy responses are circumscribed by institutional 'stickiness'. Dolowitz et al (2000: 35) highlight that borrowed policies develop over time; notably, many policy paths are themselves a result of policy transference. For example, Australian welfare reforms were borrowed from the US and the concept of Danish 'one-stop shops' combining benefit and employment services was borrowed from the Netherlands.

Clearly, policy transfer is not straightforward. Dolowitz and Marsh argue that geographic propinquity does not necessarily equate to effective policy transfer, but that similarity of ideology and resources are necessary preconditions (Dolowitz and Marsh, 1996: 353). Ideology provides a link between more abstract 'philosophical' judgements and analyses of welfare and the institutional *politics* of welfare in terms of the design and implementation of policies and programmes (Clarke et al., 1987: 15 my emphasis). Looking to countries with similar political ideologies can make sense as a

facilitator of policy transfer, but confining the search for policies in this way can be argued to reinforce the existing order. This is problematic in the context of policy failure, if the current and dominant paradigm is in part responsible for that failure. The existing order can thus be perpetuated by looking to countries with a history of policy lending and this can also occur by confining policy lessons to countries within similar regime types. However, it must be acknowledged that policy transfer may be facilitated by policy learning within countries with similar institutional systems. In assessing the possibility of transfer, this analysis aims to negotiate a path between the two extremes of 'technical feasibility' (in which all programmes are theoretically capable of being replaced) and 'total blockage' (where specific histories, institutions and cultures block transfers between countries) (Rose, 1991: 25). For Rose (1991: 24), there are two key standards against which programmes and policies should be judged with a view to transfer: (i) technical feasibility ('Is the programme practical?') and (ii) political feasibility ('Is it desirable?'). Rose suggests that the ideal programme needs to meet both criteria, however this transfer is mediated by the political environment and the policy process, as well as by path dependency.

Rose (1991: 23-4) argues that a key part of the policy transfer process is 'prospective evaluation'. This differs from conventional evaluation in focusing on the *potential* future success of a programme, rather than solely being retrospective. However, prospective evaluation also contains retrospective elements, such as examination of the historical path leading to the introduction of a policy or programme. Such an approach is taken in this research by making a judgement concerning the success of current or historical programmes affecting partnered women in Australia and Denmark, together with a prediction about the suitability of these programmes to Britain at a future date. To this end, it involves informed speculation based on existing evidence in another context. Policymakers prefer to rely on what has been seen to work. Reviewing 'what works' to inform policy and the agenda of 'evidence-based policy' began in Britain with Thatcher's introduction of a 'measurement culture' under

the 'New Public Management' (Hudson and Lowe, 2004: 233). However, this has also been a defining aspect of New Labour governance in Britain.²¹ Instead of evidence-based policy,' Irving and Hodgson (2007: 9, 12) highlight that the reality of policy-making is that it is often 'evidence-inspired,' 'evidence-informed,' or even 'evidence-base-aware'. In particular, the success criteria constructed for policies or programmes are important factors in forming a judgement as to whether it may be viewed as 'successful' and this will be addressed in this analysis.

Policy transfer 'success' may be defined as (i) the extent to which a transferred policy achieves the aims stated by the transferring government and (ii) whether the policy, programme or institution was viewed as a success by the key actors involved (Dolowitz et al., 2000: 33). In the second case, this is dependent upon which actors are making the judgement; an aspect which also applies to perceptions of policy dissatisfaction and policy failure. However, success in one policy context does not guarantee success in another. Dolowitz et al (2000: 33-4) suggest that policy transfer failure can occur in three ways. Firstly, as a result of 'unknowledgeable transfer,' where a borrowing system has insufficient information about the programme in the originating system. Secondly, 'incomplete transfer' in which crucial elements which contributed to policy success in the originating country are not transferred. Finally, 'inappropriate transfer' where insufficient attention is paid to differences in economic, social, political and ideological contexts in both the transferring and originating systems. Accounts of failed transatlantic policy transfer (Dolowitz, 1998, Dolowitz et al., 1999, Daguerra and Taylor-Gooby, 2004, Deacon, 2000) suggest that policy transfer failure is due to some degree of incomplete transfer. However, each of these types of policy transfer failure is the result of insufficient attention being paid to the context of either the originating or transferee countries, or both.

²¹ As early as 1991, Henkel suggested that there was an 'evaluative state'. See Henkel, M. (1991) The new evaluative state. *Public Administration*, 69:121-36.

That programmes are circumscribed by policies and the wider welfare state system means that lifting a programme from one country and re-inserting it into the context of another country can be problematic. This study thus utilises Lendvai and Stubbs' (2007) concept of 'policy as translation' rather than 'policy as transfer', which emphasises two key aspects. Firstly, policies or programmes are not available to be looked at and learned from in the sense of merely viewing a problem in an unfamiliar setting (Lendvai and Stubbs, 2007: 180), as in Rose's concept of inspiration. This conceptualisation alters the role of the actors transferring policy from one of mere 'conduits' of policy transfer to 'translators' of policy (p.179). Policy failure may occur as a result of the *process* of transference, rather than as a result of the borrowed policy or programme itself (Dolowitz et al., 2000: 35). For example, a programme may be used in a transferring country in a way which was not intended by the originating country. The implication of this is not necessarily that a programme cannot be used in a different way, however to do so may require construction of different success criteria from that of the lending country. In the conceptualisation of policy translation as a *process*, policy is produced 'in the act of looking' (Lendvai and Stubbs, 2007: 180) and is fluid, dynamic and actor-orientated. The policy transfer/translation process is akin to a research process and is thus subject to similar epistemological and ontological considerations. Furthermore, the process of policy change should be viewed in the context of a fluid policy environment, where "everything is changing, yet, at the same time, resistance to change prevails and the possibilities are limited" (Lendvai and Stubbs, 2007: 185). This recognises that there may be constraints on the perceived political acceptability of learning lessons from particular countries at specific points in time. Evidence-based policy can in practice mean "policy based not so much on evidence as on consensus...politics is the art of the possible, rather than what is rational or what might work best" (Leicester, 1999: 6). A programme that was politically unfeasible at one point may become feasible at another (Rose, 1991: 28). This relates to both technical feasibility in terms of path dependency and to political feasibility in relation to normative aspects and to the overarching welfare paradigm.

Secondly, policy as translation recognises that policies or programmes are de-territorialised and then re-territorialised; translating policies from one country to another requires reconstitution, or re-siting. This becomes problematic in the context of mainstream policy transfer literature, whose “realist ontology sees ‘policy’ both in the source and in the recipient context as a stable, pre-existing and uncontested ‘reality’” (Lendvai and Stubbs, 2007: 179). Rather, policy can be seen as being unstable, as with Clarke’s notion of welfare settlements (Clarke, 2004). Lendvai and Stubbs see the policy process as continually re-constituting, rather than linear. Similarly, Crozier (2007, see also Crozier, 2008) refers to the governance process as being ‘recursive’ and iterative, involving “repeated application of a procedure or rule to successive results of a process” (p.2).²² In this way policy learning, like policy change, may be viewed as incrementally and cumulatively transformative (see Streeck and Thelen, 2005). The problematisation of partnered women outside the labour market reflects changing conceptualisations of women’s roles, however as will be demonstrated in this thesis this shift in thinking does not necessarily constitute a paradigm shift of the third order in any of the countries studied, but more a recalibration.

2.6 Summary

This chapter has set out the theoretical framework for this research. It has discussed regime theory as a broad theoretical starting point and outlined that the key analytical concept used is welfare recalibration with its four sub-dimensions (functional, distributive, normative, politico-institutional). The framework is complemented by a number of other relevant concepts from the literature. Sainsbury’s bases of entitlement to benefits is utilised in the functional sub-dimension, along with Serrano Pascual’s activation regimes and her concept of the social contract (*quid pro quo*). The normative sub-dimension is complemented by Serrano Pascual’s concept of hegemonic

²² See also Dwyer, P. & Ellison, N. (2009) ‘We nicked stuff from all over the place’: policy transfer or muddling through? *Policy and Politics*, 37(3):389-407.

regulatory assumptions as a way of conceptualising the perceived problem representations of partnered women outside the labour market which inform the policy responses. Williams' concept of work, family and nation is also used to analyse the ideology behind the policy goals within this sub-dimension. Finally, both Dolowitz's concept of 'hard' policy learning and Lendvai and Stubbs' concept of 'policy as translation' have driven the consideration of policy learning from Australia and Denmark to Britain, complementing the work of Dolowitz and others which suggest criteria for successful policy transfer. This aspect also completes the analysis using the final sub-dimension of recalibration (politico-institutional). The next chapter sets out the methodology for the research, including how it has been informed by this theoretical framework. This is followed by a review of documentary evidence relating to partnered women outside the labour market in the three countries. Subsequent data analysis chapters are structured according to the four sub-dimensions of recalibration.

Chapter Three - Methods

3.1 *Introduction*

This chapter provides discussion of the methods employed in the study, which began with an evidence review of eight OECD countries, from which Australia and Denmark were selected for further in-depth case study research and contrasted with Britain in relation to policy learning. The case studies incorporated documentary analysis and 52 elite interviews with policy actors (31 in Australia and 21 in Denmark), mostly conducted face-to-face, but some by telephone. The key research questions posed at the outset of the study were:

1. What are the most relevant benefit (and service) policies and labour market interventions within a range of OECD countries that relate to the situation of partnered women in non-working households of working age?
2. How and for which groups of partnered women have these policies been effective in facilitating labour market participation, and to what extent are elements of these policies likely to be transferable to Britain?
3. What have been the driving factors and social and economic contexts behind the introduction of such policies and what lessons follow regarding transferability to Britain?

These questions were addressed at different stages of the research. The first by the initial evidence review (see Section 3.2) and the second and third by the in-depth case studies of Australia and Denmark (see Section 3.3) and during the analysis stage. These key research questions were supplemented by further detailed questions

constructed for the evidence review framework during the first stage and for the interview topic guides during the fieldwork planning stage (see Appendix 1).

Sections 3.2 and 3.3 of this chapter consider, respectively, the evidence review and selection of the case study countries. Subsequent sections cover methodological aspects relating to the case studies: Section 3.4 discusses the case study method, Section 3.5 considers documentary analysis, Section 3.6 discusses the construction of the interview sample, Section 3.7 considers ethical issues affecting the research and Section 3.8 discusses the elite interview method. Section 3.9 focuses on methodological issues relating to policy learning, Section 3.10 provides some reflective comments and Section 3.11 concludes the chapter with a brief summary.

3.2 *Evidence review of OECD countries*

The project was an ESRC CASE studentship collaboration between the University of Sheffield and DWP and was commissioned by DWP which requested an international review of policies relating to partners, with a focus on policy learning. Prior to my recruitment to the studentship a project initiation document had been produced by the University and DWP. This set out the working title, the research questions and a detailed workplan for the three year duration of the project, comprising: (1) in Year One an evidence review of OECD countries based on documentary analysis, (2) in Year Two historical documentary analysis of policies in selected countries and interviews with key actors, and (3) in Year Three consultation meetings and policy option dissemination with DWP and other actors. This framework was largely adhered to, however this presented some difficulties for the project, as this chapter considers.

In overall terms this study followed the recommendations of a project focused on international comparison²³ run for policymakers by the British Government's former Centre for Management and Policy Studies.²⁴ In particular the study utilised a Workbook (structured assessment tool) produced for examining policies and programmes in other countries, with a view to policy learning.²⁵ The main elements of the tool reflect the stages of this research: *scanning, selecting, understanding, assessing and recommending*. The aim of the evidence review was to undertake 'mixed scanning' (Etzioni, 1967) by reviewing policies relevant to assisting partnered women into work in a number of OECD countries; this informed the selection of Australia and Denmark for case study research. Understanding of the programmes relating to partnered women in the context of the wider welfare states of these countries was achieved through the interview and documentary data and during the analysis stage. Similarly, assessment of the policies began during the fieldwork stages, but predominantly took place during the analysis. The final stage comprised the writing up process where, following assessment and analysis, aspects of the policies and programmes examined were recommended for the British context.

Prior to my recruitment to the project, a project initiation document had been produced, which suggested that the first year would comprise the evidence review based on documentary analysis of policies in a wide range of OECD countries, chosen to reflect regime types. In the event, regime types were not utilised for reasons set out in Section 3.3, as well as in Chapter Two. During the first year the DWP-commissioned evaluations of the New Deal for Partners (NDP) were analysed using a similar methodology for meta-analysis as that employed by Hasluck and Green (2007) in their review of 'what works for whom' in British welfare to work programmes. This

²³ 'Beyond the Horizon'

²⁴ Renamed the National School of Government.

²⁵ See National School of Government Policyhub <http://www.nationalschool.gov.uk/policyhub/> [Last accessed 27 February 2010].

involved mapping and assessing the evidence and drawing out the key lessons.²⁶ Analysis of this evaluation evidence was accompanied by a mapping of social security, social assistance and employment assistance pertaining to non-working partnered women in Britain. During this time, a visit was made to a Jobcentre Plus office to examine how NDP was implemented at the frontline by observing an NDP Personal Adviser conducting mandatory Work-Focused Interviews for Partners (WFIPs) and voluntary NDP interviews. One aim of this visit was to consolidate knowledge of current policy and practice before assessing policies in other countries for transferability. This visit also acted as a pilot for the interviews with policy actors and similar visits to frontline offices in Australia and Denmark. Due to time constraints interviews with policy actors in Britain were not as extensive as for the other two countries, however engagement with current policy was ensured through regular contact with the DWP supervisor Dr Alison Herrington, as well as by my own desk research. Meetings also took place periodically with other policy officials in DWP, as well as with statisticians and I also spoke to a number of academics based in Britain. The British case was treated as both the starting point and end point for the research in that the perceived 'policy failure' of the New Deal for Partners provided the 'impetus' (Dolowitz and Marsh, 1996) for policy learning and the British case was returned to in considering policy translatability from the comparator countries.

The evidence review involved scanning of predominantly labour market policies relevant to partnered women in OECD countries. It was not practical within time and resource constraints to examine all OECD countries.²⁷ DWP requested that the US be excluded due to the amount of existing data relating to US policies. Given the documented failures of transatlantic policy transfer (Dolowitz, 1998, Dolowitz et al.,

²⁶ This meta-analysis and the interviews which follow are broadly based on the idea of drawing policy lessons based on a cumulative picture, espoused by Pawson in his realist methodology for evidence-based policy. Pawson also provides a critique of systematic reviews based on hierarchies of evidence. See Pawson, R. (2006) *Evidence-based policy: a realist perspective*, London, Sage.

²⁷ There were 29 OECD countries in addition to Britain.

1999, Daguerre and Taylor-Gooby, 2004, Deacon, 2000)²⁸ I supported this exclusion and it provided an opportunity to explore the possibilities of policy learning from another European country.²⁹ The initial focus was on countries with higher female employment rates than Britain and OECD employment rates (OECD, 2008)³⁰ for all women were used as a proxy measure to ensure data comparability. Based on this, the eight countries with a higher employment rate than that of Britain are set out in Table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1: Employment rates for women of working age, 2006

Britain	66.8
Finland	67.3
New Zealand	68.4
Canada	69
Switzerland	71.1
Sweden	72.1
Norway	72.3
<i>Denmark</i>	73.2
Iceland	81.6

Source: OECD Factbook 2008

Evidence reviews of each country were conducted, except Iceland, which was due to be begun when the evidence review was drawn to a close (see below). In the course of reviewing New Zealand, information was acquired regarding Australian policies, as the former had served as policy inspiration for the latter and Australia was later added to the analysis for reasons set out in Section 3.3 below. The evidence review revealed

²⁸ However, drawing on elite interviews with DWP officials, Dwyer and Ellison cast doubt on the US as the primary influence on British activation policy and point to hybridisation within policy learning. See Dwyer, P. & Ellison, N. (2009) ‘We nicked stuff from all over the place’: policy transfer or muddling through? *Policy and Politics*, 37(3):389-407.

²⁹ However, it transpired that the Australian reforms examined were partially inspired by the US, reflecting existing policy learning. See Gray, M. & Stanton, D. (2002) *Lessons of United States welfare reforms for Australian social policy*, Melbourne, VIC, Australian Institute for Family Studies.

³⁰ Employment rates are the ratio of the employed to the working age population, calculated by dividing the working age population into two groups: those who are employed and those who are not. All OECD countries use the ILO Guidelines for measuring employment: unemployed people are defined as those who are without a job, want a job, have actively sought work in the last four weeks and are available to start work in the next two weeks; or those who are out of work, have found a job and are waiting to start it in the next two weeks. The ILO definition of employment is more accurate than the claimant count, which merely counts people registered as unemployed and not those who are on benefits other than unemployment benefits or those who are not registered as unemployed but are nevertheless looking for paid work.

that total employment rates were an inadequate measure of partnered women's labour market participation and that more in-depth research was required to identify relevant policies.

The review was an iterative process. Searches of citation indexes accorded with Hasluck and Green (2005: 97) that using 'partners' as a search term generated a large number of unrelated items (such as 'social' and 'business' partners) and that 'partners of benefit claimants' did not produce many items. Key words used in database and index searching were: 'partnered women', 'unemployed women', 'unemployed partners', 'partners of unemployed', 'workless partners', 'unemployed partnered women', 'jobless partners', 'workless couples', 'jobless couples'. Databases searched included the International Bibliography of the Social Sciences (IBSS), Web of Knowledge, Web of Science, Applied Social Science Index and Abstracts (ASSIA) and the International Social Security Association database.³¹ Search engines used were Google and Google Scholar. Extensive searches were conducted of European Union and OECD websites, of other sources set out in the British Government's National School of Government's Policy Hub website³² and of the websites of relevant government departments in each country.³³ The focus of the review was on programmes currently operating. As Macdonald (2001: 201) has highlighted, use of the 'Find' function was helpful in searching large quantities of often lengthy documents. Burnham et al (2004) suggest that "even if the web-like character of the Internet allows us to think in new and different ways, the basic organising concepts that are deployed in social science research still have to be applied" (p.190). I logged the searches by using bookmarks in Google, as well as by keeping a journal. It was acknowledged at

³¹ ISSA comprises institutions and bodies administering social security in most countries. It was founded in 1927 and is part of the International Labor Office.

³² <http://www.nationalschool.gov.uk/policyhub/> [Last accessed 27 February 2010]

³³ Although a large quantity of documentary evidence is publicly accessible via the Internet, the success of Internet searching is circumscribed by the efficacy of search engines, citation indexes and search phrases used. One major disadvantage of the Internet is the authenticity of the vast amount of documents, however there are also constraints on Internet searching: many governments place a large amount of information onto the web, but this is not true of all OECD countries.

an early stage that Internet search alone was unlikely to yield information about specific policies and programmes relevant to non-working partners, therefore e-mail contact was made with relevant policymakers, analysts and academics in each country.³⁴ Contacts were established via a snowballing technique, including through DWP's Joint International Unit, EU committees, networking at conferences and Internet searching.

The evidence review of the eight countries revealed that partnered women as a target group did not specifically feature in policies, apart from in Australia, New Zealand and Denmark.³⁵ The intention was that the scope of the review would be widened if insufficient data were collected by focusing merely on the eight countries. In the event, the University upgrade panel which approved my progression from MPhil to PhD requested that the evidence review be drawn to a close and that I select my comparator countries and commence the case study research. This echoed my own concerns concerning the amount of time the review was taking.³⁶

3.3 *Selection of case study countries*

At the start of the research, the intention was to select up to three countries for case study analysis in the second year of the project. Following the evidence review stage and based on advice from academics in the field about what could be accomplished in the time period, I selected two cases in addition to Britain. Given the task of analysing the wealth of contextual data acquired from two countries during this research, three cases would have been potentially problematic.

³⁴ I am grateful to Dr Patricia Kennett for advice regarding this.

³⁵ At a later stage in the research, I discovered that active labour market policies had been extended to partners of benefit claimants in Germany as part of the Hartz reforms (2003 - 2005) but that these reforms were not strictly enforced. I am grateful to Dr Irene Dingeldey for this information. Although my German language skills were reasonably advanced, they were not sufficient to conduct in-depth interviews requiring knowledge of specialist terms.

³⁶ The review began in Spring 2008 and ended in Autumn 2008. Although the evidence review had originally been intended to form part of the first year's research preparation, much of the first year was also consumed with reviewing the theoretical literature.

Based on the theoretical literature (see Chapter Two), three options were considered for the selection of case study countries. The first was to select two countries which, together with Britain (if conceptualised as a liberal welfare regime³⁷), each represented one of Esping-Andersen's original three regime types.³⁸ The second option was to confine the cases to those within the same regime type as Britain on the basis that borrowing policies would be more likely to result in successful policy transfer.³⁹ The third option was to select countries purely on the basis of being the most successful in increasing the employment rates of partnered women, perhaps grouped according to particular policy approaches and which may also reflect regime approaches. Selecting two countries using regime typologies⁴⁰ was rejected on the basis of regime theory's shortcomings, particularly in the context of such a gender-focused analysis (see Chapter Two). The third option was selected, but given that Australia did not have a higher employment rate for partnered women (65.6 compared with 66.8) than Britain, in the event this was also informed by other aspects relating to the construction of the case studies, such as access to data.

The intention of selecting Australia and Denmark was to compare policy responses specifically targeted at partnered women outside the labour market with encompassing approaches not directly focused on partnered women, but which affected their employment rate. The selection was reflective of Korpi and Palme's (1998) five types of institutional models⁴¹, modified for this study. Australia's approach to partnered women outside the labour market was conceptualised as 'targeted'. Australia was also selected on the basis that the direction of British welfare

³⁷ Classification of Britain is contested, as is the typologization of the two comparator countries.

³⁸ Or four regime types - although there are differing opinions as to which countries constitute a 'fourth world of welfare capitalism'.

³⁹ Selection of countries could also be confined to EU countries, based on the rationale that EU member countries are subject to EU policies, within the framework of the Open Method of Coordination (OMC). Notably, Britain also differs from most other EU countries (apart from Denmark and Sweden) in not having adopted the Euro.

⁴⁰ This would have meant selecting one conservative-corporatist and one social democratic welfare state.

⁴¹ Korpi and Palme's typology compares five types of institutional models of welfare, based on old age pension and sickness insurance; their typology includes encompassing and targeted/basic security regimes.

reforms for partners and lone parents⁴² had some similarities with Australia and the project provided an opportunity to investigate further the context of the Australian reforms, particularly in terms of possible negative policy lessons. Given that the two countries have been considered to be members of the same regime cluster⁴³, this rationale partially reflects the second option above, however one further reason for the selection of Australia was to examine any variations between Australia and Britain, which are important in considering the possibility of policy translation. Denmark was selected as a country with an encompassing approach to encouraging the labour market participation of partnered women within its overarching framework of activation for all; the anomalous targeted approach to married immigrant women was a lens through which to view Danish encompassing activation. Since the mid-1990s Denmark has led the rest of the Nordic countries in employment policy innovation in terms of activation⁴⁴ in the context of its flexicurity model, comprising a flexible labour market⁴⁵ and activation, but importantly, balanced by generous and comprehensive social protection. Denmark has also been cited as a source of policy inspiration for British welfare reforms (Purnell, 2008) and its flexicurity policies are promoted across the EU and OECD (see Roche, 2010: 211-5).

Selecting Denmark also offered the opportunity to examine the acknowledged variations (such as the established system of day-care) but also any similarities between Denmark and Britain, which, as with Australia, are important in considering policy translation. These cases provided a most-similar-systems design (Australia) and most-different-systems design (Denmark) (Manheim et al., 2006: 211-2). Such a close-up comparison of a small number of cases aimed to overcome Galton's problem (Manheim et al., 2006: 213), whereby the influence of one country or a supra-national

⁴² In particular the Welfare Reform Act 2009.

⁴³ By Esping-Andersen (1990) - for a critique of this typologisation see Castles, F. G. (1993) *Families of nations: patterns of public policy in western democracies*, Aldershot, Dartmouth.

⁴⁴ In fact activation is an example of Danish policy learning from Sweden.

⁴⁵ Where employees have the right to leave their job within a relatively short notice period and employers also have the right to 'hire and fire' workers.

actor such as the OECD ostensibly results in policy convergence in a large sample. The case selection was also based on a judgment formed during the evidence review concerning the availability of data in the two countries. This was the primary reason for selecting Australia rather than New Zealand but was interesting in the context of problems with access to data in the Australian case (see Section 3.8).

Two hypotheses were posited relating to the selected cases. Firstly, that the higher labour market participation of partnered women in Denmark, compared with Britain, is a result of its 'encompassing' welfare state, rather than policies specifically targeted at this group of women. The second hypothesis was that there would be policies in Australia which, as in Britain, are specifically targeted at non-working partnered women but which have a differential impact on their labour market participation, for example in relation to different sub-groups of partners. Two further hypotheses were posited regarding policy learning. Firstly, that Danish policies are the most difficult to translate to Britain because of the different institutional, historical, political and economic contexts and cultural specificities. Secondly, that Australia's policies may be easier to translate to Britain, given some similarities between their welfare states, as well as their shared history.⁴⁶ In practice the research was also limited to countries which appeared to have sufficient data available in English.

3.4 *The case study method*

The approach taken in the research is that suggested by Hammersley (2004: 254) whereby a case study is driven by an interest in a problem and concerns diagnosis of the problem, identification of its sources and outlines possible solutions. From the beginning, it was anticipated that the research was likely to produce a complex picture which might be difficult to reduce to a number of statistical measures. The case study approach was considered to be the most appropriate method, given that it can

⁴⁶ Australia was a British colony and still has the British Monarch as its Head of State.

incorporate a range of methods, both qualitative and quantitative (Mangen, 2004: 309). Case studies also have a strong theoretical dimension (Burnham et al., 2004: 54) and the methodology was informed by the theoretical framework. Given the focus on policy learning, a contextual and conceptual comparative analysis was required in order to engage in 'hard' policy learning (Dolowitz, 2009) to assess the possibility of policy 'translation' (Lendvai and Stubbs, 2007). Such a contextual analysis is also important for a such gender-focused analysis (Daly and Rake, 2003: 167). The case study approach permits the retention of a wide range of factors (Mangen, 2004: 309) and allows the research to tell a 'country-specific' story. Such a 'close-up comparison' (Hantrais, 2004: 270) was considered more likely to reveal differences which may not be apparent from aggregated national-level data, the short-comings of which had already been identified in the evidence review.

One constraint on the research was that it was never considered possible to state with certainty that a particular programme resulted in higher job entries for partnered women. Hill (2006: 16) suggests that for governments it is outcomes that really matter, but the key problem with such data is that variations may have little to do with policy factors but are the result of other, wider social and environmental factors, which are not easy to bring under policy control. Multiple regression was unsuitable for such a small number of cases and although Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA)⁴⁷ was considered, two cases were insufficient for this. Armer's tests (1973 cited in Burnham et al., 2004) suggest that "a major methodological task in comparative research is to devise and select theoretical problems, conceptual schemes, samples and measurement and analysis strategies that are comparable or equivalent across the societies involved" (p.56). Comparability was sought, firstly, by examining policies relating to a sub-group of partners in each of the countries (in each these groups were comparatively

⁴⁷ This quantitative technique is informed by in-depth qualitative data, and facilitates comparison of cases rather than variables. See Rihoux, B. & Ragin, C. (2004) Qualitative comparative analysis (QCA): State of the art and prospects. Prepared for delivery at the 2004 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Chicago, 2-5 September 2004.

small in number). Secondly, by acquiring detailed information about the documented reasons for partnered women being outside the labour market in Australia, Denmark and Britain (see Chapter Four) and to demonstrate a common starting point for problematisation.

3.5 *Documents*

Burnham et al (2004: 206) suggest that no project should be entirely based on elite interviewing. In this research documents have been used as triangulation for interview data and vice versa, however documents are also important primary data which highlight how the policy 'problem' of partnered women outside the labour market is identified, represented and constructed. Atkinson and Coffey (2004: 58) argue that documents should be regarded as data in their own right and not merely to cross-check oral accounts. Government documents examined included records of parliamentary and committee debates, Green and White Papers, discussion papers, annual reports, parliamentary-commissioned reviews and programme evaluations. Other documentary evidence reviewed included academic journal articles and books and other research commissioned by non-governmental policy actors. These were acquired via the websites of government departments, research institutes and universities, as well as from citation index searches.

At the beginning of the research I identified the risk that some documents might not be publicly available, or might be withheld from me due to political or commercial sensitivities. In Australia there is no government commitment to publish evaluation or statistical data⁴⁸ in comparison with the wealth of data published by the British government, particularly DWP. For example, a research organisation contracted by the Australian government had produced a number of relevant evaluation reports.

⁴⁸ There are concerns about media manipulation of published data and also concerns regarding the Privacy Act 1988. During the later stages of write-up of this research (in March 2010) an evaluation report was published, although it had been produced for the Australian government in May 2008.

Although the organisation agreed to provide the documents if permission was sought from the relevant government department, this permission was not granted. My difficulty in accessing data was not confined to me as a researcher from outside the country, but also applied to many academics working in the field. The impression I gained from the interviews was that the role of non-governmental policy actors may be less significant to the Australian policymaking process than to the British or Danish ones.

Burnham et al (2004: 197) suggest that public agencies often lag behind private ones in maintaining their websites. One issue faced in relation to this was that materials were not always transferred between websites following machinery of government changes, so more intricate searches had to be conducted. Further, following such changes some documents were not available electronically; this was particularly visible in the Australian case where relatively more published data were available in English than for Denmark. However, this aspect underscored the importance of the interviews, where signposting was given to published originals of such documents which I may not otherwise have located. Some documents were provided to me in person, or e-mailed or posted to me later; some were accessed via the research institutes where I was based during the fieldwork. Due to budget constraints, documents in Danish were translated by a University student for a small fee. Reliance on others to read documents and search websites reduced my control over the process and required me to adequately explain the purposes of my research and the data I was looking for. Inevitably, through no fault of the people helping me, information which may have been useful may not have been accessed. Some documents were translated word for word, but due to cost constraints, summaries of relevant sections of documents were produced. Although these aspects constrained the research, this was offset by the availability of other data available in English (predominantly academic documents) and by the interviews.

Atkinson and Coffey (2004) argue that “We have to treat documents for what they are and what they are used to accomplish” (p.58). They argue that analysis of ‘documentary realities’ should not be confined to content, but “must also incorporate a clear understanding of how documents are produced, circulated, read, stored and used for a variety of purposes” (p.57). Documents are ‘social facts,’ not transparent representations and however ‘official’ they appear, they cannot be viewed as firm evidence of what they report (Atkinson and Coffey, 2004: 58). Manheim et al (2006: 53) suggest a number of criteria to consider when reviewing documents: authority, objectivity, accuracy, currency and coverage. Burnham et al (2004: 185) add to this authenticity, credibility, representativeness and meaning. It is important to consider that documents are not only produced, but are productive (Prior, 2004: 84) of a reality; Atkinson and Coffey (2004: 73) highlight the importance of authorship (production) as well as readership (consumption). For example, government (and sometimes non-government) documents often do not have named authors, but are anonymous products of organisations. Such anonymity contributes to the construction of such accounts as authoritative or factual (Atkinson and Coffey, 2004: 71). Government documents such as Green and White papers reflect political and policy ideology, employing rhetorical devices. Further, such documents are often not produced for a wider audience, but are largely aimed at (and read by) policy elites and other policy actors. Although such documents may be written in accessible language, in reality only a ‘restricted readership’ with specific competencies are able to fully decode them (Atkinson and Coffey, 2004: 72).

Mossberger and Wolman (2003: 430) suggest that when searching for policies to transfer formal programme evaluations are preferable to anecdotal information or newspapers. For Robson (2004: 123) evaluations have a number of purposes, including examining how a policy is operating, why it does or does not work, how it might be improved and how the costs compare with the benefits, with a particular concern with outcomes. Such programme evaluations are conducted by research organisations

commissioned by government departments, but the publication of such documents is managed and approved by government officials. Other research commissioned by campaigning organisations or funded by research councils are constructed in the context of lobbying campaigns or of certain funding criteria, which set parameters on what is produced. Taskforces and policy reviews operate within constructed terms of reference informed by policy ideology and the resulting reports do not reflect all evidence reviewed, but are representations (although minority reports are often published which highlight dissenting views). In this way, parliamentary committee minutes are useful as they record all proceedings. This is not to denigrate the documents used in this research in any way - on the contrary, they must be (and have been) viewed as important, but also as constructed 'documentary realities' (Atkinson and Coffey, 2004). Further, they are not separate entities, but embody intertextuality in that they make sense with reference to other documents (Atkinson and Coffey, 2004: 66-7) which together constitute constructions of reality. They are cultural artifacts which constitute reality constructed on the basis of shared understandings and expectations, shared meanings and cultural assumptions (Atkinson and Coffey, 2004: 65) and are used by policy elites to construct and maintain policy paradigms, such as 'activation'.

One of the most important features of the bureaucratic mode of social organisation within which policy elites are situated is that people and courses of action are reconstructed in terms of the categories and rules of the organisation itself; such categories do not merely classify, but also create and shape classes and systems (Atkinson and Coffey, 2004: 61). This can be seen in the categorisation of, and focus on particular groups of people, such as lone parents and partners.⁴⁹ Such categories are an important component of outcome measures and, in turn, these measures construct the indicators of success for policies and programmes which appear in documents such as

⁴⁹ Taxonomic structures are a feature of social science research. See Prior, L. (2004) Doing things with documents, in Silverman, D. (Ed.) *Qualitative research: theory, method and practice*. London, Sage, 76-94.

annual reports and evaluation reports. They inform decisions concerning the management information collected, which raises questions about which data are not publicly available and why.

For both countries access to relevant statistical data was restricted to people with links to institutions within those countries, such as universities. A number of Australian interviewees suggested that one possible source of data was the Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) Survey, but it would have taken considerable time to familiarise myself with the database, which was not feasible within the fieldwork schedule. The possibility of issuing a survey to Australian employment service providers was explored, but in the context of the transition to the new employment services contract in July 2009 they were too busy to take part.

3.6 *Construction of the interview sample*

The interviewees were recruited to achieve a purposive sample, comprised of those considered relevant to the research questions and topics. Seldon (1996: 353) defines elite interviews as those conducted with individuals because of who they are or what they did, although there is overlap in terms of methodology with interviews conducted with 'ordinary' people. Manheim et al (2006: 355) highlight that elite status depends on the information to which people have access and not on their role. Policy elites' access to information was important: however their role was also important in terms of their construction of authoritative truths. The domain of knowledge to be accessed related to their professional domains and associated identities (Baker, 2004: 164), but these views may also be informed by the individual's beliefs and opinions. The research differed from my previous research⁵⁰ in that it was not solely based on

⁵⁰ This refers to research I conducted, rather than my professional role managing evaluations of employment programmes. My own research included interviews with participants in a youth training scheme, interviews with graduates in relation to aspirations around parenthood, research with young people in relation to sexual health and with senior civil servants concerning leadership and management.

interviews with direct beneficiaries of a programme. I found this aspect challenging in seemingly giving a voice to those who, to a greater or lesser extent, already had a voice as part of an elite. However, the importance of the interviews with policy actors was two-fold: firstly, in understanding the context of the programmes and secondly, in highlighting the construction and representation of policy problems by elites and how these inform the policy responses. Given that the final aim of this research was policy learning, the elite viewpoints of policy actors were important in telling a country-specific story. The sample was not representative as such, but was intended to reflect the range of key policy actors in Australia and Denmark, based on background research. It took some time for me to understand the structure and responsibilities of the government departments, particularly for Denmark. It was easier to identify researchers and academics to approach for interviews, as their research interests and contact details were in the public domain on University and research organisations' websites.⁵¹ In most cases it was difficult to directly identify the most relevant people in government departments in the first instance, so I contacted such organisations via e-mail addresses given on their websites, which in some cases were for named officials. Recipients were happy to pass my e-mail onto relevant colleagues, or suggest other people I could speak to.

In my e-mails I introduced myself, set out my research goals and highlighted my links with both my University and with DWP. I carefully proofread my e-mails to ensure that I had clearly explained the purpose of my research whilst being as brief as possible. I was aware that the potential respondents were busy professionals with overloaded Inboxes and that many did not have English as a first language, so I needed to be clear and avoid jargon. E-mail communication is usually less formal than other forms of communication (Markham, 2004: 117); I aimed to strike a balance between too much formality and too little informality, at least at the beginning.

⁵¹ Professor Dan Finn at the University of Portsmouth and Dr David Etherington at the University of Middlesex provided a number of useful contacts and guidance.

Notably, some respondents were more formal in e-mails than others. E-mail transcends temporal and geographical boundaries - an important asset for cross-national research. E-mail also gave recipients the advantage of reading messages at times convenient to them and the opportunity to examine and reflect upon my request before responding (Markham, 2004: 104). It had the further advantage of being the primary medium for professional communication for the policy actors interviewed.

A number of policy actors asked who I had already arranged to speak to and gave me guidance as to who else I should contact. This snowball approach acted as a checking mechanism to ensure that I had recruited a range of policy actors within the two countries which were representative of each case, given that the case studies were constructed by a British researcher. In other forms of interviewing, discussion of other interviewees would have been a breach of confidentiality, however in elite interviews in policy analysis this is an important aspect of constructing the policy story. For example, I did not initially understand why a Danish respondent had strongly suggested I should interview social workers. In fact, this was an important aspect of the Danish case and my initial difficulty in appreciating the importance of these policy actors related to the British context, where social workers have never had such a role. Manheim et al (2006: 358) propose that suggestions of other potential interviewees may reveal alliances or shared perceptions and in some cases this was apparent. However, on this occasion the opposite appeared to be the case, as the respondent making the suggestion had diverging views on the policy to those voiced by the social workers.

A possible risk identified at the start of the research was that policy actors may have been uninterested either in taking part in the research, or in engaging fully in the research process. However, some officials had stated their interest in hearing about the British context, so our meetings had some benefit for them. One of the chief rewards for elite respondents is the chance to impart learning to someone knowledgeable about

and genuinely interested in a subject of importance to them (Manheim et al., 2006: 360). Officials arguably had a vested interest in facilitating policy learning, however they could equally have had reservations about how such learning would be implemented. The success of the research depended on contacts in other countries being willing and able to communicate programme information to me. This, in turn, depended on my abilities as a researcher to build up relationships with them. My own professional experience as a government researcher and civil servant was helpful in approaching potential interviewees and in conducting interviews with senior officials in both governmental and non-governmental organisations.

Seldon (1996: 361) highlights the importance of mentioning a supervisor or other mentor in first communication with potential elite respondents. When contacting government departments I highlighted the links with DWP and my background as a civil servant. The purpose of this was to establish some common ground and to position myself as an 'insider' (Miller and Glassner, 2004). Miller and Glassner (2004: 128) suggest that how interviewees respond to us depends upon the social categories to which we belong and upon whether interviewers are considered to be members of the groups they are studying. This may impact on the level of trust between interviewer and interviewee, whether they understand our questions, or whether they purposely mislead us (Miller and Glassner, 2004: 128). There was a risk of here of 'going native,' however I considered that the success of the research depended on how far interviewees considered me to have legitimacy. It was not possible to ascertain how far this affected the responses conveyed to me. In the Australian case access to officials may not have been possible at all without my government links. However, this reflects that interviews are constructed and that my presentation of myself as an interviewer was reflective of my positionality as both a researcher and former government official. Holstein and Gubrium (2004) argue that in the case of interviews assessments of reliability and validity must be based on criteria which account for their construction as "dynamic, meaning-making occasions...One cannot expect

answers on one occasion to replicate those on another because they emerge from different circumstances of production” (p.145). This includes “institutionalised ways of understanding and talking about things,” reflective of the elite interviewee as an ‘active’ rather than a ‘passive subject’ (Holstein and Gubrium, 2004: 150, 147). In advance of the interviews I offered to send respondents document outlining the broad questions and topics I wished to cover, but few respondents asked for this.

Burnham et al (2004: 209) suggest that one risk when dealing with large organisations (such as government departments) is being ‘fobbed off’. In the Australian case the fact that my meetings with officials had been organised by a governmental International Unit allowed me access that I may not otherwise have had, as well as saving me time. However, there was a gatekeeper effect, which was not the case with my relatively open access to Danish government officials. Given my own experience as a government official, I should have anticipated that government departments would have routines for processing visitors (Burnham et al., 2004: 261). Further, although my meetings with Australian government officials had been organised according to my list of policy areas, most meetings were in the form of roundtable discussions. Manheim et al suggest that one-to-one interviews are preferable to group interviews (2006: 360) but this may not always be possible when trying to access respondents with busy schedules. Although an advantage of the roundtable meetings was the ‘synergistic effect’ created by respondents reacting and building upon the responses of others (Wilkinson, 2004: 180), I did not treat them as focus groups by observing the dynamics of group behaviour. I also felt that I had less control over the interactions and that the data generated were not as in-depth compared with the one-to-one interviews. In such a setting, individuals were less likely to present anything other than official viewpoints and this may have contributed to the reduced openness of these interviews compared with the Danish ones.

On visits to frontline staff in Australia I was accompanied by a departmental representative - ostensibly to take notes, although the notes had to be cleared with the relevant Section Heads.⁵² Although this was understandable, it made it difficult to probe sufficiently, particularly in comparison with the one-to-one Danish interviews. I tried for around three months to organise a visit to a Danish Jobcenter and was dependent on AMS (National Labour Market Authority) to arrange this. Once I knew which Jobcenter I was visiting, I did some background research about the locality and discovered that there were few residents of an ethnic minority, few immigrants and therefore few partnered women subject to the 300 hours rule residing there. During the second phase of Danish interviews, I arranged another Jobcenter visit via a contact I had made during the first phase. One disadvantage of the limited time in each country was the lack of flexibility, however in the event this did not cause problems. Only one interview was cancelled in advance due to an interviewee's ill health but we both agreed that the interview need not be re-arranged as I would be speaking to colleagues with similar knowledge. One interviewee was replaced on the day with a colleague, but this transpired to be fortuitous as their replacement actually had more relevant knowledge.

3.7 *Ethical issues*

The research specification was reviewed by the University Ethics Committee, which required changes to be made to the participant information sheets to include information about anonymity, data storage⁵³ and for consent forms to be given to interviewees. A number of interviewees expressed surprise that they had to complete consent forms, however this is in line with social research.⁵⁴ Each interview

⁵² Unfortunately I was unable to utilise the notes taken by officials.

⁵³ Although the fieldwork was taking place in two different countries, the research was required to adhere to the British Data Protection Act 1998.

⁵⁴ See for example the Social Research Association (<http://www.the-sra.org.uk/> [Last accessed 2 March 2010]) and the Social Policy Association http://www.social-policy.com/documents/SPA_code_ethics_jan09.pdf [Last accessed 2 March 2010].

respondent was given an information sheet and asked to sign a consent form before the interview. All respondents received copies of the completed form, which offered a choice of options regarding anonymity: for individuals and/or organisations to be named in the thesis or to remain anonymous. Similar research with elite respondents (for example Branosky and Morrell, 2005, Kremer, 2005) name respondents in the final publications, but do not quote from them directly. Although most interviewees said they would be happy to be named and quoted in the thesis, in retrospect giving interviewees options for anonymity proved to be problematic. This accords with Robinson's (2008) research with elite and non-elite climbers, in which all responses were anonymised because whilst "some interviewees had stressed that they did not mind the possibility of being identified, others had asked for anonymity" (p.7).

Marsh (1967, cited in Kennett, 2001: 44) distinguishes between formal equivalence and functional equivalence: using identical procedures to compare data across countries (formal equivalence) does not necessarily produce functional equivalence. In the event, formal equivalence was not achieved across the two countries as consent was not given to record the interviews with Australian government officials. Although months earlier I had secured the support of officials, the week before the fieldwork began I was informed that senior officials would not agree to me recording the interviews if the data were to appear in a published document. This resulted in more reliance on interviews with non-governmental actors and on documentary evidence in the Australian case. Although data were gained from other sources, functional equivalence was challenged compared with the more extensive interview data in Denmark. This imbalance was addressed through an iterative process of data collection and the triangulation permitted by use of mixed methods in the form of documents and interviews for each case. However, one drawback to the imbalance in functional equivalence between cases is that the interview data in Denmark were triangulated by documents and vice versa, but this was not entirely possible with the Australian data. A further drawback is that the relative paucity of the Australian

interview data is all too apparent to the reader, in comparison with the richer Danish data, which owes a debt to the candour of the Danish respondents.

For some Australian respondents, direct quotes were not used (even in anonymised form) as permission was only given to use information in a paraphrased form. This meant that careful use had to be made of such data, so as not to compromise its robustness, or change the meaning. A further issue was that a small number of respondents who agreed to be named also specified that direct quotes be checked with them before they were used and attributed in the final thesis. There was a risk that respondents might withdraw consent based on quotes presented out of context, however in the event only one respondent wished to see their quotes and cleared them without problems. These issues underline the difficulty of conducting elite interviews with policy actors. Such a methodology produces interesting and rich data, but this may be one reason why this method is underused in social policy. Issues relating to anonymity may be related to the cultures of anonymity within government departments (highlighted in relation to documents in Section 3.5), but this may also reflect the cultures in different countries. Anonymity is important to the British civil service and this also seems to be the case in Australia, but appeared to be less of an issue for Danish civil servants, who were all happy to be quoted and named. In particular in Australia there had been a change of government in 2007 and in serving the current government, officials wished to distance themselves from the policies of the previous one, including the most recent programme I examined. In the Danish case the focus was on policy changes brought about by the current government, although the basis of consensual political decision-making perhaps frames these aspects differently.

In the final thesis, to protect the identity and data of all interviewees, all quotes are anonymised, but as is customary (see for example Burnham et al., 2004: 218) attributed to the type of professional or organisation - the list of interviewees is at Appendix 1.

Such anonymisation is in line with University ethics requirements, social research guidelines and with DWP's own ethical guidelines (Bacon and Olsen, 2003). However, consideration was given regarding how to typologise interviewees so as not to compromise anonymity.

3.8 *The elite interviews*

The aim of constructing in-depth and contextual case studies was one of the reasons for the selection of elite interviews, complemented by documents, for the methodology. Although commonly used by political scientists, elite interviewing is not well-used in social policy. The classic political science text by Hecl and Wildavsky (1974)⁵⁵ used elite interviewing and this is also commonly used in programme evaluations in relation to policy implementation. Dwyer and Ellison (2009) used elite interviews with senior DWP officials involved in formulating New Deal policies to illuminate the complexities of policymaking in relation to policy transfer. In this research the use of elite interviews did not aim to provide a policy network analysis in relation to the policies identified, but were primary data sources for 'hard' policy learning (Dolowitz, 2009).

Burnham et al (2004: 208) highlight that one problem with qualitative research is undertaking too many interviews, suggesting that 20-30 interviews is a reasonable target where interviewing is the principal method. In total, 52 elite interviews were conducted but for two cases; these were predominantly face-to-face but six Australian interviews took place by telephone either within Australia or from Britain where respondents could not be interviewed face-to-face (predominantly due to the availability of respondents during the limited time periods in the three interview locations in Australia). The actual number of policy actors interviewed exceeded the

⁵⁵ This text was a pioneer of the elite interview method, analysing the influence of, and constraints on, government actors in relation to budgeting processes in British government.

number of interviews conducted, as some interviews took the form of roundtable meetings (see Section 3.6). There were 31 interviews in Australia and 21 in Denmark. This imbalance between the numbers of interviews in the two cases is countered by the smaller number of recorded interviews and increased signposting to documents in the Australian case. In some cases it appeared that Australian interviewees felt that the availability of documents in our shared language to an extent superseded the interview data. It is also perhaps reflective of elite interviews as an uncommon methodology in social policy. In Denmark it may have been assumed that I would have more reliance on the interviews due to the limited availability of data in English.

During the fieldwork I conducted desk research at two research institutions in Australia and one in Denmark. The majority of the Australian interviews were conducted during April 2009. The first phase of Danish interviews took place in January 2009 and the second phase in June 2009. Pre-visit telephone conversations were conducted with government officials in both countries; these acted as pilots for the interviews, provided useful background data and facilitated access to respondents. The Australian interviews ranged in length from 15 minutes to one hour forty minutes, averaging 40 minutes. The Danish interviews were between 20 minutes and almost two hours, averaging one hour. Due to time constraints, on some days three or four interviews were conducted in a day, which was not ideal; Burnham et al (2004: 208) suggest that two interviews per day is a reasonable target. That some of the interviews were short reflects one problem with elite interviews: that respondents are very busy people. In both countries major reforms were taking place at the time of the interviews - in Australia the new employment services contract and in Denmark the municipal reforms.

Manheim et al (2006: 358) suggest that it is often best to interview the most central figures late in the study but in Denmark I took the approach of gaining the official views first in order to understand the policy and then listened to the critical voices,

particularly during the second phase. Due to geographical and time constraints Australian government officials were not interviewed first, although these interviews still took place early in the fieldwork stage. Mossberger and Wolman (2003) argue that because evaluations are not always available, sources should be queried concerning implementation problems and criticism, which includes speaking to “knowledgeable observers and experts, including social scientists, and not solely to programme operators and advocates” (p.436). Being unable to record the interviews with Australian government officials (see Section 3.7) meant that the Australian case study relied less upon interviews with government policy actors and more on interviews with researchers, academics and on documentary evidence. For example, less data relating to policy goals were obtained from Australian government officials compared with the Danish case, but was gained from other policy actors and from documents. This also meant that there were methodological similarities with the British case, where the majority of the data were obtained from documents.

Topic guides were devised for the interviews with policy actors; these were semi-structured (see Appendix 1) and were broadly based on the prompts in the CMPS Workbook (see Section 3.2), reflecting key stages of the policy process: agenda-setting, objective-setting, choosing policy instruments, implementation and evaluation. Semi-structured interviews steer a course between strict scheduling (where information is restricted to that already decided upon) and unscheduled interviews (which may allow imprecise comparisons) (Manheim et al., 2006: 356). A feature of elite interviewing is that each respondent is given individualised treatment (Manheim et al., 2006: 355). I wished to allow respondents to speak relatively openly about the topic and to allow for aspects that I had not previously considered, particularly at the start of the fieldwork when I was building up my own knowledge. As Burnham et al (2004: 216) suggest, the focus of the interviews changed as the research process progressed. During the early stages themes were defined, refined and explored; in the central part I became more selective; and during the final interviews I checked emerging

interpretations with respondents. Although the Internet has reduced the transaction costs of comparative research (Burnham et al., 2004: 189), interviews aided the interpretation of documents and added to them (Seldon, 1996: 358). Later interviews acted as a checking mechanism to ensure that I had captured the relevant elements and reached what I considered to be 'saturation point'. Some interviews were complimented by e-mail correspondence to clarify particular aspects of policies, or to pursue documentary evidence. An advantage of the Danish case study was the possibility to make two trips to Denmark, with time in the intervening period to assess data gaps, but due to resource constraints this was not possible for the Australian case.

As Leech suggests (2002a: 666), I began each interview with a brief recap of the aims of my research. At the end of the interviews I gave respondents the opportunity to say anything that we had not already covered. I sent 'thank you' e-mails to all interviewees on my return to Britain, as Seldon suggests is good practice (1996: 363). Although two of the Australian interviews took place in cafes, the majority of the interviews took place at respondents' workplaces. This should have encouraged openness (Seldon, 1996: 357), but in the Australian case did not appear to do so, although perhaps this was for reasons unrelated to the research methodology (see Section 3.7). It was harder to establish a rapport with respondents over the telephone, particularly when they were in a different time zone, with a time delay between speaking and being heard, but this was overcome because such interviews took place later in the research, when I had already built up considerable knowledge.

In elite interviews the balance is usually in favour of the respondent (Burnham et al., 2004: 205). This is because elite respondents are treated as experts about the topic in hand (Leech, 2002b: 663). There was a tension here in that one of the purposes of the research was for me to become the expert. However, Burnham et al (2004: 211) also suggest that the cardinal rule for conducting elite interviews is to be prepared, as respondents respect the researcher more if they can demonstrate familiarity with the

subject matter. I achieved such familiarity through preparation of pre-visit briefing reports for my own use and a number of actors in both countries (particularly Denmark) said that they were impressed by my knowledge. During one of the Danish interviews, the interviewee had prepared a generic presentation about their organisation, which he soon abandoned once he realised my interview questions were more specific and well-informed. However, the interviews with academics and researchers often revealed their own theories regarding the context, goals and outcomes of the programmes and this presented a challenge to my own analysis. One way in which I addressed the 'expert' status of the elite viewpoints was to acknowledge that, although the status and position of these elites was important to the construction of the case studies, their representations were themselves constructed and required analysis across the range of data I had collected.

Interviews are becoming more and more commonplace, making them increasingly naturally occurring occasions (Holstein and Gubrium, 2004: 156). They are collaborative accomplishments - two-way conversations which are "unavoidably interactional and constructive" or 'active' (Holstein and Gubrium, 2004: 141-2). However, one problem with the interview process is that it fractures the stories being told (Miller and Glassner, 2004: 127). Respondents' interview accounts were deconstructed (Holstein and Gubrium, 2004: 156) and re-constructed in the case study accounts. Triangulation was achieved by interviewing a range of actors in each country and by utilising a range of sources, both qualitative and quantitative and both interview and documentary. Such methodological triangulation was beneficial in instances where interviewees talked about the impetus for past policies in which there was a potential risk of recall problems or viewing the past anachronistically. This can also help to address problems such as unintentional inaccuracy or oversimplification (Seldon, 1996: 356). Triangulation also helped to overcome problems of validity associated with anecdotalism (Silverman, 2007: 211), which is a potential risk in relying only on elite interviews. However, the interviews in turn provided rich

contextual data, which Millar suggests is important in addition to evaluations, where evidence may be less than robust, or the wrong conclusions drawn (Millar and Austin, 2006: 5).

At the start of the study I considered that one possible problem with the research methodology was that important information relevant to the transfer of policies might intentionally or unintentionally be omitted by policy actors. For example, the role of subsidised jobs was not explicitly mentioned by any interviewees in Denmark, but this is an important facet of the Danish approach.⁵⁶ Some aspects are so embedded within the contexts of the countries that they may have been unintentionally omitted unless I had known in advance to probe further. To a large extent the preparatory research was able to address this issue, although the limitations of the Australian interviews meant that some insights relating to policy translation were not captured by the interviews, but gleaned from documents.

A further issue which was considered at the planning stage of the research was that of conceptual equivalence – ensuring that terms in English and used in Britain (for example concepts such as ‘gender’, ‘partnered women’) were understood in the comparator countries. In the event this was not such an issue, although it was a relevant consideration. For example, ‘pensioners’ in Australia was not equivalent to the meaning of pensioners in Britain. Iyengar (1993 cited in Kennett, 2001: 44-5) suggests that it may not be possible to achieve ‘linguistic equivalence’ through precise translation, but that ‘measurement equivalence’ is more practicable, whereby concepts measure what they set out to within a specific context. ‘Culture’ is a contested concept, but through probing during interviews, I ascertained that its use by different Danish policy actors was equivalent within the Danish context of the 300 hours rule. A number of Danish words have been used in this thesis, as understanding of such terms was an essential component of attempting to understand and represent the ideological

⁵⁶ I am grateful to Dr David Etherington for highlighting this.

discourses and value systems within which they are situated. Although language was a constraint regarding use of documents (see Section 3.5), that the Danish policy actors spoke excellent English aided the acquisition of interview data.

The majority of interviews were digitally recorded, if interviewees gave consent (see Section 3.7) and this allowed me to focus on the conversation and topic guide, rather than on note-taking. However, I took some notes as an insurance against recording equipment failure. I took handwritten notes during the interviews with Australian government officials and during telephone interviews. The resulting data were coded manually. Although I had initially intended to use Nvivo to code, computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) did not seem appropriate for reconstructing the policy 'stories'. I firstly coded using multiple codes where these applied and subsequently refined them. I then analysed the data further using the four sub-dimensions of the recalibration framework (see Chapter Two), employing mind-mapping (Buzan and Buzan, 1993) in the process.

3.9 *Policy translation*

Data from the case studies were key in informing the possibilities for translation of policies to Britain. This included the acquisition of information about the intentions behind policies and programmes and whether the policy goals constructed were considered to have been met in implementing them. As well as gaining knowledge about current policies, it was also important to the construction of the case studies to develop understanding of the historical and ideological paths which led to the creation of the relevant programmes, within the wider welfare state contexts. This required analysis of documents and interview data, contributing to what Rose (1991: 23-4) refers to as 'prospective evaluation', in which empirical evidence about how and why a programme works in one country is combined with hypotheses about its likely success or failure in another country. Lendvai and Stubbs' (2007) notion of policy as

'translation,' rather than policy as 'transfer,' reflects that policy learning is akin to a research process and subject to similar epistemological and ontological considerations. The concept recognises that policy is produced in the 'act of looking' (Lendvai and Stubbs, 2007: 180). This study has been constructed according to the countries selected and selecting alternative cases would have produced a different research project.

At the outset of the project, it was intended that the third year would include consultation meetings and policy option dissemination with DWP. At an early stage of the research, it was decided with both supervisors that due to time constraints this would be postponed until the writing-up stage had been completed. Preliminary discussions regarding policy learning have already taken place with the DWP supervisor and a senior DWP policy official and the research project as a whole reflects the co-production of knowledge. Following the end of the project, further dissemination will take the form of a policy brief, presentations and discussion to provide DWP (and other relevant government departments) with sufficient information to pursue policy translation.

The value of comparative analysis is the opportunity to view a policy problem in one country through the lens of one or more countries, facilitating a better understanding. An important aspect of this comparative study was that the case studies produced findings which were an impetus to return to the Britain case study and ask slightly different questions, or to pursue other previously unexplored aspects. For example, the Australian case highlighted that transitions between lone and partnered parent status were important, as was the extent of activity already being undertaken by parents before reforms were implemented. One aspect which was not considered at the start of the research was migration. I felt uncomfortable once I discovered that the 300 hours rule concerned married immigrant women as I felt the ethnicity aspect was politically sensitive and was overrepresented in the Danish case compared with the other two. Furthermore, I was concerned as to how to represent the notion of 'culture'

which the majority of Danish interviewees discussed. However, I came to realise that both 'nation' and 'culture' as reflections of ideology were important to the conceptualisation of partnered women outside the labour market in Britain.

3.10 *Reflections*

As highlighted in Section 3.2 the project initiation document agreed before my recruitment to the project set out in detail the intended activities in all three years of the research. That this was so precisely set out at the start in some respects constrained my ability to make the project my own and in retrospect it may have been helpful to have challenged and re-negotiated some aspects. For example, I retained the research questions set out (see Section 3.1) although for purposes of clarity it would have been helpful to split the second research question into two. That this question linked the effectiveness of policies with the possibility of policy transfer made clear the emphasis of the research on transferability from the start, however the policy transfer aspect was also covered in its own right by the third research question.

I also found it a challenge that the methodological focus of the research was not on partnered women themselves, although the elite interview method was one of the reasons I was attracted to the project. To have undertaken interviews with partnered women would either have resulted in a very different research project which was less focused on policy translation, or could have appeared tokenistic if added to the elite interviews. I did make changes to the proposed methodology in that I diverged from the original proposal to select comparators reflecting the 'three worlds' typology (see Section 3.3) and I adapted the proposed workplan (see Section 3.9) in relation to dissemination. The CASE-related constraints on the research did not prevent me from using and adapting the recalibration and policy translation frameworks in an innovative way as both a theoretical and analytical underpinning for the research.

The inception document did not set out Britain as a comparator country but it was used as the starting point and end point for the study. It is usual for DWP international reviews to follow this format and it was particularly important in this research given the emphasis on policy transferability. As discussed in Section 3.3, the original intention had been to examine three comparator countries with Britain as the starting and end point, but I reduced the number of comparators to two. There were insufficient resources to undertake elite interviews in Britain as a comparator country. As highlighted in the previous Section (3.9) regarding policy transfer, meetings were regularly held with the DWP supervisor throughout the project and in addition with other DWP officials, particularly at the beginning and end of the project. Documents were used as the main data for the British case and the purpose of this was to review the evaluation evidence regarding the policy 'problem,' which was returned to in consideration of policy translatability. The documents also formed the basis for the analysis of the problematisation of partnered women not in work in Australia and Denmark. As it transpired, the reliance on documentary data for Britain also had parity with the Australian case, where open access to respondents was more limited than in Denmark (see Section 3.7).

The methodology used was problematic in that the data constructed were not sufficiently bounded. Firstly, because the research examined more than one policy area and, secondly, because the data were from both interviews and documents. Although more than 50 interviews were conducted, these did not form the sole basis for the findings and were not the end-point of data collection, or 'data generation' (Baker, 2004: 163). Burnham et al (2004: 207-8) highlight that one problem with elite interviewing is when to stop and that there comes a point after which each additional interview yields diminishing returns. At a particular stage of the research I considered that a synthesis had taken place, or that I had reached saturation point with the data collection. Given the short time periods for interviewing in each country this predominantly applied to the potentially less bounded nature of the documentary

analysis. However, it also applied to the telephone interviews conducted on return from both countries. I set an end point for the research beyond which no new data would be collected, or new policies incorporated.⁵⁷ Nevertheless, in-depth case studies were achieved for each country, which highlighted aspects of consensus as well as divergent viewpoints.

The methodology and aims of the research were multi-level: the study was policy-focused by virtue of the involvement of DWP and that one of its aims was to provide policy learning for Britain. Clearly, it was also an academic project and as such straddled the boundaries of research and policy, theory and practice. The range of policy actors interviewed allowed for consideration of the policy 'problem' at both academic and policy levels. At times, however, managing these two aims did become challenging. Nevertheless, although Burnham et al (2004) argue that sponsors may "push research in directions that are ethically undesirable" (p.259), at no point did I consider that the differing aims of the research directly conflicted. This was facilitated by the fact that the DWP supervisor was herself a researcher and aware of ethical considerations. However, the aim of obtaining a rich contextual analysis for policy learning also posed problems. Selecting the case study countries, as well as bringing the project to completion, involved a considerable narrowing of focus and at times it was difficult to achieve a balance between these two aspects.

My fieldwork planning would have benefited from prior knowledge concerning problems of access to data, however in many ways this was unavoidable and was not a result of the methodology. I could also have built time into the fieldwork to learn about and gain access to HILDA data. In retrospect it would also have been useful to have gained more signposting from actors in both countries towards quantitative studies which may have suggested the reasons for partnered women being *in* work in

⁵⁷ The one exception to this was the evaluation report for Welfare to Work in Australia mentioned earlier, which was considered key to the research, given that it was important data which had not been available at the time of the fieldwork. I am grateful to Professor Dan Finn for alerting me to its publication.

Australia and Denmark. Both case studies would have benefited from a less time-intensive fieldwork period, allowing for more reflection time. Although the Danish fieldwork involved two visits, each comprised concentrated time periods during which the interviews were conducted. It would have also benefited both case studies if there had been time to analyse some interviews during the fieldwork period to highlight any further gaps, rather than doing this at the end.

3.11 *Summary*

This chapter has discussed the methods of data generation employed in this research. It has described the evidence review and the selection of case study countries and considered how both documents and elite interviews were used to construct case studies of Australia and Denmark which were compared with Britain for the purposes of policy learning. It has also discussed the construction of the interview sample. This chapter has built on Chapter Two, which set out the theoretical framework of recalibration used to analyse the findings. Chapters Five to Eight present the findings from the interview and documentary data according to this framework. However, before this Chapter Four sets out a review of documentary evidence relating to the policy 'problem' of partnered women outside the labour market in Australia, Denmark and Britain and considers the policy responses and effects.

Chapter Four - Policy problems, responses and effects: a review of the evidence about partners outside the labour market in Britain, Australia and Denmark

4.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to set the scene for the empirical research by drawing on evidence from government-commissioned evaluations in the three countries. Section 4.2 considers the policy ‘problem’ representation and the evidence relating to why partnered women are outside the labour market. Section 4.3 considers the policy responses. In Britain, this predominantly includes the New Deal for Partners from 1999, but also Joint Claims for Jobseeker’s Allowance for couples without children and the Partners Outreach for Ethnic Minorities pilot, along with some consideration of the Welfare Reform Act 2009. In Australia the story begins with the 1994 *Working Nation* reforms to income support for partners and subsequent reforms to Parenting Payment for partnered and lone parents. Australians Working Together (from 2002) introduced activity requirements for recipients of this payment with teenaged children and Welfare to Work (from 2006) increased the obligations to take up paid work for parents with children aged over six. In Denmark since 2006 the 300 hours rule (subsequently 450 hours rule) has required married couples claiming social assistance to test their eligibility for payment by requiring them to have accrued 300 hours of paid work in a two-year period. This programme is considered in the context of Danish activation since 1994. Section 4.4 highlights relevant evaluation evidence concerning the effects of the programmes which, it is argued, are too narrowly focused on short-term measures of employability and decreased welfare caseloads. Section 4.5 concludes the chapter with a summary.

4.2 *The policy 'problem'*

The focus on non-working partners in all three countries has been peripheral to activation policies. To some extent in Britain the labour market participation of non-working partnered women is only just starting to be recognised in terms of its potential impact on reducing child poverty (Campbell, 2008: 467). In Australia, McInnes (2002) has argued that “The research evidence indicates that the most effective policies supporting single mothers’ labour market participation are those which support married mothers’ labour market participation, because workforce attachments which are in place before separation, tend to endure after separation” (p.2). There is no explicit focus on lone parents in the Danish encompassing model and partnered women do not feature in Danish activation, except in the 300 hours rule.

Kennett (2004) argues that “It is vital to analyse the processes through which a phenomenon becomes defined as a problem” (p.292). As stated in Chapter Three, the backdrop to this study is the total employment rates for women compared with men and the number of workless households in each of the countries (see Tables 4.1 and 4.2 below). Australia’s family worklessness is the second highest of all OECD countries after Britain and Denmark is the lowest of the three.

Table 4.1: Employment rates for women and men of working age, 2006

	Men	Women	Difference
Australia	78.8	65.5	13.3
Denmark	80.6	73.2	7.4
UK	78.4	66.8	11.6

Source: OECD, 2008

Table 4.2: Share of working age population living in jobless households⁵⁸, 2005

	UK	Australia	Denmark
Jobless households	16.3	14.2	9.2
Jobless households with children	14.9	11.9	4.7

Source: Whiteford, 2009: 23

In Britain of a total of 17.1 million families, couple families constitute 71 per cent (National Statistics, 2007: 3).⁵⁹ There are 277,000 workless couple households with dependent children and 658,000 workless couple households without dependent children (National Statistics, 2008), with approximately 350,000 partners receiving support through the benefits system (Department for Work and Pensions, 2008: 126). The majority (69 per cent) of non-working partners are women living with a male partner (Department for Work and Pensions, 2004).⁶⁰ Appendix 2 contains tables showing the different types of income support received by couples by the number and age of dependent children.

In Britain since New Labour's first welfare reform Green Paper (Department for Social Security, 1998) there has been a focus on reducing long-term and youth unemployment. The policy objective of assisting partners into work was to reduce the number of workless households by helping one person into work, as well as to address the polarisation between 'work-rich' and 'work-poor households' (Department for Social Security, 1998: 27). One of the purposes of the New Deal for Partners of the Unemployed was to bring into the remit of the public employment service a group with whom it had had little previous contact. New Labour ideology emphasised that the primary site for the reduction of a range of social ills and for social inclusion⁶¹ was

⁵⁸ Jobless (or workless) households are where no adult of working age is in paid work. Households can refer to one or more tax/benefit family units. For a discussion of family units and households see Millar, J. (2006b) How low-paid employees avoid poverty: an analysis by family type and household structure. *Journal of Social Policy*, 35(3):351-369.

⁵⁹ The British benefit system treats cohabiting couples in the same way as married couples. With the introduction of the Civil Partnership Act 2004, partners may be of the opposite or same sex.

⁶⁰ It should be noted that over 100,000 female claimants with partners also receive support through the benefits system (DWP data May 2008).

⁶¹ For example, in a speech delivered at the Aylesbury Estate, Southwark, London on 2 June 1997 Tony Blair famously stated that 'work is the best form of welfare'. See Millar, J. (2006a) Better off in work? Work, security and welfare for lone mothers, in Glendinning, C. & Kemp, P. A. (Eds.) *Cash and care: policy*

participation in paid activities within the labour market and the goal of child poverty reduction has been an axis on which to place a number of benefit and tax-related policies. Britain has around one in five children living in relative poverty⁶² and 19 per cent of them are in workless couples (Harker, 2006: 7, 15). The Labour Government set a target of halving the number of children in poverty by 2010-11, as a step on the way to eradicating child poverty by 2020.⁶³

As Serrano Pascual (2007) argues, “The UK shares a belief with the Nordic countries in the key role of work as a means of achieving economic and social welfare” (p.288). However, a key difference between Britain and Denmark is the extent of Britain’s in-work poverty and this primarily affects couple families (Harker 2006: 47); 40 per cent of children in poverty are living in couple households where someone is actually working (Harker, 2006: 15, 17).⁶⁴ Policy goals which elevate labour market participation as the route out of (or to avoid) social exclusion are undermined by the existence of in-work poverty and hardship in households with one adult in paid work (Lyon et al., 2008). Partnered women’s income from paid work is important in preventing low-income families from moving into poverty (Millar and Glendinning, 1992, Gardiner and Millar, 2006), but it is not usually sufficient if she is the sole, low-paid worker, even when this is supplemented by in-work benefits (Lyon et al., 2008).

challenges in the welfare state. Bristol, Policy Press, 171-185. The ideology informing New Labour’s approach to welfare reform was informed by the Commission on Social Justice conducted whilst they were in opposition. Commission on Social Justice (1994) *Social justice: strategies for national renewal*, London, Vintage. See Bennett, F. & Millar, J. (2009) Social security: reforms and challenges, in Millar, J. (Ed.) *Understanding social security. Issues for policy and practice (Second Edition)*. Bristol, Policy Press, 11-29.

⁶² Defined as living in a household with below 60 per cent median income before housing costs HARKER, L. (2006) *Delivering on child poverty: what would it take?*, The Stationery Office.

⁶³ This was pledged by Tony Blair in his Beveridge Speech in 1999 BLAIR, T. (1999) *Beveridge revisited: a welfare state for the 21st century*. IN WALKER, R. (Ed.) *Ending child poverty*. Bristol, Policy Press. These goals were enshrined in legislation in the Child Poverty Bill 2009, which came into force in 2010. The Labour government missed its interim target of reducing child poverty by a quarter between 1998-99 and 2004-05 (Harker, 2006: 7) and Harker suggests that achieving the 2010 child poverty target for couple households would involve increasing the percentage of dual-earner couple households from 57 to 65 per cent and decreasing the couple unemployment rate from five to four per cent (p.13).

⁶⁴ The OECD states that in order to stay above the level of poverty (defined as 60 per cent of the median standard of living) in Europe, a couple requires one partner to work full-time at the national minimum wage and one to work part-time, whilst a single parent requires one full-time job and allowances OECD (2006b) *Starting Strong II: early childhood education and care*, Paris, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

Despite around 70 per cent of poor children living in jobless families (Whiteford, 2009: 4) child poverty has not overtly been on the political agenda in Australia. In opening Labor's election campaign in 1987, Prime Minister Bob Hawke famously stated that "By 1990 no Australian child will be living in poverty" (Bessant et al., 2006: 106). This pledge was not met and was held over him; subsequent governments have attempted to distance themselves from the child poverty agenda. Australians Working Together (AWT) which increased the obligations for partnered and lone parents receiving Parenting Payment (see Section 4.3.2) was put forward as a poverty reduction measure, but this aspect was notably absent from Welfare to Work (Blaxland, 2008: 94, 212). In introducing Welfare to Work, the Howard government emphasised the financial benefits of working (similar to 'making work pay' in Britain), but did not mention 'poverty' (Blaxland, 2008: 211-2). One reason for the relative absence of the poverty agenda in Australia compared to Britain is ongoing debate about the measurement of poverty (interview with academic).⁶⁵ The discourse of joblessness is linked to concern about inter-generational poverty transmission (Whiteford, 2009). However, Whiteford (2009) argues that in Australia in couples where one or both parents are in paid work, poverty rates are among the lowest in the OECD, thus "paid work provides effective protection against income poverty" (p.4). Tables A2.20 and A2.21 in Appendix 2 respectively show poverty rates for couple households with children and the distribution of child poverty in all three countries. For Australia and Britain there is a significant decrease in poverty for households where one or more adults are in work and the difference is greater in Australia. In Denmark there is less incidence of poverty across the board than in the other two countries and the distribution of child poverty is more equal.

In Australia there are 2.3 million couple families with children and 1.9 million couple families without children (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2008). In 2005 there were

⁶⁵ There is no official poverty line, but the measure used in Australia is the Henderson line created in 1973 Bessant, J., Watts, R., Dalton, T. & Smyth, S. (2006) *Talking policy: how social policy is made*, Crows Nest, NSW, Allen and Unwin..

163,800 couple families with non-working working age males, comprising eight per cent of the total (Baxter, 2005: 2). Partnered women were employed in 39 per cent of these couples, compared with 74 per cent of couples with an employed male (Baxter, 2005: 2). Appendix 2 contains tables showing Parenting Payment Partnered (PPp) recipients by sex, payment category of their partner, age, country of birth and payment duration. The majority (90 per cent) of PPp recipients are female and the majority of their partners (56,087 of a total of 167,272 PPp claims) are on Newstart Allowance (equivalent to Jobseeker's Allowance), or employed and on a low income. Over 35 per cent have been recipients for three or more years and over 21 per cent have claims of under six months. Most (43 per cent) are aged between 30 and 39, but 23 per cent are aged between 20 and 29. The majority (63 per cent) are Australian-born.

The first reform Working Nation (1994) followed an inquiry by the Committee on Employment Opportunities⁶⁶ and, in the context of deep recession, its overarching aim was to reduce unemployment (particularly long-term) through economic growth. At this time there was a focus on bringing dependent partners into the income support system in their own right, based on analysis that such a small number of wives of unemployed men were in work because the institutional structure did not recognise them as labour force participants; further, the joint benefit entitlement and income tests disincentivised second earners (interview with former government official). Subsequent pilots targeted at disadvantaged groups, as well as the next reform Australians Working Together (2002) were a response to the recommendations of the McClure Report (2000a) in relation to reducing the number of jobless families and assisting single and partnered parents into work.⁶⁷ The objectives of Welfare to Work were to increase workforce participation and reduce welfare dependence amongst

⁶⁶ Committee on Employment Opportunities (1993) *Restoring full employment. A discussion paper*, Canberra, ACT, Commonwealth of Australia, Australian Government (1994) *Working Nation: policies and programs*, Canberra, ACT, Commonwealth of Australia.

⁶⁷ The other two targets were: (i) a significant reduction in the proportion of the working age population who need to rely heavily on income support and (ii) stronger communities that generate more opportunities for social and economic participation.

working age income support recipients (particularly groups outside the labour market, including parents),⁶⁸ whilst maintaining a strong safety net for those who needed it (Department for Education Employment and Workplace Relations, 2010: 3). This has some similarities with New Labour's welfare reforms, emphasising 'work for those who can, security for those who cannot' (Department for Social Security, 1998: iii). Over the three years following Welfare to Work, 109,000 people were expected to enter employment, 56,000 of these being parents⁶⁹ (Senate, 2005b).

In Denmark there are 1,332,382 couples (Statistics Denmark 2009)⁷⁰ and Table A2.15 in Appendix 2 shows the total number of married couples claiming social assistance: in 2008 there were 35,831 married couples with children and 12,633 without children receiving cash-benefits. It was estimated that around 6,000 couples would be affected by the 300 hours rule and that around 1,200 people would lose their cash-benefits.⁷¹ The focus of the 300 hours rule was immigrant married couples and in particular immigrant women in these couples, based on their comparatively lower employment rates. Table A2.16 in Appendix 2 shows the economic activity and employment rates for both Danish and immigrant women; notably, the employment rate for immigrant women has steadily increased from 27 per cent to 47 per cent between 1997 and 2007.

In Denmark policy goals for activation include assisting young people and long-term unemployed people into work. The policy goal of the 1994 labour market reforms was to reduce long-term unemployment and to reduce the duration for which unemployment benefit could be claimed, as well as to reduce the possibility of the

⁶⁸ Other target groups were mature aged, long-term unemployed people and people with disability; membership of these groups may overlap.

⁶⁹ The rest were 20,000 people with disabilities, 15,000 very long-term unemployed, 11,000 mature age, plus 7,000 additional recipients due to the income support taper rate changes Senate (2005b) *Inquiry into the Employment and Workplace Relations Legislation Amendment (Welfare to Work and other Measures) Bill 2005 and the Family and Community Services Legislation Amendment (Welfare to Work) Bill 2005*, 23 November 2005. Department of Employment and Workplace Relations *Questions on Notice*, Canberra, Commonwealth of Australia.

⁷⁰ Incorporating married couples, registered partnerships, couples living in consensual union and cohabiting couples.

⁷¹ Interview with government official.

'carousel' of benefits and work.⁷² Initiatives in the 2000s such as the 300 hours rule have been driven by the policy goal of increasing the workforce through the social integration of immigrants. Danish employment policy is underpinned by the requirement to promote labour market flexibility in relation to the 'golden triangle' of 'flexicurity,' comprising flexible employment protection,⁷³ encompassing social protection and activation. The Danish Government's aim is that 25,000 more immigrants and descendants should be employed by 2010 (www.nyidanmark.dk).

The policy responses to partnered women outside the labour market in all three countries share similar policy goals: of increasing the labour market participation of this group, or a particular sub-group of partners and also to reduce the numbers receiving benefits. However, in Britain and Australia the policy goal was initially to target partnered women not engaged with the benefits system or employment assistance. In Denmark partnered women, whether parents or carers of adults, had been subject to the same activation rules as other benefit recipients. As we will see in this thesis, this is a crucial variation between Denmark and the other two countries. Each country has a flexible labour market but although each experienced recession in the 1980s, only Denmark has had a labour shortage. All countries share the policy goals of reducing long-term unemployment by targeting particular groups, such as young people, ethnic minorities (and in Australia Indigenous people) and of assisting sick and disabled people into work. However, in Denmark such targeting is in the context of encompassing activation. The next section examines evidence relating to

⁷² The scope of leave programmes was also curtailed, along with job rotation. See Goul Andersen, J. & Pedersen, J. J. (2007) *Continuity and change in Danish active labour market policy: 1990-2007. The battlefield between activation and workfare. CCWS Working Paper No. 2007-54*, Aalborg, Centre for Comparative Welfare Studies, Aalborg University, Etherington, D. & Jones, M. (2004a) Welfare-through-work and the re-regulation of labour markets in Denmark. *Environment and Planning C: Government and Policy*, 22:129-148.

⁷³ There is no Dismissal Protection Act, but the right to give notice is a central concern of union collective agreements Kvist, J., Pedersen, L. & Köhler, P. A. (2008) Making all persons work: modern Danish labour market policies, in Eichhorst, W., Kaufmann, O. & Konle-Seidl, R. (Eds.) *Bringing the jobless into work? Experiences with activation schemes in Europe and the US*. Berlin, Springer, 221-256.

why partnered women are not in the labour market in each country, to highlight the similarities and differences amongst the groups.

4.2.1 *Why are partnered women outside the labour market?*

Examining the range of possible reasons for couple worklessness is important for two reasons. Firstly, to compare the Australian and Danish cases with that of Britain and, secondly, because suggested reasons for a policy ‘problem’ should in theory inform the policy response. If we do not fully understand the reasons why someone is not in work, the policy response may be rendered ineffective. So, the policy response should be informed by what we know about ‘what is not working,’ rather than merely focusing on ‘what works’ in active labour market policies.

Drawing on Hakim’s Preference Theory⁷⁴ (Hakim, 2000), McRae (2003: 329) argues that constraints affecting women’s decisions regarding work and family are in two categories: structural and normative. Structural constraints include (i) job availability, (ii) cost and availability of childcare and (iii) outcomes of different social origins, manifested in poor educational qualifications, early pregnancy, poor health, or culture. To this can be added disincentives to work created by the interaction of the tax and benefits systems. Normative constraints include (i) women’s own identities (their ‘inner voices’), (ii) gender relations in the family and (iii) their partner’s attitudes towards work and care (McRae, 2003: 329). The following two sections consider evidence relating to partnered women’s constraints on working as reflections of McRae’s concepts.

⁷⁴ Hakim argues that women in Britain and the US can be divided into three groups according to their preferences for work-life patterns: home-centred women, adaptive and work-centred women.

4.2.2 Structural constraints

Table 4.3 shows the barriers to work for partnered women in Britain.⁷⁵ The majority of New Deal for Partners (NDP) participants have worked at some point (Hasluck and Green, 2007: 93), however the majority (46 per cent) had not worked for five or more years (and 47 per cent of main claimant partners had also not worked during this period) (Coleman and Seeds, 2007: 17). Those who have never worked tend to have learning difficulties or basic skill requirements, or are young parents with young children (Thomas and Griffiths, 2005: 19). For those who have worked, it is important to note the reasons for labour market exit. In Coleman et al's (2006: 24) sample, 42 per cent of partners said they had spent a great deal of their adult life looking after the family or home. Long periods of absence from the labour market are associated with weak work histories and lack of up-to-date skills, which make it difficult to enter the labour market without lengthy preparation (Thomas and Griffiths, 2006: 50). Many partnered women lack skills, qualifications or recent work experience and this is further compounded by a lack of confidence (Aston et al., 2009a, Thomas and Griffiths, 2006). In Britain, some Muslim partnered women were culturally or religiously constrained in the work they could do (Aston et al., 2009a: 51).⁷⁶

Table 4.3: Barriers to working for partnered women in Britain

	per cent
Health problems or disabilities	39
Childcare responsibilities	15
Caring responsibilities other than childcare	51
Literacy/language problems	23
No experience of paid work	16

Source: Coleman et al 2006: 2

⁷⁵ The term 'barriers' to work is often used in DWP programme evaluations. In this thesis, 'constraints' is used in preference to barriers, except where 'barriers' is a direct quote.

⁷⁶ For example, not working with pork or alcohol, not 'free mixing' in environments where men work, or working in jobs viewed as 'degrading,' such as cleaning.

Similarly to British partners, there are also sub-groups of Australian partners, such as partners of prisoners, Indigenous partners and culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) women, although these did not tally directly with the British partners. The CALD and Indigenous partners have additional, but differing, requirements for assistance into work and the scope of this study does not allow these two groups to be considered in detail. However, Baxter (2005) highlights that a small percentage of women in Australia have significant language barriers and are disproportionately represented in couples where the man is unemployed or has an illness or disability. The CALD group in particular did not overtly feature in the interviews with Australian policy actors and this aspect is of interest. Similarly, interview respondents were reluctant to engage in discussion of issues relating to the employment of Indigenous Peoples.⁷⁷

Table 4.4 shows partnered women's reasons for not looking for work in Australia as evidenced by Baxter (2005). Her analysis of data from the Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia survey demonstrates that the relationship between a number of barriers to work and female employment is very strong and partially explains the lower employment rates for women partnered with workless men (p.13). These barriers are: incomplete secondary education, ill health or a disability, caring for a sick spouse or other family member, having children aged under five and poor language skills. Baxter's (2005: 9) analysis highlights the prevalence of low levels of education amongst partnered women in workless couples.

⁷⁷ Documents relating to Indigenous employment were sourced but these did not discuss women, or partnered women.

Table 4.4: Partnered women's reasons for not looking for work in Australia (per cent)

	Partner unemployed	Partner sick/ disabled	Partner not in labour force for other reasons
Prefers to look after children, other childcare reasons	71.4	43.2	45
Ill health of someone other than self/other family reason	7.1	29.7	5
No jobs available	3.6	18.9	5
Language difficulties/ethnic background	10.7	2.7	0
Lacks training or qualifications	3.6	10.8	10
Too young/too old	3.6	5.4	0
Own illness or disability	10.7	13.5	10
Welfare payment may be affected	0	8.1	0
Studying	3.6	10.8	25
Does not need to work	3.6	5.4	15
Moved house/holidays	3.6	2.7	15
Have a job to go to	3.6	0	5
Other reasons	10.7	0	10

Source: Baxter, 2005: 17

In Australia interviews with a number of organisations working with partnered women suggested that, based on anecdotal data, they could be split into two groups: those with existing skills, and those with few or no qualifications. The former group generally require only coaching, confidence-building and IT skills, whereas the latter group tend to need more support. Most parents do not enter employment assistance as a significantly disadvantaged individual, but as the equivalent of a jobseeker who has been unemployed for three to four months (interview with employment service professional). Providers' experiences of placing parents into work suggest that they are easier to place than other groups. Anecdotal evidence from providers also suggests that employers are more likely to employ parents than the very long-term unemployed, partly because being out of the labour force in order to care for children

is seen as a 'legitimate activity' (interview with employment service professional).⁷⁸ However, two other interviewees from welfare organisations suggested that, although some parents are more job-ready, some are significantly disadvantaged and not ready to move into work. This is supported by other data which suggest that 72 per cent of jobless Parenting Payment recipients have qualifications of Year 10⁷⁹ or less, compared with only 25 per cent of the overall workforce (Australian Council of Social Services, 2007: 4, Baxter, 2005: 9). Mothers claiming Parenting Payment are more likely than other mothers to have no employment experience at all, but lone parents tend to be more highly educated than partnered (Social Research Centre, 2005a: iv). Six per cent of mothers claiming Pp had never been in paid employment (Butterworth, 2003: 26).

In Denmark around two-thirds of spouses who lost their benefit under the 300 hours rule had not been employed before arriving in Denmark, although 20 per cent had worked for at least five years (Bach and Larsen, 2008: 33-4). Those affected by the rule either had 'poor' Danish language skills⁸⁰ (22 per cent of both those who lost their benefit and those who retained it), or spoke no Danish at all (19 per cent of those who lost their benefit and 12 per cent of those who retained it) (Bach and Larsen, 2008: 40). Structural constraints on labour market participation for immigrant women in Denmark include the availability of work, but this may relate to discriminatory practices, or further to concerns about how they will be treated in the labour market (interview with social workers).

One of the most important constraints on work for partnered women in Britain is having caring responsibilities, whether for children (including disabled children), a sick or disabled partner, or other dependent relatives. This is a structural constraint in

⁷⁸ This is supported by a qualitative employer survey conducted by the Department for Education Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR), which found predominantly positive attitudes amongst employers towards parents returning to work Department for Education Employment and Workplace Relations (2010) *Welfare to Work Evaluation Report*, Canberra, Department for Education Employment and Workplace Relations.

⁷⁹ Equivalent to GCSE.

⁸⁰ Proficiency in Danish was estimated by the interviewers and is subjective.

relation to the availability of alternative care provision. It may also be structural if it relates to job availability, or to poor educational qualifications. The majority of partners caring for people other than dependent children had given up work to care, although a small number became carers because they were not employed (Thomas and Griffiths, 2006: 34). Caring is also a normative constraint in the context of women's own identities, gender relations in the family and their partner's attitudes towards work and care (discussed in Section 4.2.4). For most partners their main activity was looking after children or the home (39 per cent), or caring for someone who was sick or disabled (25 per cent) (Coleman and Seeds, 2007: 16). The existence and number of dependent children is a characteristic of the benefit claimed (see Tables A2.1 and A2.2, Appendix 2). As a number of authors have pointed out, caring for a child or another adult can be passive as well as active (Finch and Groves, 1983, Giullari and Lewis, 2005). For some partners, the person they cared for had 'intermittent and unpredictable care demands' which severely restricted work or precluded work altogether (Thomas and Griffiths, 2006: 34). Non-working partnered women who care for their partner may also be responsible for the care of children, and/or for another dependent relative. For these women, entry into paid work may mean that the double bind of care and work becomes a triple bind. Furthermore, responsibilities for different dependents may change over the life course and women in particular may be caught in a cycle of caring. Pakistani and Bangladeshi partnered women of all ages and educational backgrounds believed that they would be at least partly responsible for an elderly or ill family member at some point (Aston et al., 2007: 66). Such responsibilities "often had a substantial impact on women's lives, including their educational achievements and subsequent employment options" (Aston et al., 2007: 66).

There is a possibility that the extent of partners caring for another adult has been overstated in DWP evaluations compared with other surveys of the general

population (Perry, 2005).⁸¹ However, there are dependencies between the sickness or disability of a main claimant and the caring role (as well as workless status) of their partner, also seen in Australia. Baxter (2005: 16) found that partnered women whose husbands were not working because of ill health or a disability were unlikely to move into employment and this group was also likely to state that they did not wish to work. There has been relatively little Australian research into the impact of caring responsibilities on the labour force status of carers (see Edwards et al., 2008: 100). The distribution of carers is towards those older than working age, but significant numbers of female carers live in households in which no adult is employed (Edwards et al., 2008: 106). Carers who worked tended to do so part-time and stated barriers to work were: 'difficult to arrange working hours', 'no alternative disability care arrangements' and 'would be too disruptive to person with disability' (Edwards et al., 2008: 103, 106). Although in Denmark some women care for sick or disabled husbands (interview with employment service professional), this is less usual than in Britain or Australia.

For partners with children, lack of affordable childcare may be a significant disincentive to working, if the costs cannot be offset against the salary earned. In Britain couple families pay the highest costs on entry into paid work as a percentage of net family income: 33 per cent, compared with 10 per cent in Australia and eight per cent in Denmark (OECD, 2007c). Further, the decision to enter paid work is affected by the availability of work which is flexible enough to accommodate family commitments, or reduced capacity for work. This depends to some extent on anti-discrimination and flexible working policies and how these are implemented in practice. In Australia evidence from the Parenting Payment Intervention Pilot (which preceded Australians Working Together - see Section 4.3.2) suggested that childcare costs had a major impact for non-working partnered parents (25 per cent) (Pearse, 2000: 99). Brennan (Brennan, 2007a, Brennan, 2007b) argues that despite the more

⁸¹ Whether individuals admit to caring responsibilities may depend to some extent on who is asking the question.

established and comprehensive foundation of care in Australia compared with Britain (discussed further in Chapter Five), childcare is still prohibitively expensive for many families. Doiron and Kalb (2002) suggest that, on average, childcare costs are low for partnered mothers, but that the labour supply of those with pre-school children is the most sensitive to childcare costs. In Denmark a significant number of both those who lost their benefit (50 per cent) under the 300 hours rule and those who retained it (42 per cent) were looking after the home (Bach and Larsen, 2008: 89). However, it is not possible to tell whether they were doing this because they were not in, or could not find, paid work. Furthermore, 45 per cent of those who lost their benefit and 43 per cent of those who kept their benefit were taking care of children (Bach and Larsen, 2008: 89).

In Britain being a carer is also linked with partners' propensity to be sick or disabled themselves (Thomas and Griffiths, 2005: 22). Almost two fifths of partners (39 per cent) described themselves as having a longstanding illness, health condition or disability and 29 per cent said that their condition affected the type or amount of work they could do (Coleman and Seeds, 2007: 22). Poor health is also a constraint for Australian partners. Almost one third of women with a sick or disabled partner have a long-term health condition and ill health is also prevalent amongst women with an unemployed partner (Baxter, 2005: 11). Butterworth (2003: 27)⁸² was the first to document the prevalence of mental disorders amongst income support recipients, although this was lowest amongst partners (34.8 per cent had a moderate or severe disability and 35.1 per cent had none). However, carers in general and female primary carers in particular experience lower levels of health and well-being than any other group in society (Cummins et al., 2007).

⁸² Butterworth states that this group differed most from departmental administrative data and may have been skewed by the inclusion of Family Allowance recipients Butterworth, P. (2003) *Estimating the prevalence of mental disorders among income support recipients: approach, validity and findings*, Canberra, Department of Family and Community Services. Page 24.

In Denmark health is a major constraint on working for spouses subject to the 300 hours rule, affecting 69 per cent of those who lost their benefit and 60 per cent of those who kept their benefit (Bach and Larsen, 2008: 115). Tables A2.17 and A2.18 in Appendix 2 set out the self-estimated health and self-estimated reduced work ability of spouses affected by the rule. The majority of illnesses were mental or psychological (76 per cent for those who lost their benefit and 84 per cent for those who kept it) (Bach and Larsen, 2008: 45). However, this sub-group of married cash-benefits recipients do not have a higher proportion of persistent or chronic illnesses compared to a larger group of social assistance recipients (Bach and Pedersen, 2007 cited in Bach and Larsen, 2008: 44), suggesting that ill health is a problem for that wider population.

For non-working partnered women their reasons for being, and remaining, workless are related to the complex dynamics of intra-household decision-making about labour supply. Moylan et al (1984, see also Millar, 1994) were amongst the first to raise the issue of joint labour supply amongst unemployed married couples. Developing Pahl's (1984) notion of a 'household work strategy,' Millar and Ridge (2008) have highlighted that entering and sustaining employment is a 'family-work project'. Labour supply decisions for one member of a partnered couple may be based on the work (or workless) status of the other. The additional worker effect holds that the family operates as an 'insurance unit' for labour market changes, with the employment of one party being offset by that of the other (Gregory, 1999: 7). Male unemployment may lead to female partners entering work, or increasing their amount of paid work to maintain living standards (Gardiner and Millar, 2006: 358). However, women in couples with children are unlikely to avoid poverty based on their own income from paid work (Gardiner and Millar, 2006: 363), particularly compared with the loss of benefits and associated poverty traps (Irwin and Morris, 1993). Additional female unemployment may ensue because the female partner becomes discouraged (Cooke, 1987), related to the perception, or the reality, of the availability of suitable work (Beatty et al., 2010). Such effects may be exacerbated by the partnering of individuals

with similar levels of skills, education and labour market prospects (Davies et al., 1992, Brynin and Ermisch, 2008), meaning that both partners may be likely to enter relatively insecure, low-paid work. The state of the labour market and the insecure nature of the entry-level jobs available are major contributing factors towards the lack of sustainability of successful job outcomes from NDP (Thomas and Griffiths, 2005: 98).

Discouraged worker effects may also reflect perceived or actual disincentives to work associated with earnings disregards for benefit receipt, or to benefit withdrawal combined with taxation of low-paid work (Irwin and Morris, 1993, Dilnot and Kell, 1987, Davies et al., 1992, Hasluck and Green, 2005: 37, Centre for Social Justice, 2009).⁸³ McGinnity (2002) and Dex et al (1995) have attributed this to means testing.⁸⁴ Some low-waged couples perceive that both partners would need to be in paid work to be better off than on benefits (Thomas and Griffiths, 2006: 36). This is supported by OECD evidence which suggests that couple households are only likely to be lifted out of poverty when there is one full-time and one part-time worker (OECD, 2006b: 34). In-work benefits are one method of addressing disincentives to work.⁸⁵ Additionally, Better Off Calculations (BOCs)⁸⁶ allow Jobcentre Plus Personal Advisers to calculate whether or not households are likely to be better off in work compared with being on benefit. These tend to be most positive for partners with children, although they

⁸³ This relates to means-tested benefits, but there are also disincentives to work for those on contribution-based (individualised) Incapacity Benefit, as well as in relation to Housing Benefit. See Beatty, C., Fothergill, S., Houston, D., Powell, R. & Sissons, P. (2010) *Women on Incapacity Benefits*, Sheffield, Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research.

⁸⁴ Doris contests this - despite clear disincentives, Doris' fixed effect model suggests that the comparatively lower employment rate of wives of unemployed men may be due to dynamic considerations relating to the expected length of the husband's unemployment spell. Doris, A. (1999) *Means testing disincentives and the labour supply of the wives of unemployed men: results from a fixed effects model*, Dublin, Maynooth University.

⁸⁵ Francesconi et al's study of the effects of in-work benefits suggested that Working Families Tax Credit (introduced in October 1999, became Working Tax Credit in 2003) increased the likelihood of women from couples entering or remaining in work. They further suggest that WFTC may have increased the bargaining power of married women in poorer households. See Francesconi, M., Rainer, H. & van Klaauw, W. (2009) The effects of in-work benefit reform in Britain on couples: theory and evidence. *Economic Journal*, 119(February):F66-F100.

⁸⁶ BOCs (previously known as In-Work Benefit Calculations) calculate potential household income based on salary and any in-work benefits, the aim being to demonstrate the financial gains to entering paid employment.

would only be marginally better off in work (Coleman and Seeds, 2007: 27). For some partners (mostly carers) BOCs reinforced existing beliefs that there would be little or no financial gain from working.⁸⁷

In Australia Baxter (2005) found that the likelihood of partnered women working depended to some extent on the reason why their partner was not working, for example whether they were unemployed, sick or disabled, or outside the labour market for other reasons. Women with sick or disabled partners were likely to be discouraged workers, for a number of reasons, including perceptions of the labour market as well as lack of recent work experience (Baxter, 2005: 18). King et al (1995) concluded that the income test prior to Working Nation acted as a disincentive to work, also supported by Donnelly and McClelland (1989). However, Bradbury (1995) contests this, arguing that “heterogeneity is more important than state dependence” (p.68) in relation to benefit receipt for couples.⁸⁸ Gregory (1999) suggested that the design of the welfare system could be an explanatory factor for increasingly high effective marginal tax rates [EMTRs] for couples with dependent children who face low labour market incomes (p.9).⁸⁹ High EMTRs were mentioned by a number of policy actors interviewed in Australia and Apps (2006: 100, see also Millar, 2009: 240 in relation to the UK) suggests that EMTRs offers an explanation for the very low working hours of married mothers. No evidence was found relating to disincentives to

⁸⁷ Conducting BOCs for partners is complex compared to other customer groups, particularly when attempting to cover all likely permutations across the household. Due to the Data Protection Act (1998) BOCs can only be carried out in full if the main benefit claimant is present, or has given their consent for the adviser to access their benefit records for this purpose. Otherwise, calculations are indicative only. For a discussion concerning the risks of leaving benefit to enter paid work in respect of married couples, see Millar, J., Cooke, K. & McLaughlin, E. (1989) The employment lottery: risk and social security benefits. *Policy and Politics*, 17(1):75-81.

⁸⁸ This is in contrast to the British case, where state-dependence appears to account for around one-third of the difference between wives with employed husbands and those with unemployed husbands. See Davies, R. B., Elias, P. & Penn, R. (1992) The relationship between a husband's employment and his wife's participation in the labour force. *Oxford Bulletin of Economics and Statistics*, 54(2):145-171.

⁸⁹ Effective marginal tax rates (EMTRs) show how much of an additional dollar of income is retained by individuals and families, after payment of income tax and the withdrawal of any means-tested cash payments. See Harding, A., Vu, Q. N., Tanton, R. & Vidyattama, Y. (2008) Improving work incentives for mothers: the national and geographic impact of liberalising the Family Tax Benefit income test. *37th Australian Conference of Economists*. Gold Coast, QLD.

work in the tax and benefits systems in Denmark, but this perhaps reflects that there is not the same overlap between work and benefits seen in Britain and Australia. Furthermore, low-paid work is not such a significant issue in Denmark as it is in the other two countries (see Chapter Six, Section 6.3).

There are also other constraints which may impact on partners' ability to take up work and for which employment services may act as brokers for other support. These are outside the scope of this research but include being in temporary or substandard housing, which can adversely impact on health and take priority over job search (Thomas and Griffiths, 2006: 50) and lack of transport infrastructure, which limits the travel to work area.

4.2.3 *Normative constraints*

As discussed in the previous section, caring responsibilities can be a structural constraint on paid work in relation to the availability of alternative care, but this is also a normative constraint, based on gender relations and the attitudes to work and care within couples. Evaluation evidence from NDP suggests that the traditional gender roles of the male breadwinner and the female home-maker are still the reality for many couples (Thomas and Griffiths, 2005: 24) and "perceptions of caring responsibilities and 'breadwinning' responsibilities were strongly affected by gender role expectations" particularly for carers of spouses (Thomas and Griffiths, 2006: 46). Thomas and Griffiths (2005: 24) highlight the importance of the attitude of the main claimant towards their partner being in work, which they argue is linked with the balance of influence and power within relationships. They suggest that in couples which reflect the male breadwinner/female home-maker model, partnered women taking up paid work would "disrupt the perceived desirable balance of roles within the couple" (Thomas and Griffiths, 2005: 27). In some cases carer-partners said that they felt guilty for contemplating employment, especially in cases where they cared

for the main claimant; this could be compounded by the notion that they might be emphasising the 'failure' of the main claimant to fulfil their breadwinning role by being unable to work (Thomas and Griffiths, 2005: 28). Discouraged female worker effects may occur when the male wage earner becomes unemployed because women do not wish to 'reverse roles' (Millar, 1994). When Joint Claims for JSA was introduced for couples without dependent children, it was perceived by some partners to be "counter to cultural beliefs about gender roles" (Bewley et al., 2005: 2) because it required both partners to be available for work. Further, there was resistance from a cultural perspective to Joint Claims from some Bangladeshi men who did not want their wives to work, or to learn English and be independent (Aston et al., 2009b: 22). Notably, McRae considers women's own identities, gender relations in the family and their partner's attitudes towards work and care to be normative constraints, but categorises 'culture' as a structural constraint.

A significant proportion of workless couple families in Britain are reluctant to use formal childcare (Harker, 2006: 31, Coleman and Seeds, 2007: 2) and take-up of the Childcare Assist and Childcare Subsidy (childcare subsidies offered by Jobcentre Plus) has been low (Harker, 2006: 32). This reluctance can relate to affordability and suitability (for example for couples with disabled children) but also to attitudes. Parents have expectations of alternative care, which may relate to the perception of their own identity as carers for their children. However, women may also not wish to use formal childcare if this is not a 'social norm', particularly in their own communities. In a quantitative survey of partners, just three per cent used formal childcare rather than family or friends; in half the couples the main benefit claimant looked after the children whilst the partner worked (Coleman et al., 2006: 75). For the remainder, there appeared to be strongly-held perceptions about caring roles. Table 4.5 below shows the childcare-related barriers for partners, highlighting that the most important barrier was the age of the child.

Table 4.5: *Childcare-related barriers to work for partners in Britain*

	per cent (multiple response)
Age of children	44
Someone else having to look after my children	23
Cost of childcare	15
Availability of childcare in the area	10
None of these	39
Don't know	2

Source: *Coleman et al., 2006: 90*

Many Bangladeshi and Pakistani partners do not wish to use formal childcare as informal childcare by extended family is the norm (Aston et al., 2009b: 110). Of Pakistani non-working mothers, 96 per cent said that their primary activity was looking after the home and family (Aston et al., 2007: 12), although many women felt that husbands were now taking an active part in looking after their children (Aston et al., 2007: 61). Some younger women also recognised the socialisation and developmental benefits of formal childcare (Aston et al., 2007: 110).

In Baxter's (2005: 17) analysis in Australia, over 70 per cent of women with an unemployed partner cited preferring to care for children (or other childcare-related reasons, which may include availability of alternative care) as a reason for not looking for work. A survey of Parenting Payment recipients suggested that recipients were making an 'active choice' not to work (unpublished FaCS data cited in Ganley, 2003: 189). Family responsibilities were cited as the main reason for not working by both those who stated that they preferred not to work as well as by those who said that they would prefer to work. Saunders et al (2003) found that for Parenting Payment recipients (both single and partnered) childcare was the most important activity for them (p.66). Around half of Parenting Payment recipients mentioned one or more of the following as a disadvantage of being in work: being away from, and having less time for, family and children; worrying about both children and family's wellbeing;

inability to fulfill carer responsibilities while at work; concern about children's development; and extra workload at home and less time for housework (unpublished FaCs data cited in Ganley, 2003: 189). Caring for children and looking after the home have been cited as key constraints on labour market participation for women in workless couples (Donnelly and McClelland, 1989, King and McHugh, 1995). An evaluation of the Parenting Payment Intervention Pilot (PPIP) found that 30 per cent⁹⁰ of those with unemployed partners felt that they and their partner could swap carer/earner roles (Pearse, 2000: 99).

In Denmark the cost and availability of childcare is not a structural constraint on working as it is in Britain and to some extent in Australia. This is emphasised by the interview data in subsequent chapters. As argued in Chapters Five and Six, in Denmark universal day-care is both an institutional and social norm; there is a day-care offer for every child from the age of six months and supply now meets demand. However, some women may be reluctant to use day-care because they are unfamiliar with its set-up and purpose, or it may be their preference not to. They may also have a different cultural understanding of the importance of their role as a homemaker and carer, rather than as a worker. As highlighted in Chapters Five and Six, there is some commonality in this regard between all three countries. However, in all of the countries labour market demand is important and labour market discrimination is an issue for ethnic minority partnered women, an aspect highlighted by non-governmental Danish interviewees as a counter to the official claims that such women simply did not wish to work.

This section has reviewed the evidence relating to constraints on working for partnered women in the three countries. In each country for partnered women not in paid work their main activity tends to be caring for the family or home, however it is

⁹⁰ Just less than the British partners.

difficult to tell whether this is their primary role partly because they are discouraged workers. In both Australia and Britain there is evidence to suggest that partnered mothers prefer to care for their children; in Britain partners women may be reluctant to use alternative care, but this may be due to lack of availability of suitable, affordable care. If their partner was to assume the caring role, this could potentially restrict both partners from moving into work, which is a policy goal in each of the countries. In Britain caring for an adult appears to be a constraint on paid work less clearly evidenced in Australia and not at all in Denmark. In Britain gendered roles are important constraints on paid work for partnered women in some couple households. This also appears to be the case in Australia and possibly for some sub-groups of ethnic minority women in Denmark. Partnered women across all three countries share a lack of work experience, qualifications and in particular in Denmark lack of language proficiency. In all three countries health conditions are a constraint, particularly in the Danish case. In Britain and Australia there is evidence of disincentives to work in relation to ‘discouraged worker’ effects, but this is not evidenced in Denmark. Although the groups are heterogeneous, this section has demonstrated that there are shared constraints on working between partnered women across the three countries.

4.3 *What are the policy responses in each of the countries?*

This section sets out the ‘policy stories’ relating to employment programmes for partnered women outside the labour market in Britain, Australia and Denmark. The focus is predominantly on the most recent policies, but also acknowledges historical policy trajectories. As background context, the historical origins of each of the three welfare states are set out in the relevant annexes for each country (Britain in Appendix 3, Australia in Appendix 4 and Denmark in Appendix 5).

4.3.1 *Britain*

4.3.1.1 *The New Deal for Partners (NDP) and the Partners Outreach for Ethnic Minorities (POEM) pilot*

The New Deal for Partners of the Unemployed (NDPU) was introduced in 1999, targeted at dependent partners of benefit claimants, rather than those claiming benefits in their own right. As with the other New Deals,⁹¹ it was funded by £60 million of Windfall Tax and aimed to help thousands of people (mainly women) into work (Department for Social Security, 1998: 27) by providing a range of support accessed through a Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser. NDPU was originally a voluntary programme for dependent partners of Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) claimants, but in 2001 it was renamed the New Deal for Partners (NDP) and eligibility was extended to partners of non-JSA recipients of Income Support, Incapacity Benefit and Severe Disablement Allowance. Eligibility for participation in NDP is dependent upon an individual's relationship with the main benefit claimant – whether they are a spouse, or an unmarried and co-habiting partner or a civil partner.⁹² From April 2004 under the Enhanced NDP partners were required to attend one Work Focused Interview for Partners (WFIP) with a Personal Adviser; this became the gateway to NDP, although NDP participation remained voluntary. Since 2004 partners have had access to the same range of Jobcentre Plus services as other customer groups, in particular to a similar suite of assistance as lone parents. The range of benefits relating to partners and the assistance offered by NDP are at Appendix 3 and Table 4.6 below highlights NDP eligibility for partners of different benefit recipients.

⁹¹ The first New Deal programme was the New Deal for Young People, followed by the New Deal for the Long-Term Unemployed/New Deal 25 Plus, the New Deal for Lone Parents, the New Deal for Disabled People, the New Deal 50 Plus and then the New Deal for Partners of the Unemployed.

⁹² Although couples can be same sex, this research predominantly considers heterosexual couples.

Table 4.6: Enhanced New Deal for Partners eligibility by working age benefit from 2004

Type of benefit	Eligibility for NDP	Actions
Couples without children claiming Jobseeker's Allowance	Not eligible for NDP	Both partners claim JSA in their own right and are under the JSA signing regime
Couples with children claiming Jobseeker's Allowance	Eligible for NDP as only one partner is under JSA regime	One mandatory WFIP at six month point Failure to attend or participate in a WFIP can result in benefit sanctions to either or both partner's benefits Any action related to NDP following WFIP is voluntary
Partners of Income Support claimants	Eligible for NDP	One mandatory WFIP at six month point Failure to attend or participate in a WFIP can result in benefit sanctions to either or both partner's benefits Any action following WFIP is voluntary
Partners of Incapacity Benefit (IB)/ Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) claimants ⁹³	Eligible for NDP	One mandatory WFIP at six month point Failure to attend or participate in WFIP can result in benefit sanctions to either or both partner's benefits Any action following WFIP is voluntary
Partners of Severe Disablement Allowance (SDA) claimants ⁹⁴	Eligible for NDP	One mandatory WFIP at six month point Failure to attend or participate in WFIP can result in benefit sanctions to either or both partner's benefits Any action following WFIP is voluntary
Partners of Carer's Allowance (CA) claimants	WFIPs are not currently mandatory	Can voluntarily undertake a WFIP and join NDP

The Partners Outreach for Ethnic Minorities (POEM) pilot ran from 2007 to 2009. It aimed to assist partners of an ethnic minority into work but, based on the recognition

⁹³ From October 2008 all new claimants have claimed ESA.

⁹⁴ Closed to new claims in 2001.

that some partners were significantly disadvantaged, the pilot also aimed to achieve softer outcomes such as movement closer to the labour market (Aston et al., 2009a: 12). Although it targeted all ethnic minority groups, it was predominantly focused on Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Somali women, who have some of the lowest employment rates (Aston et al., 2009a: 12). The pilot targeted partners of main benefit claimants, as well as couples not receiving benefit.⁹⁵ The programme was contracted out to providers, who based their approach on developing partnerships with relevant organisations and providing outreach in venues relevant to the target groups.⁹⁶ Support was individually tailored and included job search assistance, training and group activities, signposting to other providers and culturally sensitive childcare.

4.3.1.2 *Joint Claims for Jobseeker's Allowance*

Joint Claims for Jobseeker's Allowance was introduced in 2001 and changed the rules for young couples without dependent children where both were aged 18 or over, and at least one partner was born on or after 18 March 1976. From this date, eligible couples could only receive means tested JSA if they made a claim jointly and both partners complied with JSA conditionality in being available for work. In March 2002, eligibility for Joint Claims was extended to couples where one or both partners was born on or before 28 October 1957. As partners in Joint Claims are claimants in their own right, they are not eligible for NDP.⁹⁷

4.3.1.3 *The Welfare Reform Act 2009*

The Welfare Reform Act 2009 legislated for increased conditionality for both lone and partnered parents. Tables 4.18 and 4.19 respectively outline the proposed

⁹⁵ Some were partners of potential main benefit claimants who had chosen not to claim benefit.

⁹⁶ The ethnicity of partners has historically not been well known from DWP data, at least until the partner is in direct contact with Jobcentre Plus.

⁹⁷ Section 4.4 of this chapter does not include evaluation evidence relating to Joint Claims, as this is outside the scope of this thesis.

conditionality for partners and conditionality under the Progression to Work model following the Act.

Table 4.7: Proposed conditionality for partners of benefit recipients following the British Welfare Reform Act 2009

	Capable of work	Children aged 7+	Current conditionality	Proposed conditionality
Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)	Yes	Yes	Worked Focused Interview every six months and access to New Deal for Partners	JSA joint claim, full JSA conditionality for both members of a couple
Income Support (IS) Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)	Yes	No	Worked Focused Interview at six month point and access to New Deal for Partners	Partner becomes main claimant in JSA claim with full JSA conditionality ESA main claimant can still claim ESA
Income Support (IS) Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)	Yes	Yes	Worked Focused Interview at six month point and access to New Deal for Partners	Partner becomes main claimant in a JSA claim with full JSA conditionality ESA main claimant can still claim ESA

Source: Department for Work and Pensions, 2008: 129

Table 4.8: The British Progression to Work model for parents with younger children

Age of youngest child	Conditionality grouping	Requirements
Under 1	No Conditionality	Not subject to any conditionality requirements
1-2	Progression to Work	Required to attend periodic WFIs and agree an action plan. Not mandated to undertake any activities recorded on the action plan or any other activities, although they will be encouraged to do so voluntarily
3-6	Progression to Work	Required to follow the full Progression to Work regime based around WFIs, action plans, work related activity and adviser direction

Source: Department for Work and Pensions, 2009b

Increases in lone parent obligations began in October 2008, with lone parents with a youngest child aged 12 or over being moved from Income Support to JSA, with accompanying requirements.⁹⁸ The Welfare Reform Act is another step in the lengthy process of simplifying the benefits system, explicitly begun by the Labour government in 1998. The Act extends Joint Claims to couples with children aged seven and over and legislated to introduce Progression to Work pathfinders⁹⁹ for parents (both lone and partnered) with children aged below seven. In effect, most workless couples not in work will be engaged in benefit regimes linked to JSA and/or Employment and Support Allowance as the key working age benefits. Although eligibility and conditionality will be individualised, for partners claims are effectively linked, as are any sanctions.

4.3.2 *Australia*

4.3.2.1 *Working Nation*

For partnered women, the key change as a result of *Working Nation* under the Keating Labor government was that women who had previously been considered dependent spouses in the benefits system were required to claim benefit in their own right. The significance of this reform for partnered women is two-fold. Firstly, the reform began a process of changes to payments claimed by partnered women which resulted in the introduction of Parenting Payment (see Table 4.1, Appendix 4). Parenting Payment (PP) is paid to the person designated as the Principal Carer Parent (deemed to have this role if they care for a dependent child aged less than 16 years)¹⁰⁰ and is intended to assist with the costs of caring for children for families not in work or on a low income.

⁹⁸ From April 2009, lone parents with a youngest child aged ten or over have been moved from IS to JSA and from April 2010 most lone parents with a youngest child aged seven or over will be moved from IS to JSA. The Coalition government has proposed increasing conditionality to lone parents with a youngest child aged over five.

⁹⁹ These draw - in a modified form - on the Gregg Review. See Gregg, P. (2008) *Realising potential. A vision for personalised conditionality and support*, Norwich, The Stationery Office.

¹⁰⁰ Only one person at a time can be the principal carer of a particular child, which can be problematic for separated or divorced parents.

Secondly, *Working Nation* resulted in partial individualisation of benefits. Payment entitlement was divided into two and the income test¹⁰¹ was restructured into a 'free area' of earnings disregard, followed by an individual and then a joint income test. The taper rate for those in work was changed from 100 per cent to a maximum of 70 per cent.¹⁰²

4.3.2.2 *The Parenting Payment Intervention Pilot (PPIP) and the Workless Families Pilot (WFP)*

Both of these pilots were randomly assigned trials involving PP recipients. The Parenting Payment Intervention Pilot (PPIP) informed the policy development of *Australians Working Together* (Department of Family and Community Services, 2001: 138, 149). In particular the Workless Families Pilot aimed to test the effectiveness of joint and individual interviews, an aspect considered in the British NDP evaluations (see Section 4.4.1 of this chapter). More detail concerning these pilots and the evaluation evidence is at Appendix 4.

4.3.2.3 *Australians Working Together (AWT)*

The next stage of welfare reforms impacting on partners under the Howard Coalition government was *Australians Working Together (AWT): participation for a more equitable society* (Australian Government, 2003)¹⁰³ introduced gradually from September 2002

¹⁰¹ In Australia all benefits are income- and assets-tested.

¹⁰² This means that for every additional dollar of earnings, only 30 cents is retained. See Vu, Q. N. & Harding, A. (2008) *Winners and losers from tax-transfer system and other changes during the Howard years*. Presentation to the conference *A future for the Australian welfare state? Continuity and change from Howard to Rudd*. Macquarie University. Page 14.

¹⁰³ *Family and Community Services Legislation Amendment (Australians Working Together and Other 2001 Budget Measures) Act 2003 No. 35*. This was preceded in May 2004 by a Parenting Payment trial which aimed to increase the voluntary participation of PPS and PpP recipients in Job Network. See Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (2004) *Annual Report 2003-04*, Canberra, DEWR.

(Social Research Centre, 2005c: 2).¹⁰⁴ AWT targeted four main groups¹⁰⁵ and bracketed PP claimants into three sub-groups in terms of activity testing (conditionality): (i) those with a youngest child of pre-school age, (ii) those with a youngest children child in primary school and (iii) those with a youngest child in secondary school (Blaxland, 2008: 30). Table 4.9 sets out the changes to conditionality.

Table 4.9: Australians Working Together changes for sole and partnered parents

Age of youngest child	Payment type	Requirements
< 6	Parenting Payment Single and Partnered	No new requirements
6 – 12	Parenting Payment Single and Partnered	Compulsory annual participation planning interview, further participation voluntary
13 – 15	Parenting Payment Single and Partnered	Attend annual interview and develop Participation Agreement comprising participation in activities for up to 150 hours in each consecutive 26 week period

Source: Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, 2005b

From September 2003 parents whose youngest child was aged between 13 and 15 years were required to develop a Participation Agreement with a Jobs, Education and Training (JET) Adviser,¹⁰⁶ detailing approved activities to be undertaken, lasting up to 150 hours every 26 consecutive weeks (six months) (Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, 2005: 5).¹⁰⁷ Such activities could include paid work, job search, participation in Job Network (JN)¹⁰⁸ programmes, education or training, volunteering

¹⁰⁴ The first stages of implementation did not require legislative reform. See Blaxland, M. (2008) *Everyday negotiations for care and autonomy in the world of welfare-to-work: the policy experience of Australian mothers, 2003-2006* (PhD thesis). Sydney, University of Sydney. Page 80.

¹⁰⁵ Parents, mature age jobseekers, indigenous jobseekers and people with disabilities.

¹⁰⁶ The JET program began in 1989 following the Cass Social Security Review and was a voluntary program for parents, during which JET advisers provided information and referrals to education, vocational training and employment as well as childcare. Parents receiving JET make a co-payment of 10 cents per child per hour towards the cost of childcare. Duration of JET has been increased from one to two years.

¹⁰⁷ The 150 hours could be undertaken over the full six months, averaging just over six hours per week, or could be concentrated into a shorter period. See Blaxland, M. (2008) *Everyday negotiations for care and autonomy in the world of welfare-to-work: the policy experience of Australian mothers, 2003-2006* (PhD thesis). Sydney, University of Sydney. Page 31.

¹⁰⁸ Australian employment services have been privatised since 1998, when the first incarnation Job Network (JN) was created by the Howard Government, replacing the former Commonwealth Employment Service

or other activities to overcome constraints on workforce participation. Although parents with a youngest child aged between six and 12 were required to attend a participation planning interview, further participation was voluntary. AWT also introduced a number of other measures including 850 additional Personal Advisers for disadvantaged jobseekers¹⁰⁹ (see Table 4.4, Appendix 4), more out-of-school hours childcare places being made available, together with improved financial assistance with childcare fees.

4.2.3.4 *Welfare to Work*

The Welfare to Work Budget 2005-06 measures under the Howard government further increased the activity requirements for sole and partnered parents¹¹⁰ from 1 July 2006. Table 4.10 sets out the changes to the existing requirements. Both partnered and sole parents on PP are required to undertake, or search for, paid work of at least 15 hours per week when their youngest child is aged six. New partnered claimants with a youngest child aged six are required to claim NSA, but sole parents are not required to do so until their youngest child is aged eight. For political reasons, there was a transitional ('grandfathering') arrangement for existing PP recipients on 30 June 2006, who remained on the benefit until 1 July 2007, or until their youngest child turned seven (whichever was later):¹¹¹ this applied to around 79 per cent of the PP population (Department for Education Employment and Workplace Relations, 2010: 14).

(CES). Centrelink (the trading name of the Commonwealth Service Delivery Agency) was created in 1997 as a cross-departmental agency providing benefit payments and became the gateway to Job Network, a national network of private and community sector organisations providing services under contract to what was then the DEWR. Finn highlights three distinct periods in JN's history, distinguished by different employment service contracts: the first employment services contract (ESC1 1998–2000), ESC2 2000–2003 which incorporated the 'Active Participation Model' (APM) and ESC3 2003–2009. See Finn, D. (2008) *The British 'welfare market'. Lessons from contracting out welfare to work programmes in Australia and the Netherlands*, York, Joseph Rowntree Foundation. The new contract 'Job Services Australia' (JSA) began on 1 July 2009, replacing Job Network.

¹⁰⁹ The legislation also closed access to Partner Allowance, created as part of *Working Nation*.

¹¹⁰ The other target groups were people with disability, mature aged and long-term unemployed.

¹¹¹ This 'grandfathering' arrangement potentially acted as a disincentive to work because parents who left PP and returned more than 12 weeks later would have been required to make a new claim under the new rules (interview with former government official).

Table 4.10: Conditionality before and following Welfare to Work in Australia

Previous arrangements			Arrangements from 1 July 2006		
PPs and PPp			Existing PPS & PPp at 30/6/06	New PPp recipients from 1/7/06	New PPs recipients from 1/7/06
Age of youngest child			Age of youngest child		
0-5	6-12	13-15	0-6 no requirements	0-5 no requirements	
No activity	Attend annual Personal Adviser interview	150 hours of approved activities in each 26-week period	7-15 Participate in services from 1 July 2007 or when youngest child is 7	6-15 When youngest child is 6 apply for NSA and undertake, or seek, paid work of at least 15 hours per week	6-15 When youngest child is 6 undertake, or seek, paid work of at least 15 hours per week When youngest child is 8, claim NSA
No MO activity	No MO activity	No MO activity	Youngest child aged 6+ MO requirement of 150 hours over 6 month period every 12 months		

Source: Australian Government, 2005c Para. 3.4

Welfare to Work involved commitment of \$389 million over four years from July 2005, with \$283 million allocated for employment-related assistance (Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, 2005a: 175). The increased activity testing was accompanied by a new compliance framework.¹¹² Welfare to Work reforms included changes to the income test thresholds and taper rates to encourage work (Australian Government, 2005a: 12)¹¹³ and other measures (see Table 4.4, Appendix 4). The reforms also included \$50 million over four years for an Employer Demand and

¹¹² Replacing the previous breaching system and comprised participation failures and serious failures (such as refusing a job offer) for non-compliance. This compliance regime was reviewed by the Rudd Labor government (elected in 2007) and a new system of ‘no show, no pay’ was introduced at the same time as the Job Services Australia contract. This involves losing one day of payment for every day that individuals do not participate; they may lose payment for up to eight weeks.

¹¹³ As a result, recipients could earn up to \$250 per fortnight before this withdrawal commences (increased from \$245 to \$250 a fortnight, compared to \$142 for NSA recipients).

Workplace Flexibility Strategy to encourage employers to recruit people from the four target groups, predominantly comprising coordinated communication, consultation and engagement (Department for Education Employment and Workplace Relations, 2010). The JET programme was superseded by Welfare to Work, although the childcare subsidy element was retained as JET Childcare Fee Assistance (see Chapter Five, Section 5.5).¹¹⁴ From July 2009 Employment Preparation was subsumed into the support streams based on estimated job readiness (see Chapter Five, Section 5.4.2) under the new Job Services Australia contract. Prior to July 2009 JN providers could access a Jobseeker Account (JSKA)¹¹⁵ to enable them to purchase items not available through other funds to help jobseekers enter employment.¹¹⁶ Under Job Services Australia from July 2009 the JSKA has been replaced by a more flexible Employment Pathway Fund. Following the Participation Review commissioned by the Rudd Labor government, flexibilities have also been introduced to the Welfare to Work requirements for parents from 2010.¹¹⁷

4.3.3 *Denmark*

4.3.3.1 *Activation*

To provide context for the 300 hours rule, this section examines Danish encompassing activation (*aktivering*). Activation in its current form began with the 1978 Work Offer scheme,¹¹⁸ however the watershed for Danish labour market policy was the

¹¹⁴ \$266 million was also allocated for childcare, including an extra 84,300 Outside School Hours Child Care places, 2,500 extra Family Day-care places and 1,000 extra In-Home Care places to assist working parents Australian Government (2005a) *2005-06 Budget Overview*, Canberra, Commonwealth of Australia..

¹¹⁵ Administered by DEEWR

¹¹⁶ This has some similarities with the Adviser Discretion Fund (ADF) in Britain.

¹¹⁷ The Participation Review Taskforce recommended continuation of the current participation approach to helping parents into work, but stated that within such a punitive approach there was insufficient attention being paid to skills development and that voluntary work should be considered as an alternative pathway to work and a move away from the work first model. Australian Government (2008) *Participation Review Taskforce Report*, Barton, ACT. Commonwealth of Australia. See also Attorney-General's Department (2009) *Budget Measures. Budget Paper No. 2 2009-10*, Barton, ACT, Commonwealth of Australia.

¹¹⁸ Targeting young people and following five years of rising unemployment Kvist, J. & Pedersen, L. (2007) Danish labour market activation policies. *National Institute Economic Review*, 202(1):99-112..

introduction of 'the active line' by the 1993 *Labour Market Reform I*,¹¹⁹ comprising reform of unemployment insurance and active labour market policy.

Denmark has two types of unemployment benefit: one based on insurance, and social assistance.¹²⁰ The Danish social protection system is based on the 'Ghent model' of voluntary unemployment insurance schemes administered by trade union-linked funds (Clasen and Viebrock, 2008: 433).¹²¹ People in paid work can voluntarily join an *Arbejdsløshedskasse* (unemployment insurance fund, or AK).¹²² AKs are operated by private companies¹²³ and supervised by *Arbejdsdirektoratet* (ADIR, the Directorate of Labour, Ministry of Employment), a regulatory body of the *Beskæftigelsesministeriet* (Ministry of Employment). The requirement for receipt of unemployment benefit (*dagpenge*) is membership of an AK for 52 weeks in the last three years. Unemployed people who are not members of an AK can apply for *kontanthjælp* (cash-benefits, or social assistance). Prior to the 1993 reform unemployment benefit duration was unlimited, but since then it has been progressively limited to four years in total.¹²⁴ If work in the ordinary labour market is not secured within this time, unemployed insured people must then apply for cash-benefits. The 1998 *Law on Active Social Policy*

¹¹⁹ Implemented from 1994 and following a Social Commission report.

¹²⁰ Permanently disabled people who are unable to work may claim Disability Pension. Other benefits in Denmark include family allowances and special benefits. Special benefits include a special benefit for those caring for a terminally ill relative (not just paid to spouses), benefits paid to people incurring particularly high rent costs and benefits for people with a large number of children (or children with special needs).

¹²¹ The Unemployment Insurance Act of 1907 enshrined the involvement of the trade unions in the administration of benefits, building on the 1899 Constitution of the Danish Labour Market, an agreement between employers and employees.

¹²² AKs are enshrined in law as 'an association of persons who have joined together for the sole purpose of providing economic assistance to each other in the event of unemployment and for carrying out additional administrative duties conferred upon the fund by the legislature'. See Kvist, J., Pedersen, L. & Köhler, P. A. (2008) Making all persons work: modern Danish labour market policies, in Eichhorst, W., Kaufmann, O. & Konle-Seidl, R. (Eds.) *Bringing the jobless into work? Experiences with activation schemes in Europe and the US*. Berlin, Springer, 221-256.

¹²³ Workers do not have to be trade union members to join an unemployment insurance fund. The state refunds expenditure on unemployment insurance to recognised AKs. Requirements for recognition include membership of at least 10,000 people and fulfilment of state requirements regarding benefits. See Kvist, J. & Pedersen, L. (2007) Danish labour market activation policies. *National Institute Economic Review*, 202(1):99-112.

¹²⁴ Extension of this period may be permitted for reasons such as sickness, parental leave and care of dependants. It is still possible to be on benefit for longer periods, such as insured people who are sick or disabled and cash-benefits recipients in match categories 4 and 5.

extended activation to cash-benefits claimants and also extended to municipalities¹²⁵ the responsibility for activating this group (see Table 5.1, Appendix 5 for a chronology). Social assistance receipt has not been curtailed, except for couples and immigrants.

There are three main types of activation: (i) guidance and qualification/skills upgrading, (ii) job placements¹²⁶ and (iii) subsidised jobs (up to one year).¹²⁷ In practice most activation offers are combined. All unemployed people have the right and duty to activation during the 'activation period' which is every six months¹²⁸ following the 'benefit period'. Table 4.11 below sets out the Danish activation offers by target group and Table 4.12 highlights the types of activation and their take-up amongst both insured and uninsured unemployed.

¹²⁵ In Denmark policy delivery is decentralised to local government Kommuner (municipalities). Since 2007 benefits and employment services for insured and uninsured unemployed people have been brought together in joint Jobcenters. Since 2009 municipalities have had responsibility for the provision of services to both groups, subject to the legislation of the Ministry of Employment.

¹²⁶ 4 weeks for insured unemployed and 13 weeks for uninsured unemployed.

¹²⁷ In addition there are other programmes for people with disadvantages, such as (i) rehabilitation for people with reduced work capacity; (ii) flex jobs (permanent employment for people with permanently reduced work capacity; (iii) sheltered employment for people receiving a Disability Pension. See Kvist, J., Pedersen, L. & Köhler, P. A. (2008) Making all persons work: modern Danish labour market policies, in Eichhorst, W., Kaufmann, O. & Konle-Seidl, R. (Eds.) *Bringing the jobless into work? Experiences with activation schemes in Europe and the US*. Berlin, Springer, 221-256..

¹²⁸ It is possible to apply for a one-month vacation in-between.

Table 4.11: Danish activation by target group

Target group	Activation offer
Young people under 25 both insured and cash benefit recipients	Right and duty to be trained if they are capable of doing so During the training period they receive the same students grants as other students
Insured unemployed under 30	Right and duty to activation after 13 months of unemployment. The offer must be for at least 6 months. Repeated activation every 6 months
Insured unemployed aged 30 to 59	Right and duty to activation after 9 months of unemployment Repeated activation every 6 months
Insured unemployed aged over 60	Right and duty to activation after 6 months of unemployment Repeated activation every 6 months
Cash-benefit recipients under 30	Right and duty to activation before 13 weeks of unemployment Activation period is 18 months ¹²⁹ Repeated activation every 6 months
Cash-benefit recipients over 30	Right and duty to activation after 9 months of unemployment (as insured unemployed) ¹³⁰ Repeated activation every 6 months

Source: AMS¹³¹

¹²⁹ The number of hours per week is decided by the municipality. For example, Aalborg Kommune activates for at least 25 hours per week.

¹³⁰ If activation is longer than 11 months, an activation-free period (or vacation) must be included. Activation offers are received every six months if they are still unemployed.

¹³¹ Provided by AMS, December 2009

Table 4.12: Principle types of activation in Denmark by type of benefit, 2006

Types of activation	Comprising	Insured unemployed per cent	Social assistance per cent
Guidance and upgrading of skills and qualifications	Short advisory and introductory courses, labour market training courses, short vocational training, special labour market courses, day classes at high schools, university study	56	71
Jobs with wage subsidies (1/3 private, 2/3 public) ¹³²	Individual receives minimum wage Employer receives wage subsidy Minimum period 6 months	41	9
Practical job training in enterprises (<i>ansættelse med løntilskud</i>)	Employment projects with private and public sector employers, voluntary organisations, private households, associations	3	20
Total activated persons		26,300	28,100

Source: AMS¹³³

4.3.3.2 300 timers reglen/300 hours rule

The 2002 labour market reform *More People into Work*¹³⁴ under the Venstre (Liberals)¹³⁵ minority coalition changed the rules for married couples where both spouses were claiming cash-benefits, but where one spouse (usually the woman) was deemed by the municipality to be unavailable for work because they were working in the home. In such cases couples were entitled to claim only one amount of cash-benefits for the

¹³² They can last for up to one year.

¹³³ Document provided during interview, January 2009.

¹³⁴ Implemented from July 2003.

¹³⁵ For the first time since 1920 the Social Democrats (*Socialdemokraterne*) were no longer the party with the largest representation and Venstre formed a minority coalition with the Danish People's Party (*Det Konservative Folkeparti*).

person available for work, plus a 'spouse supplement' for their dependent.¹³⁶ *More People into Work* also introduced lower cash-benefits after six months for families where one or both spouses receive cash-benefits, which decreased the amount of cash-benefits by around DKK1000 for approximately 21,000 people (Goul Andersen and Pedersen, 2007: 18). This was offset by 'Partner Assistance' (*Ægtefælle tillæg*) in which the tax allowance (*Personfradrag*) of a non-working spouse is transferred to the working spouse.

The 2005 labour market reform *A New Chance for All (En ny chance til alle)*¹³⁷ was a package of measures focused on the integration of immigrants. Introduced on 1 April 2006, it abolished the spouse supplement and introduced *300 timers reglen* (300 hours rule).¹³⁸ This rule states¹³⁹ that where both members of a married couple are claiming cash-benefits, the spouse with less than 300 hours of employment within the last two years loses their entitlement.¹⁴⁰ Only one spouse may lose their entitlement and they are considered to be working at home and not available for the labour market (Finansministeriet, 2005: 38). The requirement is on a continuing basis; once an individual has proved their availability for work by obtaining 300 hours of employment, they may re-claim cash-benefits until the two-year period is again reached. Based on the 'success' of the 300 hours rule (see Section 4.4.3) and as a result of a political agreement in 2008 the 300 hours requirement has been increased to 450

¹³⁶ In practice, this rule was used for only around 200 people (government official).

¹³⁷ July 2005 - this legislation also denied cash-benefits to young people who refused education, denied child benefit to parents of 15-17 year olds not in education or employment and required cash-benefits recipients with problems other than unemployment to receive repeated activation offers. See Goul Andersen, J. & Pedersen, J. J. (2007) *Continuity and change in Danish active labour market policy: 1990-2007. The battlefield between activation and workfare. CCWS Working Paper No. 2007-54*, Aalborg, Centre for Comparative Welfare Studies, Aalborg University. Page 20.

¹³⁸ However, as with the Australian Parenting Payment reforms, there was a transition period - in this case, recipients did not lose their entitlement until 1 April 2008.

¹³⁹ The aim of the social assistance law is: "to prevent people that have difficulty keeping their job to get help from the Government and to create an economic security net for anybody who cannot provide for themselves. The target is to help people to provide for themselves. Every man and woman has the responsibility to look after themselves and their married spouse and their children under 18 years and that responsibility only stops when you are separated or divorced" (translated by government official during interview).

¹⁴⁰ During initial implementation it had not been clear whether both individuals had to be receiving cash-benefits; this point was clarified later by the National Board of Appeal (*Ankestyrelsen*) and led to some cases in which cash-benefits were withdrawn being reviewed. See Jensen, K. B. & Lauritzen, H. B. (2008) *Local authority implementation of the 300 hour rule*, Copenhagen, Anvendt Kommunal Forskning. Page 2.

(450 timers reglen/450 hours rule), with effect from 1 July 2011. *A new chance for all* also outlined improvements to work incentives for people claiming cash-benefits,¹⁴¹ along with increased funding for activation.

A further policy initiative relating to non-working partners was set out in the *Law for an active employment effort* (Ministry of Refugees Immigration and Integration Affairs, 2008). This allows Jobcenters to provide training or other appropriate measures to unemployed people not receiving benefits (similarly to POEM in Britain). This is relevant to those who have lost their entitlement through the 300 hours rule, for women ineligible for cash-benefits because their spouse is working, or for unemployed insured women who have reached the end of their entitlement. This provision has only been used for a small number of people and as a result, little data are available.¹⁴²

This section has introduced the programmes relating to partnered women examined in this study. In Britain and Australia partnered women, particularly parents, have been subject to increasing conditionality, although as will be argued in subsequent chapters, in Britain until the Welfare Reform Act 2009 this has been in the absence of independent access to benefits as in Australia and Denmark. In Denmark partnered women have not been explicitly targeted by Danish encompassing activation policies since 1994, until the focus on integration of reforms in the 2000s.

4.4 *What are the effects of the policy responses?*

This section considers evaluation evidence relating to the programmes in the three countries. Martin (2000: 90, citing Grubb, 2005) highlights the tendency in the US to

¹⁴¹ DKK 500m has been set aside for this initiative.

¹⁴² The Ministry of Refugees, Immigration and Integration Affairs has produced a pamphlet describing how the initiative has been used Ministry of Refugees Immigration and Integration Affairs (2008) *Indsats for ledige selvforsørgede betaler sig! [An effort worthwhile]*, translated for the purposes of this research by S.S. Nielsen, Copenhagen, Ministry of Refugee, Immigration and Integration Affairs.

have a proliferation of overlapping programmes which limits the ability to disentangle 'what works' (European Commission, 2000: 46-7). Such political 'hyperactivism' - whereby there is an overproduction of policy initiatives in order to be seen to be 'doing something' (Dunleavy, 1995) - is also true of Britain. In Australia one major difficulty resulting from their privatised employment services model is the loss of insight into why and how interventions work (Finn, 2008: 42). Denmark's decentralised policy delivery model in some respects makes assessing the effect of activation difficult (European Commission, 2000: 45) because of the diversity of approaches in different localities.

In terms of assessing the 'success' of policies, it is necessary to define - and to critique - what is meant by this term. "While evaluation can be understood as part of the rational side of policy analysis it also has a deeply political aspect" (McClelland, 2006: 67). Furthermore, "Analysts do not stand outside of the normative disagreements which figure in problem definition" (Bacchi, 1999: 20). Discussion of policy success in this study takes into account its differing definitions in the three countries and this is linked with how differently the policy problem of partnered women outside the labour market is constructed in each country. Although moving off benefit and into work is a policy goal for Australian labour market policies, a further policy goal is also increased earnings whilst on part income support payments (Senate, 2005a: 143). In Denmark moving off benefits is seen as a positive consequence of being in work¹⁴³ and in Britain the policy goal for partners is moving into work and off benefits. DWP considers jobs to be sustained if they are of 16 hours or more per week¹⁴⁴ and last for at least 13 weeks. However, there is growing policy interest in longer-term sustainability and progression.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴³ In Denmark, Ministry of Employment targets for Jobcenters for 2009-10 were: (i) to reduce the number of unemployed with more than three months' unemployment, (ii) to reduce the number and duration of sick leave claims and (iii) to reduce the numbers of young people under 30 receiving benefits.

¹⁴⁴ For main benefit claimants. For dependent partners this is 24 hours per week.

¹⁴⁵ "The system must do more to help people stay in work and move up the ladder through better in-work support - through advice, financial incentives and training" Department for Work and Pensions (2007) *In work, better off: next steps to full employment (Cm 7130)*, The Stationery Office. Page 9. This has been

The success of programmes in each country is defined both as numbers moving into work and in decreasing numbers of benefit recipients. In Australia and Denmark the programmes studied had the effect of decreasing the numbers claiming benefit and in both countries this constituted policy 'success'. However, when examining the quantitative outcomes of labour market programmes, there are also qualitative considerations, or 'soft' outcomes, such as sustainability and quality, pay and the potential for progression.

4.4.1 *Employment outcomes*

Although around 200 people join NDP each month there are high attrition rates between identification of eligibility and participation (National Audit Office, 2007: 21). In 2005-06, 300,000 partners were identified as eligible to join NDP, but only three per cent did so (House of Commons Committee of Public Accounts, 2008). Between 1999 and 2004, 7,820 partners participated in NDP and 1,860 moved into work.¹⁴⁶ Tables A2.3 and A2.4 in Appendix 2 show that between April 2004 and August 2009 of the 9,120 partnered women starting the caseload, 4,380 left NDP for paid work. The job entry rate for NDP was 48 per cent but, based on estimated calculations of deadweight, it helped only 61 people into work who would not otherwise have secured jobs without the assistance of the programme and "shows the largest net cost to the Exchequer" of all the New Deals (House of Commons Committee of Public Accounts, 2008: 10).¹⁴⁷ A minority (eight per cent) of partners were in work at the time

attempted via the Employment, Retention and Advancement pilots. Further, the Coalition government has stated that 12 months should be the measure of a sustained job entry. Duncan Smith, I. (2010) Welfare for the 21st Century. Speech at the Department for Work and Pensions, 27 May 2010. London, Department for Work and Pensions.

¹⁴⁶ Historical DWP data.

¹⁴⁷ Job entries have been estimated at a cost of £34 million in total - £2,300 per job. However, the Public Accounts Committee states that data concerning NDP is "based on relatively weak evidence on additional jobs and includes a relatively high proportion of administrative costs because of the low number of participants" - House of Commons Committee of Public Accounts (2008) *Helping people from workless households into work: Ninth report of session 2007-8*, London, The Stationery Office. Page 10. The cost of NDP for 2006-07 was £613,000 Jobcentre Plus (2007) Jobcentre Plus Annual Report and Accounts 2006-2007 Norwich, The Stationery Office.

of their WFIP and for most this was less than 16 hours per week (Coleman and Seeds, 2007: 16).

In total 54.7 per cent of POEM participants were women (Aston et al., 2009a: 44). Over the lifetime of the pilot, 32 per cent of all clients recruited were Black African, with Bangladeshi and Pakistani partners each comprising 14 per cent of the total; ten per cent were non-UK white (Aston et al., 2009a: 42). The majority of clients were aged 25 to 34 (Aston et al., 2009a: 46). The key finding from POEM was that both clients and providers felt that the one-to-one individual, intensive and tailored support was its strength (Aston et al., 2009a: 58). Of 9,614 clients recruited, POEM helped 2,835 into work (Aston et al., 2009a: 78). POEM participants were typically employed in low-skilled, entry-level work such as retail, cleaning, office and administration, hospitality and catering, social care, security, driving and in factories and warehouses (Aston et al., 2009a: 83). Part-time work such as school lunch-time supervisors and child-minding were commonly requested by partnered women, along with cleaning agencies where work could be done flexibly to accommodate school drop-off and pick-up (Aston et al., 2009a: 84). DWP did not collect data on sustainable outcomes and by the end of the pilot these were harder to achieve as the recession began to impact (Aston et al., 2009a: 84).

Due to space constraints *Working Nation*, the effects of the Parenting Payment Intervention Pilot and the Workless Families Pilot in Australia are considered only briefly here - further details are at Appendix 4. Partial individualisation and changes to the income test following *Working Nation* predominantly benefited older women without dependent children (Burke and Redmond, 2002). The key finding from PPIP was that its impact was least for jobless couples (PPP recipients with a NSA-claiming partner) (Barrett and Cobb-Clark, 2000: 201). Evidence from WFP highlighted the importance of a longer-term perspective on encouraging the workforce participation of

those in workless families who are likely to be entrenched in disadvantage and require significant resources (Cobb-Clark et al., 2006: 442).

DEWR data showed that following *Australians Working Together* the number of PpP recipients remained stable, but in-flows declined by eight percentage points between 2002 and 2004, although the strong labour market was likely to have been a factor in this reduction (Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, 2005b: 6). Most exits from PpP were a result of commencing paid work, or due to a partner's earnings (Social Research Centre, 2005b: 43), such as a partner commencing work or declaring their earnings. PpP recipients were more likely to exit income support than PPs recipients (13 per cent compared with eight per cent) (Social Research Centre, 2005b: 43), perhaps due to a partners' earnings. For partnered parents, the rate of participation in paid employment increased from 24 per cent to 27 per cent and there was an increase in the percentage of partnered parents reporting average fortnightly earnings over \$400 from 37 per cent in 2001/02 to 49 per cent in 2003/04 (Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, 2005b: 10, Social Research Centre, 2005a: 36).¹⁴⁸ However, the largest increase was for sole parents (Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, 2005b: 10). Overall, there was little change in levels of 'self-reliance' and employment participation for parents following AWT, which may reflect the voluntary nature of the programme (Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, 2005b: 13).¹⁴⁹ However, as the results of PPIP and WFP suggest, compulsory participation does not always encourage participation or result in job outcomes (see Appendix 4).

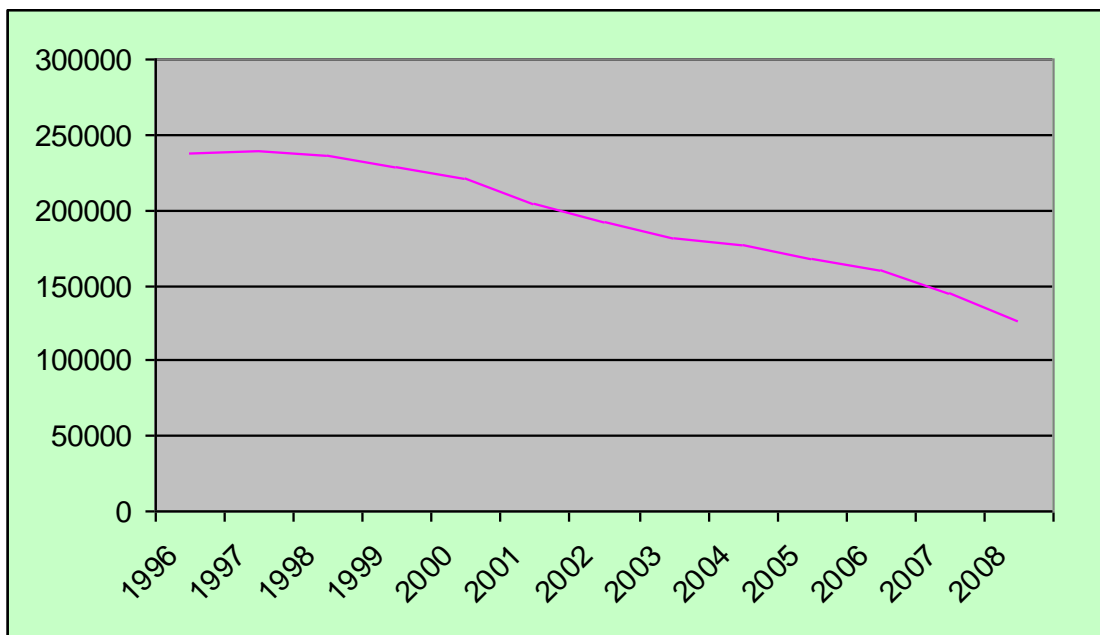
Welfare to Work was only partially successful in achieving its objectives during 2006-7 and it is difficult to disentangle the effects of the reforms from the strong labour market context (Department for Education Employment and Workplace Relations,

¹⁴⁸ There was a general increase in wages over the period, given the improved economic conditions.

¹⁴⁹ The short time period between policy implementation and evaluation was also noted in the report.

2010: 95).¹⁵⁰ Only a small proportion of parents (five per cent) in the target group were directly affected by the reforms.¹⁵¹ There was a 32 per cent decrease in PpP claims (from 83,558 to 56,863) for parents with children aged 0-5 and 6-15 (Department for Education Employment and Workplace Relations, 2010: 20-1). Figure 4.13 shows the steady decrease in the number of recipients of PpP between June 1999 and June 2008, particularly following Welfare to Work.

Figure 4.13: Numbers of Parenting Payment Partnered recipients in Australia, June 1999 - June 2008



Source: DEWR and DEEWR annual reports 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2009

The number of NSA claims for partners with school-age children also decreased by 55 per cent (from 24,476 to 11,398).¹⁵² However, there was an indirect effect of higher rates of transfer from PP to other payments, such as Disability Support Pension and Carer

¹⁵⁰ The evaluation comprised data from the following sources: Centrelink administrative data, Longitudinal Pathways Survey, Survey, Evaluation and Analysis Dataset, administrative data from the Corporate Management Information System, Post-Program Monitoring Surveys, an Employer Survey and departmental focus groups with jobseekers.

¹⁵¹ The evaluation covers the year 2006-07. The grandfathered group (79 per cent) were excluded, as were those (16 per cent) whose children were not six until after 1 July 2007 and were therefore not subject to the participation requirements during 2006-07.

¹⁵² These parents would previously have claimed PpP.

Payment, neither of which are activity tested.¹⁵³ Compared with similar groups in previous years, both single and partnered parents left income support sooner and were at least as likely to be in paid work than if they had remained on income support (Department for Education Employment and Workplace Relations, 2010: 40). The rate at which partnered parents left NSA after six months was faster than for comparable groups: 45 per cent compared with 32 per cent in 2005-06. The proportion on income support with earnings was slightly higher for partnered parents than sole parents, although for partnered parents the reason may have been the income of their partner rather than entering work themselves. The overall employment rate for partnered parents was higher (51 per cent) for those on NSA, compared with 40 per cent for those on PpP (Department for Education Employment and Workplace Relations, 2010: 40). Of partners with a youngest child age six to 15, 29 per cent were in paid employment after six months, compared with 20 per cent in 2005-06. For those who were employed, the median number of hours worked per week was 22 hours and the median hourly wage was around \$18, above the minimum wage of \$13.75 (Department for Education Employment and Workplace Relations, 2010). The quantitative effects of Welfare to Work were small and this must be balanced by qualitative evidence of the difficulties the reform caused for individual parents and families (see Chapter Five).

Activation is considered by policy actors to have played a key part in contributing to the 'Danish miracle' of moving from very high unemployment in the late 1980s and early 1990s to a pattern of considerably low unemployment. This is also the key reason for its export as policy learning to other countries. However, activation has failed to permanently reduce benefit claims and is not as successful for harder to reach groups with multiple barriers to work (Rosdahl and Weise, 2001: 160, Kvist et al., 2008: 225). The success of activation is generally accepted, despite the difficulty of effectively

¹⁵³ Older women also applied for DSP if they did not receive the Age Pension.

measuring its impact,¹⁵⁴ the lack of systematic review evidence regarding its effect on various target groups and insufficient data concerning exact individual employment (Kvist et al., 2008: 222). Micro-based evaluations of activation show that effects vary depending on the type of intervention and on those participating; macro-based studies suggest that the context is important (Kvist et al., 2008: 222), for example Albrekt Larsen (2002) argues that economics, rather than activation, is the cause of decreased unemployment in Denmark. In general, studies which measure the impact of Danish activation do not adequately take into account the differences for men and women, although a small number do. Jespersen et al (2008) found that women gain most from private job training. Similarly, Laužadytė (2008)¹⁵⁵ found that only private sector employment programmes reduced the duration of unemployment (by 0.85 weeks) for women, compared with 0.21 weeks for men. Other evidence suggests that job placements in the private, rather than public, sector are the most successful for both short-term and long-term unemployed (European Commission, 2000: 43). Table 4.14 highlights the effects of different activation interventions.

Bolvig et al (2003) demonstrate that the timing of activation is significant and suggest that it should be implemented earlier in the benefit spell for men, but later for women. Graversen (2004) also concludes that the sequencing of activation is significant and that where more than one activation offer is received, education should precede job training. The majority of activation participants are positive about the interventions, stating that they benefit from increased confidence and improving their job prospects; however, a significant minority (24 per cent) feel negatively about it (Arbejdsministeriet, 2001, Bach, 2002).

¹⁵⁴ Larsen summarises the following different methods of measuring the effects of activation: flow effect measures, subjective effect measures, fixed effect measures and duration measures. See Albrekt Larsen, C. (2002) Policy paradigms and cross-national (mis)learning from the Danish employment miracle. *Journal of European Social Policy*, 9(5):715-735.

¹⁵⁵ Using county-level data from AMS to estimate the impact of ALMPs on unemployment exit for men and women.

Table 4.14: The effects of Danish activation interventions

Type of interventions	Effects
Search activity	Probability of leaving benefit increased during first 8 months Probability decreases after one year
Private job training	Largest direct employment effect but large variations for different people On average reduces dependence on benefits by 16 percentage points (two months)
Municipal employment projects	On average reduces dependence on benefits by 6 percentage points (three weeks)
Education	Difficulties in measurement as effects may be in the longer-term
Wage subsidy jobs	Number of ordinary employees falls by 0.4 every time someone is employed on a wage subsidy

Source: Kvist et al., 2008

One acknowledged drawback of activation is a lock-in effect, whereby people search less intensively for work during participation, or because they prefer to complete their activation before applying for work (see for example Madsen et al., 2007). The most pronounced lock-in effects are for education activation (Bolvig et al., 2003); this increases unemployment duration by about two weeks for both men and women and has both locking-in and negative post-programme effects (Laužadytė, 2008: 22-3).¹⁵⁶ However, the deficit from classroom training may in fact be smallest for women (Jespersen et al., 2008) and it may have ‘qualification effects’ which result in improved qualifications and increased job matching. Nevertheless, it is difficult to measure whether people secure work as a result of gaining qualifications or as a result of increased job search and it has different effects for different groups of people, some of which are apparent only in the longer term (Kvist et al., 2008: 107, 250). Activation can also have a motivation (or threat) effect, causing unemployed people to intensify their job search and increase their probability of securing work without intervention

¹⁵⁶ The post-programme effect of public job training for women was found to be slightly positive (0.5 per cent), but Laužadytė argues that this did not compensate for the dramatic locking-in effect.

(Geerdsen, 2002, Geerdsen, 2006, Ministry of Labour, 2000). This is particularly relevant to the 300 hours rule, where there is a threat of loss of benefit.

Bach and Larsen (2008) report six findings from their evaluation of the 300 hours rule, based on statistical modeling. Firstly, wives were less likely than husbands to be employed. Secondly, younger and middle-aged spouses were more likely to be employed. Thirdly, education does not appear to influence the probability of being employed. Fourthly, those born in Denmark were less likely to be employed than all other ethnic groups. This aspect is important, given the rhetoric concerning the perceived problem of immigrants' unemployment (discussed in Chapter Six). Fifthly, those who do not speak Danish at all are less likely to be employed. This is also important, as both the AKF (Jensen and Lauritzen, 2008) and SFI (Bach and Larsen, 2008) evaluations found that recipients often did not understand the letter from the municipality concerning the 300 hour requirement and the threat of loss of benefit (Jensen and Lauritzen, 2008: 4-5, Bach and Larsen, 2008). Finally, self-estimated illness has a large influence on the probability of employment (Bach and Larsen, 2008: 69-70). It is not possible to establish whether people had left the cash-benefits system as a direct result of the rule¹⁵⁷ and Bach and Larsen (2008: 61-3, 68) also highlight the rule's deadweight effect. However, the SFI evaluation has been used by the Danish government to justify the increase in the requirement of paid work from 300 to 450 hours (Folketinget, 2009).¹⁵⁸

Table 4.15 shows that the majority of those affected by the 300 hours rule were women and immigrants.¹⁵⁹ Table 4.27 shows the main occupation of individuals at risk of

¹⁵⁷ Interview with government official.

¹⁵⁸ Findings from the SFI evaluation should be viewed with two caveats: first, the sample was selected prior to clarification of the rule, resulting in a significant number not in receipt of cash-benefits; second, those who lose their benefit are considered to be closest to the labour market. See Bach, H. B. & Larsen, B. (2008) *300-timers-reglen. Betydningen af 300-timers-reglen for gifte kontanthjælps-modtagere [The significance of the 300 hours rule for married social assistance recipients]* (translated for the purposes of this research by S.S. Nielsen), Copenhagen, Det Nationale Forskningscenter for Velfærd (SFI).

¹⁵⁹ The ethnic origins of those affected by the 300 hours rule are predominantly the Middle East and the Balkans.

losing their benefit at the time of the survey. Around a third of those who lost their benefit and 25 per cent of those who retained their benefit were employed. Employment was predominantly full-time, entry-grade and low-paid, such as cleaning and other service industry work (Bach and Larsen, 2008: 83). That a majority of those affected by the rule were married women but that the work they entered was mainly full-time highlights the difference in part-time working between Denmark and Britain: most workers in Denmark (including women) are employed on a full-time basis (see Table A2.22 in Appendix 2).

Table 4.15: Characteristics of those affected by the 300 hours rule (per cent)

	Lost their benefit	Who kept their benefit cash-benefits
Women	70	52
Born in Denmark	5	10
Danish citizenship	25	35
Placed in match-group 4 ¹⁶⁰	52	46
Work ability highly reduced	24	38
Poor or very poor health	38	52
Chronic disease or similar	38	46
Mental illness	23	32
<i>Basis for calculation</i>	321	681

Source: Bach and Larsen, 2008: 16

¹⁶⁰ In Denmark activation participants are assigned to one of five match-groups which constitute measures of employability. Match-groups 4 and 5 comprise those furthest from the labour market and requiring the most support to enter work. See Chapter Five, Section 5.4.2 for more discussion of this aspect.

Table 4.16: Main occupation of married social assistance recipients in Denmark (per cent)

Main occupation at the time of the interview	Lost their social assistance			Retained their social assistance		
	Spouse also receiving	Spouse not receiving	Total	Spouse also receiving	Spouse not receiving	Total
Employed	31	34	33	0	34	25
Cash-benefits	18	13	15	78	31	43
Cash-benefits, in activation or pre-rehabilitation	12	8	10	22	12	14
Sickness benefits	2	2	2	0	7	5
Course/education	2	5	4	0	2	2
Rehabilitation	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unemployment benefit/maternity	0	3	2	0	4	2
Early retirement	0	1	1	0	2	2
Working at home/ no occupation	35	33	34	0	8	6

Source: Bach and Larsen, 2008: 71

One in five of those who lost their benefits stated that they were searching for a job; for those working in the home, this was one in four (Bach and Larsen, 2008: 89). Recipients who lost their cash-benefits appeared to be more interested in paid work than those who kept their benefit (62 per cent compared with 42 per cent) (Bach and Larsen, 2008: 63).¹⁶¹ Bach and Larsen (2008: 93) argue that this suggests that those who kept their benefit were not as motivated to find work but that perceived work ability has an effect on the desire to work. Perceptions of employability are important in evaluating work potential. The question is which comes first: the preference for work or the risk of losing benefit. Self-estimated work ability is also important in relation to whether recipients report illness, which leads to exemption from the rule (Bach and

¹⁶¹ 30 per cent of those who lost their benefit said they would prefer part-time work and 36 per cent full-time work. Of those who kept their benefit, 26 per cent said they would prefer part-time work and 28 per cent full-time. Men were more likely to prefer full-time work Bach, H. B. & Larsen, B. (2008) *300-timers-reglen. Betydningen af 300-timers-reglen for gifte kontanthjælps-modtagere [The significance of the 300 hours rule for married social assistance recipients]* (translated for the purposes of this research by S.S. Nielsen), Copenhagen, Det Nationale Forskningscenter for Velfærd (SFI).Page 92.

Larsen, 2008: 65). There is evidence of significant health problems amongst the couples affected by the rule, which is of concern given that those who were considered to be closest to the labour market lost their benefit - such aspects have been underplayed by the Danish government in espousing the success of the rule.

A further aspect of concern regarding the effects of the rule is that the destinations of many who lost their cash-benefits is not known, although 60 per cent of municipalities in the AKF study (Jensen and Lauritzen, 2008) stated that they had conducted follow-up programmes.¹⁶² The Danish government has argued that as an economic incentive the policy has been successful, which was one reason cited for increasing the number of hours of paid work required from 300 to 450 (Folketinget, 2009). However, the other side of a stick rather than a carrot approach of economic incitement to enter work by reducing (or removing) benefit is the risk of poverty, particularly for children. This was an aspect which particularly concerned social workers (see subsequent chapters).¹⁶³ The extent of hardship is demonstrated by the finding that 20 per cent of those who lost their benefit had been unable to pay their rent in the previous three months and 57 per cent had borrowed money from family and friends (Bach and Larsen, 2008). A number of those who lost their benefit described themselves as 'very poor' (23 per cent), even those who were working (16 per cent) (Bach and Larsen, 2008: 129).

4.4.2 'Soft' outcomes

The relative lack of outcome data for NDP can be countered by the rich qualitative data. Reasons for exit from NDP without entering work included: BOCs indicating

¹⁶² One way of funding these was via the Act on Active Measures 2007 (see Section 4.2.3).

¹⁶³ There was considerable opposition voiced by the Danish Union of Social Workers and many other agencies (such as by the Council for Socially Marginalised People, the trade union confederation LO and Amnesty International amongst others) in response to both the proposals for the 300 hours rule and the 450 extension. See Ardejdsdirektoratet (2009) *Høringssvar til forslag til lov om ændring af lov om aktiv socialpolitik (Ændring af 300 timers reglen for ægtepar) [Proposed amendment to the 300 hours rule for married couples]*, 28 January 2009, Copenhagen, Ardejdsdirektoratet (ADIR).

that the household would not be better off in paid work than on benefits; the insurmountability of barriers to work; and difficulty in coping with the demands of training (Thomas and Griffiths, 2005). Nevertheless, there were instances where carers in particular described positive change had occurred during their time on NDP (Thomas and Griffiths, 2006). These resulted from: firstly, adjustment to the demands of caring, coupled with support arrangements; secondly, improvement in health conditions; and, thirdly, other family members taking over caring roles. Notably, these improvements were not a direct result of NDP. Thomas and Griffiths (2006: 25) suggest that it is the WFIP process which is problematic, rather than NDP itself, as they are a single event in circumstances which for many partners are subject to change. Similarly, in Australia an evaluation of AWT suggested that economic and social participation appeared to be strongly influenced by customers' underlying attitudes to participation, which were difficult to change in a one-off interview (Social Research Centre, 2005c: 25). Crucially, for partners in Britain barriers to work are not necessarily overcome on taking up paid work (Hasluck and Green, 2005: 71) and for many work was not sustained due to difficulties combining paid and caring work (Thomas and Griffiths, 2006: 42, 46). The reality for many partnered women who do move into paid work may be a 'revolving door' of low-paid, short-term work, followed by a return to benefits.

Some of the successful job outcomes¹⁶⁴ from NDP were not the result of programme design, but of implementation; sometimes these could be attributed to the variety of skills, experience and working styles of individual Personal Advisers (Thomas and Griffiths, 2005). The extent to which the range of issues faced by partners in taking up employment was understood by Advisers, along with their ability to address these issues, had an important bearing on the take-up of employment (Hasluck and Green,

¹⁶⁴ One problem with outcome data for NDP is that neither the ending of periods on NDP, nor the reason for exit, are always clear from the management information. See Thomas, A. & Griffiths, R. (2005) *Work Focused Interviews for Partners and Enhanced New Deal for Partners: qualitative evaluation phase one. Department for Work and Pensions Research Report No. 283*, Leeds, Department for Work and Pensions.

2007: 95). However, Jobcentre Plus Job Outcome Targets discourage advisers from spending time assisting partners, as the number of points which they receive for partners' job entries is lower (eight points), compared to the number of points received for helping lone parents or IB/ESA recipients into work (12 points)¹⁶⁵ and is not commensurate with the input required (Thomas and Griffiths, 2006). Qualitative interviews with clients and providers suggested that POEM achieved soft outcomes, such as increasing clients' confidence and motivation, increased their awareness of suitable work, improved their job search, application and interview skills and improved their English language skills (Aston et al., 2009a: 92). Outreach workers of the same ethnic backgrounds to the target groups were vital in accessing partners, however subsequent support did not need to be provided by advisers from similar ethnic groups and could be advantageous in allowing clients to become more confident, particularly with language skills (Aston et al., 2009a: 108).

There is mixed evidence as to whether WFIPs and NDP interviews are more effective when conducted with both partners; to some extent, this is dependent upon the specific situation of the couple. In the WFP in Australia there was no evidence to suggest that joint interviews were more effective than individual interviews in increasing economic activity (Cobb-Clark et al., 2006: 435). However, in Britain many advisers¹⁶⁶ considered that joint interviews gave them the opportunity "to engage with the complexities of the 'couple dynamic'" (Coleman and Seeds, 2007: 34). Many joint WFIPs occur for 'contingent reasons,' such as the main claimant giving their partner a lift to the Jobcentre Plus office, or providing 'moral support' because they were more familiar with Jobcentre Plus, and were more likely to occur in couples where the main claimant was looking for work, where the partner was too ill to work again, or for partners whose first language was not English (Coleman and Seeds, 2007: 33).

¹⁶⁵ However, Jobcentre Plus customers with children now attract a Child Premium of two points, following the Harker report on child poverty - Harker, L. (2006) *Delivering on child poverty: what would it take?*, Norwich, The Stationery Office.

¹⁶⁶ Most advisers prefer to conduct interviews individually, predominantly because this is the default Jobcentre Plus model and is also less time-consuming.

However, the majority of couples viewed the appointment letter from Jobcentre Plus as being for the addressee only, despite the invitation to bring along the main claimant. This underlines the confusion inherent in this policy, which treats partners both as dependents and as individuals, a point which will be returned to in subsequent chapters. The potential effectiveness of interviews also depended on whether the main claimant's attitude towards their partner working was positive and supportive, or negative and obstructive (Coleman and Seeds, 2007: 35). This will also be returned to in later chapters in relation to gendered roles within couples.

Evaluation evidence suggests that some partners view NDP as a positive opportunity for support, whilst others resent the obligations placed upon them (Hasluck and Green, 2007: 95). Take-up has predominantly been confined to partners who are already highly motivated to work and are most work-ready (Thomas and Saunders, 2002), as well as those already looking for work, where NDP could provide job search or training (Coleman and Seeds, 2007: 4). This may be because often the most motivated or job-ready tend to volunteer for such programmes. The most successful outcomes have been for partners who wished to become self-employed and joined NDP to take utilise the test-trading option, but this sub-group were atypical in tending to possess higher-level qualifications (Hasluck and Green, 2007: 93, Thomas and Griffiths, 2005: 79).¹⁶⁷

In Australia AWT appeared to increase the number of partnered parents participating in study from five to 16 percentage points, which can be seen as a first step towards employment (Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, 2005b: 12, Social Research Centre, 2005a: 36). Similarly to the evaluation of the WFP (see Appendix 4),

¹⁶⁷ One of the benefits of self-employment is the flexible working arrangements it often facilitates, such as working flexible hours and working from home. Some partners also reported involving the main claimant in their self-employment initiatives. See Thomas, A. & Griffiths, R. (2005) *Work Focused Interviews for Partners and Enhanced New Deal for Partners: qualitative evaluation phase one*. Department for Work and Pensions Research Report No. 283, Leeds, Department for Work and Pensions.

evaluations of the Personal Adviser (PA) intervention¹⁶⁸ highlighted that Pp recipients were already participating to some extent in study or training (Social Research Centre, 2005a: 13). Importantly, Participation Agreements ratified activities already being undertaken (Social Research Centre, 2005a: iv); just over half of activity-tested parents were undertaking new activities and the rest were undertaking new activities in addition to existing ones (Alexander et al., 2005: 16).¹⁶⁹ Such existing economic activity may be a reason why employment rates did not dramatically improve as a result of AWT (Blaxland, 2008: 204-5).¹⁷⁰

Alexander et al (2005) examined the effects of AWT on parents and their children and reported overwhelmingly positive responses to the participation requirements. In most cases the stress and time pressures reported by participants at the beginning dissipated over time and were outweighed by positive impacts on confidence, self-esteem, social connectedness and anticipated or actual financial benefits (p.62). There were no significant increases in behavioural or relationship problems amongst children, predominantly because most parents ensured adequate supervision whilst they were participating in activities, and positive effects on parent-child relationships outweighed the negatives (p.60). These positive effects were reinforced by the children, who took on increased responsibility within the household and respected their parent's working role. In most cases parents were more involved in homework, facilitated by the new skills they had acquired through their activities and a link was made between parents acting as positive role models and children's performance at school (p.59). The evaluation also highlighted the benefits for both parents and children where activities allowed parents to be more involved in their children's lives,

¹⁶⁸ The evaluations utilised the Trans-theoretical Model of Behavioural Change to examine change in attitudes and intentions. See Social Research Centre (2005a) Personal Adviser evaluation research customer survey wave 1. Research report final. Canberra, DEWR. Page 47-8.

¹⁶⁹ For some participants, participation was also for considerably longer than the requirements stipulated. Alexander, M., Baxter, J., Hughes, J. & Renda, J. (2005) *Evaluation of the impact of activity requirements for Parenting Payment customers on their children aged 13-15 years*, Melbourne, Australian Institute for Family Studies. Page 16.

¹⁷⁰ See Table A4.7 in Appendix 4 for the list of activities being undertaken at the time of the PA interview.

such as through paid or voluntary work at their children’s school (p.59). However, lack of involvement with children’s lives was a particular issue for parents with health problems of their own or with other caring responsibilities (p. 59).

Table 4.17 highlights the types of employment assistance in which partnered parents under Welfare to Work in Australia participated, along with the corresponding job outcomes.

Table 4.17: Participation in Australian Job Network and outcomes for partnered parents with youngest child aged 6-15

Job Network services	% of parents participating	% employed full- or part-time three months after existing employment assistance
Job search support	71.1	45.5
Intensive support job search training	15.6	39.1
Intensive support customised assistance		
First round	8.3	37.9
Second round	0.3	n/a
Employment Preparation	4.7	46.8

Source: Department for Education Employment and Workplace Relations, 2010: 45-6

Although parents found the assistance helpful, many suggested that they required more individualised services and consideration of their caring responsibilities, particularly in relation to suitable jobs available in the local labour market (Department for Education Employment and Workplace Relations, 2010: 46). That the reforms did not adequately take into account the circumstances of parents is examined further in subsequent chapters. Take-up of Employment Preparation by parents was in the following forms: training (63 per cent), clothing and equipment (17 per cent) and other assistance such as transport costs and employer incentives (Department for Education Employment and Workplace Relations, 2010: 47). The Jobseeker Training Account was used for courses in IT (24 per cent), hospitality (17 per cent), first aid (14

per cent) and office administration (11 per cent) (Department for Education Employment and Workplace Relations, 2010: 47-8).

This section has reviewed evaluation evidence relating to the programmes examined in each of the countries. In Britain NDP has had low participation rates and has predominantly assisted partnered women closest to the labour market. Australians Working Together appeared to be effective in increasing partnered women's engagement with the labour market, by building on activities already being undertaken as well as by offering further assistance. There were recognised benefits for mothers and their children through this level of engagement. Welfare to Work resulted in decreased claims for benefit, increased earnings with part income support payment, as well as exits from income support. However, it is not possible to ascertain whether exit from income support was due to a partner's own earnings, or whether the effects were partly due to the threat effect of the policy. The 300 hours rule is considered a success by the Danish government, presented in terms of a link between the loss of benefit, or threat of it, and movement into work. Further, that many recipients looking after the home lost their benefit is seen as a policy success resulting from testing their availability for work.

4.5 *Summary*

This chapter has examined the policy problem, responses and effects of partnered women outside the labour market in Britain, Australia and Denmark. Section 4.2 demonstrated that there is a shared ideology as a basis for policy learning in terms of the policy goal of increasing the employment rates and decreasing benefit receipt of target groups as they are variously constituted in the three countries. Section 4.2.2 highlighted the structural and normative constraints on working common to partnered women across the three countries, such as lack of educational qualifications

and recent work experience, ill health and in the British and Australian cases on particular in relation to both structural and normative constraints in relation to childcare. Section 4.3 set out the policy responses, which have increased conditionality for partnered women in each of the countries. Section 4.4 examined the perceived success of the policies, which has predominantly been in reducing the number of income support recipients and with some success in moving partnered women into work. The following three chapters examine the similarities and differences of the policy contexts of the three countries in more detail, using the four sub-dimensions of recalibration: Chapter Five discusses *functional* and *distributive*, Chapter Six considers *normative* and in Chapter Seven *politico-institutional* recalibration informs consideration of policy translation to Britain.

Chapter Five - The function of the welfare state in relation to partnered women as a social group

5.1 Introduction

This chapter begins the interview analysis by examining aspects relating to functional and distributive recalibration. Functional recalibration concerns changes in the function of the welfare state in relation to social risks - in relation to partnered women outside the labour market these functions are social security, employment assistance and childcare. Distributive recalibration involves changes in the distribution of benefits (and also activation) for partnered women as a social group within the three welfare states in response to the changing social risks articulated in the functional sub-dimension. Drawing on Sainsbury (1996), Section 5.2 considers partnered women's access to benefits as an important precondition for activation. It is argued that access to benefits for partnered women demonstrates policy change in relation to their conceptualisation as workers, rather than as dependent wives/partners or mothers. This re-conceptualisation operates on a number of levels and, importantly, is underpinned by normative recalibration, considered in Chapter Six. Section 5.3 compares the social contracts in the three countries as a reflection of the functional recalibration of welfare states from social security to workfare states and in relation to Serrano Pascual's (2007) notion of *quid pro quo*. Section 5.4 compares the targeted and encompassing policy responses in the three countries. It discusses how categorisation as a form of selectivity in income support systems in Australia and Britain translates into targeted labour market policies for sub-groups of partnered women. In Denmark encompassing activation is supported by employment assistance tailored to the individual, but the 300 hours rule introduces targeted *withdrawal* of support for a specific group. Individualised employment assistance is also a feature of Australian labour market policy but the section considers how treating partnered women as standard jobseekers has underplayed their difficulties in accessing paid work arising

from their status as carers. For both Australia and Denmark the section discusses how far policy actors perceived such individualisation had been achieved in practice. Finally, returning to functional recalibration, Section 5.5 discusses the provision of childcare in each country as a reflection of the function of the welfare state (functional recalibration). It is argued that childcare is a crucial foundation for activation policies in all three countries and an important aspect of policy learning for Britain. Section 5.6 concludes the chapter with a summary.

5.2 *Access to benefits for partnered women*

This section considers access to benefits in relation to the changing function of the welfare state in response to perceived social risks. As described in Chapter Two, 'old' social risks in the 20th Century included poverty, unemployment and illness and in Australia and Britain such risks were linked with the response of the welfare state to the male breadwinner's incapacity to earn a family wage. By contrast, in Denmark the male breadwinner model was dominant for only a short period in the 1950s (Borchost, 2006); since the 1970s women have been viewed predominantly as paid workers rather than mothers (Stoltz, 1997). In Britain and Australia partnered women outside the labour market have thus been increasingly viewed as a 'newer' social risk. This is partly linked with the decrease in male employment in the industrial sectors and the increase in jobs in the service sectors. The latter has mostly benefited women, some of whom have taken up such work as part-time workers to supplement a full-time male wage (one-and-a-half earner model), or to replace it. However, as Chapter Four showed, in the context of male unemployment, it is sometimes the case that partnered women become discouraged, rather than encouraged workers.

The interviews with policy actors highlighted that, in order to understand the policy contexts in Australia and Denmark, it was necessary to examine the bases of entitlement and eligibility to benefit (Sainsbury, 1996), as these link to the activation

policies. Sainsbury argues that women's entitlements to benefits are on the basis of their status as 'wives' (and partners), 'mothers' (or 'caregivers') and 'workers' and on their eligibility in terms of need, labour market status and citizenship (p.130). As Chapter Four demonstrated, for partnered women their statuses as 'caregivers' and 'mothers' are important constraints on paid work. The status of 'disabled' has also been added to Sainsbury's typology to reflect the increasing number of partnered women who are recipients of sickness or disability benefit (Beatty et al., 2010). The welfare state is a site of stratification in terms of gender; men and women have different relationships to the welfare state and, indeed, the welfare state may treat them differently. However, as will be argued, all three countries in this research increasingly treat partnered women as having a degree of parity with men as workers, rather than as mothers and this change has been particularly significant in Britain and Australia. The re-conceptualisation of partnered women's roles as workers, rather than as dependent wives/partners or mothers in society (the labour market, family, nation) suggested by the policies is underpinned by normative considerations (discussed further in Chapter Six).

Britain and Australia share a male breadwinner foundation for their respective social security systems. In Britain partnered women not entitled to contributory benefits have historically received 'passive compensation' through derived access as dependent wives/partners of a main claimant. This was also the case in Australia, although as there are no contributory benefits this applied to all partnered women linked into the income support system through the unemployment status of their partner. In Australia *Working Nation* changed the basis of entitlement to benefits for partnered women from wives/partners to mothers/workers. It will be argued that this was a significant shift in recognising them in the benefits system in their own right, as well as on the basis of the 'principle of care' (Sainsbury, 1996) for children. This change in the basis of entitlements is also a feature of continuing British welfare recalibration in relation to partnered women. This recalibration of the function of social security is

closely linked with activation policies. In Australia it was a precursor to the extension of activation to partnered women who had no existing connection with the public employment service, but in Britain this has worked the other way around. The legacy of the male breadwinner foundation of benefits has persisted throughout attempts since the introduction of the New Deal for Partners in 1999 to encourage partnered women into work through the extension of voluntary activation policies and increasing conditionality in the form of Work-Focused Interviews. In Denmark partnered women already had access to benefits as well as activation in their own right and have been conceptualised in policymaking as workers. The 300 hours rule in effect withdrew support in the form of benefits and activation for a sub-group of married women by testing their availability for work and thus their eligibility for benefit.

5.2.1 *Britain*

In the post-war British welfare state Beveridge did not envisage a key role for means testing, but this element has gradually become a more important feature. This was predominantly a result of Conservative reforms in the 1980s which were continued by New Labour and have led to an erosion of the importance of the basis of national insurance and 'the contributory principle' (Williams, 2009). However, given women's greater likelihood of interrupted working lives following childbirth, means tested benefits have the potential to be more gender-equalising than contributory benefits. Benefits may be paid to partnered women on the 'principle of care' of adults or children, but this may lead to a 'gendered dualism' (Sainsbury, 1996: 223) in benefit receipt, whereby men receive contributory benefits and women receive means tested benefits. In Sainsbury's analysis, entitlement on the basis of the principle of care is not necessarily negative, but it does have the potential for a locking-out effect in relation to access to paid work, which labour market policies attempt to overcome. Table 5.1 sets

out the bases of entitlement and eligibility for benefits for partnered women in the three countries and these are described further below.

Table 5.1: Bases of entitlement and eligibility for benefits for partnered women in Britain, Australia and Denmark

Country	Entitlement wife/partner, mother, caregiver, worker, disabled	Eligibility need, labour market status (LMS), citizenship
<i>Denmark</i> Unemployment benefit Cash-benefits	Worker Worker	LMS LMS/Need
<i>Australia</i> Parenting Payment Partnered Newstart Allowance (Principal Carer) Carer Payment Carer Allowance	Mother Worker/Mother Caregiver Caregiver	Need LMS/Need Need Citizenship
<i>UK</i> <i>pre-Welfare Reform Act 2009</i> Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) JSA (Joint Claim) Income Support Incapacity Benefit/Employment and Support Allowance Carers Allowance	Wife/Partner Worker Wife/Partner Wife/Partner/Disabled Caregiver	LMS/Need LMS/Need Need LMS/Need Need
<i>post-Welfare Reform Act</i> Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) Income Support ¹⁷¹ Employment and Support Allowance Carers Allowance	Worker Wife/Partner Worker/Disabled Caregiver	LMS/Need Need LMS/Need Need

Based on Sainsbury, 1996

In Britain in relation to partnered women there are both individualised contribution-based and non-means tested benefits, and means tested benefits based on a derived

¹⁷¹ For those with children aged under five.

access model of a main benefit claimant with supplements for dependent partners. A summary of the range of benefits is at Appendix 3. In 2001 the New Deal for Partners was extended from partners of Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) recipients to partners of main claimants of: Income Support, Incapacity Benefit, Invalid Care Allowance (now Carers Allowance) or Severe Disablement Allowance (SDA). All of these benefits except SDA are represented in Table 5.1¹⁷²

JSA is split into two types: contribution-based and income-based. Both contribution-based JSA¹⁷³ and Incapacity Benefit (IB) (which in 2008 was replaced by Employment and Support Allowance - ESA)¹⁷⁴ are non-means tested benefits based on individual National Insurance (NI) contributions. Contribution-based JSA¹⁷⁵ is limited to six months, after which income-based JSA may be claimed if the person is still unemployed. As discussed in Chapter Four, unemployed partners without children have formerly claimed JSA as a Joint Claim and have not been eligible for the New Deal for Partners. ESA is split into contribution-based and income-based elements. In Britain, unlike in Denmark or Australia, means testing is on the basis of household income and savings, but not assets (such as houses). ESA recipients are assessed as being in either the Support or Work-Related Activity Groups,¹⁷⁶ therefore in terms of the bases of entitlement, these two strands are considered in this analysis to have either 'worker' or 'disabled' as the bases of entitlement and labour market status or need as the bases of eligibility.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷² SDA was closed to new claims in 2001.

¹⁷³ This is not affected by savings, as with income-based JSA, but the amount received may be affected by any part-time earnings or occupational or personal pensions.

¹⁷⁴ Except for a small number of post-2001 recipients with significant pension income. Those who have insufficient NI credits to qualify for IB may receive means-tested Income Support with a disability premium. Beatty, C., Fothergill, S., Houston, D., Powell, R. & Sissons, P. (2010) *Women on Incapacity Benefits*, Sheffield, Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research. Page 13.

¹⁷⁵ The Welfare Reform Act 2009 changed the rules relating to contribution-based JSA and ESA, requiring NI contributions of 26 weeks in the past two tax years.

¹⁷⁶ The Coalition government intends that Pathways to Work will be replaced by the Work Programme but so far plans appear to reflect these two groupings established by the Labour government.

¹⁷⁷ Those in the Work-related Group are required to undertake activities to move them closer to the labour market, but for those in the Support Group such activities are voluntary.

The British social security system in relation to partnered women has its origins in the Beveridgean National Insurance scheme which allowed married women to opt out of paying full national insurance contributions and instead rely on their husband's contributions, forfeiting the claim to benefits in their own right (Sainsbury, 1996: 55). This option was widely used (Land, 1985: 56-7) until its abolition following the Social Security Pensions Act 1975.¹⁷⁸ Although since 1990 income tax has been individualised, the unit of assessment for both means-tested benefits and tax credits is the family.¹⁷⁹ Bennett (2005) argues that "There is a tension between the focus on the individual in labour market strategies and the focus on the family in benefits reforms" (p.xi). Until 1983 only husbands could apply for means tested assistance; now, either partner may apply for the benefit, but in most couples the main claimant is male (Department for Work and Pensions, 2004). It may appear logical in cases where the man has been the principal wage-earner and the woman the home-carer for the male partner to become the main benefit claimant although this depends to some extent on the reason for claiming and the benefit claimed. However, a benefit system which has some benefits based on derived access (as the British one has historically) implicitly assumes, perhaps wrongly, that all adults in the family have equal access to household income. Furthermore, such a model of derived access may reinforce any family breadwinner models which already exist. As a result, individualised benefit systems are seen as being more gender equalising in terms of women's access to income (Michel et al., 2001, Esping-Andersen, 1999).

Following implementation of the Welfare Reform Act 2009 (HM Government, 2009b) partners will be required to claim benefit in their own right and participate in the relevant benefit regime (JSA or ESA), with accompanying sanctions such as loss of benefit for those who do not meet the requirements. The function of benefits in this

¹⁷⁸ Women already using the option could continue to do so.

¹⁷⁹ This contradiction was noted by Martin Taylor, who authored a report on incentives which preceded the introduction of NDPU and Joint Claims. Taylor, M. (1998) *Review of the tax and benefit System: the modernisation of Britain's tax and benefit system, Number 2*, London, HM Treasury.

respect represents a shift from ‘passive compensation’ for dependent partners to a reciprocal aspect of the social contract of activation, discussed further in Section 5.3. The basis of entitlement for partnered women will be as ‘workers’ for both JSA recipients and for those ESA recipients deemed capable of paid work. This removal of the concept of a dependent partner and increased conditionality has similarities with the partial individualisation changes following *Working Nation* in Australia.

5.2.2 *Australia*

Australia does not have any contributory benefits apart from superannuation and this is the principal reason for the predominance of means-testing.¹⁸⁰ Since 1910 the Australian welfare state has been funded from general taxation and can be conceptualised as having a distinctive ‘targeted safety net approach’ (Bessant et al., 2006: 89) based on means testing. In Australia the principal relevant benefits for partnered women are: the unemployment benefit Newstart Allowance (NSA), Parenting Payment (Partnered and Single), Carer’s Allowance (CA)¹⁸¹ and Carer Payment (CP).¹⁸² A summary of the range of benefits is at Appendix 4. Prior to the *Working Nation* (WN) (Australian Government, 1994) changes there were three types of dependency-based payments: Job Search Allowance, Newstart Allowance (NSA) and Sickness Allowance. As described in Chapter Four, the key change following WN for partnered women not in paid work was that they were required to claim benefit in their own right, rather than as a dependent. A report at the time stated that “marital status is no longer a significant limiting factor in women’s labour force participation.

¹⁸⁰ Australia’s welfare state was not based on the universal social insurance principles that were a feature of either the British or Danish welfare states. Attempts to introduce such systems in the 1920s and 1930s failed, predominantly as a result of trade union opposition.

¹⁸¹ Carer Allowance is a supplementary payment paid to people who provide daily care at home to someone with a disability, a severe medical condition or who is frail aged. It is not taxed or income and assets tested.

¹⁸² Carer Payment is an asset and income tested income support payment for those unable to participate in the workforce full-time because of their caring responsibilities. In the 2009-210 Budget the Australian Government announced that it will provide \$1.8 billion over five years (including \$384.8 million in 2008-09) to improve assistance to carers through the introduction of a new carer supplement, in recognition of the contribution carers make in caring for people with disabilities and the frail aged.

Rather, it is the presence and more particularly the age of dependent children” (Douglas et al., 1993: i). This latter aspect formed the basis for the introduction of Parenting Payment (PP) for partnered or single parents who were not in work or were on a low income, a benefit based on the principle of care for a child. Changes to eligibility and entitlement for this payment have been the focus of activation to move parents, both single and partnered, into paid work. In Australia although benefits are partially individualised and individuals claim benefits in their own right, one disadvantage of PP is that only one member of a couple is designated as the ‘principal carer’, which does not allow for the possibility of shared care and reinforces the gendered role of one person (usually the woman) as a carer.¹⁸³

The next significant change for partnered women was *Australians Working Together* (AWT) (Australian Government, 2003). Before this was introduced, low-income partnered women could claim income support in the form of Parenting Payment until their children were 16, without reciprocal requirements. AWT introduced a set of requirements (see Chapter Four, Section 4.3.2) for those with a child aged over six to attend an annual interview similar to the WFIP required of partners in Britain. Parents with children aged between 13 and 15 were required to attend an annual interview, develop a Participation Agreement and participate in activities for up to 150 hours in each consecutive 26 week period. These requirements were extended further by *Welfare to Work* (WTW) (Australian Government, 2005b). This change meant that partnered mothers’ entitlement to PP ended when their youngest child reached the age of six,¹⁸⁴ at which point they were required to claim NSA as a principal carer but also as a worker and to search for or take up paid work of at least 15 hours per week, plus Mutual Obligation activities (see Section 5.3.2). Sanctions such as loss of benefit are applied to those who do not comply with the requirements. This involved a

¹⁸³ Principal carers are generally the mother or father of a child, however they can also be a foster carer, grandparent or other person with legal guardianship.

¹⁸⁴ PPs recipients must fulfil paid work or work search obligations, but are not moved onto NSA until their youngest child is aged eight.

redefinition of capacity for work and of mothers' entitlement to benefit as both workers and mothers, with increasingly more emphasis on 'worker'. Changes to the requirements for partnered recipients of PP reflect functional recalibration in that the function of social security for this group has been to provide income for the period during which their capacity for paid work is reduced due to caring for children. Changes in this respect in both Britain and Australia reflect the expectation that mothers on income support are increasingly expected to seek work when their youngest children reach school age. The requirement to search for part-time work in Australia took into account partial incapacity for work resulting from caring roles, although how far this was implemented in practice is discussed further in Section 5.3.2. Although these are all reflections of functional recalibration, they are normatively underpinned in relation to the conceptualisation of partnered women as workers, rather than as wives/partners or mothers.

5.2.3 Denmark

In Denmark there are two types of unemployment benefit: unemployment benefit for insured people (*dagpenge*)¹⁸⁵ is individualised and non-means tested and cash-benefit (social assistance) for those without sufficient insurance is means-tested on the basis of both income and assets. Unlike unemployment benefit, social assistance is not time-limited, but the 300 hours rule has effectively limited its duration for a sub-group of married recipients. The 300 hours rule must be viewed in the context of other related policies relating to immigrants.¹⁸⁶ For example, the 2002 law on immigration introduced 'Start Help' (*Starthjælp*), a benefit paid at a lower rate¹⁸⁷ for immigrants

¹⁸⁵ The maximum level of compensation is 90 per cent of previous income for those with lower earnings, but the average replacement rate is 63 per cent. See Kvist, J., Pedersen, L. & Köhler, P. A. (2008) Making all persons work: modern Danish labour market policies, in Eichhorst, W., Kaufmann, O. & Konle-Seidl, R. (Eds.) *Bringing the jobless into work? Experiences with activation schemes in Europe and the US*. Berlin, Springer, 221-256. Page 235.

¹⁸⁶ On establishing the Venstre-Det Konservative Folkeparti (Liberal-Conservative) coalition in 2001, as well as creating the Ministry of Employment, the new government created the Ministry of Refugee, Immigration and Integration Affairs, reflecting its focus on the integration of immigrants.

¹⁸⁷ Around 35 to 50 per cent of usual benefit rate.

than for other recipients. From this date, only people who had lived in Denmark for at least seven out of the preceding eight years were entitled to cash-benefit. Ostensibly, this applies to Danes who have lived outside Denmark, but the principal target of the policy was immigrants.¹⁸⁸ Danish social security is predicated on the individual, deriving from reforms in 1933 which changed the basis of entitlement from discretion based on charity to the notion of the individual with rights as a citizen (Greve, 2005: 36). Although the emphasis is on individual entitlements and citizenship rights for all (Millar, 1999: 34), more recent policies emphasising citizenship/residence have restricted access to social security for immigrants, highlighting Williams' claim (1995) that "access to benefits differs according to gender, race, or migrant status" (p.131).

In Britain and Australia there is parity of treatment of both married and cohabiting partners, but this is not the case in Denmark - an aspect particularly relevant to the 300 hours rule. There is arguably a marriage penalty for couples on cash-benefit¹⁸⁹ so it is not quite true that "universalism has neutralised the influence of marriage on social rights" (Borchorst, 2002: 269). The Social Assistance Law states that: "Every man and woman has responsibility to look after themselves and their married spouse and their children under 18 years and that responsibility only stops when you are separated or divorced."¹⁹⁰ Although the income of cohabiting couples is still assessed on the basis of the household, it is specifically married couples who have an enshrined responsibility to support each other financially before recourse to the state, as one government

¹⁸⁸ There is also an Introduction Allowance (*Introduktionsydelse*) for immigrants taking part in an Introduction Programme. This programme aims to help to integrate immigrants and their descendants into Danish society, for example through the provision of Language Centres for Danish language learning. It is only after this three-year programme is completed that they are placed in a match group and are under the Law on an Active Social Policy, which legislates for activation interventions.

¹⁸⁹ The SFI evaluation suggested that a small number (seven per cent in total of those denied cash-benefit and not denied) said that they had considered divorce in response to the letter from the local authority about potential loss of benefit, which would not have applied had they not been married. See Bach, H. B. & Larsen, B. (2008) *300-timers-reglen. Betydningen af 300-timers-reglen for gifte kontanthjælps-modtagere [The significance of the 300 hours rule for married social assistance recipients] (translated for the purposes of this research by S.S. Nielsen)*, Copenhagen, Det Nationale Forskningscenter for Velfærd (SFI).

¹⁹⁰ Translated by government official during interview.

official stated: "If you are married, then you are obliged to look after and support your married partner and that's a part of Danish legislation."

The dependent spouse supplement (introduced in 2002 and abolished following the 300 hours rule) has similarities with the main claimant/dependent spouse (derived access) model in Britain and Australia before partial individualisation. On this basis, married women could claim entitlement to benefit as wives. One Danish academic interviewed suggested that the spouse supplement was anomalous to the Danish model, although this was presented by the government as a rationale for the introduction of the 300 hours rule. It was seen as anomalous to Danish activation as it was seen to implicitly accept that the dependent spouse was not available for work, which undermined the rationale of 'all must be active' (Rosdahl and Weise, 2001) under the encompassing activation regime.

The parliamentary proposal which changed the 300 hour requirement to 450 hours stated: "Couples can decide to let one partner stay at home but it should not be on the state's expenses. With the right to cash benefits follows the duty to be of service to the labour market" (Ardejdsdirektoratet, 2009). This expectation was supported by all of the interviewees, as one government official commented: "We accept if you want to be a housewife, it's your choice, but then you and your family have to pay for it yourselves. It's not our job to pay if you want to be a housewife." Another government official stated that: "In the UK being a mother entitles you to benefit, but in Denmark you can't do that. You can have it for a certain period of time when the children are small, but then you are on the same rules as everyone else."

Motherhood per se does not automatically translate into benefit entitlement in Britain or Australia because it is linked with eligibility on the basis of need, although motherhood is in particular linked with benefit receipt for lone parents, particularly in Britain. However, this quote highlights the point that in Australia and Britain

motherhood has been linked with incapacity for work. This is not the case in Denmark, where everyone who wishes to claim either unemployment benefit or cash-benefit does so on the bases of entitlement as 'workers,' with eligibility being labour market status for unemployment benefit and labour market status/need for cash-benefit. In terms of functional recalibration, the 300 hours rule in effect withdrew support in the form of benefits and activation for a sub-group of married women by testing their availability for work and thus their eligibility for benefit by requiring them to accrue 300 hours of paid work in a one year period; the spouse who did not have 300 hours of paid work lost their benefit entitlement. In contrast to Britain and Australia, in Denmark caring for a young child does not result in exemption from activation and such exemptions are being gradually curtailed in Australia and Britain. The case of carers is more complex: in Australia and Britain carers of adults as a group of benefit recipients are still exempted from activation, but this is not the case in Denmark under encompassing activation. As will be argued in Section 5.5, the provision of alternative care (for children and adults) is a crucial aspect of changing eligibility for benefits and increasing conditionality for partnered women in all three countries. Such provision is an important underpinning of activation in Denmark, is to some extent an established foundation in Australia, but is comparatively less institutionalised in Britain.

Ferrera et al (2000) suggest that women are key to functional recalibration for two reasons. Firstly, in terms of the welfare state revenues generated by high female labour market participation. Secondly, population, family, labour market changes, higher rates of female employment, modifications to the male breadwinner model and traditional gender relations challenge the 'goodness of fit' between the welfare state and an evolving socio-economic reality (p.72). The male breadwinner foundation of the British and Australian welfare states is important to partnered women's historical access to benefits as dependents. Changing the basis of entitlement to benefits for partnered women from wives/partners to mothers/workers in Australia was a

significant shift in recognising them in the benefits system in their own right, as well as on the principle of care. This reflects functional recalibration in representing a shift from social security as 'passive compensation' to 'activation'. In Britain the legacy of the male breadwinner foundation of benefits has persisted throughout attempts since 1999 to encourage partnered women into work through activation policies, but the Welfare Reform Act 2009 has introduced partial individualisation of benefits for partnered women, which has some similarities with the changes introduced by *Working Nation* in Australia. In Denmark the period of the male breadwinner/housewife was short-lived and that women are predominantly viewed as workers, including in active labour market policies, is a significant difference between Denmark and Britain and Australia. However, as will be discussed further in Chapter Six, the 'goodness of fit' between the welfare state and an evolving socio-economic reality relates to how partnered women's roles are constructed and whether and how policies fit with socio-economic changes in their own lives.

5.3 *From welfare to workfare: three social contracts*

Since the 1990s in each of the three countries there has been an institutional shift from welfare to workfare states. Workfare involves "the imposition of a range of compulsory programmes and mandatory requirements for welfare recipients with a view to *enforcing work whilst residualising welfare*" (Peck, 2001: 10, italics in original). In this process of re-commodification alternatives to labour market participation are restricted, either by tightening eligibility or by cutting benefits (Pierson, 2001a: 422). Commonality can be seen across all three countries in limiting the duration of benefit claims, increasing conditionality for partnered women and the imposition of penalties for non-compliance. Peck argues that the shift to workfare states involves a move from welfare states based on need and universality to workfare states based on selectivity and market-based compulsion (Peck, 2001: 12). As the previous section has demonstrated and subsequent sections intend to further elaborate, the transformation

is more complex than this for partnered women. Need in relation to income support is articulated according to different constructions of entitlement and eligibility and it is important not to overstate the 'universality' of the British welfare state in particular in relation to benefits for wives and mothers (the issue of selectivity in benefits and activation policies is examined further in Section 5.4 in relation to distributive recalibration). It will be argued that the changes in entitlement and eligibility for benefit in each of the countries examined in the previous section are closely related to the recalibration of the function of these welfare states from providers of social protection to workfare states. This section examines this shift as articulated through the social contracts for welfare in the three countries. As Chapter Two discussed, Serrano Pascual (2007) identifies five types of activation regime based on two aspects. The first aspect is the modes of managing individuals and within this the two extremes of: (i) the moral-therapeutic management of behaviour, and (ii) adaptive skills management (these aspects are discussed in Chapter Six). The second aspect is a 'new social contract', which is the focus of this section. Within this contract are the two elements of: (i) the *quid pro quo*¹⁹¹ between unemployed people and the State and the duties of the state and the rights and duties of the individual; and (ii) the balance, or imbalance between the two (p.294). Here, they are considered in relation to increased obligations in return for receipt of benefit. These social contracts have both Rousseauian (1998) and Hobbesian (1998) elements. Rousseauian in that they have moral aspects and, in emphasising the individual's responsibility to the rest of society, or the 'general will' (Rousseau, 1998: I, 6), they recognise the societal dimension crucial to Rousseau's social contract. The notion of *quid pro quo* also recognises the 'credits and debits' (Rousseau, 1998: I, 8) which are part of a Rousseauian contract and Serrano Pascual highlights the balance or imbalance between these. The Hobbesian aspect is visible in the government's role in enforcing these contracts through legislation and monitoring of compliance by frontline policy actors.

¹⁹¹ Latin meaning 'something for something' but as Goodin argues, there can be asymmetries within this supposed reciprocity. See Goodin, R. (2002) Structures of mutual obligation. *Journal of Social Policy*, 31(4):579-596.

5.3.1 *British 'rights and responsibilities'*

In Britain, 'rights and responsibilities' was part of the Blairite policy agenda, ranging from welfare reform to justice.¹⁹² This was influenced both by the Commission on Social Justice Report (1994, see also Bennett and Millar, 2009) produced before Labour took office, as well as by the work of Giddens (1998: 65). In the area of welfare reform, this began with the first welfare Green Paper in 1998 (Department for Social Security, 1998): "At the heart of the modern welfare state will be a new contract between the citizen and the Government, based on responsibilities and rights" (p.80). This social contract has been presented as a return to the 'first principles' of the post-war welfare state (Purnell, 2008: 97, Driver and Martell, 2006). However, it also underpinned the shift from passive to active labour market policies, begun with the introduction of Jobseeker's Allowance in 1996. Subsequent welfare reforms have drawn on a distinction between the requirements for work-readiness attached to Jobseeker's Allowance and the relative absence of requirements for other benefits. However, in the case of partners, it has been ideologically problematic that, prior to the Welfare Reform Act, many partners were not been claiming benefits in their own right, but at the same time were targeted by a policy to increase their labour market participation. Although the requirement was comparatively minimal, this conditionality has nevertheless been asymmetrical. Although NDP treats non-working partnered women as if they have an independent relationship to the labour market, their participation in the programme depends upon the employment (or rather, unemployment) status of their partners (Lewis, 2001: 162). In this way WFIPs have involved more duties than rights, although this has been balanced to an extent by the range of support offered by NDP, despite its limitations. However, it is problematic that both members of a couple may be sanctioned for the partner's non-participation and this couple-based sanctioning will continue even when partners claim benefit in their own right.

¹⁹² Critical to New Labour's focus on rights and responsibilities in the area of welfare was the influence of Clinton's New Democrats in the US and specifically the work of David Ellwood (adviser to President Clinton). See Driver, S. & Martell, L. (2006) *New Labour (2nd edition)*, Cambridge, Polity.

5.3.2 Australian 'Mutual Obligation'

The 'active line' in Australian labour market policies began with the Social Security Review of 1986-89 (Cass, 1988), from which followed tougher means testing and a new activity test. Working Nation introduced 'Reciprocal Obligation' in relation to unemployment benefit recipients and in 1996 the Howard government introduced the requirement for income support recipients to fulfill their 'Mutual Obligation'¹⁹³ to society in return for benefits. The McClure report (2000a) which preceded both AWT and WTW recommended the extension of Mutual Obligation to parents: "The whole of the society has an obligation to provide assistance to those most in need. Similarly those who receive assistance and opportunities through the social support system have a responsibility to themselves and the rest of society to seek to take advantage of such opportunities" (pp.34, 40). The Australian interviewees had mixed views about 'Mutual Obligation'. Some were against any form of compulsion, but others were supportive of conditionality, although all non-governmental actors criticised the WTW reforms, considering the quantitative requirement for paid work to be too tough, as one campaigning organisation suggested: "We supported activation but we were concerned about the way the previous [Liberal-National Howard] government was going about it and we were concerned about the profile of this group."

The number of hours of paid work required under Welfare to Work was more demanding than those required by the 300 hours rule: 15 hours per week (or 30 hours per fortnight) in Australia, compared with three hours per week, or three months' full-time work in Denmark.¹⁹⁴ One Australian campaigning organisation commented that: "In Australia participation requirements are very arbitrary" and, as with the 300 hours

¹⁹³ Mutual Obligation activities include job search, training, Work for the Dole or a work experience activity. The concept of 'Mutual Obligation' has been critiqued in philosophical terms. For example Goodin has suggested alternative models along the three dimensions of conditionality, temporality (time) and currency (mode). See Goodin, R. (2002) Structures of mutual obligation. *Journal of Social Policy*, 31(4):579-596, Goodin, R. (2001) False principles of welfare reform. *Australian Journal of Social Issues*, 36(3):189-205.

¹⁹⁴ Five hours a week under the 450 hours rule.

requirement in Denmark, no analytical basis was cited for either of the quantitative requirements. WTW was accompanied by the Welfare to Work Contact Model, involving regular face-to-face interviews at Centrelink¹⁹⁵ offices to reinforce jobseekers' obligations and monitoring.¹⁹⁶ Furthermore, fortnightly reporting was a more onerous requirement than the six-monthly reporting under AWT. For employment service providers, the quantitative focus on a required number of hours could be difficult to manage: "It's as frustrating for the providers as it's terribly frustrating for the individuals."

In recommending the extension of Mutual Obligation to parents, McClure (2000a) emphasised "a broad concept of economic and social participation...[which] extends beyond the traditional focus on financial self-support and labour force status (employed, unemployed or not in the labour force) to recognise the value of the many other ways people can participate in society" (p.4). Further, McClure outlined the importance of 'capacity building,' explicitly recognising and supporting economic and social activities already being undertaken (p.41), arguing that the system would "need to be sensitive to parents' concerns about the welfare of their children" (p.42). However, the WTW requirements appeared to override policy learning from previous interventions concerning, firstly, the importance of building on activities already being undertaken and, secondly, being sensitive to childcare obligations (see Pearse, 2000: 105, Alexander et al., 2005, Coventry, 2000: 124). One campaigning organisation commented that: "The work requirements were imposed without much sensitivity to people's requirements."

¹⁹⁵ Centrelink is contracted by the Australian Government to assess claims, pay benefits and enforce compliance and is distinct from the employment assistance providers.

¹⁹⁶ The stipulation that parents with participation requirements attend Centrelink offices in person (rather than contact Centrelink by other methods, such as by telephone) on a fortnightly basis was later modified, as a number of organisations highlighted that this requirement was incompatible with both the 15-hour work test and with caring responsibilities.

In contrast to previous interventions for partnered women, WTW was a significant shift towards workfare (Blaxland, 2008: 197). For example, only short-term study of less than twelve months met participation requirements (Australian Government, 2007). Although parents could continue with studies already commenced, one employment service professional interviewed suggested that in some cases Centrelink asked parents to jettison training or education activities in favour of paid work. Although under AWT vocationally-oriented voluntary work had been permitted, under Welfare to Work voluntary work did not count towards the activity requirement, although under the discretion of employment services providers it could result in reduced job search requirements (Senate, 2005a: 151).¹⁹⁷ However, one campaigning organisation emphasised the importance of education and training for partners:

“Most partners of people on income support come from relatively disadvantaged backgrounds, probably over half have Year 10 education or less themselves, their partners similar...usually unable to break out of low-skill and casual employment into better paid, full-time or permanent employment because of their low educational level...It just underscores the importance of education and training for this group.”

Similarly, they went on to state that in particular couples aged in their 40s and 50s may lack labour market experience and have few qualifications:

“They may have done casual work, but never have really established themselves in the labour market...and some actually had capacities to study but just never had the opportunity, so that’s the group who would particularly benefit now from return to

¹⁹⁷ Approved activities included under AWT were: job search, a vocational or pre-vocational training course, training to help facilitate job search, paid work, measures designed to eliminate or reduce any disadvantage the person has in relation to obtaining work, voluntary participation in an approved program of work for income support payment, participation in a labour market program, a course of education, and other activities including voluntary work. See Commonwealth of Australia (2003) Family and Community Services Legislation Amendment (Australians Working Together and other 2001 Budget Measures) Act 2003. Canberra, Commonwealth of Australia.

study. They come back a decade later and actually do quite well, so if we can identify them and assist them in that way that's really what they need...Others may require some paid workforce experience so that they can get references, contacts and all of the other benefits of having been employed for a while."

The above quote highlights the different paths to work for different partnered women, but WTW focused on a single pathway in the form of a work first approach. Parents could refuse work if (i) no appropriate care was available for their child/ren; (ii) travel time to or from the person's home to the place of work (via the place of childcare) exceeded 60 minutes; (iii) the cost of travel to and from work exceeded 10 per cent of the gross wage; or (iv) they were not at least \$50 per fortnight better off, compared to not working (National Welfare Rights Network, 2007). However, one academic suggested that there were some early cases of women being directed towards 'inappropriate' work under the broad concept of 'any suitable job' (Senate, 2008: 22). The 30 hours per fortnight requirement was too rigidly enforced, and did not allow women to take up decent work, but instead pushed them into unpredictable casual work which could not guarantee regular hours (Bodsworth, 2010: 50).¹⁹⁸ Such casual work often provided neither paid holidays nor other forms of leave, resulting in some parents working a greater numbers of hours across the year, although perversely refusing shifts for a period of time could potentially find them in breach of their activity requirements (Bodsworth, 2010: 50).

The focus on paid work overrode any other activities, regardless of whether they were part of a longer-term path potentially leading to sustained paid work (Bodsworth, 2010: 66). This went against evidence from PPIP which suggested that some PIP recipients were likely to be entrenched in disadvantage and require a longer-term

¹⁹⁸ Since the 1970s there has been a dramatic increase in part-time and casual work in Australia, particularly 'non-standard' forms of work. Australia also has the highest proportion of precariously employed workers in the world. See Bessant, J., Watts, R., Dalton, T. & Smyth, S. (2006) *Talking policy: how social policy is made*, Crows Nest, NSW, Allen and Unwin. Page 108.

perspective to encourage workforce participation (Cobb-Clark et al., 2006: 442). One former government official suggested that: “The Welfare to Work reforms could have been less focused on a work first approach and instead built on previous reforms”. An employment service professional commented that: “Most people thought that they were going to be better off and that going into work would be a good thing, but that the system would operate around them, rather than them having to fit the system.”

This criticism was partly related to the compliance regime¹⁹⁹ which was viewed as being too punitive.²⁰⁰ Interviews with employment service professionals also suggested that Centrelink staff also had a lack of discretion in allowing parents conditional exemptions for personal circumstances, such as domestic violence (see McInnes and Taylor, 2007). The reforms were viewed as reducing parents’ autonomy in making their own decisions about combining work and care and exacerbated difficulties they were already experiencing, such as ill health and stress (Blaxland, 2009, see also McInnes, 2006). The reforms did not sufficiently take account of caring responsibilities or non-work activities already being undertaken and overrode parents’ own job search efforts (see Blaxland, 2009, McInnes and Taylor, 2007). Under AWT the Activity Agreements which participants had to agree with employment service providers permitted a wider notion of activity, encompassing social as well as economic participation. However, in both functional and normative terms, WTW transformed the meaning of these agreements to a narrower focus on paid work.

The introduction of the new Job Services Australia contract from 1 July 2009 included the replacement of Activity Agreements with legally-binding Employment Pathway

¹⁹⁹ For recipients of both Parenting Payment and Newstart claimants, three ‘participation failures’ or a ‘serious participation failures’ could result in an eight-week suspension of their payment.

²⁰⁰ McInnes highlights a number of shortcomings of this regime, such as misinterpretation by Centrelink and providers. See McInnes, E. & Taylor, J. (2007) Single mothers’ struggles for survival in the Job Network system. *Our Work, Our Lives’ Conference*. Adelaide, 20-21 September 2007, McInnes, E. (2006) When unpaid care work doesn’t count: the commodification of family life in the new Welfare to Work order. *Road to where: the politics and practice of implementing Welfare to Work*. Brisbane, 17-18 July.

Plans (EPP). A number of interviewees highlighted the importance of a 'pathway' to work, building on the skills and experience partnered women already have; an aspect missing from the Australian reforms, but outlined in the British welfare reforms under the Labour government (Department for Work and Pensions, 2009b, Gregg, 2008). The Rudd Labor Government appeared to move away from an overtly workfarist approach in emphasising more human capital elements through its rhetoric of creating an 'education revolution' (Australian Labor Party, 2007) from the early years upwards.²⁰¹ In the area of labour market policy for partners, this shift towards a more human capital approach can be seen in the flexibilities introduced for parents to undertake part-time study or voluntary work with vocational value within the parameters set by Welfare to Work (Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations, 2009).²⁰²

Australian activation policies relating to partnered parents are illustrative of functional recalibration in responding to a group perceived by policymakers as remote from the labour market and who, as Section 5.4 of this chapter and Chapter Six will demonstrate, are considered 'welfare dependent'. Activation for partnered women in Australia is closely related to the function of social security. As discussed in Section 5.2, Working Nation brought such partners into the benefits and employment assistance systems and Australians Working Together began to recalibrate the function of PP as social security by increasing conditionality for this group. The interviews and documentary evidence suggest that the social contract enshrined in this reform built on activities partnered women were already undertaking and was predominantly focused on a longer-term pathway into work. However, the interviews pointed to Welfare to Work as embodying a more workfarist approach, with a focus on recording a specific number of hours of paid work or job search, rather than other avenues into work.

²⁰¹ This has similarities with the Blairite mantra of 'education, education, education'.

²⁰² Following the report of the Participation Review Taskforce - Australian Government (2008) *Participation Review Taskforce Report*, Barton, ACT. Commonwealth of Australia.

5.3.3 *The Danish 'right and duty' to activation*

In contrast to the Australian case, none of the Danish interviewees voiced objection to the notion of the 'right and duty' to activation. The Danish Constitution (*Grundlov*) was cited in a number of the interviews with policy actors as being of significance to activation. The Constitution states that:

- (1) In order to advance the public interest, efforts shall be made to guarantee work for every able-bodied citizen on terms that will secure his [sic] existence
- (2) Any person unable to support himself or his dependants shall, where no other person is responsible for his or their maintenance, be entitled to receive public assistance, provided that he shall comply with the obligations imposed by statute in such respect (Danish Constitution Section 75 paragraphs 1 and 2 cited in Kvist et al., 2008: 227)

The 1994 activation reforms introduced the concept of the 'right and duty' to activation. People have the right to work and to expect the state to help them to find work, but this is coupled with the obligation to become work-ready and to seek work. This was summarised by Danish social workers as follows: "It [activation] is a right and we have to explain why that is. That's the thing about this system. It's their right to learn Danish and it is their right to get support and we have so many things"²⁰³; "It's easy to say to people 'When you get money, you have to work, you have to be in activation'. Everybody can see some kind of fairness in that."

The right and duty introduced by the 1994 reforms was balanced by significant investment in employment services, brokered by the trade unions in order to gain their agreement to activation. This softened the workfarist potential of the 1990s

²⁰³ Unlike in Britain, in Denmark social workers have a role as frontline actors in Jobcenters, discussed further in Chapter Seven.

reforms and retained the focus on human capital development. The right and duty was viewed by the majority of interviewees to be reflective of the universal nature of the Danish welfare state based on a 'social contract' (*quid pro quo*), as one academic suggested: "The first trick is having everyone working and the second trick is having everyone benefiting because if everyone benefits everyone wants to contribute so we've got a high legitimacy of welfare provisions."

In terms of functional recalibration, Danish interviewees linked this with the 'ideology' of the Danish welfare state which, as one academic stated, is "about labour and work, so you couldn't have a welfare state like that if all members weren't working" (see Kvist and Pedersen, 2007: 100). Further, a social worker suggested that: "When you hear it again and again that people have to work and when they find out better ways to do it...I had no problem arguing to citizens who said 'Why should I do something?' because 'Everybody else is doing something, so it's not so strange that you are doing something also.'"

This highlights the importance of the encompassing nature of Danish activation, as well as the inequity of targeting via the 300 hours rule within this context. However, the following quote from a social worker illustrates that, although the interviews suggested consensus concerning the right and duty, at the time it was introduced this new policy was viewed as controversial and was in fact perceived as a different way of conceptualising the relationship of unemployed people with the state: "Many people have changed their opinion and most social workers now think that it's very fair and right that people have to do something to get back to work. It's accepted now but at first I also said 'Oh, that's slavery.'"

The introduction of Individual Action Plans (IAPs) in Denmark in 1994 was illustrative of both the right and duty, with both a focus on the needs of the labour market and the individual. However, it was argued by a number of commentators that many activities

were not tailored towards work, but focused too much on the social rights of the individual, as one academic commented: “For the first time ever the unemployed person was in power...but we confused that with reality. This was a nice instrument, but at the end of the day there were still only a few different pathways out of this action plan.” Another academic suggested: “In the mid-90s we had a huge discussion about different priorities between the different PES [public employment service] offices because some of them...you could really pick what kind of education you would like to have and you could get it, but in other PES offices it was much more difficult and there was a lot of press on this.”

Over time IAPs became less individualised and were replaced by Job Plans following the reform *More people into work* (Finansministeriet, 2002). With a dual focus on both the needs of the labour market and the aspirations of the individual, it could be argued that at one point or another, these needs may conflict and one has to take precedence over the other. The shift from IAPs to Job Plans may be viewed as reflective of a move away from a more human capital focus in Danish labour market policies. Table 5.2 below shows the population of women in the three countries with at least upper secondary education. Denmark exceeds both the OECD and EU averages in all age groups, but both Britain and Australia lag behind, particularly for older age groups.

Table 5.2: Females in population with at least upper secondary education, 2007

	25-64	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64
Australia	64	83	67	58	45
Denmark	74	86	82	68	60
United Kingdom	66	75	67	62	51
OECD average	69	80	74	64	52
EU19 average	70	83	76	66	53

Source: OECD, 2009a

A trade union interviewee highlighted that: “The Danish model is that people have to be well educated. The government mantra is the quickest way into employment. We think that people should be educated so that they can have jobs and be able to move

up.” That the Venstre government’s focus in labour market policies is on the quickest way into work was supported by interviews with government officials:

“The primary focus is on ‘job’ [sic]. If you can’t get a job then we’ll start looking at upgrading, but first and foremost a job. But of course it’s difficult if you don’t have the skills, then you shall have the skills first, but...If you focus on upgrading for everybody, you park them...if education should be a good idea, it should be very targeted into a concrete job.”

Similarly, an academic interviewee suggested that: “You couldn’t keep sending people into education at the same time as there were so many job openings, so this is also part of the story.” Opportunities to undertake training have been curtailed, with greater emphasis being placed on guidance (Larsen and Mailand, 2007). Nevertheless, the following quote from a Jobcenter employee suggests that implementation may differ in order to achieve sustainable job outcomes: “Sometimes you can discuss that perhaps you can get a person into work with unskilled work but if you perhaps get them a little more education perhaps they have more long-lasting work afterwards.”

In Denmark the requirement for benefit (both insured and uninsured) is availability for paid work. However, social workers and academics highlighted that the 300 hours rule goes beyond the normative foundations of activation in requiring recipients to not only be *available* for work, but to have accrued a certain number of hours of *paid work* in the ordinary labour market, as one social worker suggested: “The principle in labour market policies has always been that you are not obliged to have a job, but you are obliged to be available for a job. Only with this scheme you are not only obliged to be available, you are obliged to actually get a job. I think that’s a big difference.”

Social workers argued that existing policies were already achieving some success in assisting partnered women from ethnic minorities into work, but that change would

not be instant: “The tools we had before, if you used them right, if you had a really good offer for this woman that is a special package for her and you say ‘OK, you don’t have to be on the labour market full-time’ but she still says no and it is the husband who says no, before this law we could say they didn’t get any money. So we had the tools.”

In terms of policy learning, some actors argued that there was no requirement for legislation such as the 300 hours rule, for example one social worker stated: “It was a problem that too many women from ethnic minorities were not in the labour market and that’s a problem that’s been there for a long time, but I think we already worked on this and by debating and qualifying this debate by real information about what’s working and what’s not, you could have done all this without this law.”

In this sense, the 300 hours rule is an example of what Daguerre (2007: 83) refers to as a ‘negative activation strategy’ in which support is withdrawn and in this way it has similarities with the Australian Welfare to Work changes, which most interviewees said represented an unnecessary toughening of obligations, compared with the progressive approach of Australians Working Together. As implementation of the 300 hours rule and the local government reorganisation took place at the same time, there was also a conflict of priorities. The AKF evaluation (Jensen and Lauritzen, 2008: 2) of its implementation suggested that although local authorities were required to warn social assistance recipients about possible loss of benefit by 1 October 2006, many local authorities only came ‘up to speed’ with implementation of the rule after 1 January 2007. The capacity for policy actors to alter a policy through delivery may suggest a recalibration of policies at the level of implementation, an aspect considered further in Chapter Seven. It was highlighted by a number of interviewees that many local authorities were concerned to avoid people losing their benefit. To this end, during the six months before potential loss of benefit, around half of local authorities surveyed by

AKF intensified their efforts to move those at risk of losing their cash-benefit into work (Jensen and Lauritzen, 2008: 5-6).²⁰⁴

Danish activation mixes welfare and workfare requirements in a special way; “adjusted to service capitalism’s structural traits, institutional and organisational traditions and political norms” (Larsen and Mailand, 2007: 111). It is a unique mix of both human capital and workfare elements, constituting what a number of authors have called ‘workfare light’ (Goul Anderson and Pedersen, 2006: 15, Daguerre, 2007: 103). Goul Andersen and Pedersen (2007) suggest that Danish ALMPs are ‘a battlefield’ between the two extremes of neo-liberal workfare and Social Democratic activation, reflective of the paths of the pre- and post-2001 governments and the continuity between. Workfare has to some extent been present in Danish ALMPs since 1990, but it has become more explicit and is now “a more integral part of Danish labour market and social policy” (Rosdahl and Weise, 2001: 160, 175). There was a consensus from the interviews that in the 1990s policy actors considered that activation should be more work-focused, whilst still retaining the focus on individual aspirations. The 1994 reforms were designed to raise the qualification levels of unemployed people to match labour market requirements, as well as to test their availability for work and motivate them to intensify job search (Kvist and Pedersen, 2007: 104). However, since 2001 more workfarist elements have been assumed, exemplified by the 300 hours rule, as one academic suggested: “There has been increasing conditionality and you can look at it in isolation from the context, suggesting that a social security state has become a workfare state, but the 300 hours rule is the only clear-cut workfare element. Otherwise you have to see these changes in conjunction with the improved employment situation.”

²⁰⁴ Through (i) job-oriented programmes and (ii) assessment programmes. The former comprised motivational interviews concerning working life with a focus on perceived language and cultural barriers to work and the latter were aimed at recipients considered to have reduced (but not permanent) capacity for work. A number of local authorities contracted with external partners with experience of working with immigrants to provide these. See Jensen, K. B. & Lauritzen, H. B. (2008) *Local authority implementation of the 300 hour rule*, Copenhagen, Anvendt Kommunal Forskning. Pages 5-6.

In Danish labour market policies since 2001 there has been a functional recalibration of the function of social security and labour market policies, in line with Peck's (2001: 10) definition of workfare. This is a reflection of the new social risk of large numbers of people receiving out-of-work benefits for lengthy periods, as well as of perceptions of welfare dependency articulated by policymakers, examined in Chapter Six. This can be seen in the shift in the balance between the rights and duties of the individual and the state, with more emphasis on the duties than the rights and duties of the individual (Goul Andersen and Pedersen, 2007), highlighted by the shift from IAPs to Job Plans and the curtailing of human capital approaches in favour of work first. Although the 300 hours rule affects a small group of people (as do programmes relating to partners in Britain and Australia), examining such a programme can provide both policy analysis with regard to this group, as well as indications of policy change on a wider level. One academic posed the question: "Are these exceptions to the wonderful Danish case or whether it's actually really a break that has bigger implications for the whole system?"

The previous two sections have illustrated the three cases of welfare recalibration at the functional level, as evidenced by changes in access to benefits for partnered women and by changes to the social contracts, or *quid pro quo*. As highlighted in Section 5.2, the bases of entitlement to benefit have been recalibrated in each of the countries to a focus on 'worker'. In Denmark this has involved reinforcing the status of worker for married (immigrant) couples on social assistance. In Australia and Britain access to benefits for partnered women has been recalibrated from eligibility as wives/partners to mothers/workers. This functional recalibration of entitlement links to the activation policies and to the recalibration of the related social contracts. For partnered women in Britain since 1999 there has been increasingly asymmetrical conditionality which is being recalibrated through the Welfare Reform Act 2009 in requiring partners to claim benefit in their own right. In Australia Working Nation introduced a similar requirement for partners in 1994 which recalibrated access to

benefits on a functional level. This was followed by *Australians Working Together*, which was a further functional recalibration of policies relating to partnered women outside the labour market. Although this reform was generally viewed positively by interviewees as a way of the state encouraging partnered women into work in a way which fitted with their personal circumstances, *Welfare to Work* was clearly viewed by the majority of policy actors to place more emphasis on the duties of the individual than the duties of the state. This latter also seems to be the case for the 300 hours rule, which was critiqued as having gone beyond the normative foundations of Danish active labour market policy by requiring social assistance recipients to have accrued a number of hours of paid work, rather than to be available for work. In this way it was also seen to embody workfarist elements, reflective of the post-2001 Danish government's focus on the 'quickest way into work.' In all three cases in relation to partnered women the social contract has been recalibrated to include more workfarist elements.

The elements of functional recalibration described above reflect shifts in the focus of policies towards groups viewed as excluded from the labour market but who are seen as potential sources of labour. The following section considers these distributive aspects.

5.4 *Targeted versus encompassing labour market policies*

Distributive recalibration relates to social groups. It concerns the ways in which the distribution of benefits (and also activation) by welfare states changes in relation to the new social risks articulated in the functional sub-dimension. Distributive recalibration relates to distinctions governing access to income support and how these translate into the relevant activation programmes. Studies of activation suggest that a key feature is the enlargement of target groups by including sick or disabled people, older people, highly vulnerable groups and single parents (Borghini and Van Berckel, 2007: 278). The

following section 5.4.1 compares categorical social security and labour market policies in Australia and Britain with the encompassing social security and labour market policies in Denmark. Section 5.4.2 considers the design and implementation of individualised employment assistance in both Australia and Denmark and highlights the shortcomings of both.

5.4.1 *Categorical social security and labour market policies*

A distinction is made here between the categorical benefit systems in Britain and Australia based on capacity for work (whether jobseekers capable of work, parents, disabled people) and the benefit system in Denmark focused on categories of insured and uninsured unemployed. In the British and Australian systems benefit recipients are divided into categories and subject to targeted policies and programmes, or claiming regimes. The Danish system is not based on such categories and there is one encompassing system of activation, tailored to moving individuals closer to work, based on assessment of work-readiness, with slightly differing requirements for insured and uninsured unemployed people. However, within this framework there are target groups (see Chapter Four) for intensified activation efforts to meet government targets.

Fraser (1989) argues that the needs of those on means-tested benefits are not met on their own terms, but are framed within administrative categories developed by the welfare state. Britton (2007) defines categorising as the process by which people are placed “into collectivities or sub-populations based on any given criteria” (p.62); this is inevitable in the policy process in order to target policies most effectively (p.63). Such categories can be based on socio-demographic characteristics, such as class or gender, but other forms of categorising are a result of choice, ideology and agency (Britton, 2007: 62). Targeting may be viewed as a consequence, or indeed a constituent part, of welfare states in which means-testing predominates, such as Britain and Australia.

One Australian former government official interviewee highlighted a disadvantage of categorical systems based on incapacity for work: “Categorisation may lead to a negative focus on incapacity for, and barriers to, work, as categorisation is linked to perceptions of self, identity and roles” and this was supported by a Danish local authority employee:

“It’s very important that the people who work in the Jobcenter here, they will not make the limitations, they will not be the limits, so to speak. I mean, I debated a lot with some of my employees. That, whilst he or she is not ready to go to this job yet because he has this issue or this issue, if we are saying ‘You are not able to’, then you will not be able to.”

One problem with ascribed categorisation is the construction of groups as homogeneous, which can be problematic for a group labelled as ‘partners’ who, as we saw in Chapter Four, are heterogeneous and may have a number of constraints on working, which cross benefit categories and require individually tailored responses (Millar and Evans, 2006: 74). In both Australia and Britain assisting parents (mothers) into work is an important policy goal, but the focus has predominantly been on lone parents, with labour market policies relating to this group also being extended to partners. This focus is partly because there are more lone parents than partnered parents on income support,²⁰⁵ although this is exacerbated by partners not being able to claim benefit in their own right. It also relates to normative or moral aspects, particularly seen in British policies under the Conservatives in the 1980s and in Australian policies under the Howard government in the 1990s and 2000s which suggested that sole parent families were ‘deviant’ compared with the social norm of couple families. Distributive recalibration highlights the polarisation of paid work

²⁰⁵ Although this may be partly related to couple penalties within the tax and benefits systems. See Centre for Social Justice (2009) *Dynamic benefits: Towards welfare that works. A Policy Report from the Economic Dependency Working Group*, London, Centre for Social Justice, Adam, S. & Brewer, M. (2010) *Couple penalties and premiums in the UK tax and benefit system. IFS Briefing Note BNI02*, London, Institute for Fiscal Studies.

amongst social groups and in particular the increase in the number of workless households, lone and couple households, some of whom are of an ethnic minority. Partners are included in activation for lone parents to achieve parity of treatment but also because of the policy focus in both countries on reducing workless households (both lone and partnered), and particularly in Britain there has been the overarching goal of reducing child poverty. Blaxland (2008) highlights that in relation to activity requirements both AWT and Welfare to Work divided parents into groups according to the ages of their children, with WTW distinguishing between parents with pre-school and school-age children (p.33), a distinction also made by the British Welfare Reform Act.

Section 5.2 argued that in Denmark partnered women are considered to be 'workers' in terms of eligibility for benefits and that this is also becoming the case in Britain and Australia. One Australian campaigning organisation suggested that: "Once Welfare to Work came along there was a big shift away from identifying parents as a target group and a shift towards putting everybody onto Newstart, as with many other OECD countries." One issue relating to implementation is that the focus and experience of Job Network providers has predominantly been on unemployed people, rather than being able to take account of the specific needs of parents (McInnes and Taylor, 2007). This was highlighted by another Australian campaigning organisation:

"There has been a shift away from treating parents as a separate target group for assistance, which in some ways is probably desirable because there's quite a bit of heterogeneity amongst parents and treating them as a single category was never all that sensible, but in other ways I wonder whether we've gone a little too far because they have a particular set of needs, for example if you're caring for a child with a disability then the services have to be there for you."

In Australia Gregory and Klug (2003: 13) highlighted that Pp recipients and PPs recipients are effectively the same group, as recipients ‘churn’ between single and partnered payments due to relationship breakdown, re-partnering and instability of earnings.²⁰⁶ One Australian campaigning organisation suggested that: “Partners often lack secure employment and this has created a lot of marital instability, hence many move from Pp to PPs and back again because the relationships don’t last because the family lacks stable sources of income and for a host of other reasons as well.” Similar transitioning is seen in Britain (Arrowsmith, 2004: 15-6). Bradbury and Norris (2005a) highlight the ‘fluid’ nature of relationships amongst income support recipients, who are more than twice as likely to separate as non-recipients; cohabiting couples are more likely to separate than legally married couples (Bradbury and Norris, 2005b).²⁰⁷ Australia has two tiers of income support payments, distinguishing between pensions and allowances²⁰⁸ and one campaigning organisation commented: “The distinction between pensions and allowances is unjust and discourages workforce participation when people transition [between payments].” Similarly, a former government official suggested that: “Merging PPs and Pp would have the benefit of allowing for changes in relationship status” and a campaigning organisation that “we have to treat the person and not the payment category.”

This highlights that there is a balance to be struck between moving away from categorising recipients in terms of, for example, their parental or partnered status, but

²⁰⁶ For example, in examining inflows to PPs in 1995, the most common destination after the first period on PPs was to Pp (27.8 per cent). This ‘considerable churning’ is for two reasons: firstly, re-partnering and moving back and forth between PPS and PPP; and secondly, the instability of earnings of both the female recipient and her partner. See Gregory, R. G. & Klug, E. (2003) *A picture book primer: welfare dependency and the dynamics of female lone parent spells*, Canberra, Research School of Social Sciences, Australian National University. See also Coventry, L. (2000) Workforce pilots. *Australian Social Policy*, 2000(2):123-131 No recent published data were available.

²⁰⁷ Further, individuals may re-partner with the same person a few months later. See Bradbury, B. & Norris, K. (2005a) *Family dynamics In Australia. Final Report of the Fluid Families Project*, Sydney, NSW, Social Policy Research Centre.

²⁰⁸ Pensions are paid at a higher rate and have more generous income testing than allowances. For historical reasons (see Appendix 5), Parenting Payment Partnered is an allowance, whilst Parenting Payment Single is a pension. This has been a problem for lone parents transferred from PP to NSA, who have had a lower payment and more punitive taper rates.

still paying attention to particular needs which arise from this status. Just as Dean and Taylor-Gooby's (1992) analysis shows that the claiming regime may reinforce the identity of the 'benefit claimant,' categorization which focuses on reasons for labour market incapacity may reinforce barriers to work. Categories of payments based on relationship status may also be unhelpful in assisting partners into work, particularly if their barriers to work cross categories and are intra-household.²⁰⁹ However, the constraints of categorisation may be overcome by employment services which can move beyond categories to effectively address constraints on working.

In Denmark the right and duty to activation is applicable to both insured and uninsured unemployed in terms of the paradigm of 'all must be active' (Rosdahl and Weise, 2001). Within this regime, partnered women may choose to stay at home and not undertake paid work, but they cannot receive benefit. Some Danish interviewees suggested that partners were not recognised in the Danish model, for example one Jobcenter employee suggested: "We don't talk to them about whether they're married" and a government official stated that: "We don't deal with couples, particularly for insured." However, this was contested by a local authority employee interviewee, who argued that: "You could never deal with anybody's case without at the very moment you open it to link it to the case of the husband and wife."²¹⁰ This links to what Greve (2005) argues is the 'whole family principle' basis of the Danish welfare state in which "it was not enough to look simply at the person and discuss the individual client's problem. It was necessary to look at the whole family's situation" (p.45). Furthermore, marriage is significant for the 300 hours rule. Although it was purported to cover all couples to avoid claims of ethnic bias, all interviewees stated that immigrant couples

²⁰⁹ Moving away from a system based on categorical benefits was one argument made in Australia in favour of having one single-working age benefit in both Australia and Britain. See McClure, P. (2000a) *Participation support for a more equitable society. Final report of the Reference Group on Welfare Reform*, Canberra, Department of Family and Community Services, Gregg, P. (2008) *Realising potential. A vision for personalised conditionality and support*, Norwich, The Stationery Office. Sainsbury, R. & Stanley, K. (2007) *One for all: active welfare and the single working age benefit*, London, Institute for Public Policy Research.

²¹⁰ The Personal Identification number (CPR) stores personal information stored in the Civil Registration System (*Det Centrale Personregister*) and allows cases to be tracked in relation to spouses.

were the primary focus, for example one social worker argued that: “The aim was to target this particular group, not to target Danish families.”

Drawing on the principle of the right and duty to activation, one of the Danish government’s arguments in favour of the 300 hours rule was “the principle, that all foreigners shall be met with the same expectations and requirements as all other citizens in Denmark are met, and that foreigners and their families and descendants have the same actual options as everyone else” (Folketinget [Danish Parliament], 2005). Daguerre (2007) argues that the ‘anti-immigration rhetoric’ which informs policies relating to immigrants is evidence of ‘welfare chauvinism’ which suggests that “social programmes should benefit Danes rather than foreigners” (p.94). Such targeting led Danish academics interviewed to describe the 300 hours rule as a ‘borderline case’, or an ‘anomaly’ in the Danish model. Serrano Pascual (2007: 305) rightly argues that although public spending in Denmark remains high, the approach depends on the target group (distributive recalibration), with immigrants being subject to more disciplinary measures, marking a break with the Danish universalist welfare tradition.

In relation to distributive recalibration, British and Australian labour market policies have focused on partnered parents as an extension of policies targeted at lone parents. In both countries this focus is reflective of benefits and activation based on categories. However, in Australia such a shift in the inclusion of lone and partnered parents as target groups for employment assistance was also within the context of individualised employment services, which to date have been less relevant for partners in Britain. In Australia there is a tension evident in relation to, on the one hand, the treatment of partners as a discrete group which may reinforce constraints on working. On the other hand, treatment of partnered parents in line with other jobseekers within an individualised model may not take sufficient account of constraints on working linked to caring roles. In comparison, the Danish approach is ‘encompassing’ and based on

individualised assistance, although within this there has been distributive recalibration in relation to specific groups, such as immigrant married couples in receipt of social assistance. The Danish model does not take account of caring roles because, as Section 5.5 discusses, alternative care is provided by the state. The next section examines individualised employment assistance in practice in both Denmark and Australia.

5.4.2 *Individualised employment assistance*

Van Berkel and Valkenburg (2007) highlight the shift towards individualisation in activation services which, as with other personal social services, relates to the “need to cope with the heterogeneity of the groups at which activation is targeted” (p.11). Individualised services have the attraction of being efficient and effective in preventing people from being enrolled in programmes that they do not require (van Berkel and Valkenburg, 2007: 13). Individualisation is an alternative way of recalibrating employment policies across social groups according to distance from the labour market, rather than across social risk-based categories in relation to incapacity for work, such as disability, unemployment or caring status. However, ‘individualisation’ is an ‘ambiguous concept’, the fundamental issue being ‘who is in charge?’ (Valkenburg, 2007: 37). This relates to the notion of social contracts (see Section 5.3) and is explored further in this section in terms of individualised employment services in Australia and Denmark. In Britain individualised assistance is envisaged by the ‘personalised conditionality’ of the Welfare Reform Act.

Both Denmark and Australia define distance from the labour market by means of assessment tools. Serrano Pascual (2007) highlights the use of measures of employability to separate out employable people and to ‘diagnose’ the correct

activation intervention (p.296).²¹¹ In both Denmark and Australia the match categorisation tools precede the 'modes of management' (Serrano Pascual, 2007), so that those closer to the labour market receive less intensive services than those considered further away. Although a classificatory instrument is not used in Britain, other mechanisms are used. For example, as most JSA recipients will leave benefit after a relatively short period, during the initial period of unemployment job search is predominantly self-managed, with support increasing in line with the unemployment spell.²¹² Personal Advisers make informal assessments of key barriers to work, for example lone parents are directed to the New Deal for Lone Parents, even if their main constraint on employment is health problems.

In Australia the initial interview with Centrelink involves completion of a computer diagnostic tool, the Jobseeker Classification instrument (JSCI), consisting of 30 questions²¹³ relating to age, education, disability and language skill. It is intended to assess the likelihood of long-term unemployment and to direct participants to the relevant support stream. Under the Job Services Australia contract there are four streams, the first being for those assessed as closest to the labour market and four for those furthest away (Table A4.5 in Appendix 4 sets out the interventions available to partnered women in the four streams). McInnes and Taylor (2007: 9) have criticised the JSCI for being a standardised instrument focused on the needs of unemployed people, rather than those of parents. However, under the JSA contract providers have more flexibility than under Job Network to direct resources to individual jobseekers, regardless of the stream in which they are placed. JSA providers also have the flexibility to contract directly with providers of other support, rather than merely

²¹¹ These are features of the personality variant or treatment approach of the mode of managing behaviour, seen in Britain and to an extent in Denmark, although this analysis argues that such tools are not used explicitly in Britain but are seen in Australia.

²¹² Some income support recipients are classified into categories of disadvantaged groups: disabled people, ethnic minorities, lone parents, unemployed people aged 50 and over, the 15 per cent lowest qualified and those living in the most deprived local authority wards.

²¹³ Reduced from 60 in 2003. The outcome of the JSCI may highlight personal factors or disabilities and suggest referral to a Job Capacity Assessor (JCA), or health professional.

offering referrals, with the aim of providing a seamless service to individuals. Although there is a 'notional bank' of funding under the Employment Pathway Fund (EPF) according to the stream, as in Denmark providers have the flexibility to spend more on an individual, if this will benefit their pathway into work.²¹⁴ In Denmark providing cheaper activation measures for people closer to the labour market means that others may receive more expensive measures which may benefit their route into work. Both the Danish and Australian models are supported by frequent contact with partnered women. In Denmark this is every three months²¹⁵ and in Australia under JSA the minimum contact is once a month, although flexibility is built into this (and this increases during the Work Experience Phase - see Table A4.5 in Appendix 4).

In Denmark the employment potential of each individual is determined by placing them in different match-categories during job conversations according to their estimated distance from the labour market (Caswell et al., 2008: 11). These categories range from Match Group 1 (an 'immediate match' to the labour market), through Match Groups 2 and 3 (can be work-ready, but requires some support or intervention), to Match Groups 4 and 5 ('no match at all' to the labour market).²¹⁶ Table 5.3 below shows the definition of each match category, along with the types of intervention used for both insured and uninsured unemployed. People in Match Group 5 are exempted from the 300 hours rule, but those in Match Group 4 are included²¹⁷; participants may move between streams dependent upon the length of their unemployment spell.

²¹⁴ Under the new employment service delivery model from 2009, there is a notional allocation of funding for each activated person of DKK 18,500 (around £2,500). This notional allocation is predominantly for budgetary purposes; below this amount 50 per cent is refunded to local authorities by the state.

²¹⁵ A controlled experiment consisting of a substantial intensification of labour market policies (Hurtigt i Gang) was carried out in two counties in Denmark in 2005-06. Although the experiment displayed positive effects perhaps resulting from the intensification, none of the specific treatments had a positive effect. See Danish Economic Council (2007) *Dansk Økonomi forår 2007. Diskussionsoplæg*, Copenhagen, Danish Economic Council.

²¹⁶ From April 2010 there is a new system of 3 match-groups.

²¹⁷ Exemptions relate to the match group status of the individual, not the whole couple so if only one spouse is in match group 4 or above, the other may still lose their benefit. The inclusion of people in Match Group 4 into the rule was one reason for the withdrawal of the Social Democrats and some of the Social Liberals from negotiations over the rule, although the Social Democrats had originally supported the proposal.

Table 5.3: Types of Danish activation for unemployed people in the five match groups

Match group	Description	Insured unemployed (per cent)	Social assistance Recipients (per cent)
1	Immediate match Skills and resources are compatible with job functions widely existing in the ordinary labour market Qualifications and skills within bottleneck areas of labour market	72	6
2	High degree of match Immediately matches labour market requirements to a significant extent Matches job functions widely existing in the labour market May be a slight lack of match, for example specific qualifications	22	9
3	Partial match Only partially matches existing labour market requirements Able to perform job functions existing to a certain extent in the ordinary labour market	5	17
4	Low degree of match Significant limitations in skills and resources Immediately unable to perform job functions in the ordinary labour market Ability to work is currently so reduced that job functions compatible with skills and resources will only be found to a limited extent in the ordinary labour market	1	49
5	No match Extensive limitations in skills and resources Does not currently have the ability to perform job functions in the ordinary labour market	0	19

Source: AMS

The Law on Active Social Policy aims to deal with any social problems which may exist apart from unemployment but which may be a reason for long-term

unemployment (Finansministeriet, 2005: 45), although this has to an extent been constrained by the work first approach of the Venstre government. One Danish Jobcentre interviewee suggested that: "We have the possibility to look at the person's problems and to choose on those projects that is right for that person." Social workers suggested: "We really try to help people, to make their skills better so they can participate in the labour market. We really have a lot of tools and possibilities to help them. The law is good in that context"; "You must have various offers you can offer people because you can do this so mechanically and I don't think it's good."

In this context, social workers are employed in Jobcenters and have a key role in identifying and addressing wider and multiple barriers to work aside from unemployment, as one local authority employee stated: "They [social workers] have a social background because the unemployed people in match categories 4 and 5...have a number of other problems, that if you don't take those into consideration, it's difficult to make the whole plan for what do you have to do." This was echoed by a Jobcenter employee:

"There the importance of the social worker is to find out what's the problem and what can be done and if the person wants to change anything and to work within a plan and to find some good offers for those people. I think it's very important that you have some skilled person who can differentiate between those who need some support and those who don't need it."

Interviewees also highlighted the importance of the Danish decentralised model of policy delivery (see Chapter Seven), stating that local authorities:

"have the competence and the financial position to carry out tasks in the public sector...because they have then the possibility to do other things than just what they are asked to do with specific programmes. They could look into let's say this scheme

of non-working partnered women and look at 'What problems do we face?' In many local authorities these problems are concentrated into social housing, so the local authority being competent in whatever question concerning the citizen could be advised not only to look into the 300 hours concept but look into the broader context...the principle basis for doing the right thing is established, so it is really up to the particular local authority to conceive intelligent policies."

Integration-Jobcenters run by the local authority provide a range of services to help immigrants into work, including assistance with housing and outreach workers to help them settle into Denmark and their local area. Social workers facilitate Job Clubs which partnered women attend and which cover topics such as the Danish labour market, paying tax, day-care and job applications.²¹⁸ This has some similarities with the support provided by POEM in Britain.

Australian interviewees did not agree that employment assistance under Job Network had been 'individualised' in practice as intended by the policy, as one campaigning organisation stated:

"It seems not able to be responsive to the particular circumstances of individuals, nor to the context of the labour market in which they find themselves. So, the requirement to undertake compulsory unpaid work experience and/or take up training and/or go into paid work I think needs to be mediated by the opportunities available in the market and also the point in the pathway to work that the person is at."

Another campaigning organisation commented that:

²¹⁸ The extent of services provided depends on the priorities of the local authority. The Jobcenter-Integration visited as part of this research provided an extensive range of services.

“There has been chronic under-investment in the services and support [partners] need, not only education and training and other labour market programmes, but housing close to where jobs are and the whole suite of services, mental health services that this group is likely to need and the services haven’t been joined together very well.”

This interviewee also suggested that those who are severely disadvantaged require:

“someone to really step them through all of the assistance they need, shepherd them through various family and other crises that are happening and gradually into the labour market and training and the other support they need...the mainstream system I don’t think is going to work with that group really at all, even the new one.”

In contrast to Job Network, Job Services Australia is intended to be a ‘one-stop shop approach’ to employment services: flexible, responsive and designed to provide jobseekers with tailored services and support. However, one campaigning organisation critiqued this, suggesting: “Choice isn’t a big thing in Australian employment services. The providers serve the government, not the consumer.”²¹⁹

These points are of note because although ‘personalised conditionality’ (Gregg, 2008, Department for Work and Pensions, 2009b) is in line with the neo-liberal notion of the ‘consumer’ of public services, choice is relatively absent from workfarist policies. This can be related to outcome-based funding, as McInnes and Taylor (2007) suggest of Australia: “Despite the rhetoric of an individualised service, there is high pressure on employment consultants to get outcomes, and thus payments, leaving no opportunity for genuine individual attention to jobseekers’ individual needs” (p.7). It remains to be

²¹⁹ Both Job Network and Job Services Australia offer a choice of provider and a customer service guarantee, but often clients are referred to a provider by Centrelink and do not realise they have a choice. See Finn, D. (2008) *The British 'welfare market'. Lessons from contracting out welfare to work programmes in Australia and the Netherlands*, York, Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

seen how far the new Job Services Australia model will achieve such individualised assistance. Similarly, one Danish academic stated that:

“One of the arguments for contracting out in Denmark as well as in the UK was that when you contract out you have private providers with specialist skills towards specific target groups, so services would be more tailor-made or individualised, but our general finding was that this market was actually quite standardised...because of the tendering model and the price mechanisms and the competition in the market.”

Whilst it is outside the scope of this study to examine in-depth the contracting of employment services, some aspects relating to this are discussed further in Chapter Seven. In Britain flexible, individualised assistance has been in the form of Employment Zones and Flexible New Deal, however such a flexible approach has so far not been attempted with partnered women.

This section has examined policy actors' views of individualised employment assistance in Australia and Denmark as a reflection of distributive recalibration. In both countries assessment tools are used to categorise recipients according to their distance from the labour market and to determine the level and type of assistance deemed necessary to move them into work. In Denmark individualised activation is supported by the decentralisation of some levels of policy design as well as delivery to local authorities. This is augmented by the capacity and expertise of social workers to construct a package of support for partnered women. Australian interviewees suggested that the ability to construct such a package to sufficiently take account of the needs of partnered parents was absent under Job Network. In both Australia and Denmark there are further challenges to the implementation of individualised services as a result of increased contracting out and this is discussed further in Chapter Seven. The next section returns to functional recalibration in relation to the provision of childcare as a function of the welfare state.

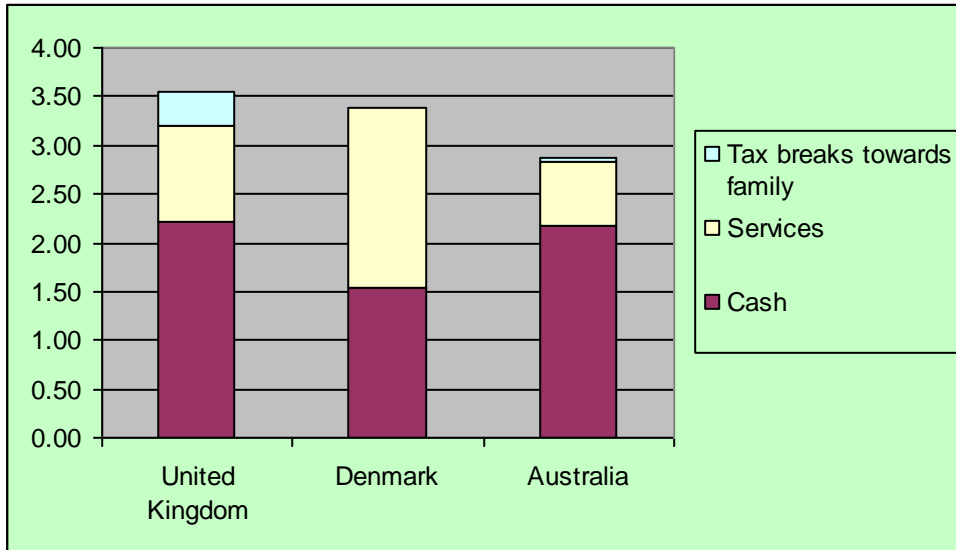
Ferrera and Hemerijck (2003) suggest that in terms of welfare recalibration “Beyond important supply-side activation measures, of key importance has been the rediscovery of public social services with respect to childcare, maternity and parental leave arrangements” (p.123). This section considers childcare as an illustration of functional recalibration, examining in what ways this is a function of each of the welfare states in response to the new ‘social risk’ of the reconciliation of work and family. It will be argued that the provision of childcare in Denmark is a key function of the welfare state and is a foundation on which activation policies are overlaid. Since the 1970s this has also been the case in Australia, although there have been some contradictions in relation to ‘maternalist’ policies. In Britain childcare provision is a missing core foundation for activation for partnered women, reflective of stalled functional and normative recalibration. Section 5.5.1 sets out a potted history of childcare in the three countries and Section 5.5.2 discusses childcare as a foundation for activation policies for partnered women.

5.5.1 *A brief history of childcare in Australia, Denmark and Britain*

Figure 5.4 shows total family spending (child payments and allowances, parental leave benefits and childcare support) in the three countries and Figure 5.5 shows spending on early childhood education and care. Australia spends the least and Denmark’s expenditure is more than twice that of Britain. Denmark differs from both Britain and Australia in not offering tax breaks to families as a method of funding their childcare.

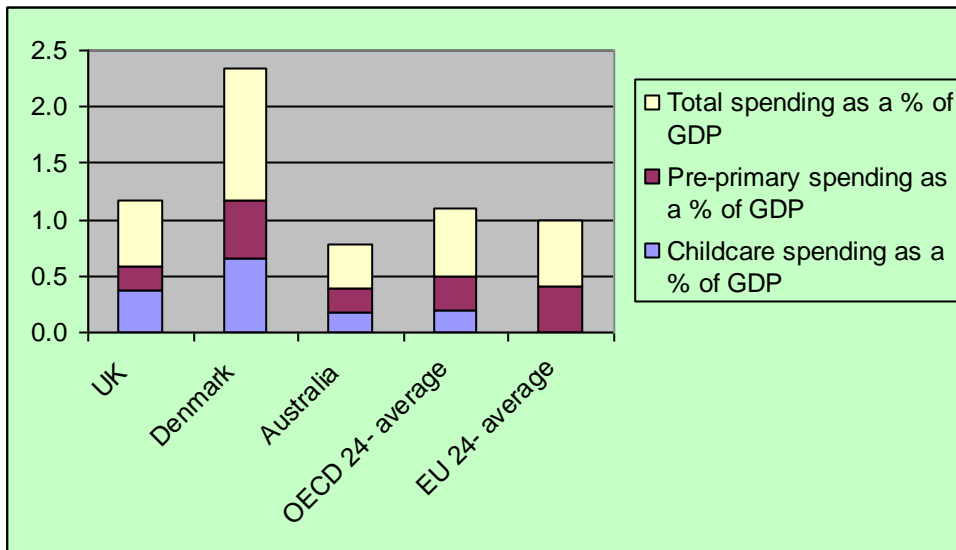
²²⁰ ‘Early childhood education and care’ is the term used in the OECD report Starting Strong and is distinct from the concept of ‘childcare’ which suggests that replacement care is instrumental, rather than pedagogical. However, taking into account this critique of the concept of childcare, childcare is used in this thesis to cover both early years care as well as school age care. See OECD (2006b) *Starting Strong II: early childhood education and care*, Paris, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Moss, P. (2006) Farewell to childcare? *National Institute Economic Review*, 195:70-83.

Figure 5.4: Public expenditure on family (percentage of GDP), 2005



Source: OECD Family Database

Figure 5.5: Public expenditure on childcare and early education (percentage of GDP), 2005



Source: OECD Family Database

As in most countries, the impetus for establishing childcare facilities in Denmark came with the industrialisation process and provision began with a two-tiered, class-based system, emphasising care for working-class children from working families and education for upper-class children (Borchorst, 2002: 270).²²¹ In 1901 state-run People's

²²¹ The first such provision for the former was in 1828.

Kindergartens were established, along with the notion of 'social pedagogy'.²²² Economic pressures meant there were only a small number of facilities, concentrated in major cities and predominantly for working-class children. Universal provision was institutionalised in 1949, allowing state funding to be allocated to children from better-off families too. By the mid-1950s there was a visible shift towards universalist provision, which was established by the 1960s.²²³ The importance of childcare in facilitating the integration of women into the labour market was stated in legislation (Borchorst, 2002: 274).²²⁴ Responsibility for operating costs was equally divided between the state, local authorities and parents and from an early stage priority for places was given to children of parents working outside the home (Borchorst, 2002: 274). Part-time day-care facilities never gained ground (Borchorst, 2002: 274).²²⁵ By contrast, in Britain the trend for part-time nursery education was established as early as the 1944 Education Act (Randall, 2002: 221). Nevertheless, a critique of the Danish norm of full-time work and day-care is that long working hours do not sufficiently allow for time with family (Borchorst, 2002: 281).

In relation to functional recalibration, the Danish day-care model has been characterised by continuity, although there have been challenges.²²⁶ At a time of high unemployment in the 1970s, the rules linking child care to labour market participation were tightened, but the child-centred legislation meant that children of unemployed

²²² At this time education and care were also integrated.

²²³ In 1951 local authorities were obliged to support the running of childcare facilities and in 1964 legislation was passed which obliged the public sector to provide childcare facilities. At this time programmes previously termed 'preventive child welfare' (*forebyggende børneforsøg*) were now referred to as 'social pedagogical measures' (*socialpædagogiske foranstaltninger*). See Borchorst, A. (2002) Danish child care policy: continuity rather than radical change, in Michel, S. & Mahon, R. (Eds.) *Child care policy at the crossroads. Gender and welfare state restructuring*. New York, NY, Routledge, 267-285.

²²⁴ This can be contrasted with the marriage bar, which was still operational in both Britain and Australia respectively in 1971 and 1966.

²²⁵ In Denmark part-time day-care is less used than full-time. In 2008 there were 211 part-time children in nurseries, 7,422 in kindergartens and 9,739 in age-integrated institutions (E-mail correspondence with Statistics Denmark, August 2009)

²²⁶ In 1973, economists recommended a modular system entitling children to three hours of pedagogy per day in which additional modules would depend on parents' employment. See Borchorst, A. (2002) Danish child care policy: continuity rather than radical change, in Michel, S. & Mahon, R. (Eds.) *Child care policy at the crossroads. Gender and welfare state restructuring*. New York, NY, Routledge, 267-285.

people did not lose their places (Borchorst, 2002: 276). In Denmark the state is the main provider of day-care and the provision of day-care is a pillar of the Danish welfare state model. More recent concerns relating to day-care in Denmark relate to quality of provision in the context of increased quantity.

Between 1972 and 1976, and 1983 and 1996 Australia developed “a world-class childcare system more in keeping with the generous, public provision of social democracies such as Denmark, Sweden, and France than with the virtual absence of national support exemplified by other liberal regimes such as the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom” (Brennan, 2002: 98). In this sense, Australia has more in common with the Danish than the British model. As one campaigning organisation commented: “It’s pretty good compared to the UK, compared to the Anglophone countries and it’s because the Whitlam government in the 70s invested in funding for childcare services, so the structures were there to be built upon.” The Whitlam government’s model (National Childcare Program)²²⁷ was based on non-profit community-based services, but in 1990 the Hawke Labor government began directing funding towards families using private, for-profit rather than non-profit care. The shift to a marketised model intensified under the Howard government (from 1996)²²⁸; although this was intended to reduce financial pressure on government expenditure, it did the opposite (Brennan, 2002: 104). Although between 1992 and 2006 the policies of both Labor and Coalition governments led to large increases in the number of government-supported childcare places, unmet demand also grew (Craig et al., 2009: 12). There are still accessibility issues, particularly for parents in rural areas. In Australia such issues have been exacerbated by the corporatisation of childcare

²²⁷ The Whitlam Labor government built on the 1972 Childcare Act introduced by the previous McMahon Liberal-Country Party coalition government. See Brennan, D. (2002) Australia: child care and state-centred feminism in a liberal welfare regime, in Michel, S. & Mahon, R. (Eds.) *Child care policy at the crossroads*. London, Routledge, 95-112.

²²⁸ In the first budget following the election of the Liberal/National Coalition under Howard, the government removed non-profit operational subsidies and withdrew funding for over 5,000 planned places in community childcare centres. See Craig, L., Mullan, K. & Blaxland, M. (2009) *Australian work and family policy: 1992-2006. SPRC Report 3/09, review prepared for Trends in Time: Work, Family and Social Policy in Australia 1992-2006. Australian Research Council Linkage Project LP088202424.*, Sydney, SPRC.

(Brennan, 2007a).²²⁹ In Britain and Australia the market is the main provider of childcare and state provision is ostensibly based on the notion of neo-liberal 'choice'²³⁰ through subsidies. However, there are signs that the Australian childcare landscape may be changing in curtailing the capacity of private providers to become dominant and in encouraging non-profit providers (Senate, 2009: 105).

It was not until 1998 that Britain had a national childcare strategy. Although childcare provision had expanded dramatically during the Second World War, the war nurseries were rapidly wound down under the direction of the Ministry of Labour (Randall, 2002: 221). In response to the growing number of women in paid work in the 1960s, private day nurseries, childminders and play groups expanded rapidly (Randall, 2002: 222). Under the Conservatives²³¹ in 1972 plans were set out to expand nursery education for three and four year olds by 1982. However, the plans were curtailed in 1974 under Labour's public expenditure cuts. Randall (2002: 222-3) describes public provision in the 1970s as "meagre in the extreme" although in the 1980s there were a series of initiatives for under-fives and during this time private provision expanded considerably. In 1993 the Major Conservative government announced plans for universal provision and following this a nursery education voucher scheme and a disregard for low-income families receiving income supplements were introduced. Although the voucher scheme was largely viewed as unsuccessful, both of these formed the basis for the expansion of provision and subsidies under the Labour government following the publication of its Ten Year

²²⁹ The listing of childcare providers on the stock exchange began in the 2000s and the extent of corporatisation was highlighted by the collapse of ABC Learning Centers (holding 20 per cent of the market) in 2008, although the balance may be shifting. See Senate (2009) *Provision of childcare. Education, Employment and Workplace Relations References Committee. November 2009*, Canberra, Commonwealth of Australia.

²³⁰ It must be noted that market-based replacement care has implications for other areas of the labour market, such as use of migrant labour and use of feminised labour. This is highlighted by a number of authors - see for example Lister, R., Williams, F., Anttonen, A., Bussemaker, J., Gerhard, U., Heinen, J., Johansson, S., Leira, A., Siim, B., Tobio, C. & Gavanoas, A. (2007) *Gendering citizenship in Western Europe. New challenges for citizenship research in a cross-national context*, Bristol, Policy Press.

²³¹ The Minister of Education was Margaret Thatcher. See Randall, V. (2002) Child care in Britain, or, how do you restructure nothing?, in Michel, S. & Mahon, R. (Eds.) *Child care policy at the crossroads: gender and welfare state restructuring*. New York, NY, Routledge, 219-238. Page 222.

Childcare Strategy in 1998 (Department for Education and Employment, 1998), which aimed to provide good quality, affordable childcare to all children aged 0-14.²³²

5.5.2 *Childcare as a foundation for activation policies*

Day-care was particularly important to the Danish case, but also to the Australian one. As a social worker commented: “If in Britain you want to really change the society in the direction of having more women joining the labour market from low income groups and from a history of non-working families then you will have to look at the day-care aspect of it.” As highlighted in Section 5.2, in Denmark caring for children at home does not constitute incapacity for work when receiving benefit and this is a key difference between Denmark and the other two countries. Full-time labour market participation for partnered women is possible because of the institutional foundation of day-care, which provides a basis for labour market policies, highlighted by a Jobcentre employee: “If you want to draw unemployment benefit, you have to make sure that your child is taken care of...It’s not directly you know...you give me proof, but it’s just if you want to have a job, if you want to have unemployment benefit, then you must be able to start the job tomorrow morning at 9.”

In Denmark local authorities provide the majority of funding for day-care and parents pay the remainder (based on household income); those on a low income pay nothing, or very little.²³³ There are reductions for families on a low income, for siblings and for families with special needs and there is an additional aided place subsidy for families on a low income. Similar subsidies are provided for after-school clubs, according to

²³² The Home Office consultation paper *Supporting Families* (1998) was the first time any British government had published such a paper on the family. See Millar, J. & Ridge, T. (2002) Parents, children, families and New Labour: developing family policy?, in Powell, M. (Ed.) *Evaluating New Labour's welfare reforms*. Bristol, Policy Press, 85-106. Page 85.

²³³ The subsidies are paid directly to the day-care provider. The maximum was reduced from 33 per cent to 25 per cent in 2005, at the same time as Family Allowance was increased for children aged under three, but was increased to 30 per cent in autumn 2009 to cover the costs of providing every child in day-care with a nutritious meal.

family income. All children have the right to childcare regardless of their parents' labour market attachment (Finansministeriet, 2005: 41) and there is a day-care guarantee from when a child is 26 weeks (six months) old²³⁴ (Finansministeriet, 2007: 51). However, local authorities may decide their own guidelines for provision at the local level, for example prioritisation of certain groups and the combination of full-time and part-time places.²³⁵

In Denmark there are play groups as in Britain, but most are for ages 0-1, as the expectation is that all children are in day-care beyond this age. In this sense, as discussed further in Chapter Six, for partnered women in Britain and Denmark the respective models constrain the capacity to work and care, but in different ways. As one government official suggested: "Parents do not want to keep their children out of day-care because that would mean that their children didn't have anybody else to play with because nobody else is at home." This was echoed by an academic: "In most public housing estates in Denmark it would be very odd being at home during the day, but that may not be the case in Britain." Furthermore, a social worker suggested that: "In Britain you still have that implicit idea that children staying at home until school age is preferable. It's better. It's not the only thing to do, but it is something which society should treasure...whereas in Denmark that's your private decision if you don't want to work." Day-care as a social norm in Denmark is also self-reinforcing in that parents want their children to benefit from day-care. Day-care also plays a role in relation to the integration of immigrants, as a social worker highlighted: "We actually see the day-care system in terms of integrating not only ethnic minorities but

²³⁴ This has been in place since 1995. Since 2005 all children aged eight months have been guaranteed a day-care place in a public setting within the local authority and since 2006 this has been extended to children aged six months. There are penalties for local authorities who cannot provide day-care to meet the guarantee. Parents must generally apply for day-care places three months in advance of requiring the place and if a day-care place cannot be provided, in some local authorities it is possible to claim an allowance to care for children at home. When children are aged around 10-12 months parents start to enrol them in either centre-based provision - *Vuggestuer* (crèches), *Børnehaver* (kindergartens), *Aldersintegrerede Institutioner* (age-integrated centres), or *Communal Dagpleje* (family day-care). Family day-care has similarities with the childminder model in Britain.

²³⁵ These priorities must be made public.

also for people who are from a long history of non-working families. We see the day-care system as something which can help these families change the pattern.” Nevertheless, one Danish academic did pose the question as to: “When is the norm supportive and when is it force to presume that you should be on the labour market? It’s about whether it’s force or empowerment.”

Authors such as Borchost (2002) have critiqued the Danish model for not providing sufficient choice: “Childcare services have served to commodify women rather than the opposite”(p.269). In the Danish model there is no cash or alternative to day-care provision, as in Finland.²³⁶ However, none of the Danish interviewees challenged the view that women with young children should work, for example on academic suggested: “Denmark has had record high activity rates for mothers with small children...0-2 has been the record for many many years. For many years the culture has been ‘Go out to the labour market.’” Furthermore, a government official stated: “The debate about whether women should work was over and done with in the 1970s. The focus is now on work-life balance.”

In contrast to Britain, although the day-care offer in Denmark is linked to the policy goal of increasing labour market participation (see Millar and Ridge, 2002: 102) the pedagogical focus²³⁷ comes first, as a government official explained:

“Part of the purpose of the [Day-care] Act is that actually it does have the labour market perspective, but it’s only a smaller part....Day-care is also very much viewed

²³⁶ In Finland since the mid-1980s child home care allowance (HCA) has been available as an alternative to municipal day care. HCA is a means-tested allowance (by family size and income) if one parent stays at home to care for a child aged below three. Hakim et al have argued for a Parental Care Allowance for the UK. See Hakim, C., Bradley, K., Price, E. & Mitchell, L. (2009) *Little Britons: financing childcare choice*, London, Policy Exchange.

²³⁷ Pedagogy is a complex concept, but can be summarised as expressing “the ideals of upbringing and development with a view to living a good life as an individual and as part of a community” - Juul Jensen, J. (2005) Pedagogy as an integrative concept: the Danish model of early education and care, in Daycare Trust (Ed.) *Learning with other countries: International models of early education and care*. London, Daycare Trust, 26-29. Page 26.

as an instrument in helping all children have the same possibilities in life. And that's why it's common for parents who are unemployed to also have their children in day-care. And that's also partly why it does have a lot of public funding."

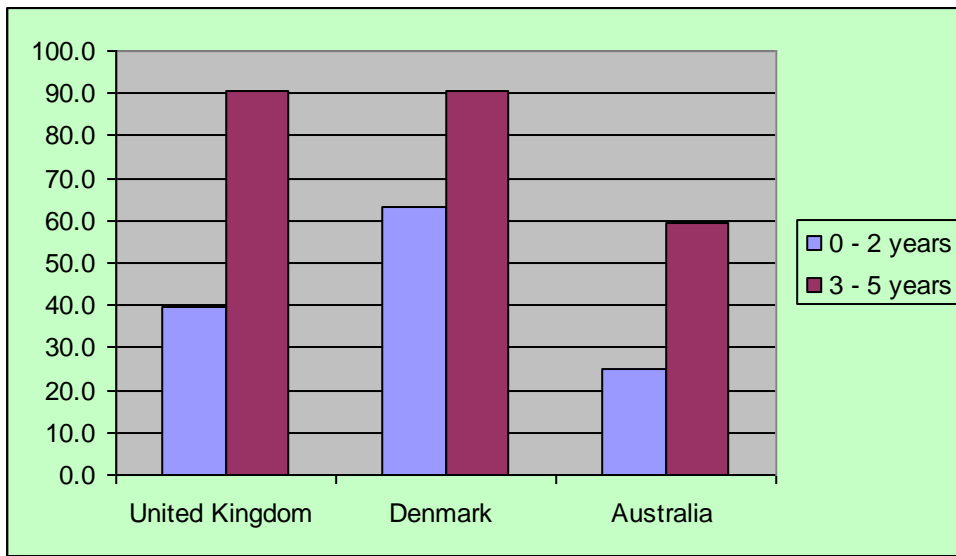
They further argued that:

"A good thing about having the pedagogical focus coming first is that it makes the parent feel more comfortable about going to work when their children are still very young. If your child had to attend a day-care facility that was mainly just for 'storage' while the parent is working, it wouldn't be very attractive."

By contrast, an Australian employment service professional commented that: "Women may want to work, but have concerns about putting their children into childcare." This underscores the importance of not merely the availability of replacement care, but also quality, accessibility and acceptability for families who wish to use it. Furthermore, in Australia there have been a number of policies which have encouraged partnered women to remain at home with their children, such as the Baby Bonus (which rewarded women who withdrew from the labour market after the birth of their child) and Family Tax Benefit Part B, which provides tax incentives to single-earner families. Such maternalist policies, particularly under the Howard government, may be one reason why despite having a foundation of childcare and a range of subsidies, enrolment in childcare in Australia is lower than in Britain. Figure 5.6 shows enrolment in childcare for 0-2 and 3-5 year olds in the three countries.²³⁸ Denmark has the highest enrolment, but Britain has a similar proportion of 3-5 year olds enrolled, primarily as a result of the early Years Entitlement (discussed below).

²³⁸ Compulsory school age is seven in Denmark, six in Australia and five in Britain. Figure A2.19 in Appendix 2 shows take-up of out-of-school hours care in Australia and Denmark.

Figure 5.6: Enrolment rates of children aged below 6 in formal care or early education services, 2006



Source: OECD Family Database

In Australia there are subsidies for childcare, occasional care, outside school hours care and vacation care in the form of two main types of provision: Childcare Benefit (CCB)²³⁹ and Childcare Rebate (CCR)²⁴⁰ along with the Jobs, Education and Training Childcare Fee Assistance (JETCCFA).²⁴¹ There are two points to be made about these subsidies in relation to the British and Danish cases. Firstly, both subsidies are subject to a work, study or training test. All eligible families can receive up to 24 hours of CCB per child per week, but to receive up to 50 hours both partners need to be working, training or studying for at least 15 hours per week (30 hours per fortnight), or have an exemption.²⁴² Eligibility for CCR is based on a similar work, study or training test as for CCB and covers up to 50 per cent of out-of-pocket childcare expenses, to a

²³⁹ Introduced in 2000 as part of the New Tax System. Childcare Benefit is the foundation subsidy, with the level determined by household income and the number of children cared for.

²⁴⁰ Formerly Childcare Cash Rebate and Childcare Tax Rebate. To be eligible for CCR families have to be assessed for CCB, but not necessarily receive it.

²⁴¹ See Chapter Four.

²⁴² The greatest gains from CCB are for low-income families, but CCR benefits high-income families the most. See Brennan, D. (2007a) The ABC of child care politics. *Australian Journal of Social Issues*, 42(2):213-225. In its first budget in 2008-09, the Labor Government increased the CCR from 30 per cent to 50 per cent of out-of-pocket childcare costs, which was viewed by some interviewees as regressive, benefiting higher earners.

maximum. Secondly, subsidies are paid for both approved and registered care.²⁴³ Approved services include long day-care, family day-care, outside school hours care, vacation care and some occasional and in-home care.²⁴⁴ Registered care is work-related childcare provided by carers registered with the Family Assistance Office and includes grandparents or other relatives, friends or nannies.²⁴⁵ However, one critique of these subsidies is that they familise other family members who may not wish to provide care on a formal basis. A further issue is the cost of childcare for working parents who do not receive the maximum rate. For parents on certain payments (including NSA and PP) undertaking activities such as job search, work, study or rehabilitation as part of an Employment Pathway Plan, JETCCFA provides extra help with the cost of approved childcare by paying most of the 'gap fee' not covered by CCB or CCR. Nevertheless, some academics interviewed suggested that the gap fee was not sufficiently covered. One campaigning organisation stated that "The JET CCFA is also essential because unless you reduce the childcare cost to practically zero it's a very big stumbling block."

Table 5.7 sets out the subsidies available to partnered women in Britain in respect of childcare, according to the proposed conditionality following the Welfare Reform Act and divided into universal support available to all, whether in or out of work and subsidies for those in work or on NDP.

²⁴³ The Childcare Payments Bill 1997 introduced a legislative basis for subsidies for use of approved and registered childcare, which included childcare provided by family members. Prior to this, Childcare Assistance had only been paid to approved long day-care centres.

²⁴⁴ To be approved, the service has to meet the regulations of the state government and the service has to participate in a Commonwealth accreditation process.

²⁴⁵ It can also include care provided by individuals in private pre-schools and kindergartens as well as some outside school hours care and occasional care. Grandparents tend to be the most-used care.

Table 5.7: Childcare subsidies available to partnered women in Britain

Age of child	Conditionality for partners post-Welfare Reform Act	Universal				Partners on NDP or in work: Jobcentre Plus subsidy Childcare Tax Credits Child Tax Credits Employer vouchers
		Child Benefit	Early years education	Sure Start Children's Centres	Extended schools	
< 1	Progression to Work: no conditionality	✓		✓		✓
1-2	Progression to Work: attend periodic WFIPs and agree action plan	✓	Some two year olds	✓		✓
3-6	Progression to Work: full conditionality, of WFIs, action plans, work-related activity, adviser direction	✓	Ages 3 & 4	To school age	From age 5	✓
7+ ²⁴⁶	JSA - full conditionality	✓			✓	✓

Universal support comprises the Early Years Entitlement of 12.5/15 hours of free early years education with a 'registered provider' such as a school, nursery or playgroup for 38 weeks a year.²⁴⁷ Following the publication of the Ten Year Childcare Strategy (Department for Education and Employment, 1998) all four year olds have been entitled to a free place in early education, from April 2004 extended to all three year olds for 33 weeks a year and from April 2006 extended to 38 weeks of the year. Take-up of the entitlement has increased since its introduction and in January 2009, 92 per cent of the three year old population and 98 per cent of the four year old population

²⁴⁶ This may be reduced to five under the Coalition government plans.

²⁴⁷ From April 2007 twenty pathfinder local authorities have been delivering an extended entitlement of 15 hours per week, rolled out nationwide by September 2010.

made use of the Early Years Entitlement (Department for Childre, Schools and Familis, 2009). Although take-up is low for the poorest families (Harker, 2006: 33) this is a cultural change in the use of provision outside the family. The Labour government extended this entitlement to the most disadvantaged two-year olds.²⁴⁸ Sure Start Local Programmes were targeted specifically at disadvantaged families and became Children's Centres providing universal provision in 2003.²⁴⁹ The Full Service Extended Schools (FSES)²⁵⁰ includes 8am to 6pm wrap-around, chargeable (for some parents) childcare, such as before and after school clubs for 48 weeks of the year, as well as access to other services.²⁵¹ Child Tax Credit is paid regardless of labour market participation but, as with some elements of the Australian subsidies, the childcare element of Working Tax Credit is linked to participation in paid work, as are Jobcentre Plus childcare subsidies (see Appendix 3). The childcare element of WTC is usually only paid to those working at least 16 hours a week and covers up to 80 per cent of childcare costs, to a maximum weekly limit.²⁵² Francesconi et al (2009) argue that this may not encourage low-earning couples into employment because both partners have to work 16 hours to claim the credit (p.F68). However, this could be argued to be in line with policies which aim to incentivise both partners to move into work, rather

²⁴⁸ From September 2009 15 per cent of the most disadvantaged two-year-olds have been offered 10 or 15 hours of free, high-quality childcare a week, equating to 20,000 places by 2011 and providing family support, parenting classes and wider support, effective partnership-working and outreach activity to engage families in using childcare. HM Government (2009a) *Next steps for early learning and childcare. Building on the 10-Year Strategy*, London, The Stationery Office.

²⁴⁹ Sure Start Local Programmes (SSLP) began in 1998, bringing together early education, childcare, health and family support services for parents-to-be, parents and children, adapted to local needs. Following *Every Child Matters* (2004), Sure Start provision moved from Local Programmes to Sure Start Children's Centres. Jobcentre Plus has also been piloting the approach of placing Advisers in Children's Centres to promote its services Marangozov, R. & Stevens, H. (2010) *Work-focused services in children's centres pilot. Interim report. Department for Work and Pensions Research Report No 677*, Norwich, Stationery Office.

²⁵⁰ Compulsory school age is five.

²⁵¹ To be established by 2010. Services will be based on the requirements of the local community and delivered in partnership. Support includes study support, parenting support, health care, adult learning and community activities and builds on provision introduced in 2001. See Cummings, C., Dyson, A., Papps, I., Pearson, D., Raffo, C., Tiplady, L. & Todd, L. (2006) *Evaluation of the Full Service Extended Schools initiative, second year. Thematic papers. Research Report no. 795*, Manchester, University of Manchester.

²⁵² Childcare Tax Credits may be claimed when only one partner is working if the other partner is receiving disability benefits.

than providing economic encouragement for one to remain at home.²⁵³ Employer-provided childcare vouchers provide tax relief for those in work (where schemes are in operation) and take-up is across a range of occupations and ethnicities, but predominantly by middle income earners (although disproportionately by manual and unskilled workers) and by lone parents rather than couples (Konings, 2010).

Randall (2000) argues that one of the reasons that childcare policy is not more developed in Britain has been the liberal reluctance to intervene in the private sphere, together with 'traditional' assumptions about mothering. However, she also argues that it was not so much that governments promoted such maternalist assumptions, as it did not interfere with them (p.185). Bacchi (1999) suggests that "governments are 'intervening' all the time, even when they are not 'acting' in the traditional sense"; one example of this is not providing publicly funded childcare (p.3). Nevertheless, in Britain the extension of the Early Years Entitlement to the most disadvantaged two-year olds marks an important policy shift in terms of functional (as well as normative) recalibration), as previous policy developments (and public funding) have concentrated on early years *education*, rather than early years *care*.

The previous two sections have considered childcare as a reflection of functional distribution, which may also be seen as a function of the welfare state in response to changing social risks, such as the reconciliation of work and care. The Danish case is a reversal of the situation in Britain where, as Chapter Four demonstrated, it is difficult for many partnered women to combine work and care, despite the promotion of labour market participation through activation policies for this group. In Denmark partnered women are commodified through activation and day-care policies and it is a social norm that they work full-time and take up day-care provided by the state. In Britain being in work when children are below school age is viewed as an individual

²⁵³ There is also a Childcare Charges Disregard for recipients of Housing Benefit, Council Tax Benefit and Working Tax Credit (WTC) working over 16 hours a week and on a low income. This disregard built on that introduced by the Conservatives from 1994 for those in receipt of Family Credit.

'choice', as the state does not provide comprehensive support for children aged below three, but instead a variety of piecemeal subsidies for what is viewed as a private issue. However, since 1998 there has been a significant shift in the provision of universal nursery education for three- and four-year-olds and the high take-up suggests that this is becoming a social norm. In Australia subsidies are available for a wider range of care than in Britain, such as family-provided care, but there has been a tension with more maternalist policies which encourage partnered mothers to care for their children themselves. Furthermore, receipt of many subsidies in both Britain and Australia is linked with labour market participation and as will be discussed further in Chapter Seven, such instrumentality is problematic.

5.6 *Summary*

This chapter has examined the findings from this study in relation to functional and distributive recalibration. Access to benefits has been considered as illustrative of the functional recalibration of social security for partnered women, with a focus on their status as workers, rather than wives/partners, or mothers. Active labour market policies for this group are reflections of a functional shift from welfare to workfare and this was demonstrated by the social contracts (*quid pro quo*) in each of the countries. Functional recalibration was also examined in terms of the role of the state in the provision of childcare. Distributive recalibration has compared social security and labour market policies in the three countries in relation to targeted and encompassing approaches to partnered women as a social group and within this context, individualised activation has been explored.

Consideration of these two sub-dimensions suggests that the three countries are on similar policy reform paths in relation to encouraging the labour market participation of partnered women, however each is at a different stage, with Britain lagging behind the other two in relation to partial individualisation of benefits, individualised

employment assistance and childcare. As a Danish academic commented: “All the other OECD countries are moving in the same direction, towards a work first approach, but it’s not the same to say that we are converging in any way because the starting point for this was very different.” In all three countries there has been a shift towards work first approaches. In Denmark this is exemplified by the 300 hours rule, although it is unclear whether this represents a more serious challenge to the Danish universal model. In Australia, *Australians Working Together* signaled a ‘step’ towards workfare for some partnered parents, but this became a ‘leap’ under the Welfare to Work reforms (Blaxland, 2008: 197), although the Labor government has introduced some more human capital-related elements to the overarching workfarist approach. The dominant British approach is work first, but partners have to an extent been excluded from workfare before the Welfare Reform Act 2009. The cases of Denmark and Australia suggest caution with regard to extending a workfarist approach to partners, particularly without childcare provision. The other side of encouraging partnered women’s labour market participation is the ‘farewell to maternalism’ (Orloff, 2006), which requires that care is transferred elsewhere.

Chapter Six - Normative representations of the policy 'problem'

6.1 Introduction

The focus of this chapter is normative recalibration, which is concerned with the values, norms and discourses which inform the policies relevant to partnered women in the three countries. "Normative recalibration...denotes symbolic initiatives and new discourses addressing the functional and distributive dilemmas of the *status quo* and the future directions of policy" (Schmidt, 2000 cited in Ferrera and Hemerijck, 2003: 92). Page (2007) suggests that "if it becomes broadly accepted that welfare reform should be determined solely by the weight of 'scientific' evidence there is a danger that the broader ideological and political rationales for such policies will be overlooked" (p.155). These rationales are important for consideration of the possibility of policy learning. An advantage of lesson-drawing is to enable researchers and policymakers to examine a policy problem in a different context, or to make the familiar strange (MacClancey 2002, cited in Lendvai and Stubbs, 2007) by examining a policy issue in a different context. This chapter builds on Chapter Four's discussion of the policy 'problem' evidenced in each of the countries by elaborating further how partnered women's worklessness is problematised, or socially constructed across the countries, as suggested by the elite interview data. Bacchi (1999) argues that "any policy proposal necessarily contains a diagnosis of the problem to be addressed" (p.199) by the policy community. This informs the policy responses and is an important aspect of gaining an in-depth understanding of the contexts of the countries as a basis for 'hard' policy learning.²⁵⁴

²⁵⁴ For example, Lewis demonstrates how differently the problems associated with lone motherhood are conceptualised in different countries - Lewis, J. (1999) The 'problem' of lone motherhood in comparative perspective, in Clasen, J. (Ed.) *Comparative social policy: concepts, theories and methods*. Oxford, Blackwell, 181-199.

The shift from welfare to workfare states (see Chapter Five) is reflected in normative debates that are “no longer exclusively concentrated on issues of distributive justice and income maintenance, but increasingly...on work-related values and aspirations...the division of labour between men and women in and outside the family” (Ferrera and Hemerijck, 2003: 92). It is argued in this thesis that the four sub-dimensions of recalibration are inter-dependent, but normative recalibration underpins the other three. The re-balancing of social security, labour market policies and childcare which we saw in the previous chapter as illustrations of functional and distributive recalibration is underpinned by conceptualisations of citizenship, social exclusion, integration and dependency. These aspects are considered in this chapter using Williams’ (1995) framework of ‘work,’ ‘nation’ and ‘family’.

6.2 *Work, nation and family*

Multi-layered welfare settlements emerged “from the state’s relationship to the specific and interrelated organisation, conditions, current and historic social relations of power, discursive practice, and forms of mobilisation associated with family, nation, and work” (Williams, 1995: 148). These three interrelated dynamics are a way of incorporating and illustrating the gendered and racial/ethnic social relations suggested by the interview data into this comparative study of partnered women. As Clarke (2004) argues, welfare states embody assumptions about work and care, as well as about national membership in relation to “who lies outside the nation” (p.48). Section 6.3 concerns ‘Work’ and discusses the normative justifications for the policies examined in the three countries, firstly using Serrano Pascual’s (2007) conceptualisations of economic rationality and incentives. Secondly, Serrano Pascual’s hegemonic regulatory assumptions relating to the meaning of work and citizenship are considered as normative underpinnings of the programmes relating to partnered women. Section 6.4 discusses ‘Nation and ‘culture,’ including culture as a reflection of the normative recalibration of nation states in response to increasing ethnic diversity,

particularly in Denmark. It also considers how 'culture' is used in a negative way in policymaking in relation to 'welfare dependency' and argues for its positive usage to describe the 'welfare cultures' (Pfau-Effinger, 2005) of welfare states. As Williams (1995) rightly highlights, each dimension of work, family and nation includes processes (and conceptualisations) of inclusion and exclusion (p.149), particularly exclusion from the labour market and these are explicitly discussed in Section 6.4 in relation to 'nation'. Section 6.5 considers 'Family,' specifically the tensions for partnered women in reconciling the demands of paid and unpaid labour (Williams, 1995: 149), heightened by the promotion of the adult worker model (Lewis, 2003) and the universal breadwinner model (Fraser, 1989) in policymaking. Section 6.6 summarises the chapter. In focusing on normative recalibration it is argued that welfare recalibration as a progressive dynamic of *renovation* and *re-casting* to achieve a better 'fit' with prevailing societal challenges (Ferrera and Hemerijck, 2003: 121-2) may wrongly assume that all families and households have equally recalibrated.

6.3 Work

For Serrano Pascual, two factors distinguish activation regimes: governance structures and institutional setting, and hegemonic regulatory assumptions (Serrano Pascual, 2007).²⁵⁵ Hegemonic regulatory assumptions have four aspects: (i) the meaning of work, (ii) the meaning of citizenship, (iii) who or what is considered to be responsible for the jobless situation of the individual and (iv) the duties of jobseekers and the duties of the state in terms of a social contract (*quid pro quo*). The three types of social contract (*quid pro quo*) in relation to activation were considered in Chapter Five as a reflection of the functional shift from welfare to workfare. However, these social contracts are informed by aspects of normative recalibration considered here. Who is deemed to be 'responsible' for the unemployment of the individual shapes the policy

²⁵⁵ As stated in Chapter Two, this analysis does not consider governance structures and institutional setting, but instead uses politico-institutional recalibration in Chapter Seven in relation to policy learning.

responses and this can be seen in the dichotomies of active/passive, as well as other policy drivers associated with activation, such as 'making work pay'. These in turn reflect conceptions of dependency versus work as a social norm and to social inclusion (and in particular in Britain the reduction of child poverty) in relation to wider conceptualisations of citizenship, including the adult worker model. These all "act as cultural frames that not only influence policy design, but also serve as a regulatory justification/foundation for these policies" (Serrano Pascual, 2007: 278).

Serrano Pascual's (2007) five types of activation regimes (discussed in Section 2.4, Chapter Two) are based on two aspects: (i) the modes of managing individuals and (ii) a new social contract (*quid pro quo*). Within the modes of managing there are two extremes of: (i) the moral-therapeutic management of behaviour and (ii) adaptive skills management. The first (moral-therapeutic) aspect has two dimensions. Firstly, an understanding of the 'problem' of unemployment as a consequence of rational calculations based on cost/benefit analyses (*homo economicus*) and, secondly, an understanding of unemployment as a personality failing. These have some similarities with the work of Mead (see for example Mead, 1986: 76-88, see also Roche, 1992: 129-134). The first holds that the individual does not wish to work, or that it is not worthwhile to do so (for example, because the gains from working are little compared to the stability of being on benefit), whilst the latter assumes that the individual is not able to work without assistance. Serrano Pascual argues that the first scenario sees the question as a moral issue, whilst the second treats the problem as a therapeutic issue (p.296) and these conceptualisations inform the policy responses. The buoyant labour markets which have been features of the three countries have seemingly given rise to the perception that people are not in work through their own choice, as a result of economic rationality or personality failings.

6.3.1 *Homo economicus*

The programmes examined in the three countries all include some aspect of ‘making work pay’ as a policy goal. Ferrera and Hemerijck (2003: 102) include wage subsidies as a supplement for low-incomes in functional recalibration. This aspect does have functional elements, for example in Britain the increasing importance of in-work benefits as a policy lever is a recalibration of the function of social security from providing wage replacement to supplementing low-paid work (see Millar, 2009: 247, Bennett and Millar, 2005). However, in line with Serrano Pascual, this analysis considers ‘making work pay’ policies as normatively driven in that they contain a diagnosis of the ‘problem’ of unemployment as a consequence of the economic rationality of individuals, which produces the policy response of enforcing work or job search as a moral obligation. Furthermore, this discourse conceals low-waged labour as a structural problem. Albrekt Larsen (2002) suggests that post-1994 activation in Denmark placed demands on unemployed people in order to counteract the low economic incentives of generous unemployment benefits (p.717). Some Danish commentators argue that since 2001 there has been ‘a new orthodoxy of economic ideas’ emphasising incentives (Goul Andersen and Pedersen, 2007: 14-5). Although there are no in-work benefits in Denmark, some measures have been introduced to make work pay, such as the introduction of the transferable tax allowance for couples in 2002, so that one spouse could earn more before the social assistance of the other spouse was reduced.²⁵⁶ Daguerre (2007: 98-9) argues that underlying the Danish government’s emphasis on making work pay is not the idea that people in low-paid jobs should earn more money, but that by reducing high benefit levels recipients can

²⁵⁶ In Britain the Conservative party in the Coalition government plans to introduce a transferable tax allowance to incentivise marriage. Prior to the introduction of independent taxation in 1990, the Conservative government proposed to allow husbands and wives to transfer their personal tax allowance to their spouse. As a result of a number of serious objections instead all persons were taxed as individuals, but an extra tax allowance was provided in the form of the married couple’s allowance (MCA), withdrawn by Labour in 2000 for all couples except those already aged 65 and over. See House of Commons Library (2009) *Tax, marriage & transferable allowances. Standard Note: SN/BT/4392*, London, House of Commons.

be encouraged to take up work. One Danish academic suggested: “There are these incentives based on ideological understandings of what the issue is.”

The threat of removal of benefit as a basis for a programme assumes that individuals have no other significant barriers to employment than economic disincentives or lack of motivation to work, or at least downplays these supply-side issues, as well as demand-side ones such as the availability of (suitable) work. This emphasises the link between the framing of the policy problem and the policy response, as interviewees highlighted of the 300 hours rule, for example a government official stated:

“This programme does not only provide for the housewife to get a job, it also gives economic encouragement for the husband to find a job...So, now before if they had two times social assistance, it was very difficult for that husband to go out and find a job that could match the twice social assistance. Now that they only have one social assistance, he also has a very good economic encouragement to go out and find a job...So, it’s a programme that enhances the availability of the other partner but also gives economic encouragement to get closer [to the labour market]”

Another government official suggested that:

“When you see that if you don’t want to accept the job the municipality gives you, they will take your money from you, so therefore I want to find a job myself. When you make these demands you see that many people can find a job themselves”

This is, to some extent, supported by the SFI evaluation (Bach and Larsen, 2008), although the sustainability of jobs is not known. However, social workers countered the notion of the success of the rule, arguing that: “For those who have the incentive to find a job, that’s very positive, but I do believe we would have been able to reach that target by other means. And what about those other women who don’t?” Furthermore,

as another social worker emphasised, there is still a group of partnered women who do not respond to such economic incentives, partially because they are not currently able to move into the labour market, for example as a result of ill health: “Match group 4 people are people who at the moment are not able to work. So, we’re saying that at the moment you’re not able to work, but afterwards we punish them financially for not working.” This view was supported by the trade unions, for example:

“We don’t believe in this punishment approach. We don’t believe so much in economic incentives. We think instead of punishing people you should help them to escape unemployment. If they’re immigrants, you should give them some language courses. Maybe they have some other problems, such as health problems. And also tell them that when you receive benefit you should not just lie home on your couch and watch TV; you need to apply for jobs all the time and keep courses and if you don’t do this, we think it’s ok if you lose money in some ways. There are some applications we do agree on. But we don’t agree about this punishment because these people cannot get a job because of other problems. Maybe employers discriminate. It’s not their own fault”

The pastoral role of Danish social workers was viewed by some policy actors, including social workers themselves, as being manifested in a ‘soft’ approach towards partnered women not in work. The government argued that the 300 hours rule arose out of a desire to activate a group of people who had been allowed to become inactive under the previous policy by introducing a more ‘objective’ element in the form of number of hours worked, as government officials highlighted: “There was some kind of feeling that it was still very hard to get these women to be actually really available. I think there was a feeling in the municipalities that they didn’t really try, they didn’t encourage them to go out and they didn’t ask them to go out and actually take some projects”; “Many social workers are not used to focusing on the labour market; they are used to dealing with the person: ‘We have to take care of them and don’t demand

too many things from people'...It's better for these people to get a job. It's no help to leave them." However, social workers countered the argument that they have been too 'soft': "You're not seeing the citizens. You have no idea...If you meet someone, you can say 'There's nothing wrong with him, he can go out' and you meet him and say 'I wouldn't send him out'. It's easy to state these things when you are so far away." The interviews with social workers also underscored their support for the right and duty to activation, also discussed in Chapter Five:

"You can see that the consequence during the 80s that people weren't activated, there were people who had received social assistance for 10, 15 years and we started to see that when you start activating people early then people don't get accustomed to being a client and they don't lose their hopes to get back to work. I think it's important for people not to be passive"

Other interviewees further emphasised that the 300 hours legislation did not allow for being 'soft', as one academic suggested: "When the reform was first implemented, some municipalities introduced it in a softer way, but the Ministry emphasised the need to implement it according to the law."

In Australia increasing incentives to work was a key driver for the *Working Nation* package, as well as changing eligibility for previously dependent partners (Commonwealth of Australia, 1994), based on analysis suggesting that joint entitlement and the joint income test disincentivised second earners (interview with former government official). As with the 300 hours rule in Denmark, *Welfare to Work* involved the threat of removal of benefit for parents who did not comply with paid work or job search requirements. For lone parents it involved transfer to a lower rate of benefit by moving them from a pension (PPs) to an allowance (NSA), but partnered

mothers were already receiving an allowance (PPp).²⁵⁷ Working Credits also aim to make work more attractive to income support recipients by allowing them to keep more of their payment whilst working (see Appendix 4).

There is an irony in the suggestion that the 300 hours rule provided an economic incentive to work in order to help people to avoid poverty, given that one outcome was that cash-benefit recipients and their families were likely to be in poverty (see Bach and Larsen, 2008): “It’s so drastic what is happening to these people and that’s our main concern. It’s just not possible for a family to live on what’s left without living in poverty” (social worker).

As the evaluation evidence suggests, the 300 hours rule has resulted in some economic and social marginalisation and is likely to continue to do so. The 300 hour rule was “seen as controversial from the start, as it was widely considered to break with previous practice in the benefits area” (Jensen and Lauritzen, 2008: 1). The rule was seen by many Danish interviewees as signifying a recalibration of the Danish welfare state, particularly in response to immigration. It was also viewed by many as breaking fundamental principles of the universal Danish model, as academics and social workers highlighted: “It’s making work pay at its most controversial because you are actually taking away their social assistance. You kind of de facto accept that people are living at below subsistence level. That’s not something we normally do in this welfare state”; “In Denmark labour market marginalisation has not been tantamount to social marginalisation” (academic); “This benefit is the last line of defence here. There’s no security net catching you afterwards. In that way it broke a fundamental principle in Danish labour market policy.” Social workers interviewed were amongst the most vociferous critics of the rule, for example:

²⁵⁷ Although, as has already been noted, PP recipients have a fluid relationship status and may transition between being partnered and sole parents.

“We hate the law. I don’t think you’ll find many social workers who think this is a just law. I think it’s discriminating and it makes people very poor and when people are poor their health gets worse, they don’t have money to send their children out with the other children with whatever the school organises. They are marginalised and you make them so different from the rest of society. Especially the children”

Similarly, in Australia there is evidence to suggest that the Welfare to Work reforms have resulted in increased poverty as well as increased stress, which again calls into question the policy goal (Martin et al., 2008, McInnes and Taylor, 2007). In Britain, the ideas of David Ellwood (Adviser to President Clinton) were influential to New Labour, particularly in the area of making work pay (Driver and Martell, 2006: 98).²⁵⁸ Policy initiatives such as Tax Credits²⁵⁹, the National Minimum Wage,²⁶⁰ the Ten Pence Tax Rate²⁶¹ and In-Work Credit (IWC)²⁶² aimed to increase the economic gains from low-paid work compared to being on benefit (the latter was specifically at parents). Australia does not have in-work benefits as such, but income support part payments (as well as Family Tax Benefit - see section 6.5) provide a similar function to British in-work benefits, although they are based on income, not on hours worked as in Britain.²⁶³ It could be argued that tax credits are viewed in policymaking as being more

²⁵⁸ Additionally, the European employment policy guidelines for 2002 (Council of the EU 2002) echo a 2000 OECD policy paper which stressed the need to reform tax and benefits systems in order to avoid unemployment and poverty traps and ‘to make work pay’. See Lewis, J. & Giullari, S. (2005) The adult worker model family, gender equality and care: the search for new policy principles and the possibilities and problems of a capabilities approach. *Economy and Society*, 34(1):76-104. Page 4.

²⁵⁹ The first in-work benefits were introduced in 1973 (as Family Income Supplement). New Labour transformed Family Credit (introduced in 1986) into Working Families Tax Credit in 1999 (renamed Working Tax Credit in 2003) and also introduced Child Tax Credit.

²⁶⁰ Introduced in November 1997. As of 1 October 2008 the NMW was £5.73 per hour for workers aged 22 years and older, with a ‘development rate’ of £4.77 per hour for workers aged 18-21 and £3.53 per hour for all workers under the age of 18, who are no longer of compulsory school age. Ferrera and Hemerijck (2003: 105) argue that two-thirds of the employees who have benefited the most from the introduction of the National Minimum Wage (NMW) are women who work part-time.

²⁶¹ The Ten Pence Tax Rate was introduced in 1990 and designed to benefit low earners. The abolition of this rate in 2008 was accompanied by a small increase in the tax-free personal allowance.

²⁶² A payment of £40 per week (£60 in London) for couple parents (either the main claimant or partner) during their first year in work if they had previously been receiving benefit for at least a year.

²⁶³ These limitations were introduced by the Conservative government. However, this also needs to recognise demand-side issues such as precarious employment. The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Iain Duncan Smith) has proposed a Universal Credit to replace existing benefits, which would have a taper rate based on earnings, rather than hours worked.

respectable given their explicit link to paid work and paying tax, as one Australian academic commented: “The part payments make the transitions smoother compared to the UK system. In the UK it’s about tax allowances being more respectable and working being more respectable” (see also Millar, 2009: 238, Bennett and Millar, 2005).²⁶⁴ Although part income support payments with earnings may be viewed negatively, in Australia increasing the numbers of recipients of part payments is a defined policy goal in reducing the extent of ‘welfare dependency’ (Department for Education Employment and Workplace Relations, 2010). Landt and Pech (2000) argue that since the 1980s in Australia “increasing numbers of people have come to rely on income support to supplement their earnings” (p.48). This, they argue, reflects both the increased participation in employment of people on income support and a reduction in the availability of secure full-time work, particularly for men. This relates to a functional recalibration of the role of benefits as a supplement to (rather than a replacement for) paid work and undermines the dichotomy of active/passive. Further, the binary of ‘working’ and ‘jobless’ (or active/passive) was challenged by evidence, as we saw in Chapters Four and Five in relation to AWT and the extent of existing social and economic activities (Alexander et al., 2005, Social Research Centre, 2005a, Blaxland, 2008). In Australia there is a federal minimum wage, the value of which was eroded under the Howard government (Masterman-Smith and Pocock, 2008: 53-4), but increased by the Labor government. There are also agreed wage rates for different industries, occupations, employers and job types which are set out in awards and agreements. In Denmark wages, working conditions and welfare are agreed through collective bargaining amongst the social partners (see Chapter Seven).

²⁶⁴ Introduction of a US-style earned Income Tax Credit has been considered in Australia. See Leigh, A. & Wilkins, R. (2009) Working Credits: a low-cost alternative to Earned Income Tax Credits? Melbourne Institute Working Paper Series. Working Paper No. 7/09. Melbourne, Vic, Melbourne Institute. Kalb conducted a micro-simulation of EITC which predicted that sole parents would benefit the most but that partnered women would not benefit as second earners. See Kalb, G. (2006) Evaluation of policy options to encourage welfare to work. *The Australian Economic Review*, 39(3):273-92.

Goodin and Schmitz (1998) argue that “The language of incentives suggests that the poor do not work because they have coldly, calculatedly determined that it is not worth their while working” (p.179).²⁶⁵ Policymakers may also wrongly over-emphasise economic rationality in relation to the labour supply of partnered women. Duncan et al (2003) refer to this as a ‘rationality mistake’ (p.310) in which policymaking conflates the individualisation model, which describes the preferences and values of individuals, with the new household economics, which describes how these are operationalised according to a gendered division of labour (p.323). Duncan et al argue that this may not reflect the reality of family life although, as Chapter Four illustrates, for partnered women in Britain the new household economics does have some relevance to their labour supply decisions across the household. Duncan et al suggest that Hakim’s preference theory²⁶⁶ (2000) is predicated on the individual and therefore ignores the importance of social ties and ‘socially negotiated moral responsibilities,’ which includes negotiation with partners (p.325). Further, Hakim’s preference groups are static, which also does not reflect the reality of family life for partnered women, who may have periods in and out of paid work throughout their lives, as well as transition between being lone and partnered parents. As Chapter Four demonstrated, partnered women sometimes moved into work as a result of changes in circumstances, such as children starting school or adjustment to caring responsibilities. Duncan and Edwards’ (Duncan and Edwards, 1999, Duncan et al., 2003) concept of ‘gendered moral rationalities’ accounts for the diversity of decision-making in relation to employment and caring amongst both lone and partnered mothers;²⁶⁷ such moral rationalities may lead mothers to prioritise caring over paid work (Duncan and Edwards, 1999). As we saw in Chapter Four, this prioritisation was a result of both structural as well as normative constraints.

²⁶⁵ Goodin (drawing on Steiner, 1974-5 and 1994) refers to a ‘thoffer’: a combination of a threat and an offer. See Goodin, R. E. & Schmitz, D. (1998) *Social welfare and individual responsibility*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press..

²⁶⁶ Hakim argued that women in Britain and the US can be divided into three groups according to their preferences for work-life patterns: home-centred women, adaptive and work-centred women.

²⁶⁷ They use the term ‘moral’ in the sense of ‘the right thing to do’.

6.3.2 *Hegemonic regulatory assumptions*

Serrano Pascual's (2007) concept of hegemonic regulatory assumptions relates to the prevailing understanding of unemployment in policies: whether as an individual or societal failing (p.294-8). Further, her notion of personality failings as a cause of unemployment is closely linked with the rationale of economic incentives discussed in the previous section. The former problematises partnered women's worklessness as a result of individual attitudes and a lack of willingness to work. In Britain there has been a focus on workless households and on economic inactivity,²⁶⁸ emphasising the worklessness of the individual, with the focus on the person being 'inactive' or passive rather than unemployed or without work. However, some British studies have highlighted that economically inactive groups such as sick or disabled people are actually hidden unemployed, or discouraged workers (see for example Beatty et al., 2010). One Danish trade union officer suggested:

"There are two things. Firstly, whether you believe in incentives or not and, secondly, whether you believe unemployment is an individual or a structural problem. If it's a structural problem of course you can find individual aspects about it too, but the main thing is that there is a lack of demand on the labour market. Of course you should solve structural challenges with structural solutions, but the individual solution is that you punish people"

There has been a shift in Denmark from viewing unemployment as a structural problem to seeing it as an individual failing. Until the late 1980s, unemployment was considered to be a product of insufficient demand, with Keynesian policy responses adopted (Goul Andersen and Pedersen, 2007: 5). However, from the late 1980s

²⁶⁸ Economically inactive people are those "who are out of work, but who do not satisfy all of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) criteria for unemployment because they are either not seeking work or are unavailable to start work" - National Statistics (2005) What is economic inactivity? <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/about/data/guides/LabourMarket/concepts/inactivity.asp> [Last accessed 30 April 2008].

onwards policy debates focused on the problem of structural unemployment, with an accompanying shift in activation to focus on supply-side policies, such as a mismatch between minimum wages and qualifications, insufficient work incentives and inflexible labour markets (Goul Andersen and Pedersen, 2007: 5). Albrekt Larsen (2002)²⁶⁹ critiques the focus on the 'problem' of structural unemployment caused by a mismatch of workers to jobs, suggesting that instead it was caused by low labour market demand. The individualisation of social problems diverts attention from structural factors. What can be observed in Australia and to a lesser extent in Denmark and Britain in relation to partners are not policy responses based on structural problems in the labour market itself, but as Serrano Pascual (2007) argues, supply-side responses which seek to 'blame' the individual for their workless situation. A Danish academic suggested that: "Denmark is shifting from a more structural understanding of unemployment to unemployment as an individual failing...you punish people because they can't get work. They must be doing something wrong, because they are lazy or will not take up the work they are offered...This is affiliated with this movement towards a more prominent work first approach, for example how the media handle the unemployment problems. It's very obvious that this has changed."

Hegemonic regulatory assumptions also reflect how policy conceptualises individual partnered women: as competent and responsible (active), or as dependent and passive (Serrano Pascual, 2007: 278). In both Britain and Australia there has been an emphasis in political rhetoric on the concept of 'welfare dependency'. However, welfare dependency has not historically been an overt policy driver for Danish labour market policy, apart from for young unemployed people (Torfing, 1999: 22). This is contested by Daguerre (2007), who argues that the overall rationale of the post-2001 reforms is to reduce welfare dependency by increasing the number of people in the labour market.

²⁶⁹ Albrekt Larsen further critiques the attribution of the Danish employment 'miracle' to this paradigm and to activation. Instead, he argues that the Danish miracle is more likely to have been a result of favourable macro-economic conditions and other public policies. See Albrekt Larsen, C. (2002) Policy paradigms and cross-national (mis)learning from the Danish employment miracle. *Journal of European Social Policy*, 9(5):715-735.

Danish activation has the twin aim of both policing moral hazard in a system of generous benefits and promoting an inclusive society (Kvist et al., 2008: 223). This study suggests that, although the latter has perhaps historically been the overriding goal, in more recent years the former has taken on more precedence and this is clear from the case of immigrant married women. In Denmark as in Britain such women outside the labour market are conceptualised as a 'problem' in terms of the risk of long-term benefit receipt in relation to increased poverty, as one government official highlighted:

"The Government's argument...is if you want to help them on a long-term process, it makes them more poor staying on social assistance. If you want to get them out of poverty, you have to help them get into the labour market. That's how you and your children will on the long-term be better off. So, we need to use some economic encouragements to help them get out of poverty because it's not a long-term solution that they stay for years and years on social assistance"

That benefit dependency as a personality failing is again linked with economic incentives to work highlights that Serrano Pascual's (2007) modes of managing individuals are not mutually exclusive, but may be combined. In relation to benefit dependency, one Danish government official commented that: "We're talking about the weakest group and of course you find Danes there too and many of them don't want to work, particularly if they come from a family where their parents aren't used to working, that's the kind of lifestyle." However, other interviewees suggested: "I would say it's a very few people who really if you asked them deep down, who doesn't want to work" (municipality); "Of course there are lazy people, but that's not the majority" (social worker). In Australia the notion of dependency was an important policy driver, as one employment service professional commented about Welfare to Work: "The policy is based on the idea that people are lying and cheating the system and need to be caught out." Further, a campaigning organisation suggested of the

government department implementing the reforms (DEWR) that: “Their brief was to cut down the numbers on income support at a fairly low cost.”

Borghgi and Van Berkel (2007) highlight that within the activation paradigm there has been a redefinition of social issues as a lack of (predominantly labour market or economic) participation rather than a lack of income, as well as an emphasis on individual responsibilities and obligations in preventing or solving social problems. The notion of paid work as a ‘social norm’ is important in considering policy responses to partnered women outside the labour market in all three countries. When AWT was introduced in Australia, the Minister stated: “The introduction of a part-time participation requirement will encourage and help parents prepare to return to work as children grow older, the usual situation for most parents with school-aged children” (House of Representatives, 2005: 2310). In Australia and Britain the majority of women with children return to work when their children are of school age, whereas in Denmark women tend to return to work earlier in their child’s life. A Danish academic suggested:

“I think that it’s very important to understand that going to work is a cultural expectation. There might be recessions, so there won’t be jobs, but then you get your benefits, but the rule of thumb is that everybody goes to work, everybody all the time and choosing to stay at home would be a very logical thing during your child’s first year but then you go back to work”

Whiteford (2009: 62) suggests that as Australia’s high level of joblessness can be attributed to mothers not working until their children are teenagers it is important to change expectations about participation in employment. As we saw in Chapter Five, to an extent the labour market absence of partnered mothers has historically been reinforced by access to Parenting Payment based on the principle of care until children were aged 16. Policies are based on cultural foundations concerning what is ‘normal’

in relation to waged work and the labour market (Pfau-Effinger, 2005: 8). The functional aspect of the provision of childcare is normatively informed in terms of what is provided and who provides it. Furthermore, the length of maternity, paternity and parental shared leave²⁷⁰ and the age at which children attend childcare and school are underpinned by normative assumptions concerning women's roles as wives, mothers, carers or workers. Such 'norms' are articulated in the construction of policies by policymaking elites.

Dependency is an ideological term (Fraser, 1997: 123). As Goodin (see Goodin and Schmitz, 1998) argues, the construction of dependency has a moral dimension, implicitly or explicitly suggesting that some forms of dependency (such as upon the family or the labour market) are preferable to other forms (such as dependency on the state). Goodin (2001: 198-9) suggests that 'moral panic' (see Cohen, 1980) is responsible for the focus in both the US and Australia on 'welfare dependency' and 'dole bludgers'.²⁷¹ Although the interim McClure report in Australia "provided striking evidence that the problem of welfare dependency did not actually exist...in due course the McClure Committee reported back with a set of recommendations designed to mitigate the worst effects of welfare dependency" (Bessant et al., 2006: 111). The 'work first' approach of Welfare to Work was partly a result of the rhetoric around the 'dependency' of sole mothers (McInnes and Taylor, 2007), constructing them as a group who were 'deviant and work-shy' (McInnes, 2006: 2). Chapter Five discussed how activation policies aimed at non-working partnered women have been an extension of those targeted at lone parents. However, Dean and Taylor-Gooby (1992) rightly argue that "Dependency, whether it be upon the market, the family or the state,

²⁷⁰ In Denmark maternity leave (*barselsorlov*) is 18 weeks at 100 per cent of earnings up to a ceiling; paternity leave is two weeks at 100 per cent of earnings and parental leave comprises 32 weeks (per family), until the child is aged 48 weeks. In Britain paid maternity leave is 52 weeks with Statutory Maternity Pay paid for 39 weeks at a flat rate and paternity leave is two weeks, also paid at a flat rate. In Australia Paid Parental Leave will be introduced from 2011, offering 18 weeks paid at the Federal Minimum Wage, although the introduction of paternity leave has been postponed.

²⁷¹ Goodin also critiques the term 'self-reliance' - Goodin, R. E. & Schmitz, D. (1998) *Social welfare and individual responsibility*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

is the universal condition of all social beings" (p.150). Women's unpaid labour in the form of care or working in the home facilitates men's independence as workers (Pateman, 1989). Breadwinner-based welfare states such as Britain and Australia were founded upon such dependency. However, dependency is presented as problematic by policymakers in both of these countries in the context of workless households and in Denmark in relation to immigration. Such a focus on dependency in moral terms is qualitatively different from arguments which highlight the disadvantages of women being outside the labour market, as one Australian campaigning organisation commented: "We were worried about women being outside the labour force for so long that it would be difficult to break back in and the problems of entrenched child poverty and long-term reliance on income support."

Borchost and Siim (1987) argue that it is crucial to focus on such variations in dependency: "There is a huge difference between being dependent as a client on social welfare, with public assistance as one's only source of income, and being dependent as a consumer of a public service offered as a universal benefit. The latter, of course, enhances access to market income and actually reduces one's dependency as a client." In Denmark dependence on the state is more acceptable in terms of use of services, particularly childcare, as a social worker highlighted: "There is a different relationship with the state in Denmark and also a different conception of welfare as being a positive thing." This is reflective of Danish universalism, where state, rather than family, provision is expected (Millar, 1999: 34). This was supported by other interviewees: "Day-care is very closely related to the whole concept of the Danish welfare state; that it is very normal that for aspects of life that the state provides a lot of services" (government official); "For people from other countries it's more common that they take care of sick persons; in Denmark we go to the community and we ask for help because we pay you high taxes. I think that's an important difference between England and Scandinavia" (local authority). This is in contrast to the negative

connotations of 'welfare' in Britain and Australia, where welfare does not tend to refer to 'well-being,' but emphasises reliance on income support.

The common thread of recalibration in Europe is the normative emphasis on gainful employment as the principal channel for achieving effective citizenship (Ferrera and Hemerijck, 2003: 123). The implication of this 'employment-anchored social policy' (O'Connor, 2005) is that participation in activities which are unpaid (such as caring for dependents) is of inferior value.²⁷² This was seen in Chapter Five in the recalibration of partnered women's access to benefits as wives/partners and mothers to workers, as well as in relation to the curtailment of caring activities as a legitimate reason for incapacity for work within social security and activation policies. Implicit in such an ideology are value judgements regarding the nature and extent of women's labour market participation. Ideology may be implicit in social assumptions as well as explicit ideological conceptions in informing the character of social welfare (Clarke, 2004: 48). Furthermore, countries' policies regarding labour market participation, as well as caring, reflect different conceptualisations of citizenship. Marshall (1963) ascribed social rights of citizenship to the 20th Century, following on from civil rights in the 18th Century and political rights in the 19th. However, this was predominantly in relation to men's rather than women's rights, given women in Britain, for example, did not achieve political rights until the 20th Century (Roche, 2010: 97). Roche (1992) has argued for a progressive approach to citizenship which accounts for both economic and social dimensions and moves beyond the individual requirements exhibited by the social contracts of activation (see Chapter Five).

²⁷² The economic value of unwaged care work in Britain adults has been calculated at £87 billion in terms of the cost of replacement care, which can be considered to be a saving to the Exchequer. Buckner, L. & Yeandle, S. (2007) Valuing carers – calculating the value of unpaid care. London, CarersUK. In Australia the cost is estimated at \$30.5 billion Carers Australia (2009) *Carers and workforce participation*, Deakin, ACT, Carers Australia.

In the Australian context, Saunders et al (2003: 6) have defined economic and social participation as follows: (i) economic participation includes paid work, self-employment, job search and study or training and (ii) social participation includes voluntary work, childcare and adult care (p.6)²⁷³ A number of authors (Giullari and Lewis, 2005, Land, 2002, Finch and Groves, 1983) have argued that unpaid care has both active and passive elements, which further undermines the construction in social security and activation of caring responsibilities as 'passive' and distinct from 'active' paid work (see Sinfield, 1997 for a critique of this binary). The tendency in workfarist policies to define care work as passive also helps to justify the low value attached to it (Giullari and Lewis, 2005: 15). This is not to undermine the importance of economic participation for many partnered women, but the two types of participation are perhaps better characterised as a spectrum than as a dichotomy. Millar (1994: 89) suggests that the dichotomy of dependence/independence also makes little sense when paid work does not guarantee adequate income and must be supplemented by in-work benefits.

This section on 'Work' links closely with Section 6.5 in relation to 'Family' as the policy 'problem' of partnered women in all three countries is conceptualised as a lack of access to paid work, although partnered women are likely to be working in the home and caring for adults, children or both. This section has specifically considered two normative underpinnings of policy change relating to partnered women, based on Serrano Pascual's (2007) hegemonic regulatory assumptions of economic incentives and personality failings. Economic incentives were explicitly cited as a driver for the 300 hours rule in Denmark, however 'making work pay' as a policy goal was also apparent in Australia and Britain. The notion of dependency has been an important foundation for activation policies relating to sole parents in Australia and by extension

²⁷³ While parents of young children may participate in toddler groups, Saunders et al make the distinction that other forms of caring may not involve interaction outside the home. See Saunders, P., Brown, J. & Eardley, T. (2003) *Patterns of economic and social participation among FaCS customers*, Canberra, Department of Family and Community Services..

to partnered women. Although in Britain partners of main benefit claimants could not so easily be considered 'welfare dependent' if they were not claiming benefit in their own right, as we saw in Chapter Five, dependency has been important in relation to the functional recalibration of partnered women's access to benefits from dependants to claimants in their own right. Although dependency has not been an overt feature of Danish activation policy, it has been used as a justification for the 300 hours rule, although a major critique of the programme is that it increases women's familial dependency. This is discussed further in Section 6.5, where the privileging of economic participation is also considered in more detail. Serrano Pascual's (2007: 297) notion of personality failings highlights that policies relating to partnered women may consider attitudinal factors to be a cause of unemployment. In terms of normative recalibration, this can be related to the normative shift from considering caring or working in the home as a legitimate constraint on employment, elaborated further in consideration of 'Nation' and 'culture'.

6.4 *Nation and 'culture'*

Williams (1995) suggests that a new welfare settlement or order may be characterised by "particular configurations of power relations and discourses shaped by family, nation, and work" (p.155). Similarly, Clarke (2004) argues that "Nations have to be remade in the face of shifting conditions, borders, populations and problems" (p.41). Welfare state policies are based on specific notions of 'social integration': cultural ideas about 'social inclusion' and 'social exclusion' and the nature of citizenship (Pfau-Effinger, 2005: 8). Kvist and Pedersen (2007: 100) argue that one way of legitimising Danish activation is that employment is seen as being the best way to avoid social exclusion. This relates to the idea of 'an inclusive society' with respect to every person being able to realise their potential as active citizens. Daguerre (2007) argues that "social inclusion remains at the heart of activation" in Denmark (p.100) and, as government officials stated, a defined policy goal of the 300 hours rule was to: "help

people integrate into Danish society by going out on the workforce". However, social workers challenged this, arguing:

"It does the opposite of integration. It sounds like we want to do something for integration on the one hand and it's for everybody this law, but it's the families that are not from Denmark that are affected. It symbolises the understanding of the word 'integration' in Denmark on a political level...Integration is something with culture and people getting together but integration on the labour market and if you are not on the labour market, you cannot be integrated. That's the big headline"

"When people receive social assistance they are obliged to participate in activation projects...Once the 300 hours rule hits you and you no longer receive social assistance you are no longer obliged to participate. The local authority can offer you to participate but you are not obliged to say yes...So in a funny way if this law was meant to put them closer to the labour market or what we feel is better integrated into society...it goes the other way"

In Britain one of Labour's policy agendas was social exclusion, including the establishment of the Social Exclusion Unit.²⁷⁴ Similarly, in Australia under the Rudd Labor government there was a focus on social inclusion, including the establishment of a Social Inclusion Board.²⁷⁵ The Rudd Government adopted a new definition for jobless families: those with dependent children aged between 0 and 16 and no recorded earnings in the past 12 months; individuals in such households are likely to be claiming full rather than part benefit payments.²⁷⁶ The Danish case demonstrates

²⁷⁴ Now the cross-departmental Social Exclusion Taskforce focusing on the combination of aspects such as unemployment, discrimination, poor skills, low incomes, poor housing, high crime and family breakdown.

²⁷⁵ See Hayes, A., Gray, M. & Edwards, B. (2009) *Social inclusion: origins, concepts and key themes*, Barton, ACT, Commonwealth of Australia.

²⁷⁶ In 2000 the McClure Report acknowledged the link between low participation rates and relative deprivation and social exclusion. See McClure, P. (2000b) *Participation support for a more equitable society. Interim report of the Reference Group on Welfare Reform*, Canberra, Department of Family and Community Services.

that there is also an ethnic element to a political agenda of social inclusion or social exclusion, which in the British case is not as overt. Clarke (2004) argues that New Labour's multiculturalism can be said to be based around 'tolerance' and "attempts by the centre left to reinvent 'solidarity' around national/ethnic homogeneity" (p.68). Rather than a policy such as the 300 hours rule, in Britain there have been a number of activation programmes specifically targeted at ethnic minority groups and in particular in relation to partners (POEM). In Australia a distinction can be made in labour market policies between those referred to as culturally and linguistically different (CALD) groups and indigenous groups (including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples). The CALD group in particular did not overtly feature in the interviews with policy actors and that this was the case is of interest. Indigenous Peoples have featured more explicitly in government policies, including income support and employment policies. In Australia the Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) scheme (operational since 1977) has been viewed as "the most significant labour market program targeted at Indigenous Australians" (Altman and Gray, 2005: 4). Interviewees were reluctant to engage in discussion of issues relating to the employment of Indigenous Peoples, apart from to highlight the 2007 Northern Territory National Emergency Response (known as the NT intervention) which introduced a clear racial element to income support payments. Amongst a number of measures was income management (quarantining) of payments to ensure children's needs were met.²⁷⁷ The low employment rates for Indigenous Peoples have historically been, and continue to be, a politically sensitive area. However, aspects relating to Indigenous Peoples are beyond the scope of this study (see Section 4.2.3).²⁷⁸

²⁷⁷ See

http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/sa/indigenous/progserv/ntresponse/about_response/overview/Pages/about_nter.aspx [Accessed 6 October 2009]

²⁷⁸ Interviewees voiced concern that such issues be considered in an in-depth and discrete way and this was not possible within the scope of the research. Documents relating to Indigenous employment were sourced but these did not discuss women, or partnered women.

Examining the 300 hours rule in Denmark and POEM in Britain demonstrates the different approaches to the engagement of partnered women from ethnic minorities within active labour market policies. Clarke (2004) argues that “What the ‘cultural turn’ makes visible is the way in which welfare is about the nation and the people as much as it is about ‘work’” (p.47). Nation is articulated with race, ethnicity and culture (Williams, 1995: 146). From the Danish case the notion of ‘culture’ or ‘social norms’ was important to the representation of the ‘problem’ of partnered women outside the labour market. Although this was also the case in Britain, this was to a lesser extent. A number of Danish interviewees referred to a distinction between the dominant Danish cultural model of the dual breadwinner, supported by day-care, from which some immigrant families were seen to diverge, as an academic highlighted:

“We do have both a financial support system and the day-care institutions so that it’s actually possible for a mother to work practically full-time and this has been so for quite a long time. So, if you choose not to do it, it’s alternative to the culture, to the general opinion and idea of how family life should be led”

It was suggested in the parliamentary proposal for the 300 hours legislation, as well as by some of the interviewees, that women in immigrant and ethnic minority couples often do not work outside the home and are also less likely to use formal day-care outside the family, as one academic suggested: “There are cultures in which having a spouse at home is much more natural or expected than it is in the majority Danish or Scandinavian culture.” The Danish interviews support Daguerre’s (2007: 9) suggestion that the policymaking elites framed the policy problem of partnered women outside the labour market in cultural terms: “Some of the municipalities say that their feeling is that a lot of these women were not allowed to go out and take a job, even though they might have wanted to. There was a cultural thing and now they have a good excuse because now they have to if they want to keep the social assistance. Or go out and find a job and help providing for the family” (government official); “The culture

says also for a number of these people that it's not acceptable for her to provide" (Jobcenter).

The notion of cultural barriers was based on the premise that some immigrant women were outside the labour market because of their husbands' negative views about them working, rather than through their own choice (Jensen and Lauritzen, 2008: 5). In this way, the 300 hours rule was viewed positively as "an argument that they could bring to bear on their husbands" (Jensen and Lauritzen, 2008: 5, see also Ardejsdirektoratet, 2009). This was contrasted with the high female labour market participation in Denmark, equated with gender equality, suggested by a Jobcenter employee: "In Denmark it's important for women to get out and get their own money and not be dependent on their husbands". A conflict has been constructed between minority cultural traditions and "Danish" equality norms (Langvasbråten, 2008). However, some interviews countered this, for example an academic argued: "There have been a number of studies which on a rather weak basis of a low employment rate concluded that this implied that there was probably a 'housewife mentality.'"

Evaluation evidence from POEM and NDP (Aston et al., 2009a, Bewley et al., 2005: 2) in Britain suggested that there are cultural barriers to work for women from ethnic minorities (particularly Muslim women), in which men were reluctant for their wives to work. In Australia some interviewees working with partnered women receiving income support suggested that some husbands do not want their wives to work and that in some cases (for both migrants and non-migrants) this is related to oppression or even risk of domestic violence at home (interview with employment service professional). Some policy actors working directly with partnered women expressed concern that the increased work testing under Welfare to Work risked harm occurring to women with violent partners, along with their children (interview with employment service professional). However, such circumstances and attitudes do not necessarily affect all ethnic minority (or immigrant) groups, as some Danish

interviewees highlighted: “The research shows that not all immigrant women...have this housewife mentality. Many of these women also want to work” (researcher); “It’s important to emphasise that there are a lot of immigrants who work” (Jobcenter). Further, one researcher stressed: “Immigrant women are so heterogeneous” and this is underlined by Sainsbury (2006: 230), who highlights that immigrants may be labour or economic migrants, refugees, asylum seekers or political immigrants, family members, ethnic ‘citizens’ or undocumented migrants.

A further distinction was drawn by some Danish interviewees between the dominant Danish model of day-care and the reluctance of some immigrant families to use formal care: “One problem is that some immigrant women don’t know what [day-care] could do for their children” (researcher). It had even been suggested by a Social Democrat that immigrants should be required to place their children in day-care. However, as we saw in Chapter Five in relation to Integration-Jobcenters in Denmark and the POEM pilot in Britain, this was viewed as an opportunity to increase awareness of provision: “We actually want these [immigrant] families to put their children into day-care. If they speak the language they know at home they’ll never learn Danish and that would forever stop them in this society” (social worker); “Sometimes families are not quite sure what day-care is, so information is definitely a critical issue in heightening participation” (government official). These comments are supported by the OECD (2006b), which has suggested that early years provision has a role in supporting the integration of immigrant and ethnic minority families, particularly where parents or children lack language proficiency. However, there may also be cultural issues regarding take-up, which is seen amongst some ethnic minority partnered women in Britain (Aston et al., 2009a), although Koning (2010: 21) suggests that employer childcare vouchers are taken up by a large number of ethnic minority groups.

In Denmark the notion of ‘difference’ between immigrants and ‘ethnic Danes’ was emphasised in relation to the 300 hours rule. Some Danish interviewees referred to the

diversity of family models in Britain, compared with the dominance of the dual-earner model in Denmark,²⁷⁹ particularly when considering different ethnic groups, as an academic highlighted: “Danish society is more homogeneous than British society so immigrants are seen as being different.” Such diversity of models in Britain is also highlighted by Daly and Rake (2003). Another aspect was the comparatively recent immigration to a homogeneous country such as Denmark, compared with Britain: “One of the things you have to understand about Denmark is that we’re about 50 years behind other countries in terms of immigration. Immigrants came to Denmark in the 70s” (social worker). In the interviews, references were made to a ‘clash’ of cultures and, for example, “the dilemma and capability of integrating different cultures to Danish culture” (local authority). However, this was critiqued by academics as viewing women from ethnic minorities as homogeneous: “Immigrant women come from very many different countries and many are highly educated. This is the problem with saying ‘culture’: you don’t differentiate...it’s a problem using culture.” Similarly, a researcher suggested:

“It’s very problematic that we as a society believe that ‘They have a problem other than us and we cut their benefits’...We have to be critical about whether their culture really is the problem. If the main reason why they don’t work is because they don’t have qualifications and they don’t know anything about Danish labour market, why should we then take their money? Is this the right way to help them?”

A survey of nine different ethnic minority groups by Goul Andersen (2008: 23, 33) highlights that attitudes to work amongst ethnic minorities (as well as attitudes to receiving benefits) are similar to those of ethnic Danes. Low employment may be a response to barriers of discrimination (Armstrong et al., 2009: 266) and social workers concurred with this: “Some [immigrants] are afraid to get into the labour market. They

²⁷⁹ However, in Denmark the anti-immigration policies (of which the 300 hours rule is one) are also linked with Danish identity, which is outside the scope of this research.

are afraid of the Danish people and of being misused”; “It’s so difficult to explain the fairness in this law...Nobody wanted to hire you and now we take your money.” A Danish researcher contrasted the Danish approach to the labour market participation of immigrants with that of other Nordic countries: “We have to understand the driving forces behind these beliefs, compared to other countries like Sweden and Norway, who don’t cut benefit. They discuss discrimination and in Denmark we discuss culture.”

The creation of a group as being ‘other’ than can be related to the creation of specific groups as recipients of policies, particularly in the context of targeted policies which by definition are directed at, or involved in the creation of, social groups (discussed in terms of distributive recalibration in Chapter Five). However, Armstrong et al (2009) urge caution against “accepting different standards for different groups” as in this way “existing *inequalities* are explained away by reference to...‘cultural difference’ or ‘diversity’” (p.267). Clarke (1999) suggests that culture is a “field or domain of social life in which meanings are produced and reproduced...[and] in the process, some sets of meaning may...[become] the ‘way of life’ of a social group” (p.77). This differs from a ‘quasi-anthropological concept of culture’ which suggests that “sets of traditions, values, beliefs and habits that characterise (or are believed to characterise) a distinctive social group” (p.73). Important to Clarke’s definition of culture is the role of agency in the production and reproduction of meaning. Pfau-Effinger (2008) suggests that culture consists of “constructions of sense to which people orient their behaviour”, which includes values, models and stocks of knowledge (p.21). This conceptualisation relates to both culture at the individual and family level, as well as to the cultural and ideological beliefs which inform policymaking, constructed through the agency of policy actors. The argument that welfare dependency is a ‘way of life’ for a significant number of people has been used to justify the existence of a ‘dependency culture’ and Murray’s (1984) concept of the ‘underclass’ is culturally constructed. Such concepts have been challenged by empirical evidence (Dean and Taylor-Gooby, 1992, Beatty et

al., 2010). Pfau-Effinger (2005) defines a 'welfare culture' as a country's dominant model of welfare: "the relevant ideas in a given society surrounding the welfare state and the way it is embedded in a society" (p.4). In both Britain and Australia welfare reform documents refer to an intended shift from a 'welfare culture' to a 'work culture' (Department for Education Employment and Workplace Relations, 2008, Department for Work and Pensions, 2009b: 10), again drawing on the one hand on notions of dependency and on the other on work as a norm.

Just as the welfare states of Britain and Australia were predominantly based on a white male breadwinner model, the Danish welfare state was also constructed on the basis of a less ethnically diverse population. Examination of the 300 hours rule suggests that Denmark is attempting to combine universalism with difference, which Williams (1995: 129) argues constitutes 'a new politics of welfare.' In terms of hegemonic regulatory assumptions Serrano Pascual (2007: 278-9) suggests that a political understanding of unemployment links unemployment to national identity and the viability of the welfare state, which may lead to activation focusing on national citizenship. Anti-immigration rhetoric in the Danish media and Danish government reports suggest that immigrants are deliberately arriving in Denmark as 'welfare tourists' (Daguerre, 2007: 95) to take advantage of the welfare system (notably, a claim also made by some of the right-wing British media about immigrants to Britain). In this way, the 300 hours rule in Denmark is an example of symbolic policymaking, as stated by the following Danish interviewees: "The 300 hours rule is a very limited arrangement in some senses...[but] This is one very clear and symbolic example of some of the policy developments taking place in Denmark" (academic); "We didn't have that point of view that we had to have more women into the labour market because in Denmark there's quite a lot of women who work" (government official); "It's not a rational argument that we're spending a lot of money there or we would save a lot of money there" (academic). Daguerre (2007) suggests that in Denmark stronger work requirements and sanction regimes have been "more

symbolic than real” (p.103). Both this study and evidence such as Bach and Larsen (2008) contest this view, highlighting the reality of the 300 hours rule in relation to loss of benefit and increased poverty.

The 300 hours rule was viewed by policy actors as being reflective of the influence of the *Danske Folkeparti* (DFP - Danish People’s Party²⁸⁰), a Radical Right-Wing Populist Party, combining ethno-pluralist xenophobia, welfare chauvinism, anti-establishment populism and EU-scepticism (Rydgren, 2004: 488). The DFP has “constructed immigrants as a threat to the homogeneity and cultural way of life in a small nation like Denmark” (Daguerre, 2007: 93).²⁸¹ Although on taking office in 2001, *Venstre* (Liberals) had originally stated that the DFP would not have undue influence on their policies (Daguerre, 2007: 82), in fact they occupy a pivotal position and a de facto role as an unofficial coalition partner (Rydgren, 2004: 487).²⁸² Similarly, an Australian campaigning organisation suggested that the Welfare to Work reforms were a reflection of political power: “The government had obtained control of the upper house of Parliament, it didn’t have to negotiate with anybody, it wanted to save money on social security payments, so it forged a policy without really consulting with anybody.”²⁸³ Early in the implementation of AWT there were signs of resulting ‘positive improvement’ (House of Representatives Standing Committee on Employment Workplace Relations and Workforce Participation, 2005: 149), but just

²⁸⁰ Founded in 1995, the Danish People’s party was a breakaway faction of the Danish Progress Party, which emerged in 1972 and was a populist anti-tax protest party. See Rydgren, J. (2004) Explaining the emergence of Radical Right-Wing populist Parties: the case of Denmark. *West European Politics*, 27(3):474-502.

²⁸¹ Active labour market policies aimed at immigrants can also be viewed in the wider context of race relations in Denmark, for example the Danish ‘cartoons crisis’ of 2005 and the publication of the Danish ‘canon’. See Mohring Reestorff, C. (2007) Kulturpolitiske kanonkugler. Kulturkanonen og kulturens nationalstatslige foranfring (The Cultural Canon and the national anchoring of culture). *Kulture & Klasse*, 35(2):86-109.

²⁸² This was also stated in a number of the interviews with policy actors as important context to the 300 hours rule.

²⁸³ Blaxland emphasises the speed at which the two bills progressed through Parliament and states that its passage was hastened by the fact that the Howard Government’s Liberal/National Coalition had achieved a majority in both Houses of Parliament in the 2004 election. See Blaxland, M. (2008) Everyday negotiations for care and autonomy in the world of welfare-to-work: the policy experience of Australian mothers, 2003-2006 (PhD thesis). Sydney, University of Sydney.

two months later Welfare to Work, in contrast to AWT, passed into legislation after little parliamentary debate (Blaxland, 2008: 32), suggesting that its principal political driver was ideology.

Although in the case of partnered women in Britain and Australia the 'nation' element is less evident than in Denmark²⁸⁴ there are similarities between the countries in the notion that those not in work (and, importantly, claiming income support) are 'other' (Lister, 2004) than the majority of the population. The 300 hours rule can be viewed as a negative policy tool which risks further marginalising an already disadvantaged group by removing their safety net. The agenda driving the 300 hours does not seem to be numbers of couples claiming social assistance or potential savings to be made. To an extent it reflects the Danish policy agenda of increasing labour supply, but is illustrative of normative recalibration in relation to the construction of a sub-section of immigrants as not wishing to work and who do not share the dominant values. The Danish case is of interest to Britain in terms of ethnic minority partnered women: the 300 hours rule appears to undermine more supportive policies for immigrants in Denmark, such as the services provided by Jobcenter-Integration and by encompassing activation. The Danish case also highlights the construction of 'culture' in labour market policy. Policies cannot be said to be merely evidence-based, but are ideologically-driven. It was notable from the interviews that the views of Danish government officials concerning the policy 'problem' diverged from those of other policy actors, particularly those working directly with partnered women affected by the policies. This highlights the importance of policy elites in the construction and representation of policy 'problems'.

²⁸⁴ Apart from for Indigenous people in Australia, who have been associated with 'welfare dependency'.

6.5 *Family*

The following two sections consider aspects relating to 'Family' as reflections of normative recalibration, although these overlap with the first section of this chapter concerning 'Work'. The first section discusses the shift towards the adult worker model family (Lewis, 2001) reflected in policies relating to partnered women and highlights the basis, continuing legacy and tensions apparent in recalibrations to the male breadwinner-based welfare states of Australia and Britain. This is contrasted with the relative absence of such a foundation in Denmark, in which partnered women are viewed less as carers and mothers, than as workers. Fraser's (1997) typology of family models is considered and it is argued that all three countries are moving towards achievement of the universal breadwinner model, but only Denmark has virtually attained it. The second section focuses on de-familialisation (McLaughlin and Glendinning, 1994, Lister, 1994) and considers different conceptualisations of gender equity (Armstrong et al., 2009). It argues that all three countries promote the 'sameness' model but with differing bases of care provision. It further argues that the commodification of partnered women in Denmark as an expression of gender equity may itself be a constraint on women's own wish to fulfill caring roles.

6.5.1 *From the male breadwinner to the adult worker model family*

In the 1990s most Western European governments shifted towards the assumption of the adult worker model (AWM) family, during a period of 'welfare state retrenchment' (Lewis, 2003: 176). The central tenet of the AWM (Lewis, 2006, Lewis and Giullari, 2005, Lewis, 2001) is the notion that all adults are capable of paid work. The concept has similarities with that of the 'citizen worker' (Rake, 2001), which relates to the social contracts discussed in terms of functional recalibration in Chapter

Five.²⁸⁵ The adult and citizen worker models build on societal changes such as increased female labour market participation, increased educational attainment, and changes in the structure of both families and the labour market. However, as Esping-Andersen (2009) highlights, such societal changes have not been evenly distributed. This section also highlights that some partnered women in all three countries may consider responsibilities other than fulfilling the requirements of the activation contract to be more important (Griggs and Bennett, 2009: 61).

The concept of the adult worker model family assumes that the male breadwinner model no longer exists, or at least is less pervasive than it was. In 1998, the New Labour Government declared the welfare state based around the male breadwinner as being “increasingly out of date” (Department for Social Security, 1998: 13), although as Chapter Five highlighted, the British benefit system still demonstrates the legacy of this model. In recommending the introduction of policies aimed at encouraging non-working partners into work in 1998, Taylor (1998) highlighted that policies required only one member of a couple to actively seek work when claiming JSA and this partner was not necessarily the one with the most ‘marketable skills’ (p.26). The changes introduced by *Working Nation* in Australia “sought to improve the financial returns obtained from increased work. They were aimed at encouraging people to take up part-time work, mainly by encouraging *both* members of a couple to work” (Warburton et al., 1999: i). This can be contrasted with both NDP and the 300 hours rule, where the aim was to target the member of the couple most likely to move into work. However, whereas in both Britain and Australia part-time work is seen as a strategy for encouraging people (particularly women) into work (for example Warburton et al., 1999: iv),²⁸⁶ this is not a strategy in Denmark, where full-time work is more prevalent (see Table A2.2 in Appendix 2).

²⁸⁵ Further, in terms of the ‘social investment state’ the concept of the citizen worker also holds that children are the citizen-workers of the future. See Lister, R. (2006) Children (but not women) first: New Labour, child welfare and gender *Critical Social Policy*, 26(2):315-335.

²⁸⁶ See also Millar, J., Ridge, T. & Bennett, F. (2006) *Part-time work and social security: increasing the options. Research report No. 351*, Leeds, Corporate Document Services.

The adult or citizen worker models can be seen in the British Labour Government's policy goals of an 80 per cent employment rate, of reducing worklessness and economic inactivity and of reducing child poverty (see Gardiner and Millar, 2006).²⁸⁷ However, the AWM is gendered as it is undermined, firstly, by both women's low pay and, secondly, by the problem of unpaid and unequal work within the household (Lewis, 2003: 180). In both Britain and Australia in the 1980s there was an acceptance that many women would not be in the labour market and an overriding concern about the numbers of men out of work as a result of industrial decline. However as Orloff (2006) argues, countries are moving away from a 'maternalist' policy model under which mothers are expected to stay at home to care in favour of 'employment for all' in which women are expected to enter the labour market.

Rhetoric about women's engagement in paid work has a differing normative basis for different groups of women. As discussed in Chapter Five and in Section 6.3.2 above, targeted policies in Australia and Britain have predominantly focused on lone parents, but have been extended to partnered parents. Furthermore, the normative basis for some of the Australian Howard government's (1996-2007) policies can be viewed as contradictory in relation to different groups of women. On the one hand, welfare reforms such as Australians Working Together and Welfare to Work increased activity testing for lone and partnered mothers, emphasising the disadvantages of remaining at home if they were receiving benefit. On the other hand, tax reforms encouraged some mothers to stay at home. Family Tax Benefit²⁸⁸ is designed to assist families with the costs of raising children and is split into two parts: A and B.²⁸⁹ Family Tax Benefit Part A is similar to Child Tax Credit in Britain (Millar, 2009: 238) and is means-tested

²⁸⁷ The basis given for the 80 per cent objective is to address the dependency ratio, usually defined as the ratio of those of working age to those of retirement age, or the ratio of workers to non-workers. This requires another 2.5 million people to be in work, comprising 300,000 lone parents, 1 million Incapacity Benefit claimants and 1 million older workers - Department for Work and Pensions (2005) *Five Year Strategy: Opportunity and security for all*, London, TSO.

²⁸⁸ FTB is paid to around 2.2 million families with 4.2 million children under 16 (around 80 per cent of Australian families).

²⁸⁹ Both Parts A and B were introduced in 2000 as part of the New Tax System. Family Tax Part A was formerly Family Allowance.

on parental income.²⁹⁰ Family Tax Benefit Part B is paid to sole parent families and to couple families with one main earner earning below a specified income (all sole parents and couple households on income support are eligible for the maximum rate). Apps (2006) demonstrates that Family Tax Benefit Part B financially penalises families with dual full-time incomes, thus creating disincentives for mothers to take up paid work as a result of high effective marginal tax rates; it also effectively rewards full-time care of children at home. Brennan has argued: “The structure of family tax benefits made it much more economically advantageous for a family to rely on a single income, than to share paid work and family care between the parents” (pp.38, 45) and has created strong work disincentives for women in low and middle-income families (see also Cass and Brennan, 2003: 55).²⁹¹

One critique made by an Australian academic was that partial individualisation in Australia was “in name only and essentially family-based.” Furthermore, Cass (1995, cited in Wilson et al., 1999: 31) has suggested that the liberalisation and partial disaggregation of the couple income tests did not change the male breadwinner model (see also Brennan, 2002: 95). Hill (2007: 226) argues that embedded within the Australian policy framework is a traditional ideology of gender relations which delivers more financial support to mothers who stay at home to care for their children. There is also a contradiction between the assertion of the work ethic and familism (Roche, 1992: 151), which relates to differing perceptions of dependency. One Australian researcher stated that being in work has been framed in terms of ‘good motherhood’: “to be a good mother, you should be a working mother; it’s the right thing to do by your children to bring in enough income to secure your family’s long-term future.” However, an Australian academic suggested: “For low skilled women

²⁹⁰ FTB Part A is considered to be responsible for high EMTRs, particularly for couple families. See Harding, A., Vu, Q. N., Tanton, R. & Vidyattama, Y. (2008) Improving work incentives for mothers: the national and geographic impact of liberalising the Family Tax Benefit income test. *37th Australian Conference of Economists*. Gold Coast, QLD.

²⁹¹ In Australia the short-lived First Child Tax Refund (FCTR refunded to new mothers tax paid in the year prior to the birth of their child, on the proviso that the parent remained outside the labour market.

the choice may be between a low-level service sector job for not much pay, compared to being at home with your kids.” This reflects Duncan and Edwards’ (1999) ‘gendered moral rationalities’, which may be a product of gendered societal constraints; Land and Rose’s (1985) notion of ‘compulsory altruism’ acknowledges that unequal power relations may exist within caring relationships between spouses or partners.

In the activation regime (and, more specifically, the workfare state) women’s role as homemakers, carers and mothers is now linked with passivity if they are receiving benefit and this has been increasingly conceptualised as being less acceptable and linked with dependency. This process of re-commodification involves reducing “alternatives to participation in the labour market, either by tightening eligibility or cutting benefits” (Pierson, 2001a: 422) and “enforcing work while residualising welfare” (Peck, 2001: 10). The normative goal of post-war welfare states was to protect the vulnerable (Ferrera and Hemerijck, 2003: 92), however in Britain and Australia protection was via the male breadwinner. Programmes relating to partners in both Australia and Britain have made visible women who were formerly less so in the benefits system and in labour market policies.

Women have previously been underrepresented in public training schemes (Sainsbury, 1996: 184). In Britain, women in couples claiming benefit were not offered employment assistance because of their ‘assumed dependency’ (Department for Social Security, 1998: 27). Similarly, in Australia partnered women were not offered labour market assistance under the pre-Working Nation model of dependency-based payments (Douglas et al., 1993). For many years in the Australian welfare state, it has been seen as acceptable for mothers to be outside the labour market and instead be at home caring for children and, importantly, to receive income support for this. As we saw in Chapter Five, this has historically been the case for partnered mothers, but in terms of both functional and normative recalibration this is changing. One Australian campaigning organisation suggested: “The same as the UK, we were laggards in

activation of parents. The part-time work requirement was fairly lax by international standards.” However, Pech and Innes (1998) highlight that, on the one hand, although Parenting Payment provides “some tangible recognition of the social value of child-rearing” (pp.25-6) or what Sainsbury (1996) refers to as the ‘principle of care,’ on the other hand:

“women who do exercise their choice to stay on payment may come disproportionately from groups that are already disadvantaged in the labour market, including those whose partners are similarly disadvantaged. If this is so, then the social security system might, under the guise of allowing women choice, be helping to entrench some in poverty and disadvantage” (pp.22-3)

There is thus a balance to be struck between empowerment and further oppression from the state. Ferrera and Hemerijck (2003) suggest that in relation to normative recalibration “Despite women’s new life histories...social policy programmes in many European welfare states remain encapsulated in the breadwinner model” (p.92). As suggested in Section 6.4, the British and Australian welfare states began as white, male breadwinner states in which “Women’s role in the family became tied to the development of race and nation,” as well as work (Williams, 1995: 151). Castles and Mitchell (Castles, 1992, Castles and Mitchell, 1993) argue that Australia is a ‘wage-earners’ welfare state’ (Castles, 1985, Castles, 1992)²⁹² and (as with the British welfare state) this was specifically a white, male, married breadwinner welfare state (Bessant et al., 2006: 89, Bryson, 2001: 65). The concept of the Australian ‘wage earner’s welfare state’ has some similarities with the concept of the ‘family wage’ in Britain as a basis for the post-war welfare state on the model of the (married) male worker, supported by the trade unions. However, Land (1999: 129, see also Lewis, 2001: 153) argues that

²⁹² The concept of the ‘wage earners’ welfare state’ is based on the Harvester/’Basic wage’ ruling of the first Arbitration Court by Justice H.B. Higgins in 1907. Judge Higgins ruled that the state, the industrial relations and arbitration systems should deliver a basic wage sufficient for a male worker and his family; this was viewed as a way of preserving male full employment.

although the male breadwinner model was accepted as an ideal over 100 years ago by the Trade Union Movement, it was never a model to which the majority of working class families conformed. Brennan (2002) suggests that “The assumption of women’s dependence was built into the very foundations of the Australian welfare state. Most pensions and benefits assumed the presence of a male breadwinner and female caregiver” (p.96). This was also the case with the British welfare state, as we saw in Chapter Five in relation to benefits.

In Denmark the male breadwinner model was short-lived and “a historical parenthesis” (Borchorst, 2002: 273). Although by the late 1950s “the male breadwinner/female homemaker family model spread to the working class, and...three-fourths of married women were housewives” (Borchorst, 2002: 273), this ‘golden age’ lasted only 15 years, “as traditional family policy promoting a male breadwinner family model...never gained ground” (Borchost, 2006: 5-7). From an early stage, the Danish welfare state was based on universal and equal access by citizens and based on institutional systems of care. These institutional aspects supported increased female employment in the early 1960s, resulting from opportunities accompanying the economic boom which were reinforced by women’s rights organisations (Borchost, 2006: 5). The ‘women friendliness’ (Hernes, 1987b, Hernes, 1987a) of the Danish welfare state was both a product of mobilisation from below and institutional response from above. Borchost (2009: 100) argues that the universal breadwinner model is dominant in Denmark. This model is based on Fraser’s (1997) typology of three models, based on a normative theory of justice distinguishing between recognition of caring and redistribution of resources. The ‘caregiver parity model’ aims to achieve gender equity by supporting informal care work: women are caregivers and men breadwinners, but parity is achieved by paying women to care and granting them social rights on account of their caring role. This has similarities with Sainsbury’s (1996) basis of entitlement to benefit on the principle of care and, as we have seen, in Britain and Australia the social rights to care have been

curtailed by activation policies. Knijn and Kremer (1997) take further the conceptualisation of the social rights of citizenship in relation to how differently welfare states conceptualise social rights to give or to receive care. Such a right must be related to both men and women in couple households if men are to realistically share caring responsibilities. Similarly, Fraser's 'universal caregiver model' achieves equity by allowing both men and women to be care-givers. Borchost (2009: 9) suggests that Fraser was biased towards economic redistribution to achieve social justice, but that such a theory of redistribution is based on class and gender, rather than ethnic differences. Such differences are important, as we saw in the Section 6.4 in relation to 'nation' and 'culture' whereby immigrant women have recently been made more visible as a target group for activation.

Fraser's third model, the 'universal breadwinner model', aims to achieve gender equity by promoting female employment and making both men and women breadwinners. Most Danish interviewees cited the universal breadwinner model as the dominant model, although some evidence suggests that it is not the reality for all women. Using Danish an event history data set²⁹³ developed by AMS, Laužadytė (2008) found that children of all age groups increase fathers' employment probabilities, however this is not the case for women.²⁹⁴ Nevertheless, the difference in employment rates between women and men is smaller in Denmark than the other two countries (see Chapter Four). In Britain the dual earner model applies to over half the population: 60.2 per cent in 2006, compared with 27.9 per cent of single earners and 11.9 per cent of workless households (Beatty et al., 2010). In Australia in 2001 dual

²⁹³ Event history analysis is concerned not merely with *if* something occurs, but *when* it occurs. See Box-Steffensmeier, J. M. & Jones, B. S. (2004) *Event history modelling. A guide for social scientists*, New York, NY, Cambridge University Press.

²⁹⁴ Laužadytė shows that children in the household make women much less inclined to move to a job and much more prone to leave the labour force. Married men are more likely to re-enter employment and the likelihood of becoming inactive is reduced, however, married women face a higher risk of remaining unemployed. Whilst 70 per cent of men return to the labour force, 63 per cent of women do so and unemployment duration is one and a half to two times longer for women than for men. See Laužadytė, A. (2008) *Active labour market policies and labour market transitions in Denmark: an analysis of event history data (PhD thesis)*, Aarhus, University of Aarhus.

earner couples accounted for 50 per cent of all couples (Drago et al., 2004: 1). However, although women are commodified in Denmark, this does not negate the effects of either gender segregation in the workplace, or that women still do the majority of housework, as one academic commented: "We don't have a completely even distribution of housework between men and women but we do have both a financial support system and the day-care institutions so that's it's actually possible for a mother to work practically full-time and this has been so for quite a long time." Nevertheless the dominant cultural model for families (Pfau-Effinger, 2005: 9) in Denmark is important to policy problem representations and to the policy responses in relation to partnered women outside the labour market as being 'other' than the majority population. Ferrera and Hemerijck (2003: 123) suggest that the Scandinavian countries offer mothers the widest array of choices in relation to care, although as a Danish academic highlighted, the Danish model "is so much founded on the idea of the universal breadwinner" which equates to limited choice with regard to caring.

Combining work and caring is not a new social risk, but is one which has become more explicitly 'visible' in policy terms for partnered women. Furthermore, partnered women outside the labour market are not necessarily a new social risk, but this is now conceptualised in a more visible way as a policy 'problem' in each of the countries. The targeting of partnered women by activation is linked to the changing conceptualisation of women's roles in societal institutions such as the labour market and the family and this can be seen at both functional and normative levels in relation to recalibration. This is a more explicit change in Australia and Britain than in Denmark, with the former having the legacy of male breadwinner model-based welfare states. The shifting conceptualisation of women's roles is viewed in terms of the functional recalibration of social security, labour market and childcare policies in the wider context of women's increased labour force participation. However, this is underpinned by a recalibration of normative expectations of partnered women as

social groups outside the labour market and often caring for children, when they could legitimately be expected to take up paid work.

6.5.2 *De-familialisation*

De-commodification is defined as the degree to which individuals, or families, can uphold a socially acceptable standard of living independently of labour market participation (Esping-Andersen, 1990). Similarly, de-familialisation describes the degree to which individuals can uphold a socially acceptable standard of living independently of family relationships (Lister, 1994: 37, see also McLaughlin and Glendinning, 1994). Orloff (1993) argues that de-commodification should be accompanied by two additional dimensions: access to paid work and the capacity to form and maintain autonomous households or 'autonomy'. Millar (2003) highlights the dynamic and interrelated nature of transitions between autonomy and dependency. From the interviews and documentary evidence analysed in this study, Denmark appears to be a de-familialising and commodifying welfare state, as both labour market and day-care policies encourage female labour market participation (dual breadwinner model). The day-care guarantee from when a child is aged six months encourages women to return to the labour market before children reach school age and both labour market participation and day-care are on a full-time basis. By contrast, Australia and Britain have been less commodifying and de-familialising. Recent welfare reforms in both countries aim to commodify women, but without adequately de-familialising them by ensuring alternative care, although Australia has moved further in this direction than Britain. In both Australia and Britain it has been possible for mothers to receive benefit for looking after children at home, even if in Britain this has been as dependent partners. This possibility has now been reduced in both countries, depending on the age of the youngest child. In Denmark it has not been possible (with the minor exception of the relatively short-lived spouse supplement) to receive benefit for caring for children, or working in the home.

It could be argued that prior to the introduction of the spouse supplement and the 300 hours rule non-working partnered women were to an extent de-commodified. The 300 hours rule may thus be viewed as being in accord with the wider Danish welfare model in aiming to de-familise married women by commodifying their labour supply. This reduction in the de-commodifying potential of labour market policies arguably aligned policies relating to married couples/immigrants with other active labour market policies. However, as was argued in Chapter Five, this reform went further than other ALMPs in demanding a quantity of paid work and by removing benefit. This policy then compelled women affected to become either commodified in the labour market or to become dependent on their spouse and therefore further familialised.

In neither Britain nor Australia are carers of adults a key focus of active labour market policies. By contrast, in Denmark, those caring for adults are not exempt from activation, except for short periods of caring for terminally ill relatives; one Danish Jobcentre employee commented that it “doesn’t come into the picture at all here.” As with day-care, care for adults (elderly or disabled people) in Denmark is provided through municipalities and can be viewed as an institutional foundation for activation policies and a key function of the welfare state. Ferrera and Hemerijck (2003) suggest that:

“The viability of European welfare states also relies on women’s willingness to reproduce the next generation... which requires policies and incentives that lead to a reallocation of caring work within families (i.e. between men and women) and between families and the public sector” (p.90)

Bacchi (1999: 204) argues that the construction of the policy problem of women’s inequality as ‘lack of access to paid labour’ leaves unaddressed the issue of the

responsibilities of caring. Within activation relating to female partners, there is an implicit assumption that caring responsibilities will be transferred elsewhere. Both the British and Australian programmes directed at partnered women assumed that couples have the capacity to swap child-caring and earning roles. The alternative is care by immediate family, by extended family or friendship networks, or by formal provision. The propensity to take up formal care may be influenced by individual or family preferences, as well as the availability of such care. Although policies can influence welfare states' de-commodifying and de-familialising potential, what may be described as cultural and social norms are also important. Whether and how welfare states facilitate the provision of care (whether for adults or disabled or non-disabled children) can either support or challenge the dominant breadwinner model in each of the countries. This relates to the constitution of welfare agents, whether by the state, the market or the private sphere (Clarke, 2004).

Ferrera and Hemerijck (Ferrera and Hemerijck, 2003) point to "the greater salience of economic independence, and the spreading conviction that labour market participation is a demonstration of gender equality" (p.92). However, Bacchi (1999: 67) challenges the underlying presumption in policies that women only become equal to men when they have equal access to the labour market. Furthermore, Armstrong et al (2009: 265) highlight that there are different conceptualisations of gender equality. Firstly, the 'sameness' model, where women are expected to behave like men in terms of the male pattern of full-time continuous employment, but without provision to replace care. Secondly, the 'difference' model, where there is equality of difference of preferences or choices, with care work being afforded equal recognition, the potential of which Armstrong et al argue has yet to be realised (p.265). Thirdly, the 'universal caregiver' or 'dual-carer/dual-earner' model, in which women's paid work would increase and their unpaid care work would decrease; correspondingly, men's paid work would decrease and their unpaid care work would increase. Armstrong et al suggest that this perhaps offers the greatest potential for gender equality as it involves

greater symmetry of care and paid work between men and women (p.265). In Denmark the sameness model is dominant, but alternative care is provided. Australia and Britain are moving towards promotion of the sameness model in activation, but the promotion, and incidence of, part-time work is both an advantage and disadvantage in this respect for partnered women. Similarly, Misra et al's (2007) conceptualisation of work-family policies in Europe and North America is in the form of four strategies: (i) the carer strategy (where women are treated primarily as carers and secondarily as earners), (ii) the earner strategy (where women are treated primarily as earners and secondarily as carers), (iii) the choice strategy (where women are treated as being able to choose between being primarily earners or care-givers) and (iv) the earner-carer strategy (where women and men are treated as being equally involved in both earning and caring). Denmark reflects the earner strategy and Britain and Australia previously represented the carer strategy, but have more recently moved towards the earner strategy. In Australia and Britain there is arguably more choice as to whether to work or to care than in Denmark, although this is constrained by the limited alternative care provision, particularly in Britain.

In Britain women's labour market participation is not explicitly presented by policymakers in gender equalising terms. The Labour Government's goal to encourage non-working partnered women into work was not stated as being one of gender equality or gender equity and this is a result of the tendency in British policy-making to treat the family as a private sphere (Lewis and Campbell, 2007a). This study suggests that this is also the case in Australia. In Denmark commodification has been linked with gender equality and has to a large extent addressed caring responsibilities by transferring them to the state, rather than through equality within the household. The universal breadwinner model in Denmark can be seen as being based on economic citizenship, or commodification. In Denmark commodification is a key objective of Danish social policies as a means of social integration, as well as for economic reasons. However, that some immigrant women are not in the labour market and also have less

propensity to use day-care may be a challenge to the notion of dominant social norms. There may be cultural factors which lead to this challenge, or not adhering to social norms may be viewed as resistance (Clarke, 2004: 158-9, see also Finch, 1989). It is here that human agency is important, in terms of resistance to policies and as an alternative to institutionalist views of policymaking. Does culture change policy, or vice versa, or is there an element of both in action? It has not been possible to fully answer this question in this analysis, but the evidence from the case studies suggests that both are important factors and they may be self-reinforcing.²⁹⁵ An important, and sensitive issue, is whether partnered women's caring responsibilities represent a form of oppression, from which paid labour may be empowering, or how far this goes against the preferences and identities of individual women. Some women may derive status from their caring role and may wish to fulfil it, although this may also be informed by the perception or reality of suitable jobs. Pfau-Effinger (2005) summarises this difficulty:

“The social action of individuals is not a simple outcome and not determined by state policies, although this is often assumed when statistics on behaviour (such as labour force participation rates, unemployment rates and birth rates) are used as indicators for welfare state policies. Such assumptions do not reflect the fact that the social behaviour of individuals is a process which takes place in a very complex field of influences, where cultural ideals and values also play an important role” (p.12)

Cultural values are held by policymakers as well as by recipients of policies. The state may only intervene to an extent in the social relations and economic decision-making within a household; other factors, such as power relations and entrenched attitudes to men and women's work and caring roles may be more powerful, as may moral

²⁹⁵ The complexity of the effects of policies on individual or household behaviour in relation to culture is summarised by Pfau-Effinger, B. (2005) Culture and welfare state policies: reflections on a complex interrelation. *Journal of Social Policy*, 34(1):3-20.

obligations and rationalities in relation to caring for both children and adults. A survey of time use in Australian households with children between 1992 and 2006 under both Labor and Liberal/Coalition governments (Craig et al., 2009) found that there was a discernable trend towards gender convergence in both paid and unpaid work under Labor, but that this reversed under the Coalition. Labor demonstrated a commitment to gender equity in terms of family-friendly employment arrangements and childcare. By contrast, as discussed earlier, the Coalition had a more conservative view of women, with tax policies favouring a single breadwinner model. Such data suggest that government policies can have an impact on gendered roles and such roles may be reinforced by structures of access to benefit and the availability of alternative care. Pech and Innes (1998) have argued that:

“choices do not exist in a societal vacuum. Society places its own constraints on the exercise of choice - in the social security system these constraints are reflected in the activity requirements that some recipients must satisfy to receive payment. Thus the very provision of income support both defines the range of options open to individuals and conditions the choices they make”
(p.25)

As Esping-Andersen (1999: 45) suggests, the choice to work or care is not either-or, but is a matter of degree. How policies influence people “will depend on the extent to which these changes are consistent with people’s beliefs about family responsibilities” (Land, 1999: 127).²⁹⁶ Steiber and Haas (2009: 657-8) have shown that mothers’ generalised attitudes towards work and care were less strongly related to their own employment behaviour than their own beliefs about the impact of their work on their

²⁹⁶ For example, the qualitative evaluation of the In-Work Credit (offering £40 a week for 52 weeks to lone and partnered parents moving into work of 16 hours or more per week suggested that those who took up the IWC were already work-ready or work-committed and that those who were more closely aligned to a non-working, caring role were much less likely to take up the credit. See Brewer, M., Browne, J., Crawford, C. & Knight, G. (2007) *The lone parent pilots after 12 to 24 months: an impact assessment of In-Work Credit, Work Search Premium, Extended Schools Childcare, Quarterly Work Focused Interviews and New Deal Plus for Lone Parents*, Norwich, Stationery Office.

own children. Mothers' own care attitudes had the strongest effect on their labour market participation in Britain, followed by New Zealand and then Australia and it was only in English-speaking countries that Steiber and Haas found a correlation between women's care attitudes and their choice of part-time or full-time work (p.655-6). One Australian employment service professional commented that: "The Welfare to Work requirements challenge some mothers' concept of themselves; they may see themselves as mothers and perceive their role to be to look after their child." Furthermore, there may be problems in attempting to impose autonomy on families where there are cultural barriers which suggest that it is not acceptable for wives to be independent (Aston et al., 2009a: 22). Kangas and Rostgaard (2007) argue that attitudes are important with regard to work and care (and in particular the attitudes of male partners), but that these are shaped by institutional factors. So, one significant question is: Should the state force women into work when they want to stay at home and care? This study suggests that the answer partly depends on the availability of alternative care provision. However, despite the many benefits of paid work, if forcing women into work results in families being in poverty, or a work/benefits cycle, work in itself may not necessarily be the 'good thing' it is purported to be.

6.6 *Summary*

This chapter has highlighted the normative recalibration of activation policies for partnered women in Australia and Denmark, with reference to Britain, using Williams' concepts of 'work', 'nation' and 'family'. It echoes other studies of activation in affirming that policy actors emphasised individual reasons (Lødemel and Trickey, 2001, van Berkel and Valkenburg, 2007) for partnered women being outside the labour market, rather than structural issues such as insufficient work which is flexible enough to accommodate caring responsibilities, or labour market discrimination. In Denmark and Australia, as well as Britain, there is a focus on increasing incentives to 'make work pay'. The view of labour market participation as gender equalising in Denmark

is a useful lens through which to view the continuing promotion of the adult worker model in British and Australian employment policy. Equally, the normative recalibration of the Danish model in response to challenges posed by immigrant families with different cultural family models can be helpful in highlighting partnered women's gendered moral rationalities. However, focusing on culture as a barrier to work can be problematic if it does not take demand-side issues into account, or acknowledge other barriers to work such as ill health.

Serrano Pascual's (2007: 278) concept of hegemonic regulatory assumptions relates to the prevailing understanding of the individual: as either competent and responsible or as dependent and passive. She argues that community values relating to work and worklessness influence the social representation of policies. One issue is how such community views are articulated, for example in Britain this is through the British Social Attitudes Survey (see for example Park et al., 2010). Serrano Pascual suggests that a moralistic understanding of unemployment favours activation to discourage dependency and promote responsibility; a political understanding emphasises national identity and citizenship; and an economic conceptualisation may lead to a focus on adaptation to new economic challenges through investment in human capital or through more coercive strategies to ensure a reserve army of workers (pp.278-9). As has been demonstrated in this chapter, hegemonic regulatory assumptions as constituent of normative recalibration have been important in the representation of the 'problem' of partnered women outside the labour market. In Denmark national identity was important to its conceptualisation and a moralistic understanding in relation to dependency and the promotion of responsibility informed both the British and Australian (particularly Welfare to Work) reforms, but this was also seen in the Danish policies in relation to immigrant married women.

From the analysis which has spanned this and the previous chapters, three main aspects of policy learning can be recommended from Australia and Denmark to

Britain. These issues are examined in the following chapter, which begins with consideration of the possibility of transfer, before examining what may be transferred.

Chapter Seven - What can Britain learn from the Australian and Danish policy responses?

7.1 *Introduction*

This chapter considers what Britain may learn about assisting partnered women into work from the case studies of Australia and Denmark. The following Section 7.2 returns to the theory explored in Chapter Two concerning policy transfer and policy translation in light of the findings from this study. The fourth sub-dimension of recalibration (politico-institutional) is utilised in Section 7.3 to highlight the implications for the translatability of specific policies to Britain: partial individualisation of benefits, the extension of childcare as a prerequisite for activation policy, and individually responsive employment assistance. These policy recommendations are considered in detail in the sub-sections of Section 7.3, drawing on the similarities and differences between the three countries explored in the preceding chapters. Section 7.4 discusses the negative lessons which may be learnt from the Australian and Danish case studies and Section 7.5 summarises the chapter.

The chapter commences by reviewing the similarities and differences evidenced by this analysis of the policy responses to partnered women outside the labour market in the three countries. Table 7.1 summarises these aspects as reflections of the three sub-dimensions of recalibration examined so far.

Table 7.1: Policy similarities and differences between the three countries in relation to partnered women outside the labour market

Sub-dimensions of recalibration	Britain	Australia	Denmark
<p><i>Access to benefits</i></p> <p>Functional</p> <p>Normative</p> <p>Distributive</p>	<p>Pre-Welfare Reform Act 2009: wives/partners, mothers/carers, disabled</p> <p>Post-Welfare Reform Act: workers or disabled</p>	<p>Pre-Working Nation: wives/partners</p> <p>Pre-Welfare to Work: mothers, carers, disabled</p> <p>Post-Welfare to Work: mothers/workers, carers, disabled</p>	<p>Insured and uninsured unemployed: worker</p> <p>Spouse supplement: wife</p> <p>Post-300 hours rule: worker</p>
<p><i>Social contract</i></p> <p>Functional</p> <p>Normative</p> <p>Distributive</p>	<p>‘Rights and responsibilities’</p> <p>Increased conditionality for partners, particularly post-Welfare Reform Act</p> <p>Eventually only exemptions for parents with youngest child aged under one and for carers</p> <p>Number of hours of activity not specified, but policy goal of at least 16 hours of paid work per week</p>	<p>‘Mutual obligation’</p> <p>Increased conditionality for partnered parents</p> <p>Exemptions for carers and parents with youngest children below six</p> <p>15 hours paid work or job search each week, plus 150 hours of Mutual Obligation activity within a 26-week period</p>	<p>‘Right and duty’ to activation</p> <p>‘All must be active’ in return for benefit</p> <p>Exemptions for parents of children under one and permanently sick</p> <p>300 hours within two-year period</p>

Sub-dimensions of recalibration	Britain	Australia	Denmark
<i>Childcare</i>	Predominantly marketised provision	Predominantly marketised provision	Predominantly state-provided day-care
Functional			
Normative	<p>Universal Child Benefit, 15 hours of free early years education for 38 weeks per year from age 3, targeted provision for 2 year olds</p> <p>Income-tested Child Tax Credit, income- and work-related childcare element of Working Tax Credit. Jobcentre Plus Childcare Assist/Childcare Subsidy, employer-supported childcare vouchers</p>	<p>Income-related Childcare Benefit: 24 hours of childcare per week regardless of work status, up to 50 hours dependent on activity status</p> <p>Childcare Rebate refunds up to 50% of costs to a limit (no income test), dependent on activity status</p> <p>Income-tested Family Tax Benefit Part A, Family Tax Benefit Part B income tested for families with one earner</p>	<p>Universal from 6 months of age, at low cost to parents, graduated according to income</p> <p>Family benefits per child</p> <p>Extra subsidies for low income families</p>

Access to benefits (Chapter Five) illustrates the recalibration of the function of the three welfare states in providing social security for partnered women and this can be linked with the changing social contracts for activation (Chapter Five) in each of the countries. These recalibrations are, in turn, reflective of distributive recalibration (Chapter Five) in governing conditionality and activation for particular social groups. Childcare reflects the functional recalibration of the provision of alternative care by welfare states (Chapter Five). Each of these aspects are interlinked and are

underpinned by normative recalibration (Chapter Six), reflecting how the roles of partnered women in families and the labour market have been enshrined in the policies, illustrative of the nexus of work, nation and family. There are also institutional aspects to each of the policy features described here (access to benefits, social contracts for activation, childcare) and these are discussed in this chapter in relation to politico-institutional recalibration and in considering policy learning for Britain from Australia and Denmark. Before considering these aspects, we will return to the hypotheses posited at the start of the research.

The first hypothesis was that the higher labour market participation of partnered women in Denmark, compared with Britain, is a result of the 'encompassing' nature of its welfare state, rather than policies specifically targeted at this group of women. This was supported, as the Danish policy actors attributed the high number of partnered women in employment to the attainment of the universal breadwinner model through flexicurity and activation, supported by the institutional and normative foundation of care, particularly day-care. The interviews linked the smaller number of immigrant women moving into employment with health problems, cultural issues and discriminatory labour market practices. For predominantly political and symbolic reasons this policy 'problem' has been addressed by a targeted policy in the form of the 300 hours rule and its precursor (the spouse supplement), which are to some extent anomalies within the encompassing Danish model. In terms of numbers of married women into work and off benefits the 300 hours rule appeared to have had some success, but with increased poverty for many.

The second hypothesis was that there would be policies in Australia which, as in Britain, were specifically targeted at non-working partnered women but which had a differential impact on their labour market participation. This was also supported. The Australian policy response to partnered women outside the labour market is based on a policy genealogy of reforms to Parenting Payment. The first of these (Working

Nation) increased the labour market participation of partnered women without children. Compared with British partners, there appeared to be less health problems amongst this group and less incidence of caring for adults. Welfare to Work appears to have led to a decrease in claims for both PPs and PpP for a small sub-set of the population, but results were mixed. The Australian case study also highlighted the different conceptualisations of economic and social participation in the genealogy of welfare reforms, as well as highlighting that the binary of active/passive is not as clear-cut in reality as it is purported to be in policymaking. Australia has a more established foundation of childcare than Britain, although its female labour market participation and take-up of childcare is lower than Britain, suggesting that the male breadwinner is persistent. This may be viewed in the context of maternalist policies which support, but also reinforce, the principle of care.

In terms of whether targeted or encompassing approaches are more effective, this analysis argues for an approach which moves away from categorical assistance based on benefits claimed. It suggests that policy responses to partnered women outside the labour market should be encompassing in terms of complementarity across policy areas (such as activation and childcare), but that employment assistance should be responsive to individual requirements.

7.2 *The possibility of policy translation*

This section begins by returning to the policy learning literature reviewed in Chapter Two to examine the likelihood of translation of policies from Australia and Denmark to Britain. In particular, this section discusses constraints on policy transfer set out by Dolowitz et al (2000): past relations, institutions, ideology and economic aspects. These aspects are then examined in more detail in subsequent sections relating to the specific policy recommendations.

This study has involved voluntaristic lesson-drawing (Rose, 1993). By focusing on content (the problems, goals, instruments and implementation of policies and programmes) it has been concerned with 'policy learning' (May, 1992: 340). However, it has also been concerned with 'social learning,' in examining the *construction* of policy problems, goals and solutions (May, 1992: 340 my italics). Specifically, the focus has been on 'hard' social learning (Dolowitz, 2009). In soft learning "nothing new is incorporated into the existing knowledge structure," whilst harder forms require "a deeper understanding of how and why the object under consideration operates in the observed system" (Dolowitz, 2009: 323). Searching for policies within existing paradigms, or looking for 'soft' policy learning does not challenge the normative foundation of policy 'problem representation' (Bacchi, 1999). Examination of such foundations is important in considering policy translation which takes account of context in both the policy lending countries (Australia and Denmark), as well as the policy borrowing country (Britain). Ferrera et al (2000) suggest that normative recalibration is not merely "about challenging the status quo from a value perspective...[but] also about widening the agenda by shifting emphasis within the value premises themselves" (p.75). By recognising that activation is part of a global 'policy market' (Peck, 2001: 6), this cross-national analysis does not challenge the activation paradigm per se, nor redefine the goal of encouraging partnered women into work. However, it raises questions about how it is executed in relation to partnered women.

Two hypotheses regarding policy translation were posited at the start of this research. Firstly, based on welfare regime differences, it was suggested that Danish policies are the most difficult to translate to Britain because of the different institutional, historical, political, social and economic contexts and cultural specificities. There appears to be reluctance amongst British policymakers to look to the Nordic countries for policy learning and the day-care aspect seems to be viewed as a particular barrier. However, the Nordic countries (particularly Denmark) and Australia had some influence on the

British welfare reforms (Purnell, 2008). Stone (1999: 57) highlights the ease of looking to other English-speaking countries, which has been a practical consideration for this research (see Chapter Three). Nevertheless, despite the differences between Britain and Denmark, there are also important points of policy learning. It is not possible to focus on the perceived success of Danish activation without acknowledging the institutional and normative foundation of day-care upon which activation policies are overlaid, as well as the role of the state within this. Policy translation must also take into account the Danish flexicurity model, the social partners in the policy process and the decentralised policy delivery model. The second hypothesis regarding policy translation was that, in relation to welfare regimes, Australia's policies may be easier to translate to Britain, given the similarities between their welfare states. Section 7.3 highlights the differences between the Australian and British cases, such as the fully privatised employment services and the absence of contributory benefits in the former. By extracting policy recommendations from the two case studies, this analysis argues for both hybridisation and synthesis in the sense of generally 'mixing' different policies or programmes (Dolowitz and Marsh, 1996, Dolowitz et al., 2000), but, crucially, that attention must be paid to the contexts of both the lending and borrowing countries.

Hall (1993) suggests that the policymaking process usually involves three central variables: the overarching goals that guide policy, the techniques or policy instruments used to attain the goals, and the precise settings (constitution) of these instruments. Three policy recommendations are made in relation to policy instruments and settings for the goal of assisting partnered women into work: partial individualisation of benefits, the extension of childcare as a prerequisite for activation policy and individually responsive employment assistance. In terms of what specifically may be transferred, Dolowitz (2000: 10) suggests: (i) policy instruments, content and goals, (ii) programmes, (iii) institutions, (iv) ideologies, (v) attitudes or cultural values, and (vi) negative lessons. This study recommends that the 'objects of

transfer' (Evans and Davies, 1999) should be instruments, content, goals, programmes and ideologies. It is not necessary in this context to transfer institutions - these are defined as welfare state agencies and delivery systems (Hudson and Lowe, 2004: 148) and Section 7.3 describes the relevant institutions in each of the countries and the similarities and differences between. Institutions are not easily transferred, as they are cultural products linked to a country's history (Freeman, 1999). It is also difficult to translate attitudes or cultural values and these are considered as constraints on policy translation, particularly in relation to childcare (Section 7.3.2). Negative lessons can be extracted from the case studies examined, in relation to negative (and unintentional) policy outcomes, such as increased poverty (see Section 7.4).

Ideologies behind programmes may be translated as a constituent part of other objects of transfer, such as policy instruments. They may also be transferred as objects in their own right, with the instruments employed in the borrowing context being different to those of the lending country. As discussed in Chapter Six, the ideology of the commodification of women as adult workers is evident in all three countries. However, the translation of partial individualisation to Britain involves reform of the male breadwinner/derived access model of social security at both functional and normative levels to engage directly with partnered women outside the labour market. The ideology of providing alternative care as a prerequisite to activation for partnered women may be translated, but the means by which this could be achieved in Britain is not necessarily to implement a Nordic-style day-care model. Furthermore, if the promotion of adult (or citizen) workers and re-commodification are policy goals in relation to partnered women outside the labour market, it may equate to policy translation failure if the provision of care in Denmark and Australia is not taken into account. In Britain individually responsive employment assistance involves an ideological move away from work first approaches for partnered women furthest from the labour market.

In relation to the 'degree of transfer' (Evans and Davies, 1999), this analysis has gone beyond inspiration (Rose, 1991: 22) in engaging in hard policy learning (Dolowitz, 2009) and examining how the programmes have operated within the wider contexts. Direct copying of programmes is problematic, even paying attention to the contexts of the lending and borrowing countries, due to institutional and ideological constraints. Instead, elements of programmes may be translated in terms of content, but the ideologies behind them and the wider context of institutions and instruments must also be taken into account, otherwise there is a risk of policy translation failure. Lendvai and Stubbs' (2007) concept of 'policy as translation' rather than 'policy as transfer' rightly recognises that policies or programmes are de-territorialised and then re-territorialised in the act of translation and that translating policies from one country to another requires reconstitution, or re-siting. Thus, this study has not merely examined programmes in isolation, but by using the recalibration framework, has also looked at the context within which they are sited.

Dolowitz et al (2000: 10) suggest that constraints (or what Evans and Davies (1999) refer to as 'prerequisites') on policy transfer are: policy complexity, past policies (path dependency), structural or institutional aspects, feasibility (in terms of ideology, cultural proximity, technology and economic and bureaucratic aspects), language and past relations. There are a number of aspects of the country case studies which suggest policy convergence and which may constitute a shared basis for policy translation. As Chapter Five demonstrated, each of the countries has moved from welfare to workfare and has introduced more 'work first' programmes, although the degree is qualitatively different in each case. There is 'divergent convergence' (Leibfried and Obinger, 2001) or 'contingent convergence' (Hemerijck, 2006). Rose (1993) argues that 'psychological proximity' is important for policy learning. Chapter Five highlighted the similarities between the ideologies informing the social contract²⁹⁷, or *quid pro quo* (Serrano Pascual, 2007): 'rights and responsibilities' in Britain, 'Mutual Obligation' in Australia

²⁹⁷ Both Denmark and Australia have codified constitutions, but Britain does not.

and the 'right and duty' to activation in Denmark. Despite other differences, these similarities can be construed as a shared basis for translation, although importantly, the balance between *quid* and *quo* differs between the countries. In Denmark in particular the significance of the social contract was linked to the universal welfare state model. So, the provision of services to support the universal breadwinner model was in turn supported by high labour market participation and this was accompanied by the expectation that all must be in paid work, or in activation to move them towards this.

In terms of past relations, both Australia and Britain have a shared history and still share a Head of State²⁹⁸, although the Commonwealth is arguably becoming less relevant given Australia's trading relationships with Pacific Rim countries. All three countries are OECD members and at a trans-national level the OECD may indirectly coerce its member countries into transferring policy, such as activation, through the method of publication of indicators (OECD, 2006a). Common membership of the EU has an impact on legislation in Britain and Denmark within the framework of the Open Method of Coordination (OMC) and is also a driver for coercive policy transfer.

In relation to goals all three countries have a focus on increasing labour supply by encouraging partnered women into the labour market. However, this has been to different degrees and this broad policy goal may be overshadowed by other elements. For example in Denmark this relates to targets to increase the number of immigrants in the labour market, but also to decreasing numbers of benefit recipients from this particular social group. In Australia there has been a focus on encouraging more parents, particularly lone parents, into paid work but, as in Britain, this has been underpinned by a focus on decreasing numbers of benefit recipients. In all three countries there has been discussion of reducing dependency and increasing self-

²⁹⁸ Australia was a British colony and still has the British Monarch as its Head of State, despite being a Federation since 1901, when Australia's six colonies joined together and became state governments, Australia has six states and three territories, which are part of the Federation but are self-governing.

reliance in relation to the programmes for partnered women, although the 'dependency' rhetoric has been less obvious in Denmark, except in relation to immigrants. In Britain and Australia policies have articulated a concern with the number of workless households (which is far less in Denmark), and in Britain in particular the reduction of child poverty (which again is far less in Denmark - see Tables A2.1 and A2.2 in Appendix 2) has been a key policy driver.

Britain and Australia have a shared basis for translation in terms of the prevalence of gendered role models within couple households and the persistence of the male breadwinner model in both countries. However, Australia appears to have a more persistent male breadwinner model than Britain and, as was illustrated by Chapter Five, maternalism (2006) in the form of the 'principle of care' has not been an overt feature of the British welfare state in relation to partnered women. By contrast, the male breadwinner was relatively short-lived in Denmark and the universal breadwinner model dominates. This is particularly important to policymaking relating to the 300 hours rule, which assumes that groups which do not conform to this model are in conflict with the Danish model. The new social risks to the welfare state posed by immigration are particularly evident in Denmark, but not isolated to it.

All three countries have in common flexible labour markets, although key to the Danish approach is the flexicurity model as an institutional set-up, characterised by flexible labour markets and activation but, importantly, balanced by generous employment protection. In economic terms, Denmark stands out from the other two countries in having had a labour shortage, for which the policy response was to encourage as many people as possible into the labour market. However, this is not an explicit goal for the 300 hours rule (see Chapter Six). A common factor shared by all three countries is a period of sustained economic growth in which reforms have occurred. Peck (2001) argues that such periods have hastened the progress of the 'workfare juggernaut'. As discussed in Chapter Six, a favourable economic

environment bolsters arguments based on hegemonic regulatory assumptions (Serrano Pascual, 2007) that those not in the labour market are workless through their own choice. The economic climate to some extent sets the parameters of political debates and what is seen as acceptable at a time of economic prosperity is not necessarily seen as being so in a downturn. A further barrier to policy translation from Denmark is the notion that it is a high-tax/high-spend country on the one hand, with a small population on the other. However, some Danish interviewees highlighted that they felt the conceptualisation of Denmark as high tax/high spend overplayed differences: “Normally people are saying that in Denmark we pay a lot of tax, but it’s a very simple tax system compared to the British one because you are paying your water tax and your this and that and in the end of the day the taxation is approximately the same...We pay one lot of tax...divided up into several” (Jobcenter).

Although Dolowitz does not highlight population as a constraint on policy transfer, this could be viewed as a constraint on policy translation from Denmark, with its population of 5.4 million, compared with Britain’s population of around 61 million. However, in the past this has not prevented policy learning from New Zealand (population around 4 million) (Dolowitz et al., 1999), or Australia (population around 21 million). Furthermore, policies in lending countries may themselves be products of policy borrowing, suggesting policy hybridisation (Hemerijck, 2007). Larsen and Mailand (2007: 111) have described Danish labour market initiatives from the 1990s as consisting of equal parts innovation and imitation. In particular, Denmark has imitated Dutch labour market policies in their introduction of ‘one-stop-shops’ and Australians Working Together was based on US welfare reforms (McInnes, 2002, Gray and Stanton, 2002).

Some accounts of transatlantic policy transfer (for example Dolowitz et al., 2000) suggest that failures are due to some degree of incomplete transfer. This analysis has aimed to gain sufficient contextual information about both the Australian and Danish

systems to avoid 'unknowledgeable transfer' (Dolowitz et al., 2000: 33-4) in relation to policies relating to partnered women by utilising evaluation and other documentary evidence as well as data from interviews with policy actors. This method, together with a critique of the definitions of policy 'success,' has intended to contribute towards avoiding 'incomplete transfer'. To avoid 'inappropriate transfer' the four sub-dimensions of recalibration and in particular the politico-institutional and normative sub-dimensions have considered the differences in social, political and ideological contexts in both the originating and transferring systems. Methodological issues arising from this research (Chapter Three) highlight the importance of the openness and willingness of policy actors in the originating countries to share information with borrowing countries: such openness is crucial in facilitating policy translation success. This suggests that, rather than looking to the US or Australia based on the assumption of institutional similarities, there is the potential for British policy actors to look to alternative policy lenders such as Denmark.

The goal of encouraging partnered women into work has not been revised by this study, but the assumptions underpinning activation for this group have been qualified. Firstly, by highlighting that the extension of activation to partnered women in Britain has been a challenge to the assumed welfare dependency of this group, as well as to the function of social security; and, secondly, that the extension of activation in pursuit of the adult worker model has implications for the transfer of care. There are a number of aspects in the three countries which constitute a shared basis for translation, such as policy goals, the social contracts and past relations. However, there are other aspects which may act as constraints, such as the different breadwinner models enshrined in the welfare states. This analysis argues that the instruments, content, goals, programmes and ideologies of policies observed in Australia and Denmark may be translated, but that they should be hybridised or synthesised by re-

siting them within the British context. The following sections consider the policy recommendations and their translatability in more detail.

7.3 *Policy learning for Britain from Australia and Denmark*

The following sections discuss the three main recommendations for British social policy in relation to partnered women, including consideration of the possibility of policy translation, drawing on aspects of politico-institutional recalibration. Section 7.3.1 considers partial individualisation of benefits, Section 7.3.2 examines the provision of alternative care as a prerequisite for activation policies for partnered parents and Section 7.3.3 sets out the aspects of individually responsive employment assistance. These three sections are followed in Section 7.4 by consideration of negative lesson learning and in Section 7.5 by a brief conclusion before a more detailed concluding discussion in Chapter Eight.

7.3.1 *Partial individualisation of benefits*

A key finding from Australia was that the policy genealogy could be traced back to the restructuring of payments following Working Nation which, as with the British policy story in relation to partnered women, underscores that policy change has been path dependent and incremental. The process of partial individualisation of benefits for partnered women in Britain was begun in 2001 by the introduction of Joint Claims for JSA for couples without children, which constituted a significant shift in requiring partners of some benefit recipients to claim benefit in their own right. The Welfare Reform Act (2009) extends Joint Claims to partnered women with children aged over seven and aims to simplify the benefits system by having two principal working age benefits (JSA and ESA).

In Australia, individual activity testing accompanied individual entitlement to benefit, whereas in Britain for most partners individual activity testing came first under enhanced NDP (from 2004), and it is only under the changes brought about by the Welfare Reform Act that individual benefit entitlement is linked with increased conditionality. The introduction of partial individualisation for partnered women in Britain is based on the notion that partners of benefit claimants received financial support but were “free of obligations” (Department for Work and Pensions, 2009a: 24). This was to an extent true compared to other groups of income support recipients, however if women are not claiming (and receiving) income support in their own right, the social contract or *quid pro quo* should not operate on the basis of asymmetrical conditionality (see Bennett, 2002). As one Australian former government official highlighted, partnered women claiming benefit in their own right is an important precursor to assisting them into work: “If you want to engage with this group directly, they need to be recipients of income support.”

Millar (2004: 68-71) suggests that a fully individualised means-tested social security system would have four main aspects and that these were broadly met by Working Nation in Australia, but Joint Claims in the UK meets only the first criterion. Firstly, each person would have an individual right to claim financial support and no one would be able to claim support simply as an adult dependent of another claimant. Secondly, assessments of financial need would be on an individual basis and not include the needs and resources of other adults in the household. Thirdly, the award of benefit would cover only the needs of the individual and not adult dependents. Finally, payments would be made to individuals only. This analysis echoes Millar’s (2004: 72) suggestion that the UK has made some steps towards individualisation of eligibility and it also suggests that this should be continued. However, it is not yet clear whether partial individualisation in Britain will meet all four of Millar’s criteria, particularly not the second (none of the countries currently meets this in relation to social assistance). Millar suggests that it is possible to introduce some element of

individualisation into both the means test and the payment (p.71). However, it seems that in practice claims within a couple will still be linked and sanctions for participation failures will be applied to both adults. As Griggs and Bennett (2009: 54) highlight, cross-couple sanctioning is particularly problematic and complex in the context of individualised activation. This analysis recommends that, as in Australia and Denmark, sanctions are also individualised. Although barriers to work for partners may be household-related, the *quid pro quo* is between the individual and state/society and neither member of a couple should be sanctioned for the behaviour of the other, for which they are not responsible

The Labour government in Britain estimated that up to 94,000 couples would be subject to full JSA Joint Claims conditionality following partial individualisation; of these, up to 22,000 individuals could be helped off benefits and into work after three years (Department for Work and Pensions, 2009a: 27). However, the assumptions underpinning this are uncertain due to a lack of evidence concerning how partners respond to increased conditionality (Department for Work and Pensions, 2009a: 27). One risk of increasing conditionality is that it “pushes people outside of the benefit system entirely, leading to their disconnection from both work and welfare” (Gregg, 2008: 6). Griggs and Bennett (2009: 34) highlight that WFIPs had a deterrent effect and in both Britain and Australia evaluation evidence concerning compulsory and voluntary programmes for partnered parents is mixed (see Chapter Four and Appendix 4). One Australian campaigning organisation suggested: “I favour compulsion because those who need the assistance will not by and large volunteer”; similarly one Danish government official stated that frequent contact “has to be mandatory, otherwise they wouldn’t come.” One Personal Adviser interviewed in Britain suggested that only increased conditionality would compel partners into work, as evidenced by the case of lone parents. However, the Australian example in particular highlights the balance to be struck between motivating partnered women who require it, but not undermining the efforts of those who are already motivated

and who require support and assistance to move into work. This is illustrated by the following quotes from two Australian interviewees: “A strong message is required, but with allowance for flexibility in the administration of such a message (former government official); “There needs to be assessment at the individualised level. For some we need to have those mutual obligation principles to give them the necessary push forward. But for another person, we think we should take you out of that framework, but there’s no capacity to do that in the system” (employment service provider). As Millar and Evans (2006: 74) argue, changes in definition or the introduction of more mandation are unlikely to assist hard to reach groups.

The Social Security Advisory Committee has warned of the potential of the Welfare Reform Act to create tensions within couples, ending in family breakdown and has recommended that it be imposed in a culturally sensitive manner (Social Security Advisory Committee, 2008: 3, see also Department for Work and Pensions, 2008: 172, Bewley et al., 2005). This was highlighted by frontline workers in Australia (see Chapter Six) and may be an argument in favour of joint interviews, although evidence from both Britain and Australia is mixed concerning the efficacy of such interventions. Furthermore, other facets of welfare reform, such as moving recipients of Incapacity Benefit onto Employment and Support Allowance or Jobseeker’s Allowance, may result in further familisation rather than individualisation²⁹⁹ because partners will claim means tested benefits based on joint income assessment (see Bennett and Millar, 2009: 22). This suggests that attention should be paid to the interaction of different policy reforms. Carers of adults are so far exempted from ongoing reforms; the previous Labour government stated that it would not move this group from Income Support or increase their conditionality “until it has a clear and detailed plan setting

²⁹⁹ I am grateful to Dr David Byrne for highlighting this.

out how it will reform the benefit system over the longer term” (Department for Work and Pensions, 2009a: 43).³⁰⁰

Sainsbury (1996: 173) sets out five different types of gender equality reforms: gender neutral, gender reinforcement, gender recognition, gender reconstruction and individualisation. She argues that individualisation reforms have tended to be more successful in equalising access to benefits than gender neutral measures. However, she cautions that individualisation is easier to pursue when the breadwinner model is based on the family, but harder where there is a derived access model (Sainsbury, 1996: 197). She draws on the case of the Netherlands to suggest that there are drawbacks to individualisation if “not combined with provision of adequate childcare facilities and labour market measures” (p.197). In the case of partners in Britain to this can be added the provision of care for disabled or elderly adults. Sainsbury draws on the Swedish case to suggest three prerequisites which would aid the implementation of individualisation in order to benefit women: (i) adequate social benefits with citizenship as the basis of entitlement, (ii) policies to aid women in achieving financial independence through their own earnings, and (iii) marginalisation of means tested programmes with the family as the unit of benefit (p.197). An academic interviewed in Denmark commented that: “With individual rights [to benefit] you don’t even have to study incentives because they are not there” (see also Adam and Brewer, 2010: 3). This individual model is exemplified by the citizen’s income model (Fitzpatrick, 1999, van Parijs, 1992, Roche, 1992: 178-189), although none of the countries examined achieve this.

The Australian case demonstrates that it is possible to restructure income tests to partially individualise benefit entitlement, even if assessment is still at least partially household-based. The primary goal of partial individualisation in Australia was to

³⁰⁰ In June 2008 the government published a National Carers Strategy (Department of Health, 2008) signed by seven Government departments and allocating £255 million of funding over three years. The strategy included a commitment to try to ensure that all carers who want to work are able to do so.

increase incentives to work by requiring previously dependent partners to claim benefits in their own right and by making changes to the income tests and taper rates. A number of policy actors interviewed in Australia suggested that attention should be paid to EMTRs arising from the interaction of the tax and benefits systems.³⁰¹ Whiteford (2009) argues that in Australia average EMTRs on the movement from joblessness into work are amongst the lowest in the OECD and that they insufficiently explain Australia's high level of family joblessness compared to other countries (p.53-55, 60) but Apps (2006) argues that high EMTRs particularly disincentivise second earners. Nevertheless, attention should be paid to EMTRs in designing policies for partnered women in Britain (Department for Work and Pensions, 2010, see also Centre for Social Justice, 2009).

There have been concerns within DWP³⁰² that full individualisation of benefits would bring a large number of new claimants into the benefits system (see also Millar, 2004: 73); which groups would be impacted should be further examined. A by-product of partial individualisation in Australia was that two new groups of partners became eligible for payments: partners of minimum wage earners and partners of self-employed people (interview with former government official). However, this was deemed necessary in relation to the goals of transforming a dependency-based system and encouraging more women into the labour market. Furthermore, it was acknowledged by the government at the time that a consequence of tightening the eligibility for dependency-based payments would be an increase in those claiming unemployment benefit, but that this would be offset by tax receipts from recipients undertaking more work, as well as the increased likelihood of leaving payment for a year (Warburton et al., 1999: iii). In the Regulatory Impact Assessment for the British

³⁰¹ Harding et al argue that “means-testing necessarily creates high EMTRs — particularly when the means-tests for two or more programs overlap and/or there is also a liability for income tax” - Harding, A., Vu, Q. N., Tanton, R. & Vidyattama, Y. (2008) Improving work incentives for mothers: the national and geographic impact of liberalising the Family Tax Benefit income test. *37th Australian Conference of Economists*. Gold Coast, QLD.

³⁰² Conversation with DWP official.

Welfare Reform Act, additional costs were anticipated from payment of health-related benefits to 28,000 new claimant partners (Department for Work and Pensions, 2009a: 29). However, savings to the Exchequer are estimated to be £3,000 per year for each individual helped off benefits (Department for Work and Pensions, 2009a: 29).³⁰³ The Australian system involved the creation of interim payments³⁰⁴ as a step on the way to further restructuring, but this may not be necessary in Britain.

Dolowitz et al (2000: 10) suggest that one constraint on policy translation is policy complexity, which is important in relation to partial individualisation. The Danish social security system appears simpler than those of either Britain and Australia. Given that British social security and labour market policies are already complex, increased complexity is not to be aspired to, as it has been linked with perceived disincentives to work (Beatty et al., 2010, Hasluck and Green, 2005, Centre for Social Justice, 2009, Millar, 2005). The British social security system is inherently complex, reform difficult and the goal of simplification elusive; the direction of reform has been of incremental progress towards simplification (Millar, 2005, Bennett and Millar, 2009: 20). However, Millar (2005: 14-15) highlights that there are three different perspectives that may be considered in relation to increasing simplification in the social security system: those of DWP, those of recipients and those of the public: these are not necessarily compatible.

In relation to negative lessons, partial individualisation and changes to the income test following Working Nation in Australia predominantly benefited older women without dependent children (Burke and Redmond, 2002), who constitute a significant group of British partners. Individualisation may also produce disincentives to work, as evidenced by partners on Incapacity Benefit in Britain (Beatty et al., 2010: 64). The Coalition Government's Green Paper (Department for Work and Pensions, 2010) on

³⁰³ Amounting to savings of between £15-30m in 2012/13, £22.5-45m in 2013/14 and £32.5-65m in 2014/15.

³⁰⁴ In 1994 Home Childcare Allowance was introduced as an alternative to the Dependent Spouse Rebate for couples with children and was subsumed into Parenting Allowance in 1998. See Appendix 4.

welfare reform is concerned with increasing incentives to work by altering the levels of earnings disregards and taper rates and some of the proposals have similarities with the Australian reforms. However, it is of concern that in relation to the proposed Universal Work Credit the right to claim financial support and payment of such support will be to one member of a household (Department for Work and Pensions, 2010: 19, 33), which is potentially a regressive step in the individualisation process and seemingly in contradiction to the provisions set out in the Welfare Reform Act. Partial individualisation alone may not result in increased numbers of partnered women in work, although it is a significant step in engaging directly with them and overcoming existing asymmetrical conditionality. If a simplified and partially individualised form of benefit regime is coupled with more individually responsive assistance, as well as alternative care provision, this may help to assist partnered women into work.

7.3.1.1 Politico-institutional recalibration in relation to partial individualisation

Politico-institutional recalibration concerns the levels and actors involved in governance (Ferrera and Hemerijck, 2003: 93). In particular, Grubb (2009) has suggested that it significant who pays benefits.³⁰⁵ This was supported by one Australian campaigning organisation, who argued that in Australia “state governments are less concerned about employment services because they don’t pay income support.” The Australian social security system has similarities with Britain’s in being based on categorical benefits, however Australia funds benefits from general taxation, whereas both Britain and Denmark have, respectively, contribution- and insurance-based benefits, although Denmark finances its welfare state to a greater extent from taxes rather than social security contributions (Kvist and Pedersen, 2007: 101). Serrano Pascual (2007) highlights the merging of benefits administration and

³⁰⁵ Although FaHCSIA had responsibility for Australians Working Together, DEWR was responsible for the contracts in Job Network under the Active Participation Model and providers were required under the terms of their contract to be more work focused; this overrode other requirements. This perhaps helps to explain the reasons for the overriding work first approach which some policy actors criticised in Chapter Five and highlights that the location of responsibility for policies and programmes is important.

employment services as a 'significant institutional trend' (p.284), seen in all three countries. The implications of such machinery of government changes are two-fold. Firstly, in each of the countries social assistance payments have become the responsibility of government departments focused on 'work,' highlighting politico-institutional as well as functional and normative recalibration. Secondly, there has been convergence in the creation of 'one stop shops'³⁰⁶ in all three countries, which broadly constitutes a shared basis for policy translation.

In Australia in 2004, responsibility for working age income support payments (including PP and NSA) was transferred from the Department of Family and Community Services to the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, which in 2007 became the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.³⁰⁷ This highlighted a normative shift to a focus on work for parents in receipt of benefit. The Working Nation changes pre-dated the creation of both Centrelink (in 1997) and Job Network (in 1998). Centrelink was created as a delivery agency of government by restructuring the Department of Social Security, the Department of Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs, Student Assistance Centres and the Commonwealth Employment Service. Centrelink became a one-stop shop for government payments, although the employment service function was contracted out to Job Network, comprised of voluntary, public and private employment service providers. Policy actors suggested that Centrelink predominantly

³⁰⁶ Britain and Australia share similarities in the physical aspects of customer-facing offices. Prior to the introduction of AWT, Centrelink offices were redesigned in a more open-plan style; the new Jobcentre Plus offices introduced in Britain in 2002 were also open-plan. Denmark no longer has open-plan Jobcentres and social workers interviewed suggested that side offices encouraged people to disclose more information about their circumstances.

³⁰⁷ In January 2006 the Department of Family and Community Services (FaCS) merged with the Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination (OIPC) to form the Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaCSIA). In December 2007 FaCSIA assumed responsibility for housing and became the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA). At the same time as DEWR assumed responsibility for education from the former Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) and became the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR).

has a compliance function in relation to partnered women and that this was compounded by a lack of discretion.

In Denmark the Ministry of Employment has overall responsibility for legislation relating to benefits for both insured and uninsured unemployed people. Responsibility for policy relating to cash-benefits was transferred from the Ministry of Social Affairs to the new Ministry of Employment in 2001, which also assumed responsibility for active labour market policy (Daguerre, 2007: 98). Since January 2007 services for insured and uninsured unemployed have been brought together in joint Jobcenters ('one-stop shops') and from August 2009 local authorities have responsibility for both groups of unemployed people, although AKs still retain responsibility for paying unemployment insurance to their members.³⁰⁸ In Britain in 2002 offices of the Benefits Agency and the Employment Service were brought together under a single 'one-stop shop' as Jobcentre Plus, which became an agency of the newly-formed Department for Work and Pensions, created by merging the employment responsibilities of the former Department for Education and Employment with the responsibilities for pensions and working age benefits of the former Department of Social Security. This institutional change reflected a normative shift from 'passive' to 'active' benefit regimes, building on the origins of Jobseeker's Allowance in 1996.

The merging of benefits administration and employment services, and the creation of 'one stop shops' both constitute a shared basis for policy translation. However, institutions may change slowly and incrementally and it may be the case that ideological constraints have been a barrier to individualisation in Britain. Such ideological constraints may relate to differing conceptions of dependency and in

³⁰⁸ Concern was voiced by some Danish interviewees about this responsibility in future being transferred to the local authorities. It is also important to note that payment of benefits was separated by legislation from employment measures, which was the responsibility of Jobcenters; this separation was problematic for implementation of the 300 hours rule, which required close collaboration between benefit offices and Jobcenters. See Jensen, K. B. & Lauritzen, H. B. (2008) *Local authority implementation of the 300 hour rule*, Copenhagen, Anvendt Kommunal Forskning.

particular that dependence on the state is viewed as less preferable to dependence on the family or market. In Australia the shift to partial individualisation involved recognition that “marital status is no longer a significant limiting factor in women’s labour force participation. Rather, it is the presence and more particularly the age of dependent children” (Douglas et al., 1993: i). Whether women should return to work after childbirth and, if so, how old their children are when they do this, are important normative questions for the recalibration of policies relating to partnered women and this links with both social norms and the availability of alternative care.

7.3.2 *Childcare*

The availability of alternative care is key to facilitating the labour market participation of partnered women. Although the prerequisite of care provision applies to care for both adults and children, space only allows for in-depth consideration of the policy translation of childcare. Griggs and Bennett (2009: 46) highlight that in Britain the foundation of universal care has not preceded increased conditionality for partners. In Denmark it is an institutional foundation on which labour market policies are overlaid. As a social worker suggested: “You can’t just transfer our [activation] policies. Then you have to transfer our day-care system where you are guaranteed day-care.” Similarly, an academic argued that:

“It goes to prove the success of the Danish model of women being in the labour market. The condition is that you have these good childcare facilities. It goes together. Everybody loves it and they are proud of it and they want to export it everywhere because they think it’s so good...It goes together: labour market and childcare institutions”

There are two main constraints on the translation of expanded childcare as a prerequisite to activation policies. Firstly, feasibility in terms of ideological and

cultural constraints, manifested both by policy actors, as well as families and by partnered women themselves; secondly, institutional (or structural) constraints. We will consider these in turn before addressing what may be translated.

Whiteford (2009) argues that activation for parents with below school-age children is the solution to joblessness, as “even allowing low income parents to stay out of the labour market until their youngest child is seven years of age³⁰⁹ is likely to have significant adverse employment effects” (p.62). He rightly highlights that in the Nordic countries (particularly Denmark) women are expected to be in employment when their children are aged around three, but importantly “childcare support is available to encourage this” (p.62). As this analysis has argued, the success of the Danish model of moving partnered women into work is a result of encompassing activation policies in the context of the flexicurity model and the universal breadwinner model, as well as the provision of care, including childcare. However, as this analysis has highlighted, there are also challenges to the success of this model with increasing diversity in the Danish population.

One Danish government official suggested that during a visit to Denmark, James Purnell³¹⁰ expressed surprise that in Denmark there is little debate about whether women should work. Whiteford (2009: 62) recommends that it is desirable to have considerable public debate about the appropriate age at which parents are expected to seek work. In Denmark, debates concerning female labour market participation took place in the 1960s and 1970s and current debates centre on work-life balance and the quality and content of day-care. In Britain New Labour introduced a raft of flexible working legislation, however the debate about whether women with children should be in the labour market is still ongoing, as it is in Australia, in relation to different groups of women (see Chapters Five and Six); more specifically, the debate centres on

³⁰⁹ School age

³¹⁰ At the time Secretary of State for Work and Pensions and responsible for the Welfare Reform Bill.

the age of children. As highlighted earlier in this analysis, these aspects reflect ideology, which can be implicit or explicit in policies and may reflect or may drive culture or attitudes within society. Cultural or ideational aspects may be difficult to translate between countries, although policy may contribute to cultural change. Sometimes, however, policies may run counter to cultural changes in the population. The British Social Attitudes Survey³¹¹ suggests that 38 per cent of Britons disapprove of mothers working full time when their children are aged below 12 (Harrison and Fitzgerald, 2010). However, Steiber and Haas (2009) argue that mothers' own attitudes to work and care are more important than generalized attitudes, although the latter may affect the former. As we saw in Chapters Five and Six, Danish policy actors highlighted that the Danish model does not offer sufficient choice for families who do not wish to use day-care, although the pedagogical aspect is important in encouraging its usage. Furthermore, in contrast to Denmark, both Britain (and Australia) appears to have a diversity of family models, which constrains the translation of Danish day-care policy to Britain.

Australia and Denmark established childcare institutions much earlier than Britain (see Chapter Five) and in relation to path dependency as a constraint on translation, it is necessary to build on past policies and the existing institutional structures in Britain. The brief history of childcare in Britain in Chapter Five (Section 5.5.2) highlights that, as with the welfare reforms examined in this research, reforms in the area of childcare policy in Britain have also taken considerable time. For example, the plans for nursery education for three- and four-year olds set out by the Conservative government in 1972 were not realised until the New Labour government's childcare strategy of 1998. Borchost's analysis (2002) suggests that the Danish day-care model may be viewed as a product of economic, structural and normative factors. One Danish academic stated: "One of the big differences is that here it [day-care] was not a women's issue. It was a reform movement. It was also supported by political parties and the men and not only

³¹¹ The British Social Attitudes Survey is an important barometer of public opinion for DWP Ministers.

by women.” Another academic suggested that the reason day-care has not progressed in Britain to the same extent as other countries, especially Denmark, is: “[a] Path dependent explanation. One point would be the political actors were much stronger in Denmark and they gained influence within the state apparatus. In Britain it’s not the same and you had John Bowlby³¹² being quite influential.”

Randall (2000: 228) suggests three main reasons why childcare policy has not progressed further in Britain. Firstly, the unitary, politically centralised basis of British statism has been an impediment to childcare advocates. Secondly, childcare advocacy and feminist groups have been weak actors and, further, the power of trade unions (who were influential to the development of childcare in Australia and Denmark) and local authorities were weakened under the Thatcher legislation of the 1980s. Thirdly, the liberal state tradition of the British welfare state, in particular the historical legacy of non-intervention in the ‘private’ sphere, although this is not necessarily consistent. Bacchi (1999: 3) suggests that governments ‘intervene’ in the private sphere in both explicit and implicit ways, including by not providing childcare. Although New Labour appeared more willing to intervene in the private sphere than previous governments, it still appeared to consider decision-making around care to be a private family matter, rather than a public good (see Lewis and Campbell, 2007a). However, such intervention is not consistent for partnered women. Firstly, because access to benefits based on relationship status and benefit assessment predicated on the household intervene in the private sphere of the family. Secondly, activation policies for partnered women are an intervention in the private sphere, as increasing conditionality has implications for the transfer of caring responsibilities elsewhere. For example, Griggs and Bennett (2009: 46) suggest that activation for partners may result

³¹² Child psychologist John Bowlby’s ‘attachment theory’ in the 1950s highlighted that maternal deprivation caused harm to children. Initially his theory was based on research with children who were hospitalised, or in institutional care, but was used to legitimate policymaking around childcare. Randall, V. (2000) *The politics of child daycare in Britain*. Oxford, Oxford University Press. Pages 51-53.

in potentially problematic, conflicting divisions of labour within families, particularly in circumstances where both partners are subject to conditionality.

Establishing a high quality childcare system in Britain such as that of Denmark potentially requires radical institutional and normative change. The OECD (2007a: 22-3) suggests that the Nordic model is not directly transferable to countries which are still in the process of building up childcare capacity and quality and here good quality local public services and considerable local government taxation powers are important, both of which are features of Denmark. The stated policy goal of 'progressive universalism' in Britain is 'predominantly demand-led,' to be achieved by 'incremental support of piecemeal development' (HC, 2001: Q84). Significant investment has been made in early years provision since 1998 in comparison to preceding years and incremental, piecemeal development may eventually lead to expanded provision, if the path dependent trajectory is followed. However, current provision is *too* piecemeal and, although a significant shift, the 15 hours (over three days) Early Years entitlement offer provides a low baseline compared to other countries. Furthermore, it conflicts with the reality of working life, as well as with the tax and benefits systems, which only recognise employment of 16 hours or more. Cost is one political constraint on increasing childcare provision, including political reluctance to increase taxes to fund it, or lack of political will to redistribute resources to this area. Pricewaterhouse Coopers have costed a number of options for pre- and post-school age care for both government and Daycare Trust (see PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2003, Daycare Trust, 2004). To increase supply-side funding for running costs (Daycare Trust, 2004: 29) the estimated total cost to government and parents is around 2.6 per cent of GDP (around £30 billion at 2004/5 GDP values), around 1.8 per cent more than existing spending levels. However, with regard to human capital, the rate of return per dollar of investment in early childhood education and care is higher than the rate of return for the same investment later in the life-cycle,

including at school and with decreasing returns for post-school job training (see for example Cunha et al., 2005: 19).³¹³

Based on the cases of Australia and Denmark, there are different instruments and settings by which expanded childcare may be achieved. Expansion of childcare would be unlikely to apply solely to partnered parents, but also to lone parents, or to a subset of low-income parents. However, targeting childcare provision towards a sub-set of parents may be viewed as stigmatising or paternalistic. The existing subsidies for childcare in Britain are complex (see Chapter Five) and, similarly to the social security system, it would be advantageous to streamline these for the purposes of reducing both policy complexity and potential disincentives to work for partnered women. The complex range of subsidies, combined with inadequate provision of sufficient quality results in use of a patchwork of different services which may not be suited to families' needs. Denmark offers one principal subsidy for pre- and post-school age children, graduated according to income, and Australia offers two subsidies for pre- and post-school age children. In Britain Hakim et al (2009) have suggested abolishing the childcare element of Working Tax Credit, the employer vouchers and the Sure Start Maternity Grant and instead providing a universal untaxed and untapered Parental Care Allowance (PCA) to parents with children aged 0-3. This has similarities with the Finnish model and would offer choice not available to Danish parents. Although this would be in line with the liberal notion of choice, one potential drawback is that it may discourage the use of childcare outside the home, further familialising women and with potentially negative impacts on educational attainment for children. Danish provision is based on the importance of pedagogy and universality in improving the life chances of all children, which is an important aspect of reducing child poverty, as a Danish government official suggested: "The research shows that if you make an effort to heighten the learning among all the children, the children that benefit the

³¹³ This claim may be challenged if applied to low quality provision, although this 'child-to-invest-in paradigm' has been influential for early years provision. See Prentice, S. (2009) High stakes: The 'investable' child and the economic reframing of childcare *Signs*, 34(3):687-710.

most are the vulnerable children.” The British universal Early Years Entitlement is important in relation to improving attainment and take-up is high, although it could be improved for poorer households.

An alternative option is the Australian model, which may be more translatable to Britain and where subsidies are provided for family-based care. NDP evidence suggests that partners, particularly those from an ethnic minority, are reluctant to use formal childcare (Aston et al., 2009a, Coleman and Seeds, 2007), however, the childcare element of Working Tax Credit is not paid for informal care. Nevertheless, families themselves may not wish to provide care on such a regular basis³¹⁴ and this may adversely impact on, for example, grandparents’ own risk of poverty (Grandparents Plus, 2010)³¹⁵, as well as with their own wishes to continue in paid work in line with the proposed abolition of the statutory retirement age. A further constraint on increasing childcare provision is technical feasibility in terms of the creation of places and in relation to problems with current funding mechanisms, whereby providers do not receive full reimbursement for free places (NurseryWorld, 2010). There needs to be a focus on capacity-building in Britain and one possibility which is in line with the British model is the increased involvement of employers in the provision of care, rather than merely through the voucher scheme. Some large employers in the public and private sectors already provide childcare facilities (see Millar and Ridge, 2002: 96). The link between the policy goal of increasing employment rates and increased demand for childcare places should be recognised in relation to building capacity and the self-reinforcing effect on women’s employment.

³¹⁴ Further, it may important to consider how the early years framework is achieved by informal care.

³¹⁵ The Welfare Reform Act legislated for National Insurance credits for grandparents providing care.

5.3.2.1 *Politico-institutional recalibration in relation to childcare*

In terms of Danish politico-institutional recalibration, day-care is the policy responsibility of the Ministry of the Interior and Social Welfare³¹⁶ although within this legislative framework, local authorities are responsible for ensuring that supply meets demand. It is in line with a broader international trend for childcare policy to be under the auspices of education ministries (Moss, 2006) and this is the case in Britain and Australia (the Department for Education in the former and DEEWR in the latter), although subsidies are the responsibility of different government institutions. In Denmark local authorities provide the majority of day-care, although around a third is provided by not-for-profit organisations integrated into the public system; there is only a minor role for private providers (OECD, 2006b: 46). The Australian childcare system has in common with Britain a reliance on the market, although Australia's National Childcare program was originally dominated by the community sector (see Chapter Five). Using the varieties of capitalism thesis, Morgan (2005) argues that the availability of cheap labour in liberal market economies (such as Britain and Australia) promotes dependence on the market for childcare. She also argues that the more regulated labour markets of the coordinated market economies (such as Denmark) make such private services more difficult to sustain and force the issue of childcare onto the political stage (p.259).³¹⁷

Gender equality underpinned the overall objectives of childcare policy in Denmark, due in part to the political influence of women's organisations and movements

³¹⁶ *Indenrigs- og Socialministeriet* (Ministry of the Interior and Social Affairs) from 2007 and from 2010 the Ministry of Social Affairs.

³¹⁷ The Danish model has not been immune to the neo-liberal ideas promoting choice through the market, although it has proved resistant to such challenges so far. For example, private solutions have been encouraged through pool arrangements and the role of mothers has been extended by the childcare leave act of 1992-3. There have also been moves to encourage for-profit care providers, for example the legislation *Lov om Social Service* allowed for contracting out of provision to a limited degree and the free-choice scheme promoted choice of providers, although it was optional for local authorities. Borchorst, A. (2002) Danish child care policy: continuity rather than radical change, in Michel, S. & Mahon, R. (Eds.) *Child care policy at the crossroads. Gender and welfare state restructuring*. New York, NY, Routledge, 267-285. Page 278.

(Borchorst, 2002: 268-9). Such actors have not been as influential in British childcare policy (Randall, 2000). However, in Denmark it was not only women's organisations who argued for childcare; there was political consensus. In Australia, the main driver for childcare was not the feminist movement, but employers' demands for labour in the 1970s and trade union lobbying in the 1980s (Brennan, 2002: 98). Funding for additional childcare places accompanied both Australians Working Together and Welfare to Work (see Chapter Four) so an explicit link was made between childcare and labour market participation. Bacchi (1999) argues that the market-led model frames childcare services "as primarily a means to facilitate women's workforce participation" (p.204). Childcare should not be purely instrumental to labour market participation, although this does not preclude linkages being made between the two. As we saw in Chapter Five, in Denmark the 'instrumental' aspect is secondary to pedagogy, as all children can attend day-care regardless of their parents' labour force status. Although in Britain for partnered women the Early Years Entitlement is not tied to labour market participation, the childcare element of WTC, employer-provided vouchers and Jobcentre Plus subsidies are. In Australia Childcare Benefit to fund up to 24 hours of care per week is available regardless of labour market participation, but to receive 50 hours per week, funded by Childcare Benefit or Childcare Rebate, requires participation in work, job search, training or study. There are two principal problems in tying care provision to labour market participation.

Firstly, it is essential that good alternative care is available at the time of job search, so that childcare is not viewed as another 'obstacle' to be overcome when parents take up suitable work. Secondly, the availability of alternative care as a foundation for ALMPs would not only help to facilitate the transition into work, but as Ridge's (2009: 511) study of children of lone mothers highlights, reduce any detrimental effects on the welfare of children arising from transitions in and out of unsustained work. Positing childcare as instrumental to labour market participation may in fact be exacerbated through the involvement of employers in the extension of childcare provision

suggested above. It is significant that in Denmark childcare policy is child-centred (Borchorst, 2002: 268) and the child development purpose distinguishes it from other countries which still regard formal childcare as “a service for which working parents and employers should largely pay themselves” (OECD, 2007a: 23). Danish day-care provision has integrated education and care elements since the 1960s, as has Australia since the establishment of its childcare system in the 1970s. Britain has comparatively recently moved from a ‘childcare discourse’ focusing on childcare as ‘instrumental’ to paid work to a ‘pedagogical discourse’ following *Every Child Matters* in 2003 (Moss, 2006).

In each of the countries there is concern over quality of provision and in Australia and Britain in relation to cost to users. As we saw in Chapter Four, the cost of childcare is still a potential barrier to many partnered women in Britain, particularly those who would probably be limited (at least initially) to relatively low paid work because of their skills and experience (Aston et al., 2007: 63). Attention needs to be paid to the reasons for low take-up of Jobcentre Plus childcare subsidies (Coleman and Seeds, 2007: 2, Harker, 2006: 31). The ‘selling’ of the offer to an extent relies on the skills of Jobcentre Plus Personal Advisers and parents need to be reassured of the quality and appropriateness of alternative care for their children. One way of overcoming this would be if more comprehensive childcare was provided so that it became a ‘social norm’ and take-up of the Early Years Entitlement (Department for Children Schools and Families, 2009) suggests that this is becoming the case for three- and four-year olds.

In Australia increased investment in childcare accompanied the increased participation requirements of Welfare to Work and one of DEWR’s responsibilities was to monitor the number of places to ensure sufficient availability (Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, 2006: 177). This aspect constitutes critical policy learning in relation to partnered women in Britain. In Britain, a key problem for

partnered women's engagement in the labour market is that, although many vital components are in place, there appears to be a lack of coherence overall, unlike Denmark, where there is a 'life course' approach based on parental leave, day-care and activation policies. The decentralised policy model may also be a key reason for the success of the approach and in Britain there may therefore be advantages to local authorities assuming responsibility for early years provision (from 2010) in ensuring supply meets local demand, including the provision of culturally-sensitive provision (see Aston et al., 2007: 65). It will be important that central government and local authorities ensure capacity in tandem with welfare reforms for partnered women and attention should be paid to potential tensions which may arise between the local and national dimensions of policy delivery, particularly in relation to the differing responsibilities for policy areas.

7.3.3 *Individually responsive employment assistance*

Based on evaluation evidence, Hasluck and Green (2005: 93) recommend that workless couples might be more effectively treated by explicit inclusion in existing initiatives, such as early entry to other New Deal programmes, rather than developing new programmes exclusively for this group. They are partially right, as both WFIPs and NDP are ineffective in their current forms. Harker (2006: 8) suggests offering a 'New Deal for Parents' to both lone and couple parents, which has similarities with the Progression to Work model set out by DWP and Gregg (Department for Work and Pensions, 2009b).³¹⁸ As Chapter Four showed, partnered women are a heterogeneous group and churning between PPs and PpP in Australia highlights the unstatic or fluid nature of the relationship status of partnered women, also seen in Britain. There are potential advantages in considering partners and lone parents together, as both groups may experience similar constraints on paid work (Millar, 1996: 113), despite partnered mothers in theory being able to share care responsibilities. The latter has been

³¹⁸ It is not yet known whether this will be implemented by the Coalition Government.

assumed in both British and Australian activation policies aimed at partnered women, although as Chapter Four showed, in some cases partners may be unwilling to share care, or may have a disability which limits their capacity to do so. Furthermore, in relation to constraints on working, some partnered women may have more in common with IB recipients (Coleman and Seeds, 2007: 22).

In both Australia and Britain unemployment benefits³¹⁹ will become the principal working age payments, as in Denmark. The Welfare Reform Act in Britain intends that employment support be provided on the basis of need rather than benefit label (Department for Work and Pensions, 2009b: 7). The Coalition Government intends to replace all welfare to work programmes with one single programme, the Work Programme. This has the potential to positively move away from support based on categories which may be ineffective in addressing the range of constraints on working for partnered women. The McClure Report (2000a) in Australia suggested that a system based on income payment categories as the basis for access to assistance “constrains the capacity of service providers to be *flexible* and *responsive*. It is also *fragmented*, which can be confusing and confronting for clients” (p.9). However, the case of Australia illustrates that caution should be exercised in treating partnered parents in the same way as other jobseekers. In Australia neither the policy design nor implementation sufficiently took account of caring responsibilities. Danish activation does not specifically take account of the needs of parents, but this is principally because alternative care is provided (and assumed) in the context of the universal breadwinner model. British policies should incorporate policy learning from both Australia and Denmark in relation to the importance of childcare provision, but also in taking into account caring responsibilities both as a constraint on the kinds of work which may be taken up, as well as by positively building on skills acquired through such activities. In addition to supply-side issues, the availability of flexible work is

³¹⁹ Newstart Allowance in Australia and Jobseeker’s Allowance in Britain.

important and Jobcentre Plus can play a role in this at both strategic and local levels (see Harker, 2006: 35).

Frontline actors need to have a range of skills to assess the needs of partnered women, as well to motivate and support them in their path to work. This depends on staff: client ratios, time available, as well as their capacity for flexibility in the implementation of policies. One key implementation problem for NDP was that many Jobcentre Plus advisers did not have sufficient partnered women on their caseloads to build up expertise to address specific couple-related issues (Thomas and Griffiths, 2005: 69) or the heterogeneous needs of this group. Advisers have a range of valuable skills and the expertise built up from the New Deal for Lone Parents (which has a much higher caseload than NDP) may mean that they are more familiar with the needs of parents than perhaps frontline actors were in Australia. As noted in Chapter Four, for partnered women without children, Advisers with experience of assisting IB/ESA recipients may be better placed to provide support.

If all income support recipients are to receive employment assistance from one programme, there needs to be an effective method of assessing distance from the labour market. Chapter Five described the assessment tools used in Australia and Denmark: in Australia Centrelink uses a computerised tool to place partnered women into streams and in Denmark job counsellors place partnered women into match groups during job conversations. These tools have the potential advantage of targeting resources accordingly, however they may also reinforce claimant identities (see Caswell et al., 2008) in the same way as categorical benefit systems; in Australia they were also too standardised to effectively assess the needs of parents (McInnes and Taylor, 2007). There needs to be flexibility to move partnered women between streams of support, as there is in both Australia and Denmark.

If tougher, personalised conditionality (Gregg, 2008) is to be implemented for partnered women in Britain it needs to be supported by effectively tailored activation with an emphasis on earlier intervention and individualised assistance (see for example Daguerre and Etherington, 2009: 16-7). The advantage of the Danish encompassing approach was the ability of frontline actors to construct a package of support to overcome constraints on working, based on the provision of repeated activation offers every six months. NDP evaluation evidence suggests that “no one model would suit all” (Coleman and Seeds, 2007: 34) and this cross-national analysis supports the evaluation of the POEM pilot in emphasising the importance of one-to-one responsive support. That such assistance was “intensive, flexible, and tailored to client need” (Aston et al., 2009a: 58) was viewed by both providers and clients as POEM’s key strength.³²⁰ An Australian campaigning organisation suggested that policy learning for partnered women could be gleaned from Pathways to Work in Britain and suggested a model of compulsory ‘engagements’ in the form of information sessions, with the option of undertaking a range of voluntary activities:

“There is a massive productivity loss in not aligning the services that you offer better with what people’s aspirations might be...You could get better productivity out of the unutilised potential workforce by doing more work up-front on engagement and positive messages, which means to me choice, options and respect. So, a lot of it is about messaging. I actually think you will achieve the same result ultimately, but the means by which you do it is so much better if it’s framed respectfully with an emphasis on choice and self-direction. Now, that may be a bit bleeding heart, but I haven’t seen it attempted sufficiently in this country to say ‘It’s too well-intentioned and it won’t work’”

³²⁰ Furthermore, outreach activities have been important to both the POEM pilot and the Work-Focused Services in Children’s Centres pilots in Britain. See Aston, J., Bellis, A., Munro, M., Pillai, R. & Willison, R. (2009a) *Evaluation of Partners Outreach for Ethnic Minorities (POEM): Final report. Department for Work and Pensions Research Report No. 598*, Norwich, The Stationery Office, Marangozov, R. & Stevens, H. (2010) *Work-focused services in children’s centres pilot. Interim report. Department for Work and Pensions Research Report No 677*, Norwich, Stationery Office.

Here the focus on what the state can do for the citizens has similarities with the sessions provided for immigrants in Denmark, which social workers interviewed felt constituted positive interventions. An Australian former government official suggested that: “If people find work which fits in with their preferences, long-term outcomes are more likely to be sustainable.” (see also Millar and Ridge, 2009: 119). Tables 7.3, 7.4 and 7.5 set out suggested interventions for partnered women at differing distances from the labour market, based on the evidence from Britain, Australia and Denmark. These interventions should be supported by action plans agreed between partnered women and their advisers, based on their existing skills and experience and taking into account the needs of the labour market, as well as their individual aspirations. The action plans should be updated regularly and be flexible. This overall framework for assistance can be complemented by a nominal allocation of funding per partnered woman, but with the flexibility to purchase training or equipment to facilitate job entry on an individual basis, as in both Australia and Denmark. Some form of post-employment support is also necessary for approximately six months following entry into work. An Australian campaigning organisation emphasised the importance of a ‘progress narrative’ and a government official that “There needs to be more focus on retention and progression.”³²¹

³²¹ The importance of retention is recognised by DWP in its Employment Retention and Advancement Pilots (ERA).

Table 7.2: Suggested interventions for partnered women closest to the labour market

Distance from the labour market ³²²	Barriers to work	Suggested interventions
Closest to the labour market (work-ready)	<p>Few barriers - some recent work experience, but lacking confidence</p> <p>No language or literacy requirements</p> <p>Child or adult care requirements</p>	<p>Job search for flexible work (if required, for example if a carer of adult or child)</p> <p>Assistance with completing application forms</p> <p>Assistance with regard to non-UK qualifications</p> <p>Other vocational or non-vocational study or training to facilitate sustained job entry</p> <p>Support/advice concerning self-employment</p> <p>Childcare, respite or other care (perhaps culturally sensitive)</p>

³²² This categorisation is informed by the POEM pilot evaluation. Aston, J., Bellis, A., Munro, M., Pillai, R. & Willison, R. (2009a) *Evaluation of Partners Outreach for Ethnic Minorities (POEM): Final report*. Department for Work and Pensions Research Report No. 598, Norwich, The Stationery Office.

Table 7.3: Suggested interventions for partnered women at an intermediate distance from the labour market

Distance from the labour market	Barriers to work	Suggested interventions
Intermediate distance (work-ready with some support)	<p>Some language or literacy problems</p> <p>No recent work experience</p> <p>Lack of qualifications</p> <p>Health problems or disabilities</p> <p>Problems other than unemployment</p> <p>Child or adult care requirements</p>	<p>Skills for Life including ESOL</p> <p>Support to build confidence on group or one-to-one basis</p> <p>Guidance about work culture/local labour market</p> <p>Short-term skills upgrading</p> <p>Other vocational or non-vocational study or training to facilitate sustained job entry</p> <p>Wage subsidised jobs or private or public job training for at least six months</p> <p>Voluntary work</p> <p>Help to identify and apply for work (perhaps flexible or culturally sensitive)</p> <p>Referral to other support</p> <p>Signposting/referral to other support</p> <p>Childcare, respite or other care (perhaps culturally sensitive)</p>

Table 7.4: Suggested interventions for partnered women furthest from the labour market

Distance from the labour market	Barriers to work	Suggested interventions
Furthest away (needs considerable support to be work-ready)	Never worked or not for more than 5 years	Support to build confidence on group or one-to-one basis
	Some language or literacy problems	Skills for Life including ESOL
		Work placements/work trials
		Wage subsidised jobs or private or public job training for at least six months
		Voluntary work
	Health problems or disabilities	Referral to other support
	Severe problems other than unemployment	Referral to other support
	Child or adult care requirements	Childcare, respite or other care (perhaps culturally sensitive)

Drawing on Job Services Australia, a guideline could be specified regarding the minimum number of meetings, with adviser flexibility to increase or decrease frequency according to individual circumstances (see Gregg, 2008: 109). Evaluations of the New Deal Plus for Lone Parents suggest that there should be flexibility and discretion around frequency of contact with advisers (Hosain and Breen, 2007), but that this risks “overcrowding advisers’ time and reducing effective case load practice, which already appears to struggle with lone parents furthest from the labour market” (Thomas, 2007: 72). Flexibility depends on resources available to the frontline.

Evaluation evidence suggests that for the majority of partners, the current feasibility of undertaking paid work is a constraint and if not considered feasible at the present time, is often perceived as an option for the future when circumstances change, such as when their own or their partner's health improves, or when their children reach school age (Thomas and Griffiths, 2005: 19). One-off WFIPs are not effective in being able to capitalise on any changes to household circumstances (Coleman and Seeds, 2007: 69). McInnes argues for "structured and supported pathways for mothers, and other unpaid carers, to re-skill during or after providing unpaid care" (McInnes, 2006: 3). One potential advantage of the Progression to Work approach is that it allows for consideration of work participation requirements at a future date, with a "personalised conditionality regime which is responsive to the individual's circumstances, and so that preparation for work becomes a natural progression rather than a sudden step up" (Department for Work and Pensions, 2009a: 15-6). The notion of a 'path' to work (Department for Work and Pensions, 2009b, Gregg, 2008) rightly emphasises the longer-term aspect which is key to assisting partnered women into work and which may be undermined by a work first approach. Work first approaches³²³ are not necessarily discounted here, but they are most effective for partnered women closest to the labour market and may be counter-productive for those furthest away.

DWP (2009b) has set out a range of activities which partnered women in the Progression to Work group may undertake. Although the list is predominantly work-focused, Gregg (2008) rightly emphasises that "the Government should define work-related activity in a very broad way" (p.109), as there is the risk that the system "fails to recognise the wider contributions that claimants are making, principally as carers" (Gregg, 2008: 6). This is a key policy lesson to be learned from the Australian case. Focusing solely on paid work undermines opportunities for voluntary work, which

³²³ Britain's predominantly work first activation approach is characterised by supply-side measures such as job brokering/matching, job placement, job search and short-term training, rather than demand-side solutions such as more substantial training, wage subsidies or job creation.

can be an effective method of acquiring skills and gaining confidence, particularly for partnered women without recent labour market experience. In their evaluation of Australians Working Together Alexander et al (2005) demonstrated that undertaking voluntary work in their children's schools benefited both mothers and their children. There is also a balance to be struck between the provision of training and study options to produce more sustained job outcomes and in not exacerbating the lock-in effects of education for partnered women who do not need it, as evidenced by the Danish case. For some partnered women undertaking education and training is viewed as a step towards paid work and a way of testing spending time away from home responsibilities (Hasluck and Green, 2007: 93, Thomas and Griffiths, 2005: 79, Coleman et al., 2006: 25), but it should be available on a flexible basis to accommodate caring responsibilities (see Thomas and Griffiths, 2005, Coleman and Seeds, 2007)..

Hirsch and Millar (2004: 7) suggest that a key issue is the extent to which activation can become a flexible and dynamic process, avoiding the pitfalls of, on the one hand, being too rigid in the requirements on individuals whilst, on the other, failing to give sufficient direction and continuity. Importantly for policy implementation in Britain, both the Australian and Danish experiences illustrate that there are limits to the ideal of individualised assistance in practice. The Danish example shows that the *quid pro quo* can become out of balance in favour of the state or the individual (Chapter Five). As an Australian campaigning organisation suggested:

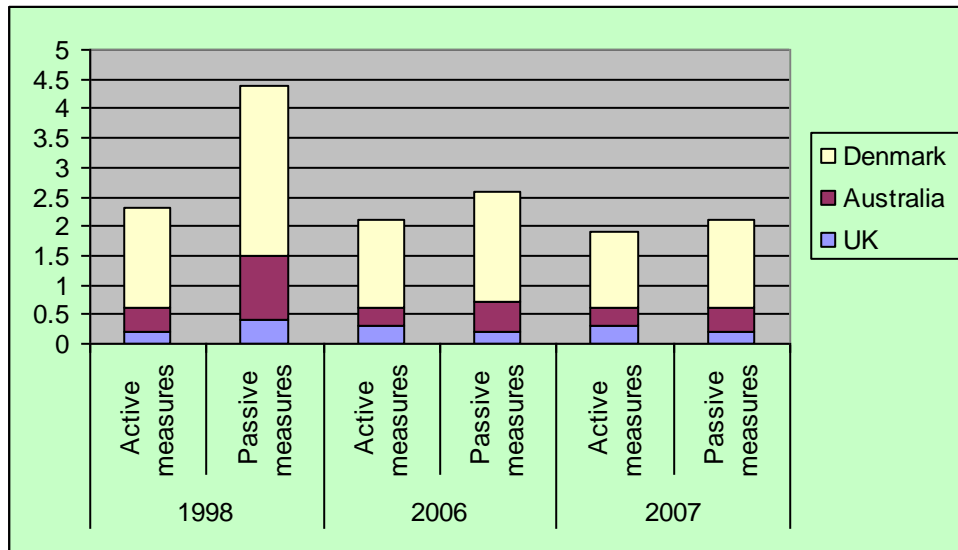
“In principle we would love to be able to create an employment system where everybody's aspirations and interests were able to be accommodated, but that process needs to cut back the other way too. So, the information you provide also informs people about where the work is and what you can make in terms

of hourly rates, or what skills are required in areas. So, you have to massage and direct aspirations too”³²⁴

This suggests investment of Advisers’ time, possibly over a long-term period. Cost is a constraint on the translation of individualised assistance. Figure 7.5 shows expenditure on both active and passive labour market measures for all three countries in 1998, 2006 and 2007. All have decreased their expenditure on passive labour market measures. Britain and Australia spend the same amount of GDP on active measures, whilst Denmark spends four times this amount, although this has reduced since 1998. On this basis, it could be argued that Australian ALMPs may be easier to translate than the Danish. However, a Danish trade union official argued that: “The money that you pay for active labour market policies is not an expenditure, it’s an investment.” Rose (2001) suggests that “the current economic climate favours drawing ‘cheap’ lessons depending primarily on the law for their effect” (p.14); work first strategies are cheaper than personalised assistance (Daguerre and Etherington, 2009: 3). Policies which may bring longer-term benefits are often compromised by the need for early and visible ‘results’ and here both the political system and the media may act as constraints, as well as the contracts for employment services. These are both technical and political constraints (Rose, 1991: 24) on policy translation, reflecting functional as well as normative aspects.

³²⁴ This suggestion is reflective of approaches such as Sen’s capabilities approach. See Giullari, S. & Lewis, J. (2005) *The adult worker model family, gender equality and care*, Geneva, United Nations Research Institute for Social Development. Also see Sennett’s respect approach Sennett, R. (2003) *Respect. The formation of character in an age of inequality*, London, Penguin.

Figure 7.5: Spending on active and passive labour market policies (percentage of GDP), 2007



Source: OECD, 2009b

Individualised assistance has been linked with the contracting out of employment services, however McInnes and Taylor (2007: 7) argue that the work first approach of Welfare to Work in Australia was a by-product of contracted-out employment assistance focused on ‘quick wins’ in terms of job outcomes, rather than on the existing experience and skill needs of women, as well as on individual circumstances and constraints relating to their parental status. They refer to ‘outcome buying,’ where clients are placed in jobs for 13 weeks and repeatedly churned through the system to achieve outcomes which enable providers to retain their contracts (p.7).³²⁵ Further, Mabbett (2009: 145) argues that private providers are important contributors to the casualisation of employment and the spread of temporary work in Australia. Finn (2008: 40) refers to problems of ‘creaming’ and ‘parking’ of clients. In the former case, providers concentrate their efforts on those closest to the labour market; in the latter case, harder-to-place participants receive less attention or services.³²⁶ In Britain job

³²⁵ Providers receive payments for sustained job outcomes at 13 and 26 weeks. There is weekly post-placement support from providers but support for the client is gradually withdrawn after 26 weeks.

³²⁶ For a review of such issues relating to contracting out in Britain, see House of Commons Work and Pensions Committee (2010) *Management and administration of contracted employment programmes. Fourth Report of Session 2009–10*, London, The Stationery Office.

outcome target structures within Jobcentre Plus also need to be sufficiently flexible to accommodate the requirements of individualised assistance.

7.3.3.1 *Politico-institutional recalibration in relation to individually responsive employment assistance*

The marketisation of employment services across all three countries is a shared basis for policy translation, although Australia has gone further than Britain and Denmark in fully privatising its employment services in 1998, when the first incarnation of Job Network (JN) was created, replacing the former Commonwealth Employment Service³²⁷ with a national network of contracted private and community sector organisations. Within a decade it made the transition from radical experiment to established institution and has been a source of policy learning (Finn, 2008: 12). Following a review of employment services undertaken by the Labor Government in July 2009, Job Services Australia replaced JN. Australian interviewees highlighted that a ‘profound weakness’ (campaigning organisation) of this model of competing providers is that employers only have access to clients from one provider.³²⁸ Although in Denmark private providers have been contracted to provide employment services since the 1980s, *More people into work* (2002) required local authorities to allow private providers to compete for employment projects.³²⁹ Legislation in 2009 set out that the government would refund 50 per cent of all the running costs of contracting, as well as for active measures.³³⁰ As in Australia, providers receive bonuses if partnered women are still in work after 13 weeks, however Danish interviewees (academics and trade

³²⁷ With Job Network also came a sophisticated computer system to manage clients. This has similarities with the Labour Market System used by Jobcentre Plus in Britain, first introduced alongside Jobseeker’s Allowance in 1996. In terms of technology as a constraint on or enabler to policy translation (see Dolowitz et al, 2000) there is a shared basis for transfer in the use of computer systems for recording of contacts between advisers and clients in each country.

³²⁸ However, projects such as the Yarra Centre for Work and Learning (YCWL) (funded by DEEWR and the Brotherhood of Saint Lawrence) are designed to help providers to jointly approach employers.

³²⁹ This included private providers, educational institutions, trade unions, AKs and voluntary organisations in the first round, but more recently contracts are predominantly with private providers.

³³⁰ Previously reimbursements were only for active measures.

unions) cautioned that economic incentives to contract out may result in cheap and ineffective active measures.

Similarly to Australia, the involvement of both the private and third sectors in the delivery of employment programmes has increased in Britain,³³¹ encouraged by the Freud report (2007), which has been influential to both the Labour and Conservative parties. Flexible New Deal (introduced in 2009) created a 'welfare market' (Finn, 2008: 98); although FND has been scrapped by the Coalition Government, there is continuity in terms of marketisation under the Coalition's proposals for the Work Programme. It is worth highlighting here the outcome-based funding model of the 'Invest to Save' (I2S) pilots (also known as AME-DEL transfer³³²) recommended by Freud, along with the adoption of 'black box' approaches (with little prescription from DWP) by providers to assist people into work, for which providers would be paid uncapped contract payments for sustained job entries. This appears to be the direction of travel for the Coalition Government.

The involvement of contracted providers in all three countries alters the number of actors involved, increasing the difficulty of disentangling the effects of different actors within the policy process. In relation to politico-institutional recalibration (Ferrera and Hemerijck, 2003: 93), the three countries share similarities of structures and actors involved in the governance of employment service provision and these are set out in Table 5.6 below. The table reflects Serrano Pascual's (2007: 278) suggestion that the activation paradigm has been accompanied by administrative and management reforms, such as privatisation, marketisation, competition and decentralization.

³³¹ The third sector is not a key provider of services in Denmark.

³³² This model involves a change to the existing limitations of DEL (Designated Expenditure Limits) relating to budgets for employment services and AME (Annually Managed Expenditure) relating to budgets for benefit payments.

Table 7.6: Comparison of politico-institutional aspects of the three countries

Feature	UK	Denmark	Australia
Contractualism	Action Plan	Individual Action Plans -> Job Plan	Participation Agreement -> Activity Agreement -> Employment Pathway Plan
Administrative structures	DWP administers benefits and employment services through Jobcentre Plus (one-stop shops for access to benefits and assistance) Childcare is policy responsibility of Department for Education, transfers delivered through DWP, Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC), local authorities, employers and private providers	BM has policy responsibility for benefits, delivered through local authority-run Jobcenters (one-stop shops) Childcare is policy responsibility of Department for Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR), payments delivered through Family Assistance Office	DEEWR has policy responsibility for benefits, delivered through Centrelink (one-stop shops) Childcare is policy responsibility of Ministry of Social Affairs, delivered through local authorities
Policy delivery actors	Personal Advisers	Job counsellors Social workers for cash-benefit recipients	Personal Advisers JET Advisers Some Centrelink social workers
Privatisation	Increasing contracting out of employment services to private and third sector providers	Increasing contracting out of employment services to private providers	Fully privatised employment service, contracts with private and voluntary sectors

The roles of frontline workers are important in relation to agency in the implementation of policies, including translating them differently than intended by

policymakers (Lipsky, 1980). In this way frontline actors are important 'agents of policy transfer' (Stone, 1999: 55). Danish Jobcenters have job consultants for insured unemployed and social workers for uninsured unemployed. The role of social workers is important to the delivery of individualised assistance: "One of the reasons we have social workers in the Jobcenters is that we have people who are actually very far from the labour market, but we insist that everyone goes to the Jobcenter" (social worker). However, the capacity to carry out their professional role is subject to challenge through reduced flexibility by policies such as the 300 hours rule. Social workers are employed by Centrelink³³³ in Australia but they have not played a role in British employment services.³³⁴ Supervision and surveillance are a feature of all three countries, often resulting in a change in the role of frontline workers; the degree of discretion also impacts on the capacity of policies to be punitive, as evidenced by the following quote from a Danish social worker:

"The 300 hours rule highlights the real dilemma of social work. Many people working at the Jobcenter see the social worker's job as to help people gain focus, to inspire them to try to make the change happen within them. They want these people in jobs; they don't want them to be unemployed. But then suddenly their role is 'I'm also going to remove your benefit' and I know that this is going to put your children in a horrible dilemma" (see also Millar and Austin, 2006: 6, Goul Andersen and Pedersen, 2007: 22)

As already highlighted, flexibility at the frontline needs to accompany individualised support. The Australian Welfare to Work reforms were complex both for frontline actors and partnered women themselves and appeared to be more constraining than facilitative. However, institutional constraints potentially limit the capacity of Jobcentre Plus in Britain to provide individualised assistance; as a centralised state

³³³ Social workers also worked in the previous Commonwealth Employment Service.

³³⁴ As in Britain, there are call centres with specialised teams dealing with particular groups of income support recipients, such as people with disabilities and family payments.

function it has less flexibility than some contracted providers. Even in Denmark, the challenge is to provide a flexible system which is not more bureaucratic, given an increased tendency for control at a central level (Kvist et al., 2008: 253). In relation to Danish politico-institutional recalibration, two aspects are particularly relevant for policy translation: the institutionalised role of the social partners³³⁵ in the flexicurity model, and decentralisation (Etherington and Jones, 2004b).

LO, the Danish trade union confederation (2008) argues that the Danish flexicurity system is not a low-cost system and it has strong historical roots, based on collective agreements between strong organisations on both sides, which does not make it easily exportable. LO also highlights that the flexicurity model is complemented by services, such as free or inexpensive childcare and care for the elderly and disabled. One Danish academic suggested that: "On a more structural level it's hard to transfer the Danish or Nordic flexicurity model...But when you come to instruments on a more individual level...giving people specific offers at a certain point of time when they are unemployed, I think you can transfer these kinds of experience from one country to another." This suggests that elements of a programme or policy may be translated, however to do so requires some synthesis of these elements within the borrowing country.

Another Danish academic commented: "Policy transfer is very difficult when you come from a country with a social partnership tradition." Trade unions in both Britain and Australia do not have such a significant role as in Denmark. In 2007 around 69.1 per cent of workers in Denmark were union members, compared with 18.5 per cent in Australia and 28 per cent in Britain (OECD, 2009b).³³⁶ Serrano Pascual (2007) suggests

³³⁵ There are three main trade union confederations: LO - the Danish Confederation of Trade Unions, the largest trade union confederation, including both private and public sector workers; FTF - the Confederation of Salaried Employees and Civil Servants; and AC - the Danish Confederation of Professional Associations, predominantly higher educated workers.

³³⁶ In Australia, the *WorkChoices* amendment to the Workplace Relations Act 2005 was a significant shift in employment regulation in Australia. Although it was effectively repealed by the Rudd Labor government, *WorkChoices* restricted unfair dismissal protection and unions' right of entry to workplaces. To an extent it

that in countries where trade union involvement is institutionalised there persists “a degree of balance between institutional pressure to encourage people to work and the protection of social rights...trade unions have defended the social contract between the State and its citizens” (p.279). That the welfare and industrial relations systems are highly interlinked (Etherington, 1998: 150) helps to explain the significance of the social contract in Denmark. Since the end of the 1970s the social partners’ influence has principally been through their relationship with the political parties (Kvist et al., 2008: 244), although “the opportunities to influence the process are slowly being diminished” (academic). This is partly a result of the post-2001 government’s marginalisation of trade unions in decision-making, but is also due to decreasing numbers of trade union members (particularly young people) linked to the buoyant labour market. The assumption of local authority responsibility for both insured and uninsured unemployed may in time lead to further decline in the influence of the social partners. However, to what extent these changes constitute a full-scale dismantling, or a mere change of role remains to be seen (Larsen and Mailand, 2007: 116, 123).

In Denmark policy implementation is devolved to local authorities, which also have significant tax-raising powers, unlike British local authorities (apart from Council Tax). The importance of this policy delivery model was highlighted by many Danish interviewees: “It is also very important that the organisation of our system is based on local self-government” (government official); “In Denmark the relevant authority [for citizens] to turn to is the local authority, from birth to grave” (local authority). Local authorities are responsible for a wide range of services, including health, social services, education and labour market policies and have considerable autonomy to

compounded the effects of Welfare to Work for women with family responsibilities, making them more dependent on their male partners and on the benefits system and contributed to the precarious employment already in existence in Australia. See Elton, J., Bailey, J., Baird, M., Charlesworth, S., Cooper, R., Ellem, B., Jefferson, T., Macdonald, F., Oliver, D., Pocock, B., Preston, A. & Whitehouse, G. (2007) *Women and WorkChoices. Impacts on the low pay sector*, Magill, SA, Centre for Work + Life, Hawke Research Institute for Sustainable Societies.

deliver services to meet the needs of the local population. Decentralisation of social policies began in the early 1970s and was further consolidated in 1987. In 1994 labour market policy was decentralised, with central government setting the economic framework,³³⁷ but regional labour market councils held responsibility for devising policies relevant to the local labour market context.³³⁸ Following structural reforms in 2007 regional labour market councils act as advisers, rather than decision makers to Jobcenters (Kvist et al., 2008: 244). The Danish model has the flexibility to examine both demand and supply issues at the local level. Australian employment providers are also able to do this, although their efficacy was questioned by some interviewees, particularly in the previous JN contract.

Local authorities in Denmark play a further role in activation by providing subsidised employment. Public employment is extensive and the strong emphasis on social services provides employment for highly-trained people, as well as decently paid work for those who are modestly trained (Ferrera and Hemerijck, 2003: 97). Although there is recalibration in terms of diverting the focus on public sector employment in favour of generating greater demand for private employment (Ferrera and Hemerijck, 2003: 97-8), it is part of the story of the Danish 'miracle' that the universal welfare state is self-reinforcing in creating employment for women. In Australia there are three levels of government: federal, state and local. The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) initiates, develops and implements national policy between the three levels of government and comprises the Prime Minister, State Premiers, Chief Ministers of the territories and the President of the Australian Local Government Association. The Australian federal model is the most centralised federal system in the world (Bessant et al., 2006: 212) and thus has some similarities with the British model.

³³⁷ At the national level, the trade unions and the local government association (*Kommunerneslandsforeningen* - KL) are influential in this process.

³³⁸ The 1994 reforms delegated management of ALMP for insured unemployed to local authorities and 14 regional labour market councils comprising the social partners (two-thirds of the seats), employers and employees, local authorities and doctors.

In Britain there is national jurisdiction for social security and labour market policies but this is complicated by local authority responsibility for Housing Benefit and other benefits for low-income households such as free school meals, as well as early years provision. In Britain, the local level of service delivery is important, for example the City Strategy and Local Employment Partnerships (LEP),³³⁹ but the importance of decentralisation to the Danish model is a potential constraint on translating policies to Britain. A number of studies have highlighted the importance of local labour markets to British activation, including increasing labour demand as well as supply (Beatty et al., 2010, Etherington and Jones, 2004b), but there are significant coordination problems seemingly inherent in the sub-national architecture in Britain (Etherington and Ingold, forthcoming).

The previous three sections have examined the main policy recommendations for Britain in relation to partnered women outside the labour market: partial individualisation of benefits, the extension of childcare as a prerequisite for activation policy and individually responsive employment assistance. Consideration has also been given to how far these policies may be translated from Australia and Denmark, drawing on aspects of politico-institutional recalibration. The following section examines negative policy learning for Britain, before concluding the chapter as a whole.

7.4 *Negative lessons*

As Dolowitz et al (2000: 10) suggest, policy learning can also be negative in highlighting what should not be transferred. There are four points of negative policy

³³⁹ Launched in 2008, the City Strategy aimed to tackle worklessness in the most disadvantaged communities across Britain which were furthest from the Labour government's target 80 per cent employment rate. Local Employment Partnerships were launched in March 2007, involving major employers in both the public and private sectors to provide guaranteed job interviews for benefit recipients. From April 2009 LEPs have been open to new as well as long-term jobseekers and were important to the success of the POEM pilots.

learning from this analysis. Firstly, the 300 hours rule in Denmark has been a stigmatising programme targeted at an already disadvantaged group. By contrast, the Partners Outreach for Ethnic Minorities (POEM) pilots in Britain offered a more supportive approach. As one Danish trade union official suggested: “The 300 hours rule is a good example of what you should not do if you want to increase the labour market participation of women.”

Secondly, the British welfare to work reforms set out by the previous Labour government envisaged a role for sanctions³⁴⁰ and this looks set to be continued, and possibly extended, under the Coalition. Conditionality brings with it the threat of punishment for non-compliance³⁴¹ and the Social Security Advisory Committee has expressed concerns about the impact of sanctions, particularly in relation to child poverty (Social Security Advisory Committee, 2008). In particular the Ethnic Minority Advisory Group in Britain has warned that increasing conditionality for partners may have the unintended consequence of increasing child poverty for Pakistani/Bangladeshi families who are already disproportionately disadvantaged (Department for Work and Pensions, 2008: 172). Lessons may be learned from the punitive sanction regime under Welfare to Work in Australia, which has been softened by the Labor government. When AWT was introduced the Australian Council of Social Service³⁴² (2001) suggested that the most appropriate key role for Advisers was to improve assessment, advice and referral and to monitor progress with employment assistance providers in a general way but that a focus on monitoring compliance “would undermine the process of supporting and encouraging participation” (p.6).³⁴³

³⁴⁰ The claim disentitlement process (whereby claims were closed down as sanctions and often restarted by a new claim) will be replaced with a fixed one week sanction for failure to attend a mandatory interview (increased to two weeks for a second failure) Department for Work and Pensions (2009a) *Impact assessment of Welfare Reform Bill. 14 January 2009*, London, Department for Work and Pensions. Page 96.

³⁴¹ This has been critiqued by Goodin. See Goodin, R. (2002) Structures of mutual obligation. *Journal of Social Policy*, 31(4):579-596.

³⁴² The peak council of the community services and welfare sector.

³⁴³ Data published for April to June 2006 (before the introduction of Welfare to Work) show that there were very few breaches for PP beneficiaries - Australian Government and Centrelink (2006) *Top 5 breach reasons by payment type for the period April 2006 to June 2006*, Canberra, Commonwealth of Australia.

In Britain there is a risk of focusing on compliance rather than on providing a personalised pathway into work, particularly at a time of reduced investment in employment services. It is important that Jobcentre Plus does not become marginalised in the new British 'welfare market' model, predominantly fulfilling a policing function as Centrelink has done in Australia. In particular this would undermine the valuable skills and experience Personal Advisers have³⁴⁴ which evaluation evidence suggests is crucial for partners (Hasluck and Green, 2007).

Thirdly, both the Danish and Australian cases demonstrate that there appears to be little to be gained by implementing an approach which specifies an arbitrary number of hours of activity. The Australian experience in particular highlights the difficulty of meeting strictly prescribed requirements in a labour market which has precarious or irregular employment, as in Britain. Instead, policies should reflect the state of the labour market and make allowances for such employment. Blaxland (2008) argues that many mothers were already working close to the required number of hours prior to the introduction of AWT and many wished, but could not find, additional hours: "merely mandating that mothers spend longer each week in paid employment does not necessarily ensure that they will be able to find more hours" (p.206). This also highlights the importance of demand-side strategies.

Finally, as the cases of both Australia (Whiteford, 2009) and Denmark (Bach and Larsen, 2008) show, reducing the amount of benefit, or removing it, does not necessarily need to accompany increased conditionality for partnered women, even in the guise of economic incentives and particularly if this results in increased poverty for households. Furthermore, the basis for economic incentives, as evidenced by both the Australian and Danish examples, is that partnered women make a rational decision not to work. In the Australian case it was clear that although many income

³⁴⁴ See McNeil, C. (2009) *Now It's Personal: Personal advisers and the new public service workforce*, London, Institute for Public Policy Research. See also Ingold, J. (2001) *Adviser skills. Employment Service internal working paper*, Sheffield, Employment Service.

support recipients were not in work, they were also not purely 'inactive' as many were undertaking voluntary work, training or education, as well as caring responsibilities. In the Danish case evidence suggests that many married women affected by the 300 hours rule have significant health problems. Although some may be pushed into work by the economic incentive of loss of benefit, most are not able to obtain work without assistance.

7.5 *Summary*

Partial individualisation is seen in relation to partnered women in both Australia and Denmark but policy learning is taken from Australia in relation to the principle of extending conditionality to this group by partially individualising benefits for a group who have previously had derived access. Partial individualisation is also in line with other British social security policies in relation to means testing on the household; although this is not sufficiently gender-equalising, translation of policies must recognise the path dependency of existing policies. Current politico-institutional aspects in all three countries provide a shared basis for policy transfer in relation to partial individualisation, such as the machinery of government changes and the creation of one-stop shops. Although partial individualisation in Britain is to be welcomed in relation to gender equality and re-balancing the asymmetrical conditionality of previous policies for partnered women, there are a number of persistent concerns. Firstly, that sanctions will still be imposed upon both members of a couple for the behaviour of one partner. Secondly, that partial individualisation combined with increased conditionality may result in partnered women exiting the benefits system but not entering paid work, which is of concern, especially in relation to child poverty. However, this may be addressed by the provision of individually responsive employment assistance.

In relation to childcare, this analysis suggests that a Nordic model of care, particularly childcare, may not be possible in the current British context. This is based on the diversity of family models in Britain, as well as the notion of (neo-) liberalism, which is constrained in the Danish model, although Denmark has had “a stronger touch of liberalism” than the other Nordic countries (Borchorst, 2002: 270). The Danish model is reflective of universalism, decentralisation and the role of the state, but in Britain pre-school provision, particularly in the form of care, is still contested as an intervention in the private sphere. However, the ideology of the centrality of alternative care as an institutional and normative foundation on which activation policies are overlaid is translatable, but there are economic, institutional and ideological constraints on its translation, both in relation to policy actors as well as partnered women and their families. The existing Early Years Entitlement and related changes to pre- and post-school provision during the New Labour years represent significant steps for further welfare recalibrations. Both Australia and Denmark provide a simpler system of subsidies graduated according to income which should be explored. There is also a requirement for further improvements to current funding mechanisms as well as capacity-building on a structural level, which may usefully involve employers, although caution is advised regarding the instrumentality of childcare provision by linking it to paid work.

The model of individually responsive employment assistance suggested here is based on policy learning from both Australia and Denmark in terms of providing a package of support to partnered women, taking into account their existing skills, needs and aspirations (including intra-household constraints on working), but balanced with the needs of the labour market. This is a difficult balance to maintain and the case studies highlight the challenges in relation to implementation at the frontline, as well as those arising from the contracting-out of employment services. The model of individualised assistance recommended is supported by increased flexibility at the frontline, including with regard to regularity of contact with partnered women. However, this

requires sufficient staff: client ratios, as well as effective resourcing and how far this is possible within the current, predominantly centralised Jobcentre Plus framework should be explored. The Coalition Government's plan to move away from employment programmes based on categories of benefit recipients is to be welcomed. However, the Australian case highlights that within this model of a single working age programme, attention must be paid to the needs of partnered women with caring responsibilities, particularly in the absence of sufficient alternative care.

As well as path dependency Randall (2000: 187) highlights the importance of timing in relation to the development of childcare policy. Timing is an important aspect of the translation of all three policy recommendations from this study. Specific policy responses are shaped by path-dependent legacies, by institutional structures of decision-making, but crucially by policy makers' capacity for *innovation* (Ferrera and Hemerijck, 2003: 122). The beginning of the process of successful translation relies upon agents of policy transfer (such as individuals, networks³⁴⁵ and organisations) (Stone, 1999: 55) to move issues onto the policy agenda and to seek out 'policy spaces' (Lendvai and Stubbs, 2007: 185) and opportunities (such as changes in government), in which new ideas may be discussed. However, this analysis has also highlighted the role of path dependency as a constraint on policy translation, both in institutional and ideational terms.

³⁴⁵ Marsh and Rhodes (1992) suggest 'policy communities', Adler and Haas (1992) focus on 'epistemic communities' and Evans and Davies highlight the role of 'policy transfer networks'. See Evans, M. & Davies, J. (1999) Understanding policy transfer: a multi-level, multi-disciplinary perspective. *Public Administration*, 77(2):361-385.

Chapter Eight - Conclusions

8.1 *Introduction*

This chapter draws the thesis to a close. Section 8.2 returns to the research questions posed at the beginning of the study, Section 8.3 sets out the contribution of the thesis to the theoretical literature, Section 8.4 considers the strengths and weaknesses of the methodological approach and Section 8.5 sets out suggestions for further research. Section 8.6 provides some closing thoughts.

8.2 *What this research tells us about assisting partnered women into work in Britain*

This research was commissioned by policymakers to produce a conceptual and comparative analysis of policy responses to partnered women outside the labour market, with a view to policy learning for Britain. The first stage of the research was an evidence review of OECD countries, from which Australia and Denmark were selected as comparators for in-depth case study research. The case study method comprised documentary analysis and 52 elite interviews with policy actors in Australia and Denmark, both face-to-face and by telephone.

The first research question posed at the start of this research concerned the identification of the most relevant benefit (and service) policies and labour market interventions within a range of OECD countries relating to partnered women in non-working households of working age. In Britain the research has predominantly considered the New Deal for Partners (NDP) and the Partners Outreach for Ethnic Minorities (POEM) pilots. In Australia, the policy genealogy examined began with the *Working Nation* reforms in 1994 and subsequent reforms relating to Parenting Payment: *Australians Working Together* (2003) and *Welfare to Work* (2006). The Danish case study considered the 300 hours rule (*300 timers reglen*) aimed at married couples

(predominantly immigrants) which commenced in 2006, in the context of Danish activation since 1994.

Policy responses in Denmark were encompassing in that activation requires 'all to be active,' even parents and carers. However, the 300 hours rule is an anomalous, targeted response within this overall encompassing approach. The active labour market policies examined in Britain were targeted at partners and in Australia were targeted towards parents, both lone and partnered. Partnered women outside the labour market in both Britain and Australia have been explicitly viewed in policymaking as supplementary to the policy goal of assisting lone parents into work. The Equalities Review *Fairness and Freedom* (Cabinet Office, 2007) stated that: "We strongly believe that it is time to devote at least as much attention to finding new ways of reintegrating more partnered women into working life [as has been given to lone parents]" (p.68). However, this analysis has shown that assisting partnered women into work should not merely focus on activation policies, but dovetail with other policy areas. Calmfors (1994) argues that "The proper perspective appears to be to view active labour market policy as only one ingredient of many in a general programme against unemployment. Active labour market policy can be a complement but not a substitute to other measures" (p.38). Likewise, Dingeldey (2007) views enabling (rather than workfarist) policies to be inclusive of both activation and childcare. It is debatable as to whether even a focus on a longer-term pathway into work through individually responsive provision will by itself result in more partnered women in paid work without access to alternative care, as well as sufficient, suitable work. Whilst in the longer term many partnered mothers in Britain may return to the labour market when circumstances and their preferences in relation to caring allow, the risk is of atrophying skills and difficulty securing work in a changing labour market.

The second research question concerned how and for which groups of partnered women the policies examined have been effective in facilitating labour market participation, and to what extent elements of these policies are likely to be transferable to Britain. On the face of it, compulsion and work first approaches have been successful in both Australia and Denmark in moving partnered women into work, however one Danish social worker stated:

“A Minister can read the statistics and say ‘It’s working. We now have eight per cent less women on welfare’ and if you read the statistics another way, you can say it’s because they don’t get any money now, or maybe because the spouse is making money they don’t have the right [to cash-benefit], but it’s not the same as saying they’re integrated or they’re in the labour market. It’s only about who’s getting money and who’s not getting money”

For policymakers, the policy solution for assisting partnered women into the labour market depends on broader ideologies about the kind of welfare state they wish to promote. If governmental policy actors wish to reduce the number of benefit recipients, the programmes examined in this study may be effective in meeting short term targets. However, as the evidence suggests, they are likely to result in poverty and other social problems (and costs elsewhere), despite the welfare rolls ostensibly being reduced. In legitimating the activation paradigm, policymakers need to consider the impact of activation policies on individuals and families in terms of ‘illfare’ (Titmuss, 1974: 27) for partnered women who may not secure stable paid work and whose families are worse off as a result, as well as the notion of ‘welfare’ constructed as an espousment of participation in paid work as a poverty reduction and inclusion measure. This highlights Titmuss’ (1974: 16) ideas about ‘means’ and ‘ends’ of social policy, where ends are ‘what we think we want’ and means are ‘how we get there’. Activation policies are not merely about increasing employment or increasing employability, but they reflect wider normative views concerning the role of the state

and the kind of societies the state in conjunction with other welfare agents constructs and maintains.

This analysis has argued for three changes to the British approach to encouraging partnered women outside the labour market into work. Firstly, the partial individualisation of social assistance benefits - full individualisation has not been recommended because this was not a feature of social assistance for partnered women in either of the countries studied. Secondly, more comprehensive, accessible and high quality alternative care for children of both pre- and post-school age as a foundation for labour market policies. Thirdly, employment assistance should be flexible and responsive to the needs of the individual partnered woman. It is suggested that all of these policy changes will be incremental and thus recalibrations of the existing British model.

This analysis supports the findings from the Comparative Social Inclusion Policies project (European Commission, 2000) concerning activation programmes, which argued that activation policies should fulfil the following criteria:

- They should recognise any useful activity as work, not merely paid employment
- They should be located in a broader programme of anti-poverty policies, rather than being isolated measures
- The resources available should be adequate for personal tailoring of programmes to fit clients' needs, rather than only supporting standardised services
- They should operate on the basis of respect for clients
- They should offer positive incentives for clients to participate on a voluntary basis (p.83)

The third research question related to the driving factors and social and economic contexts behind the introduction of the policies examined and to the lessons regarding transferability to Britain. Within the activation paradigm is the assumption of the adult worker model. In Britain and Australia this can be seen in the shift for partnered women from access to benefits (Sainsbury, 1996) as wives, mothers, carers or disabled to access as workers. In all three countries some partnered mothers prefer to care for their children at home, but in Denmark benefits cannot be claimed if partnered women are not actively seeking work, or taking part in activation projects. This was in contrast to British and Australian social security and labour market policies, where historically the principle of care (Sainsbury, 1996) has been recognised, although within the British social security system this has been more explicit in the case of lone parents rather than partners. Denmark is the only one of the three countries where activation applies to carers of adults as well as children. The adult worker model of activation needs to take into account how caring responsibilities may be transferred elsewhere, particularly in the British context where alternative provision is comparatively more limited than in Denmark and to a lesser extent in Australia. The highlighting of childcare as a shortcoming of labour market policies in Britain is not unique to this research. However, this analysis has furthered the debate in considering whether and how this may be achieved in the context of the existing British model. This is important in the case of all three of the policy recommendations in order to provide a persuasive case to policymakers. In the activation state unpaid care work is effectively devalued. Until the lack of sufficient childcare support is sufficiently addressed it is likely that only partners with better skills and more chance of moving into better paid, less precarious work will successfully move into long-term work, or return to more stable and well-paid employment. This is also argued by Esping-Andersen (2009), who suggests that until this is adequately addressed the revolution of women's labour market participation will remain 'incomplete,' leaving low-skilled women behind. Activation policies for partnered women should recognise care work as an activity which may be built upon in labour market interventions and include the provision of

appropriate employment support for such women, tailored to their distance from the labour market. Increasing skills and qualifications is also important in providing women who leave the labour market to care with a foundation of human capital; they may subsequently require less intensive support prior to their return. It is to be hoped that existing education and lifelong policies will have a positive impact on the labour market participation of partners in Britain in the future. Already many partnered women are better qualified than previous generations, although there is still a significant skills gap in Britain, particularly in the area of basic skills.³⁴⁶ There is also evidence to suggest that attitudes to gendered roles are related to level of qualification, as well as age (Steiber and Haas, 2009).

One major difficulty of extending conditionality to partnered mothers is their own preference to care for their children and to not engage in paid work. In the case of both white and ethnic minority partnered women outside the labour market in Britain, there is evidence of traditional male breadwinner cultures. For older partnered women these can be viewed as products of the historical male breadwinner model, which has been reinforced by derived, rather than individual, access to benefits. Based on Serrano Pascual's (2007) hegemonic regulatory assumptions, in Denmark the 300 hours rule was intended to be an 'economic encouragement' to seek work. However, this was contradicted to some extent by the perception of the policy 'problem' as one of 'culture', as well as evidence of considerable health problems for the target group. 'Culture' was an important aspect of the Danish approach to assisting immigrant women into work, although this was critiqued by some policy actors. Culture may be related in a positive way to different cultural understandings and to differing social norms and preferences (albeit constrained) of individual partnered women and their families. However, a focus on such cultural aspects should also take into account demand-side constraints such as labour market discrimination (Harker, 2006: 28). It

³⁴⁶ More than 5 million adults lack functional literacy and over 7 million adults lack functional numeracy skills. HM Treasury (2006) *The Leitch Review of Skills: prosperity for all in the global economy - world class skills. Final report.*, Norwich, The Stationery Office. Page 61.

can be concluded that, although policies can influence welfare states' de-/commodifying and de-/familising potential, what may be described as cultural and social norms are also important.

Institutional norms, such as the lack of provision of childcare and the age at which children begin school, may drive women's behaviour and attitudes. "Country-specific trajectories...are not really guided by some grand design or carefully thought-out master plan" (Ferrera and Hemerijck, 2003: 124) and we have seen some of the contradictions in this study. One question is whether contradictory policies such as those in Britain may allow for more capacity for diversity, or choice. A shortcoming of the Danish model is that it commodifies partnered women and does not allow sufficient choice for those who wish to care for their children rather than be in paid work. A key issue relating to this study is the extent to which partnered women who undertake unpaid caring roles should be coerced into paid employment, or into using childcare when they (and their families) have a strong preference not to do so (see Millar and Ridge, 2009). Instead, increasing pre- and post-school age care may incrementally and in the longer-term produce cultural change in line with partnered women's own preferred pathways to work, resulting in their increased labour market participation. Policies and employment need to offer a genuine choice as to whether to work, care or to combine the two: what Misra et al (2007) refer to as the 'choice strategy'.

However, Lewis and Campbell emphasise New Labour's policy focus on the behaviour of mothers, without taking into account "the extent to which men's choices affect those taken by women" (Lewis and Campbell, 2007b: 22-3); this is pertinent in relation to persistent male breadwinner models within some non-working couple households. Consideration of caring responsibilities should not merely focus on women, if one of the major issues implicit in the double bind is the degree to which men participate in caring and domestic activities in the home. It is equally important

to combine policies that allow families to provide care within the home as well as outside, which highlights the importance of limiting work hours and also encouraging men's role in caregiving (Misra et al., 2007: 822). This may be affected by a number of factors, such as the flexibility of work to accommodate caring responsibilities (for both adults and children), as well as perceptions in the workplace about men providing care. The former can be driven by policies, but the latter arguably depends both on implementation of such policies and the changing of social norms. The Australian Welfare to Work evaluation suggested that an important aspect of increasing conditionality for parents was employers' ability and willingness to accommodate flexible working (Department for Education Employment and Workplace Relations, 2010: 104).

Mandating partnered women to seek work is also problematic if there is not sufficient work available, a point made by Blaxland (2008: 206) in relation to Welfare to Work in Australia. A key question for the British context is whether there is sufficient work for couple families to be dual earners/universal breadwinners, as in Denmark. One method of facilitating both a more equal division of care as well as sharing opportunities for work might be to facilitate part-time work for both men and women, however this would require a fundamental shift not seen in either Denmark or Australia. The Danish day-care system is effective in discouraging women from leaving the labour market for long periods and a day-care place is guaranteed even before parental leave ends. The absence of such joined-up policymaking in Britain may be one reason why many women do not enter, or re-enter, the labour market until their child goes to school. For 29 per cent of partners on NDP, having a baby led to their labour market exit in the first place (Coleman and Seeds, 2007: 17). McInnes (2002) suggests that a life cycle approach should be taken in policy, which enables women to "be able to move in and out of the workforce as family needs allow without being subjected to lifelong dependency on a partner or the government" (p.6). It is a matter of concern what the long-term impact will be of extension to parental leave in

Britain, if it continues to be disproportionately taken by mothers. Longer maternity and parental leave can help to ensure women in particular do not lose out in terms of job progression and lifetime incomes (Bennett and Millar, 2005). However, whilst the promotion of parental leave to fathers has a role in equalising both labour market absence and time for both parents to spend with their children, long maternity leave can lead to further labour market detachment (Whiteford, 2009: 62). In Britain maternity leave is long and low-paid and paternity leave is short and low-paid (Equality and Human Rights Commission, 2009: 22).³⁴⁷ The Equality and Human Rights Commission (2009) in Britain has stated that “New parental rights introduced over the past decade are well intentioned but entrench the unequal division of labour and caring between the sexes and work against gender equality” (p.29). Furthermore, although the right to request flexible working offers greater flexibility than other countries, it “has so far had little impact on the traditional division of labour” (p.58), although the Coalition Government has set out plans to introduce further flexibilities into parental leave (HM Government, 2010).

8.3 *Contribution of the thesis to the theoretical literature*

This thesis has contributed to the theoretical and policy debates surrounding effective ways of assisting partnered women into work in Britain. The research findings were analysed using the framework of recalibration (Ferrera and Hemerijck, 2003), with its four sub-dimensions: functional, distributive, normative and politico-institutional. By using recalibration this analysis argues that incremental policy change helps to explain the policy approaches examined in relation to partnered women in the three countries.

³⁴⁷ Since 1997, paid maternity leave has risen from three to nine months and 12 months. Statutory Maternity Pay is paid for 39 weeks at a flat rate. Paternity leave pay is paid at a flat rate of £117.18 per week (the same as statutory maternity pay). See Equality and Human Rights Commission (2009) *Working better*, London, Equality and Human Rights Commission.

The recalibration framework has been complemented in the functional sub-dimension by Sainsbury's (1996) bases of entitlement to benefits and by Serrano Pascual's (2007) notion of the social contract (*quid pro quo*). The normative sub-dimension was complemented by Serrano Pascual's (2007) hegemonic regulatory assumptions and Williams' (1995, see also Williams, 1989) concept of 'work, family and nation' as a way of conceptualising the perceived problem representations (Bacchi, 1999), which informed the policy responses. Finally, both Dolowitz's (2009) concept of 'hard' policy learning and Lendvai and Stubbs' (2007) concept of 'policy as translation' have driven the consideration of policy learning from Australia and Denmark to Britain, complementing the work of Dolowitz (Dolowitz et al., 2000, Dolowitz and Marsh, 1996) in assessing the criteria for successful policy transfer. The policy learning aspect also completed the analysis using the final sub-dimension of recalibration: the politico-institutional.

8.3.1 *Contribution of the thesis to the comparative social policy literature*

The research is situated within the comparative social policy literature and has used welfare recalibration as a framework to analyse the findings from the two case studies in a number of innovative ways. Firstly, by focusing on policies relating to a specific sub-group of women (partners) this study offers an alternative to existing activation studies, particularly those at the macro-level which do not always provide adequate information about helpful interventions for specific groups. Secondly, the framework has been used for both descriptive and prescriptive purposes, as Ferrera and Hemerijck (2003) did in their analysis of the four 'Social Europes', but this study has expanded the framework outside Europe to produce a contextual analysis of policies in both Australia and Denmark, as well as to consider the possibility of policy translation to Britain.

Ferrera and Hemerijck (2003: 106) suggest that New Labour radically redefined the goals and functions of the welfare state by elevating labour market participation as the 'basic sphere of social integration'. Recalibrations to labour market policies for partnered women are symptomatic of these wider shifts, but in themselves they are incremental recalibrations. There is independence between the additions and subtractions in the social policy menu (Ferrera and Hemerijck, 2003: 90), but there is also interdependence amongst the four sub-dimensions, where changes in one impact on the others. For example, the shift to an activation state for partnered women can be seen in the change in the function of the welfare state from a social security state (although historically on the basis of derived access for partners in Britain and Australia); in machinery of government changes and in changes in the role of frontline policy actors in the politico-institutional sub-dimension; in a focus on gender and ethnicity in the distributive sub-dimension; in a change in the re-conceptualisation of the role of partnered women in families and the labour market in the normative sub-dimension; and again in the functional sub-dimension in relation to implications for alternative care. This analysis argues that it is not possible to adequately examine activation policies relating to partnered women without taking into account ideological and normative considerations in the construction of such policies, particularly in consideration of policy translation.

Ferrera and Hemerijck (2003: 89) suggest that women are key to functional recalibration. They also suggest that normative recalibration is perhaps the crucial front, or pre-condition for further policy adaptations in Nordic countries (Ferrera and Hemerijck, 2003: 100). This analysis accords with this argument for all three countries examined and, further, has emphasised that normative recalibration pervades all of the sub-dimensions and underpins policy change for all of the countries in this research. In Britain and Australia in particular activation for partnered women involves changes in the conceptualisation of their roles in the labour market and the family. Drawing on Sainsbury (1996), this principally relates to their access to the

benefits system: as wives, mothers, carers, workers, or as women with disabilities. In Denmark partnered women have been considered as 'workers' in relation to access to benefits, aside from the anomalous spouse supplement which preceded the 300 hours rule. The linkages between employment policy and social security seen in functional recalibration (Ferrera and Hemerijck, 2003: 123) are also visible in the other sub-dimensions.

One of the difficulties with activation policies in respect of partnered women is that they are interventions in the gender relations within families and between partners. In Britain and Australia this is an area of contestation, perhaps because of the 'liberal' tradition of non-intervention in the family and the separation between the private and public spheres. Although the term 'liberal' is problematic because it may be understood in a range of different ways, at either end of the political spectrum, Esping-Andersen's (1990) categorisation of Britain and Australia as liberal welfare regimes (although contested) has some salience to this analysis, however regime theory is only a part of story. Activation policies are also representations of individuals' and families' relationships with the state, as reflected by the social contracts (*quid pro quo*) in each country.

Ferrera and Hemerijck (2003) suggest that Nordic countries are well 'calibrated' for responding to new risks and needs, so the metaphor of recalibration "finds a relatively smaller scope of application than in other contexts" (p.98). In the case of Denmark, this is supported by this analysis, but it is argued that the 300 hours rule constitutes a recalibration of the Danish welfare state in relation to the constitution of citizenship and nation, as a response to increasing diversity in the population resulting from immigration. It is not possible to state from this analysis whether this represents a more significant challenge to the Danish universal model, but the research thus provides a case study example to illustrate the importance of Williams' (1995) 'new politics of the welfare state' comprising work, family and nation in terms of

citizenship, paid work and family. In all three countries there has been a shift to workfare and also to more 'work first' approaches in relation to 'acceptable' activities within the activation contracts. It argues that, particularly in the context of insufficient childcare provision in the UK, social security and activation policies need to support activities other than paid work (such as caring work, volunteering, education and training) which may be a way into the labour market (compare Hirsch and Millar, 2004). By using Williams' concepts the analysis adds to the recalibration framework by examining recalibration in response to migration and considers the importance of 'culture' to the policy debates.

Achieving gender equality requires a reallocation of caring work within families (Ferrera and Hemerijck, 2003: 90) and although activation policies for partners in Britain and Australia assume that this will take place, gendered relations still persist in some couple families. The welfare state has agency (Daly and Rake, 2003) in shaping gender relations within the family, through for example derived access or partially individualised models of benefits. However, partnered women also have agency in their responses to such policies, although this may be constrained by increased compulsion and decreased choice within labour market policies and the labour market itself. 'Culture' was an important aspect for this study in two ways. Firstly, as Clarke (1999) suggests, culture is a "field or domain of social life in which meanings are produced and reproduced...[and] in the process, some sets of meaning may...[become] the 'way of life' of a social group" (p.77). Secondly, the notion of a 'welfare culture,' defined by Pfau-Effinger (2005) as a country's dominant model of welfare: "the relevant ideas in a given society surrounding the welfare state and the way it is embedded in a society" (p.4). Culture in both of these contexts is distinct from the policy goals of transforming a 'dependency culture' to a 'work culture' stated in policies in Britain and Australia. In Clarke's conceptualisation, culture can also be understood in terms of 'gendered moral rationalities' (Duncan and Edwards, 1999). As Duncan et al (2003) suggest, partnered women may feel an obligation to care, but they

may also *wish* to do so. However, the question is which comes first, or is more important: the propensity to care, or the lack of availability of flexible, suitable paid work which offers real gains compared with being on benefit. In Pfau-Effinger's conceptualisation, a welfare culture is important in relation to policy translation. She suggests that different cultural family models are the basic ideas in a society in relation to the family and childcare, incorporating the relationship of the family with the employment system, the adequate societal sphere for childcare, the gender division of labour and dependency or autonomy in gender relations (Pfau-Effinger, 2008). Such gender relations are constructed by the state as well as by families themselves. These are all challenges to be considered in relation to the promotion of the adult/citizen worker model family in policies relating to partnered women.

Across the life course women may be wives/partners, mothers, carers, disabled and workers and policies need to provide capacity to fulfill all of these at different times, rather than merely focusing on 're-commodification' (Pierson, 2001a: 422) in restricting alternatives to labour market participation. Titmuss (1963) suggested that "The family seeks a new equilibrium. Somehow or other it has to conform to the contrary pulls of a changing society" (p.32). However, correspondingly there needs to be 'flexibility' in the structure of the welfare state (as well as the labour market), which needs to be understood as a 'dynamic process' (p.29). Although welfare recalibration is a progressive dynamic of *renovation* and *re-casting* in order to achieve a better 'fit' with prevailing societal challenges, new value orientations and progressive economic constraints, this assumes that all families and households have also recalibrated and as we have seen this is not the case for all partnered women in terms of their skills, or gender relations within the family.

8.3.2 *Contribution of the thesis to the policy learning literature*

The approach of this study has been innovative in expanding the policy transfer literature in two ways. Firstly, it has used the recalibration framework because the focus of recalibration - policy change - is a product of policy learning. Secondly, it has investigated the future *possibility* of policy learning, rather than examined whether policy transfer has occurred. Lendvai and Stubbs (2007: 180) underline the differences between the vocabularies used in the policy transfer literature, compared with policy as translation. In the former, the focus is on policy change/stability, whereas in the latter the focus is on transformation, hybridity and reflexivity. To this can be added 'recalibration'. Ferrera and Hemerijck (2003) suggest that the Anglo-Saxon welfare states "should make the best of their backward position by simply emulating Scandinavian 'best practices'" (p.123) and this thesis has developed this further, considering whether and how this may be done, particularly in relation to childcare.

This analysis has put forward aspects of both policy and social learning in terms of content (problems, goals, instruments and implementation of policies and programmes) as well as their construction (see May, 1992: 340). It has argued that learning from Australia and Denmark in the form of the three principal policy recommendations should be hybridised or synthesised within the British borrowing context. This is in line with Lendvai and Stubbs' concept of policy as 'translation' rather than transfer, which brings together the policy learning and research processes. Policy as translation recognises that policy learning is constructed both in the art of looking and in what is translated and that it is constrained by institutional and ideological path dependency within the borrowing context. This research has also argued that to engage in 'hard' learning (Dolowitz, 2009) requires an in-depth understanding of the originating context and that this can be achieved through information from a range of sources, using mixed methods.

Higgott (1996) suggests that regimes are “principled and shared understandings of desirable and acceptable forms of state behaviour” (p.21). Such shared understandings are linked to institutions, which are ‘cultural products’ (Freeman, 1999: 91), which both constitute cultures and are constituted by them, and which are given agency by people and in particular by policy actors. This study has highlighted that ideology is one of the most important, if not the most important, constraint on policy learning for Britain. Institutional and cost constraints are also important for translation and all of these are particular obstacles to the translation of encompassing activation and day-care from Denmark to Britain. In institutional path dependence adherence to a policy path is facilitated by increasing returns; decreasing returns are a barrier to policy change and policy learning. Path dependency relates to institutional ‘stickiness,’ however there is also ‘ideological stickiness’ on the part of policy actors, as well as individual partnered women and their families. The basic character of welfare recalibration is as a form of institutionally-bounded policy innovation (Ferrera and Hemerijck, 2003: 121), but such institutions are also ideologically-bounded.

The three aspects which Ferrera and Hemerijck (2003: 89-90) use to describe the essence of recalibration are directly related to policy learning. Firstly, there are constraints on policy choices and development, whether domestic or external, whether ideological, political or institutional. Secondly, as this analysis has demonstrated, there is interdependence between additions and subtractions in the social policy ‘menu’ across the four sub-dimensions and these are underpinned by normative recalibration. Finally, shifts of weight and emphasis in both policy instruments and goals are the result of “complex dynamics of social and institutional *learning*” (Ferrera and Hemerijck, 2003: 89-90 *my italics*). This analysis thus argues for the incorporation of recalibration as a framework for assessment of the possibility of policy learning, as well as in considering whether policy translation has taken place.

8.4 *Strengths and weaknesses of the research methodology*

This study constructed in-depth case studies comprising elite interviews with policy actors, as well as documentary analysis in order to tell the policy 'stories' for each of the countries in relation to partnered women outside the labour market. This involved interviews with both governmental actors, as well as non-governmental actors who provided critical accounts of policies. The approach enabled in-depth examination of the policies and programmes, as well as the context, which was crucial for hard learning (Dolowitz, 2009) and for the assessment of the possibility of policy translation (Lendvai and Stubbs, 2007). The use of the recalibration framework to analyse the findings has permitted a truly comparative study, rather than a chapter-by-chapter comparison for each country, illustrating both the elements of convergence and divergence, which informed consideration of policy translation.

The methodology of elite interviews with policy actors is under-utilised in social policy research. Taylor-Gooby (2002: 619) argues that quantitative studies tend to predominate in the comparative social policy literature because of the availability of statistical data, as well as the technical difficulties of conducting cross-nationally comparative case studies. This study highlights both the strengths of conducting such case studies, particularly in relation to policy learning, as well as perhaps the reasons why such research methods are not more commonly used, particularly interviewing of policy actors. Chapter Three set out the problems with identification and anonymity of respondents, which was an interesting aspect, suggesting that activation policies are a sensitive policy area in Australia. This was in contrast to a similarly sensitive area of policymaking in relation to immigrants in Denmark, about which policy actors were relatively open. However, the problems with access to data at such a late stage in the fieldwork planning were neither a result of the methodology nor its application.

For both countries access to statistical data was restricted in many cases to people with links with institutions within those countries. As suggested in Chapter Three, it would have been helpful to have been aware of such problems in advance of the country visits and to have had contingencies in place. Time could also have been built into the Australian fieldwork to learn about and gain access to HILDA data. In retrospect it would have been useful to have gained more signposting from actors in both countries towards studies concerning the reasons for partnered women moving into work in Australia and Denmark, rather than a 'deficit model'³⁴⁸ based on barriers to work. However, the reasons for the focus on barriers were that this was the starting point constructed from NDP data, that it demonstrated comparison of like with like and also permitted investigation of policy problem representations, responses and goals, which were important for policy translation. It also facilitated analysis as to how far the policy responses were in line with these representations.

The elite interviews were a key source of data in the absence of quantitative data relating specifically to partnered women in both Australia and Denmark. In Australia many of the interviews involved signposting to documents, perhaps because it was assumed that I had more knowledge of the context and the shared language meant access to more documents. By contrast, in Denmark the interview data were rich, perhaps because interviewees assumed the opposite. Aside from the difficulty of recording interviews with Australian governmental actors, there was perhaps a lack of understanding, particularly amongst the Australian respondents, that the elite interviews were the primary data collection method. This was clearly stated in the correspondence which preceded the interviews and was emphasised by the fact that respondents were asked to sign consent forms. One problem may have been respondents' lack of time, as they were busy professionals, although notably the Danish interviews were fairly long in length. The other way of addressing the possible

³⁴⁸ I am grateful to Professor Fiona Williams for highlighting this.

lack of understanding of the importance of the interviews as primary data would have been to have had more structured topic guides for the Australian interviews.

It would have been of benefit for both case studies had it been possible to spend longer in each of the countries, particularly to have more opportunity for reflection time between interviews. The research attempted to collect a great deal of information concerning the country contexts: the benefits systems, labour market policies, childcare, as well as the institutions and actors involved in the delivery of policies. There was also a tension between the contextual focus necessary for policy learning and retaining the focus on the research questions. However, the study has succeeded in answering the research questions posed at the beginning and provided a contribution to the debate about policy responses to partnered women outside the labour market in Australia and Denmark, as well the potential lessons for British social policy. It has also added to the academic literature on policy transfer and translation and has applied the recalibration framework to a new area of study.

When policies are framed purely by the quantitative effects they produce, the important human element risks being forgotten, for society is made up of individuals, families and households, as well as institutions, which are in themselves given agency by people. As Wright (2009) has argued, “the particular redefinition of citizenship rights and responsibilities that has occurred through the development of welfare-to-work policies allows the consequences of the individual and collective actions of powerful social actors, such as policy makers and employers, to go unnoticed” (p.207). It is thus important to understand policies from the perspective of policy actors and to acknowledge that they are not value-free and objective, no matter how much they rely on positivist indicators to construct policy problems, responses and effects. Notably, representations of the policy ‘problem’ in each of the countries differed between the policymaking elites and frontline actors, academics and campaigning organisations. Policy actors help to construct and maintain paradigms within which policies and

programmes are framed, which may or may not be true assessments of the policy problem representations. “Problem definition is the active manipulation of *images* of conditions by competing political actors. Conditions come to be defined as problems through the strategic portrayal of causal stories” (Stone, 1989: 299). However, whilst these paradigms are powerful, they are also ‘unstable settlements’ (Clarke, 2004) and therefore open to challenge.

8.5 *Further research*

Firstly, in relation to further research arising from this study one Danish social worker commented that: “If you are looking for policy learning, Britain can learn from the Danish approach to people on sickness and disability benefits, for example early intervention.” More policy lessons could be learned from the Danish approach to moving people with long-term health problems and disabilities into work, as this constitutes a barrier to work for some partners in Britain who care for a sick or disabled adult, or who are ill themselves. The Danish case could also be further examined in relation to the provision of alternative care for adults.

Secondly, further research could investigate on a longitudinal basis the relationship between attitudes to work and care and the labour market participation of both sole and partnered mothers in Australia, using HILDA data. This could also include the attitudes of the partners of such mothers, exploring gendering of roles within couples and its specific effects on partnered women. This would build on McRae’s (2003) examination of the influence of both institutional and normative constraints on the labour market participation of both single and partnered first-time mothers in Britain and on Steiber and Haas’ work (2009) relating to generalised and individual attitudes towards work and care. The transitions between lone parent and partnered statuses highlighted in this analysis suggest that, despite some differences between lone parents and partners, it is beneficial to study lone parents and partnered parents as a

combined group. In this context, longitudinal analysis of partnered women's transitions in and out of work and between relationship statuses would be of value.

Thirdly, in Britain research could examine which interventions partnered women who have moved into paid work felt were helpful in assisting (and sustaining) this transition. For partnered women not in work the research could examine the interventions they perceive would be helpful in assisting them into work. The advantage of micro-level studies is the opportunity to examine the effects of policies at an individual and familial level. It is important to remember this aspect when there is so much focus on outcome targets at the bureaucratic level. Such research could also utilise case studies of particular localities in Britain compared with other comparator countries to capture the local labour market aspects.

Finally, Millar and Ridge's (see Millar, 2007) research with children of lone parents highlighted the lack of comparable data concerning the role and experiences of children in couple families where working age adults were making the transition into work. Assisting partnered women into work is a 'family-work project' (Millar and Ridge, 2008) and this aspect should be explored to further inform social security, activation and childcare policies.

8.6 *Final thoughts*

Relatively high female labour market participation in Britain may suggest that participation can occur in the absence of government policies to facilitate it (Pascall, 2008: 220, Pascall and Lewis, 2004: 220). It is against this backdrop of work as a social norm that governmental policy goals relating to the labour market participation of partnered women are constructed in Britain. However, this context also draws attention to the capacity for people's agency and resistance to policies (Clarke, 2004: 158-9) and may also help to explain why in Britain despite all odds many partnered

women predominantly remain in work for the majority of their lives, even if not full-time as in the Danish model. However, others do not. The decision may relate to gendered moral rationalities but also to constraints. Women with qualifications, work experience and relatively well paid work may choose to work and pay expensive childcare costs, although their preferences to combine work and family may still be constrained. Other women with low or no qualifications, little or no work experience and with the potential of unstable and low-paid work may in such circumstances wish to prioritise care over paid work, at least for certain periods of their lives.

One Danish academic suggested that: “Instruments that work well in the context of prosperity might be a social disaster in the context of recession.” In the light of proposed public spending reductions in Britain, the extension of childcare provision beyond what is already provided, as well as investment in individually responsive employment assistance, may seem unlikely. It is also a matter of concern that reductions in public sector spending are likely to disproportionately impact on women (Fawcett Society, 2010), as this sector provides flexible and relatively stable employment for women with caring responsibilities. Despite these challenges relating to the economic and political context, the recommendations from this research offer some suggestions regarding possible future approaches to engaging partnered women in the labour market and it is hoped that they will provide a contribution to ongoing debates.

Appendix 1 - Research instruments

1.1 *Supplementary research questions*

Stage 1 - Evidence Review Assessment Framework

- Which policies and programmes in OECD countries encourage the labour market participation of partnered women in non-working households?

For each country, this involves an exploration of the following:

Table A1.1- Identification of policies in overall welfare state structure

(i) Type of welfare state/classification according to regime theory (a) Claiming principle (b) Benefit structure (c) Financing (d) Actors ³⁴⁹	
(ii) Political/ policy structure (e.g. national, federal)	
(iii) What is the scale of the problem of non-working partnered women?	
(iv) How is the problem of partnered women's workless status conceptualised in this country?	
(v) What are the reasons for the lack of labour market participation of non-working partnered women?	
(vi) Are there policies or programmes specifically targeted at non-working partnered women?	
(vii) Is the labour market participation of non-working partnered women increased by means of wider policies, such as the operation of the welfare system as a whole, work-life balance policies and childcare provision?	
(viii) Are there any policies currently under consideration by policy actors which intend to address the issue of the engagement of non-working partnered women in the labour market? What is the current stage of development of such policies or programmes?	

³⁴⁹ After Palier, B. & Bonoli, G. (1998) Changing the politics of social programmes: innovative change in British and French welfare reforms. *Journal of European Social Policy*, 8, 317-330.

Table A1.2 – Examination of individual programmes

Programme	(i) What are the policy or programme intentions?	(ii) What is actually produced by the policy or programme?	(iii) What is the take-up of the programme or intervention?	(iv) Does the programme have any unintended effects?

Stage 2 - Case studies

- What factors explain different approaches to the labour market participation of non-working partnered women in countries 1 and 2?

In the case of countries with identified successful policies the following will be explored:

1. Why have these programmes and policies been effective?
2. How far is it possible to state that the programmes themselves are successful?

Success criteria

- Job entries - this quantitative measure will need be qualified where possible by more qualitative aspects, such as type of job entered, level of pay, sustainability of jobs (including how this is defined in each country), opportunities within the job secured for combining work and caring activities, level of pay and the potential for progression. These factors are particularly relevant for non-working partnered women in Britain, as they risk becoming caught in a cycle of low-paid, low-skill jobs, followed by re-entry to the benefits system.
 - Interventions may not result in job entries, but there may be measures of progress towards work, such as increases in job readiness, as demonstrated by increases in confidence before and after joining a programme.³⁵⁰
3. Although the primary focus of the research is on labour market and social protection programmes and policies, what other factors impact on increasing the labour market participation of non-working partnered women?

³⁵⁰ Such indicators are more difficult (and less quantitative) to measure and evaluations are likely to employ a range of methods, which may make comparability between countries difficult.

4. Analysis of policies with respect to non-working partnered women’s barriers to labour market participation in Britain:

Table A1.3 – Framework for analysis of barriers to labour market participation

	supply-side	demand-side	disincentives to work
(i) barriers - actual and perceived (e.g. caring, ill health, financial)			
(ii) constraints on labour market participation (e.g. caring, poverty traps)			
(iii) cultural reasons (e.g. no history of labour market engagement, travel, childcare, lack of skills and qualifications)			

5. Do wider social policies have an impact on non-working partnered women’s labour market participation? For example, is this group affected by wider policies aimed at broader groups such as ‘families with children’, ‘carers’ and ‘work-life/work-family balance policies’?

6. Are there particular programmes which are effective for specific sub-groups of non-working partnered women? This may be explored in terms of four sub-groups of partners, identified by evaluations of NDP – there may be some possible overlap between them (Department for Work and Pensions, 2007: 1):

- i. Unemployed partners
- ii. Parent partners³⁵¹
- iii. Partners with caring responsibilities for people other than dependent children (such as partners caring for sick/disabled partners)
- iv. Partners with health problems and/or disabilities (this can be linked with group 2 above, as some partners may be sick/disabled as a consequence of their caring responsibilities)³⁵²

7. What specific characteristics of identified benefits or services influence the effectiveness of policies for non-working partnered women?

³⁵¹ DWP defines people as parents if they have at least one child under the age of 16 (or 19, if in full-time education) living within their household, whether biological or step-children Department for Work and Pensions (2007) Focus on Partners research brief series: parent partners. Sheffield, DWP Lone Parents and Partners Evaluation Team.

³⁵² Fifth and sixth sub-groups of older partners (those aged between 50 years and state retirement age - currently 60 years for women and 65 years for men) and ethnic minority partners can also be identified, but these group will not form a specific focus for this research, as they are likely to experience particular barriers to work and would each constitute a separate research project.

8. What have been the driving factors behind the introduction of such policies? For example, social, economic, historic context?
9. Are these policies/programmes consistent with the historical policy trajectories of each country or do they signify policy change/regime shifting?
10. How important are institutions/institutional factors in this policy area?
11. Which actors are involved?
12. How important are ideational processes or cultural factors?

Stage 3 – Consideration of policy transferability

- How do cross-national variations in approaches to the labour market participation of non-working partnered women in countries 1 and 2 impact on the possibilities for transfer of these policies to Britain?

This stage will consider the following:

1. To what extent are these policies/programmes likely to be transferable to Britain?
2. What are the similarities between this country and Britain (institutions, actors, culture)?
3. What are the differences between this country and Britain (institutions, actors, culture)?
4. Which elements are capable of being transferred?
5. What are the obstacles to successful transfer of these policies and programmes?
6. What factors will facilitate successful transfer?
7. What were the key factors that ensured the success of policies/programmes in the lending country and do these factors exist in Britain as a borrowing country?
8. Where are the points for potential policy transfer failure?

Key research question

What policies/programmes in Australia/Denmark are relevant to encouraging non-working partnered women into work? Which are successful?

Key areas of focus

1. The broad basis for social protection system and partnered women's access to benefits
2. Financing of benefits
3. Management and implementation of benefits system and employment services³⁵³
4. Active labour market policies/welfare-to-work programmes
5. Anti-poverty measures
6. Work-life/work-family balance policies
7. Wage subsidies/in-work benefits
8. Employer incentives to encourage employment/retention of unemployed/inactive people
9. Other initiatives such as training/skills improvement programmes and job search assistance
10. Cultural context

Agenda-setting, Objective-setting, Choosing policy instruments and Implementation

1. What were the policy drivers?
2. How did partners' joblessness become defined as a policy issue/how did it lead to ideas for policy change being discussed? How did the issue get onto the policy or political agenda? Was there a particular driver for this?
3. What other options were considered? What were these?
4. What analysis or appraisal was carried out beforehand? Who by?
5. Why was this option chosen above others? Who decided?
6. What were the policy/programme intentions? Were they explicitly identified, expressed and agreed? By whom?
7. Were specific target or client groups identified? Sub-groups?

³⁵³ The first four are based on Bonoli, G. & Palier, B. (1998) Changing the politics of social programmes: innovative change in British and French welfare reforms. *Journal of European Social Policy*, 8(4):317-30.

8. What consultation took place with target or client groups or other stakeholders? (media, political parties, individuals, interest/pressure groups, employers' organisations, TUs, international organisations, research, networks)
9. Who supported it? Did anyone not support it?
10. How far did this choice of programme relate to the existing policies currently in operation? Did the introduction of this policy involve changes in existing arrangements? If so, what?
11. Were objectives/outcomes/targets established? Targets for job entries (and movement closer to the labour market), numbers off benefit and sustained job outcomes (at 13 and 26 weeks) for this group? How were these identified and agreed? Where are they set down? How do these reflect political ideologies?
12. Did the programme involve a shift in existing arrangements? Did it involve an ideological shift?
13. How much does it cost? What financial resources were required/committed? Spending Review cycle?
14. How was the policy/programme implemented? Was it piloted?
15. What does the programme do? Activities? Group activities? How is this translated on the ground (frontline)?
16. When was the programme introduced?
17. Which individuals/organisations are involved in its delivery?
18. Were there any key differences between policy design and implementation?
19. Have there been any modifications to the programme? When? What were these?
20. How does the policy/programme interact with other programmes (existing or planned)?
21. How do the different departments/organisations involved work together?
22. How does this policy/programme fit with current government commitments?

23. Are there any policies currently under consideration which intend to address partnered women's worklessness? What is the current stage of development of such policies?

Evaluation and policy transfer

1. What evaluations of the programme have been carried out?
2. What evidence is available about:
 - a. take-up of the programme/impact
 - b. extent to which the policy/programme has achieved intended outcomes
 - c. job outcomes – at 13 weeks and 26 weeks; types of work
 - d. is there any role for subsidised work?
 - e. characteristics of group or sub-groups (similar to lone parents or to disabled?)
 - f. recipient views
 - g. any adverse effects
 - h. unforeseen consequences, e.g. interaction with other policies, effects on unintended recipients
 - i. cost/benefit analyses
3. Is the policy successful? How is success defined? In Britain success of a welfare-to-work policy is reflected in moving into work, movement off benefits (or onto an active rather than inactive benefit) and also staying in work and off benefit (there are also child poverty reduction targets too). In Denmark success is going into work, with movement off benefits a consequence. Instrumentalism or ideology?
4. Has there been movement onto other benefits and not movement off benefits in full? Increase in part payments and decrease in full payments?
5. What factors explain the success of the approach? What key factors ensured the success of policies/programmes? (Are these factors present in Britain?)
6. Have there been any unintended consequences (good or bad)? Has there been a deterrent effect?
7. What data is available? Evaluation data, statistics?
8. Do you have data about barriers for partners? Sub-groups of partners (caring, speakers of other languages, literacy/numeracy, health, work experience/qualifications)? Similar to other beneficiaries?

9. Is the policy successful for certain sub-groups?
10. Are particularly activities more successful than others (e.g. training and self-employment for partners in Britain)?
11. What lessons can we learn from the experience of this country? Which elements are capable of being transferred?

For reflection:

1. What are the obstacles to successful transfer of these policies and programmes?
2. To what extent are these policies/programmes likely to be transferable to Britain?
3. What are the similarities between Australia/Denmark and Britain (institutions, actors, culture)?
4. What are the differences between Australia/Denmark and Britain (institutions, actors, culture)?
5. How far are the policies/programmes themselves successful? Is success related to wider factors?

Table A1.4: Interviewees in Australia by type

Type of organisation	Number of interviews
Government officials ³⁵⁴	10
Employment service professionals (Centrelink, providers)	4
Campaigning organisations	3
Academics/researchers	14
Total	31

³⁵⁴ These were round table meetings with a number of officials.

Table A1.5: Interviews in Denmark by type

Type of organisation	Number of interviews
Government officials	4
Employment service professionals (Jobcenter staff, local authority staff, social workers) ³⁵⁵	4
Trade unions	3
Academics/researchers ³⁵⁶	10
Total	21

³⁵⁵ Some of these interviews were round table meetings with a number of interviewees.

³⁵⁶ Some of these interviews were round table meetings with a number of interviewees.

INFORMATION SHEET

PhD Research: Encouraging the labour market participation of non-working partnered women in the UK

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) in the UK currently implements a New Deal for Partners, which aims to encourage non-working partners of non-working main benefit claimants into work. These partners (mostly women) do not usually claim benefit themselves, but their partner receives a top-up to their benefit on behalf of their dependent partner. The DWP is seeking to learn policy lessons from other OECD countries which are more successful in moving specifically the female partners in these workless couple households into work. This research aims to identify why such policies are effective and also to identify which aspects of these policies may be transferred to the UK.

Fieldwork for this research consists of first-hand information gained from elite interviews with policymakers and other stakeholders. Participants such as yourself are crucial in helping me to understand the policies and policy context in Australia, as well as to consider the possibility of transferring policies to the UK.

This research is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), in collaboration with the DWP. It is being carried out in line with ESRC requirements and has been approved via the University of Sheffield Ethics Review Committee. All data will be treated as personal under the 1998 UK Data Protection Act and will be stored securely. Data collected may be processed both manually and with the aid of computer software.

The ESRC ask that all primary data produced by their funded research is archived with the UK Data Archives (UKDA) for the benefit of the wider research community. Founded in 1967, the UKDA is curator of the largest collection of digital data in the social sciences and humanities in the UK. It is funded by the ESRC, the Joint Information Systems Committee of the Higher Education Funding Councils and the University of Essex.

If you have any queries about this research at any time, please do not hesitate to contact myself, or my supervisor Professor Bob Deacon (e-mail: b.deacon@sheffield.ac.uk; telephone: +44 (0)114 222 6407).

Thank you very much for your help.

Best regards

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University of Sheffield

CONSENT FORM

Encouraging the labour market participation of non-working partnered women in the UK

This research is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), in collaboration with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and has been approved via the University of Sheffield Ethics Review Process. All data will be treated as personal under the 1998 Data Protection Act and will be stored securely. Data collected may be processed both manually and with the aid of computer software. Where data is not in English, I will employ a translator who will sign a confidentiality agreement.

Please answer each statement regarding the collection and use of your research data.

Please answer each statement regarding the collection and use of data you provide for this research.

1. I have read and understood the information sheet and have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.
2. I understand that my participation in this research is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time.
3. I agree to the interview being audiotaped and to its content being used for research purposes.
4. Anonymity – please choose one of the following 3 options:
 - a) I/my employer (delete as applicable) may be identified and quoted in the final thesis and in any related reports.
 - b) I/my employer do not agree to being identified in the final thesis and any related reports - my words may be quoted, provided that they are anonymised.
 - c) I/my employer do not agree to being identified in the final thesis and any related reports – the information I give may be used, but my words may not be quoted.
5. I agree to the transcript for my interview being archived with the UK Data Archive (in line with the conditions outlined above).

6. I agree to the recording of my interview being archived with the UK Data Archive (in line with the conditions outlined above).

7. I agree to take part in the above named research project.

Name of participant (please print) _____

Signature _____ Date _____

The participant should receive a copy of this form and the information sheet. Originals of this form will be placed in the project's main record and kept in a secure location.

Thank you very much for your participation

Appendix 2 - Data tables relating to partnered women in Britain, Australia and Denmark

2.1 Britain

Table A2.1: Couples in Britain by benefit type and number of dependents, February 2008

Number of Dependents by Benefit Type		Benefit Type						Total
		IS	%	IS and IB	%	JSA	%	
Dependents	no dependents	69,200	39	44,400	51	n/a	n/a	113,600
	1 dependent	36,500	20	17,000	19	23,400	34	76,900
	2 dependents	33,200	19	13,900	16	21,900	32	69,100
	3 dependents	21,900	12	7,400	8	13,400	19	42,600
	4 dependents	11,000	6	3,100	4	6,200	9	20,300
	5+ dependents	6,900	4	1,600	2	3,800	6	12,300
	Total	179,000	100	87,000	100%	69,000	100%	335,000

Source: Department for Work and Pensions

Table A2.2: Couples in Britain by benefit type and age of dependents, February 2008

		Benefit Type						Total
		IS	%	IS and IB	%	JSA	%	
Age of Dependents	no dependents	69,200	39	44,400	51	n/a	n/a	113,600
	dependent/s less than 7 yrs	54,700	31	17,500	20	48,600	71	120,800
	dependent/s between 7 and 16 yrs	44,700	25	20,200	23	17,000	25	81,900
	dependent/s over 16 yrs	10,100	6	5,400	6	3,100	4	18,500
	Total	179,000	100	87,000	100	69,000	100	335,000

Source: Department for Work and Pensions

Table A2.3: Partnered women participating in the New Deal for Partners in Britain by ethnicity April 2004 - August 2009 (thousands)³⁵⁷

Ethnicity	Individuals starting caseload (cumulative)	Participants as at August 2009
White	7.42	2.65
Black-Caribbean	0.04	0.02
Black-African	0.11	0.04
Black-Other	0.02	0.01
Indian	0.13	0.06
Pakistani	0.26	0.13
Bangladeshi	0.08	0.04
Chinese	0.02	0.01
Mixed/Other	0.31	0.15
Total	9.12	3.43

Source: Department for Work and Pensions Tabulation Tool

Table A2.4: Partnered women participating in the New Deal for Partners in Britain by age, April 2004-2009 (thousands)

Age group	Individuals starting caseload (cumulative)	Participants as at August 2009
18-24	1.40	0.41
25-29	1.29	0.45
30-34	1.28	0.48
35-39	1.22	0.50
40-44	1.05	0.42
45-49	0.65	0.29
50-54	0.37	0.17
55-59	0.12	0.05
60 and over	-	-
Unknown	1.72	0.65
Total	9.12	3.43

Source: Department for Work and Pensions

³⁵⁷ In the following tables figures are rounded to the nearest ten.

Table A2.5: Destination of partnered women leaving the New Deal for Partners in Britain by ethnicity, May 2004 - August 2009 (thousands)

Ethnicity	Work	Work and benefits	JSA	Other benefits	Off benefits/ Unknown
White	0.82	0.53	0.13	0.60	0.01
Black-Caribbean	-	-	-	-	0.01
Black-African	0.01	0.01	-	-	-
Black-Other	-	-	-	-	-
Indian	0.01		-	-	0.05
Pakistani	0.01	-	-	0.01	0.08
Bangladeshi	-	-	-	0.01	0.03
Chinese	-	-	-	-	0.01
Mixed/ Other	0.02	0.01	-	0.02	0.10
Total	0.99	0.60	0.15	0.68	2.91

Source: Department for Work and Pensions

Table A2.6: Destination of partnered women leaving the New Deal for Partners in Britain by age, May 2004 - August 2009 (thousands)

Age group	Work	Work and benefits	JSA	Other benefits	Off benefits/ Unknown
18-24	0.11	0.08	0.04	0.19	0.49
25-29	0.12	0.09	0.02	0.13	0.42
30-34	0.14	0.09	0.02	0.11	0.38
35-39	0.15	0.07	0.02	0.06	0.39
40-44	0.13	0.08	0.02	0.04	0.32
45-49	0.08	0.04	0.01	0.02	0.18
50-54	0.04	0.02	-	0.01	0.12
55-59	0.07	0.01	0.01	-	-
60 and over	-	-	-	-	-
Total	0.99	0.60	0.15	0.68	2.91

Source: Department for Work and Pensions

2.2 Australia

Table A2.7: Parenting Payment Partnered recipients in Australia by gender, June 2001 - June 2005

As at June	Male		Female		Total
	Number	%	Number	%	Number
2001	20,263	9.9	184,313	90.1	204,576
2002	19,576	10.2	172,000	89.8	191,576
2003	19,196	10.6	162,209	89.4	181,405
2004	18,917	10.7	158,240	89.3	177,157
2005	17,255	10.3	150,017	89.7	167,272

Source: Department of Families Housing Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, 2009: 61

Table A2.8: Parenting Payment Partnered recipients in Australia by age, June 2005

	Male		Female		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
<20	32	0.2	2,789	1.9	2,821	1.7
20-29	1,845	10.7	36,400	24.3	38,245	22.9
30-39	6,542	37.9	65,287	43.5	71,829	42.9
40-49	6,622	38.4	39,546	26.4	46,168	4.6
50-59	1,978	11.5	5,785	3.9	7,763	4.6
60+	236	1.4	210	0.1	446	0.3
Total	17,255	10.3	150,017	89.7	167,272	100.0

Source: Department of Families Housing Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, 2009: 6

Table A2.9: Number of Parenting Payment Partnered recipients in Australia by payment category of partner, June 2001 - June 2005

As at June	Youth Allowance	Low income	Newstart Allowance	Pension	Total
2001	193	86,329	95,182	22,242	204,576
2002	204	81,078	85,424	24,870	191,576
2003	195	81,792	74,268	25,150	181,405
2004	144	87,945	63,571	25,497	177,157
2005	164	86,184	56,087	24,837	167,272

Source: Department of Families Housing Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, 2009: 62

Table A2.10: Parenting Payment Partnered recipients in Australia by duration of payment, June 2005

	Male		Female		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<6 months	4,716	27.3	31,094	20.7	35,810	21.4
6 months to <1 year	3,001	17.4	19,565	13.0	22,566	13.5
1 to <2 years	3,700	21.4	26,857	17.9	30,557	18.3
2 to <3 years	2,180	12.6	17,420	11.6	19,600	11.7
3+ years	3,658	21.2	55,081	36.7	58,739	35.1

Source: Department of Families Housing Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, 2009: 63

Table A2.11: Parenting Payment Partnered recipients in Australia by country of birth, June 2005

	Male		Female		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Australia	11,356	65.8	92,020	61.3	103,376	61.8
Other	3,481	20.2	34,899	23.3	38,380	22.9
UK/Ireland /Eire	930	5.4	4,145	2.8	5,075	3.0
Vietnam	670	3.9	7,649	5.1	8,319	5.0
China	532	3.1	5,489	3.7	6,021	3.6
Lebanon	286	1.7	5,815	3.9	6,101	3.6

Source: Department of Families Housing Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, 2009: 63

Table A2.12: Principal carer parents in Australia by sub-target group, 2006-07

	Participation requirement	Number	Target group %
<i>Receiving PP before 1 July 2006 (grandfathered)</i>			
PP single - youngest child < 6	none	163,112	23
PP partnered - youngest child < 6	none	82,306	12
PP single - youngest child 6-15	none	249,990	35
PP partnered - youngest child 6-15	none	64,713	9
<i>Total grandfathered</i>		560,121	79
<i>Recipients after 1 July 2006</i>			
PP single - youngest child < 6	none	58,353	8
PP partnered - youngest child 6-15	none	56,863	8
<i>Total new claimants with no participation requirements</i>		115,216	16
PP single - youngest child < 6	part-time	8,230	1
NSA single - youngest child 8-15	part-time	13,902	2
NSA partnered - youngest child 6-15	part-time	11,398	2
<i>Total new claimants with participation requirements</i>		33,530	5
<i>Total</i>		708,867	100
<i>% of total working age population</i>			23

Source: Department for Education Employment and Workplace Relations, 2010

Table A2.13: Number of job placements for Parenting Payment recipients (Single and Partnered) in Australia³⁵⁸

	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Job placements	46,106	53,014	67,100
13-week jobs	16,760	20,685	29,200

Source: DEWR and DEEWR Annual Reports 2005-06, 2006-07 and 2007-08

Table A2.14: Percentage of Parenting Payment Partnered recipients with earnings in Australia

1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
5.8	7.7	7.4	10.4	11.3	12	13	14	15.5

Source: DEEWR and FaCS Annual Reports

³⁵⁸ It was not possible to obtain data regarding 26-week outcomes.

2.3 Denmark

Table A2.15: Married couples claiming social assistance in Denmark

	2007	2008
Married couples with children	39252	35831
Married couples without children	12 453	12 633

Source: Statistics Denmark StatBank

Table A2.16: Economic activity and employment rates for Danish and immigrant women

	2006	2007	2008
<i>Economy activity rate</i>			
Persons of Danish origin	77.4	78.2	78.3
Immigrants from western countries	61.9	62.7	62.9
Immigrants from non-western countries	49.1	52.6	54.4
<i>Employment rate</i>			
Persons of Danish origin	74.4	75.9	76.7
Immigrants from western countries	58.9	60.2	61.1
Immigrants from non-western countries	42.1	46.2	49.5

Source: Statistics Denmark, 2009

Table A2.17: Self-estimated health of social assistance recipients affected by the 300 hour rule in Denmark

	Recipients who lost their benefit	Recipients who retained their benefit
Very good	16	13
Good	26	17
OK	20	18
Poor	23	23
Very poor	15	29

Source: Bach and Larsen, 2008 Table 3.9

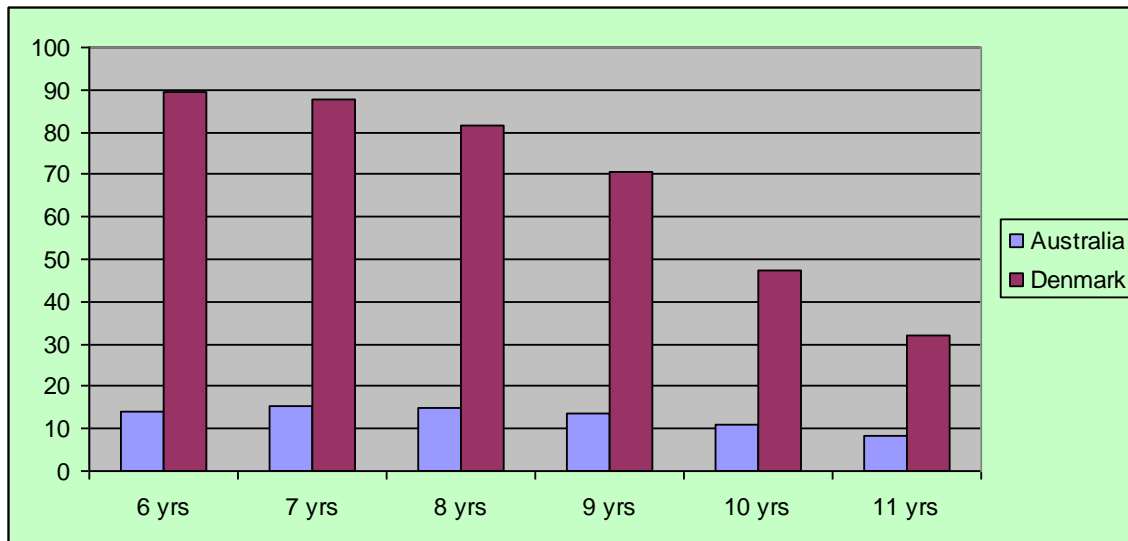
Table A2.18: Reduced work ability of social assistance recipients affected by the 300 hour rule in Denmark

	Recipients who lost their benefit	Recipients who retained their benefit
Yes	24	38
Yes – some	24	23
No, not really	15	11
Not at all	37	28
Ill	40	59

Source: Bach and Larsen, 2008 Table 3.9

2.4 Supplementary data tables

Figure A2.19: Take-up of out-of-school hours care (per cent)³⁵⁹



Source: OECD Family Database

Table A2.20: Poverty rates for couple households with children, 2005 (per cent)

	Households with children and two or more adults		
	No worker	1 worker	2 workers
Australia	50.8	7.9	1.0
UK	35.8	9.0	1.0
Denmark	21.1	5.3	0.4

Source: Whiteford, 2009: 29 using OECD Income Distribution Survey

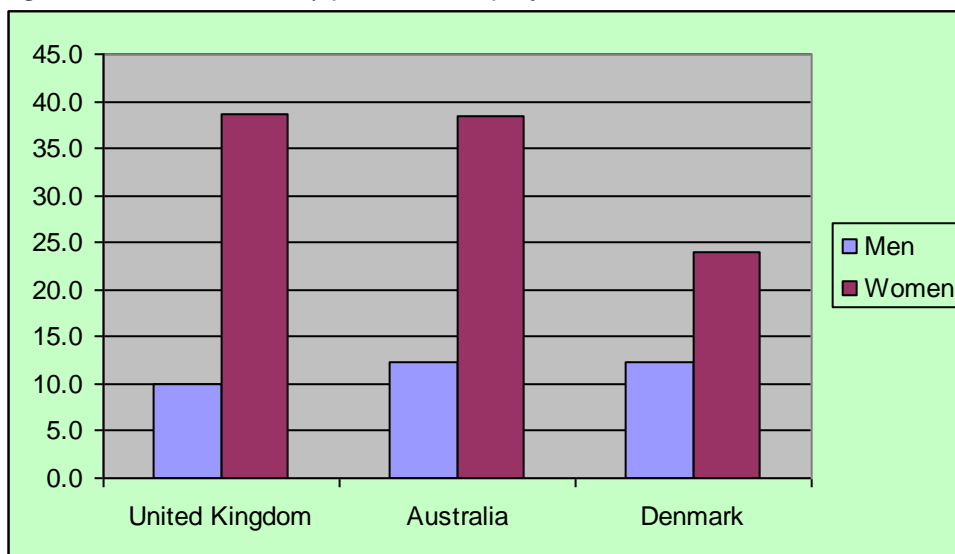
³⁵⁹ Data is for 2005 for Denmark and 2006 for Australia using OECD Family Database and OECD (2007b) *Benefits and Wages* Paris, OECD. No comparable data available for Britain.

Table A2.21: Composition of child poverty for couple households, 2005 (per cent)

	All jobless households	2 adults with children, 1 earner	All households with 1 earner	2 earners with children
Australia	69.9	21.6	24.9	5.2
UK	63.0	25.2	30.9	6.1
Denmark	42.3	36.6	43.5	14.2

Source: Whiteford, 2009: 32 using OECD Income Distribution Survey

Figure A2.22: Incidence of part-time employment in the three countries in 2007-8



Source: OECD Family Database

Appendix 3 – The British welfare state in relation to women from workless couples

3.1 *The British welfare state*

The origins of the British welfare state are in the (Old) Elizabethan Poor Law Act of 1601.³⁶⁰ Its replacement the (New) Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 was key in establishing three main planks for the new system: the principle of ‘less eligibility’ with its distinction between ‘deserving’ and ‘undeserving’ poor; the workhouse test; and administrative centralisation (Fraser, 1984: 43). In 1911 the Liberal government under Lloyd George introduced a National Insurance Act which was contributory, compulsory and state organised, but not comprehensive (Timmins, 2001: 14). The next key Act with regard to unemployment was the 1934 Unemployment Act, covering both employment insurance and social assistance, with contributions based on an equal thirds principle.³⁶¹

The Beveridgean welfare state became operational on 5 July 1948.³⁶² Beveridge’s National Insurance scheme aimed to provide a minimum subsistence income with room for economic incentives, based on flat-rate contributions at a level that the lowest-paid worker could afford, rather than a Bismarckian social insurance scheme providing earnings-related benefits, although the latter have become more important to the British model (Bennett, 2005). There was a safety net in the form of Supplementary Allowances on a means-tested basis through the (later National) Assistance Board. The National Insurance scheme allowed married women to opt out of paying full contributions and instead rely on their husband’s contributions, forfeiting the claim to benefits in their own right (Sainsbury, 1996: 55). This option was widely used (Land, 1985: 56-7) until its abolition following the Social Security Pensions Act 1975.³⁶³ Until 1983 only husbands could apply for means-tested assistance.

³⁶⁰ This identified three main groups: the impotent poor (aged, chronic sick, blind, lunatic); able-bodied; and able-bodied who refused to work Fraser, D. (1984) *The evolution of the British welfare state (Second Edition)*, Basingstoke, Macmillan.

³⁶¹ The Act effectively repealed the 1834 Poor Law.

³⁶² The Beveridge Report focused on the five giants of: want, disease, ignorance, squalor and idleness. Key components of the 1948 reforms were the National Insurance, Industrial Injuries, National Assistance and National Health Service Acts (family allowances and higher pensions had been paid since 1946) Fraser, D. (1984) *The evolution of the British welfare state (Second Edition)*, Basingstoke, Macmillan..

³⁶³ Although women already using the option could continue to do so.

3.2 *British labour market policies relevant to partnered women since 1996*

- 1996 Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) introduced, replacing Unemployment Benefit (UB) and Income Support (IS) as the benefit for unemployed people
- 1997 New Labour wins the General Election
- 1999 New Deal for Partners of the Unemployed (NDPU) introduced, targeted at partners of JSA recipients
- 2001 NDPU renamed New Deal for Partners (NDP) and eligibility extended to partners of non-JSA recipients claiming Income Support (IS), Incapacity Benefit (IB), Invalid Care Allowance (ICA), Severe Disablement Allowance (SDA)
- Joint Claims for JSA introduced, requiring couples without dependent children (where both were aged 18 or over, and at least one partner was born on or after 18 March 1976) to make a joint claim.
- 2002 Eligibility for Joint Claims extended to couples where one or both partners was born on or before 28 October 1957
- 2004 Re-launch of Enhanced NDP providing partners with access to the same range of Jobcentre Plus services as other customer groups and introduction of Work-Focused Interviews for Partners (WFIPs) as a gateway to NDP
- 2008 From April, partners of JSA recipients with responsibility for a young person or child in their household are required to attend a WFIP every six months until their partner no longer claims JSA. From October, new claimants of IB and IS paid on grounds of incapacity or disability required to claim Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) and participate in a Work Capability Assessment (WCA),³⁶⁴ gradually extended to all current recipients of IB

³⁶⁴ The WCA takes place within 13 weeks of a new claim. It marks a shift in focus from the previous Personal Capability Assessment (PCA – known as the 'All Work Test'), which focused on demonstration of incapacity, to a focus on capability to undertake work.

2009 Welfare Reform Act legislated for extension of Joint Claims principle to all partners of benefit recipients capable of paid work and with a youngest child aged over seven, along with Progression to Work pilots for parents with a youngest child aged below seven

Table A3.1: Assistance provided by the New Deal for Partners in Britain, October 2008³⁶⁵

Provision	Details
Help with job search	Assistance from Personal Adviser in identifying and applying for suitable jobs
Better Off Calculation (BOC)	Advice about benefit and tax credit entitlement and aims to demonstrate the financial gains from being in work versus being on benefit
Travel costs	Assistance with travel and training expenses where these costs are not met elsewhere
Childcare costs	Covers costs of childcare when attending WFIPs, NDP interviews, job interviews, training or further education courses
Childcare Subsidy	Covers the cost of registered childcare whilst in work, up to a maximum of £87.50 per week for one child or £150 per week for two or more children for 1 year if the job complies with employment legislation, is up to 16 hours per week, waged, expected to last for at least 5 weeks and is undertaken on the recommendation of the Adviser, as part of an agreed action plan
Childcare Assist	Assistance with the cost of registered childcare in the week before starting work of at least 8 hours per week
Adviser Discretion Fund (ADF)	Advisers may use this at their discretion to help NDP participants move into work, e.g. to pay for clothing for interviews, up to a maximum of £300 per customer in a consecutive 12-month period

³⁶⁵ NDP participants are able to access most of the same range of provision as New Deal Plus for Lone Parents participants.

Provision	Details
Work Trial	Partners must have been unemployed for 26 weeks or more and receive a qualifying benefit. Consists of up to 15 days ³⁶⁶ in an actual job, at no cost to the employer. Benefit entitlement is not affected and partners receive travel expenses and a meal allowance.
Education and training opportunities	Where training is identified as the appropriate way for the partner to move towards employment, they have access to contracted training provision
Training premium	A training premium of £15 per week participants who undertake an approved activity, usually paid for a maximum of 52 weeks ³⁶⁷
Access to programme centres	A range of modules including advice on job search techniques, alternative jobs, training, increasing motivation and confidence in returning to work
Basic skills screening and assessment	Basic Skills screening at first Adviser interview and referral for assessment if appropriate Referrals to Short Intensive Basic Skills or Basic Employability Training An extra £12 per week incentive payment for undertaking basic skills training and a £100 bonus for achieving certain qualifications
Goals programme	Confidence and motivational training (2.5 days)
Mentoring	Mentoring for parents available since July 2003, designed to address barriers to work, as an alternative to discussion with a Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser One-to-one mentoring, group mentoring, peer mentoring (or a combination) for a minimum of two sessions, followed by as many as required
Access to debt advice	Where local free advice on debt is unavailable, Jobcentre Plus can refer partners to specialist help if debt problems are identified as a barrier to work
Job Grant	A one-off tax-free payment when a recipient or their partner starts work expected to last for at least five weeks and stops receiving certain benefits. The amount depends on household circumstances: for couples without children Job Grant is £100 and for couples with children £250. Does not affect entitlement to other benefits.

³⁶⁶ From 17 July 2008, Work Trials were extended from 15 to 30 days.

³⁶⁷ However, when undertaking training in NVQ/ SNVQ 3 pilot areas the training premium will exceptionally be paid for up to 104 weeks.

Provision	Details
Self-employment	During the test trading period of up to 26 weeks, the partner is advised and mentored by a specialist provider and any earnings from the business are placed in an account, which can only be accessed for specific purposes Being liable to pay self employed National Insurance Contributions may remove entitlement to some Jobcentre Plus benefits.
Housing Benefit and Council Tax	Housing Benefit to cover rent for couples in rented accommodation or mortgage interest run-on paid for couples in private housing for four weeks if the partner takes up work of at least 24 hours per week, or the main recipient starts work of at least 16 hours per week. Council Tax is also paid for four weeks in the same circumstances

Table 3.2: Summary of evaluation evidence for programmes in Britain

Authors	Methods/sample
<i>New Deal for Partners</i>	
Coleman et al (2006) Quantitative survey	3,786 face-to-face interviews with partners and where possible main benefit claimants, representative sample
Coleman and Seeds (2007)	Synthesis of existing NDP and WFIP evaluation data
Thomas and Griffiths (2005) Qualitative Phase One	120 in-depth face-to-face interviews with WFIP and NDP participants and main claimants partners (60 interviews with 30 couples for each of the WFIP and NDP elements), 76 interviews with Jobcentre Plus staff and managers in 5 Jobcentre Plus districts
Thomas and Griffiths (2006) Qualitative Phase Two	Interviews with Personal Advisers, Business Managers, Adviser Managers and couples in same districts as phase one (paired in-depth interviews with couples, simultaneous separate couple interviews)
<i>Partners Outreach for Ethnic Minorities Pilot</i>	
Aston et al (2009a) Aston et al (2009b)	Initial interviews with DWP staff, three-wave case studies comprising interviews with providers and other stakeholders in 10 areas and 101 face-to-face interviews with clients (50 in Year 1 and 51 in Year 2), analysis of administrative data

Appendix 4 - The Australian welfare state in relation to women from workless couples

4.1 The Australian welfare state

Unlike Denmark or Britain, the Australian welfare state did not have a Poor Law, but in the Nineteenth Century poor relief was distributed by charities based on the principle of 'less eligibility'. Australia's modern welfare state was established between 1941 and 1947 by the Curtin-Chifley Labor governments. However, prior to this the Federation³⁶⁸ of Australia was a pioneer of invalidity pensions (1908) and was the first country in the world to introduce maternity benefit (1912) (Castles, 1993: 94). Australia does not have contributory benefits apart from superannuation and this is the principal reason for the predominance of means-testing.³⁶⁹ Since 1910 the Australian welfare state has been funded from general taxation and can be conceptualised as having a distinctive 'targeted safety net approach' (Bessant et al., 2006: 89), or a 'targeted' approach (Korpi and Palme, 1998).

The Joint Parliamentary Committee on Social Security set up in 1941 produced a number of reports, the fifth of which echoed Beveridge's five giants. Significant benefits which were introduced in the Curtin-Chifley period were the child endowment (1941), widows' pensions (1942), unemployment, sickness and invalid benefits (1943) and pharmaceutical benefits (1946) (Bessant et al., 2006: 91). These were provided in line with a categorical, means-tested system funded from general taxation, creating a 'welfare society' rather than a 'welfare state' (Bessant et al., 2006: 93).

³⁶⁸ Australia became a Federation in 1901. Federation is the process by which the six separate British self-governing colonies became unified under a federal government as the Commonwealth of Australia, with the British monarch as its Head of State.

³⁶⁹ Australia's welfare state was not based on the universal social insurance principles that were a feature of either the British and Danish welfare states. Attempts to introduce such systems in the 1920s and 1930s failed, predominantly as a result of trade union opposition.

4.2 Social security and labour market policies relevant to partnered women

Table A4.1: Chronology of payments to partners and parents in Australia 1943 - present

Date introduced	Name	Purpose	Ended
8 July 1943	Additional allowance for dependent spouse	Payable to certain pensioners with a dependent spouse or children	Precursor of Wife Pension, Carer Payment & additional Family Allowance
1 July 1945	Unemployment and Sickness Benefits Act 1944	Additional amounts for dependent spouse or children of those claiming e.g. unemployment/sickness benefits	Precursors of Partner Allowance and Parenting Payment (Partnered)
5 Oct 1972	Wife Pension	Replaced pensioner's allowance for a dependent spouse	Closed to new entrants (1995)
1 Dec 1983	Spouse Carer Pension	Payable to husband of severely handicapped Age or Invalid Pensioner	Became Carer Pension with broader eligibility (1985) then Carer Payment (1997)
3 July 1973	Supporting Mother's Benefit	Payable to unmarried mothers	Subsumed into Supporting Parents' Benefit (1977) then into Sole Parent Pension (1989), became Parenting Payment (Single) (1998)
20 Sept 1994	Partner Allowance	Replaced additional benefits paid to dependent spouses	Restricted to people born before 1 July 1955 without dependent children and little recent labour force experience (1995) Closed to new entrants (2003)
1995	Parenting Allowance	Subsumed Home Childcare Allowance	Renamed Parenting Payment (1998)
20 March 1998	Parenting Payment (Partnered)	Provided for partners with children not eligible for Partner Allowance	

Source: FaCS (2001) and Whiteford et al (2001)

Table A4.2: Working age benefits in Australia

Payment	Qualifying conditions
Newstart Allowance	For unemployed people aged between 21 and Age Pension age who satisfy activity test requirements (or who are exempt from activity testing). Reduced requirements apply to people with a disability, with partial work capacity and principal carers of older children (aged 6-15 if partnered)
Parenting Payment Partnered (PPP)	Claimants must have a qualifying child aged under 6
Partner Allowance	Member of couple, where partner is on a qualifying pension, allowance Born on or before 1 July 1955 and with no recent workforce experience, no dependent children Closed to new entrants from 20 September 2003 as part of AWT
Disability Support Pension	A pension for people aged 16 and over with a serious physical, intellectual or psychiatric impairment which prevents them working or being re-skilled for work of at least 15 hours a week at or above minimum wage for at least the next two years
Youth Allowance (Other)	For people aged 16 to 20 not in full-time study who are seeking or preparing for work or who are temporarily unable to work Lower rates are paid to partnered young people without children or living away from home
Youth Allowance (Student)	For full-time students in secondary or tertiary education or training or full-time Australian apprentices aged 16-24 undertaking an approved course
Carer Payment	For people providing constant care for a person with a physical, intellectual or psychiatric disability and generally receiving income support Income and assets limits tested
Carer Allowance	Income supplement paid in recognition of caring role Not income or assets tested
Family Tax Benefit (FTB) Part A	To assist families with the direct costs of raising children and based on an estimate of total family adjusted taxable income
Family Tax Benefit (FTB) Part B	A per family payment paid to single parents and couples with one main income earner and a dependent child aged under 16 or a qualifying full-time student aged 16-18, based on an estimate of total family adjusted taxable income.

Payment	Qualifying conditions
Childcare Benefit (CCB)	For families using childcare provided by an approved service or registered carer, such as long day care, family day care, outside school hours care, vacation care and some occasional and in-home care Registered carers include nannies, relatives or friends registered as carers. Eligible families may receive up to 24 hours of CCB per child per week regardless of their work status, families where both parents are working, studying, training or looking for work for at least 15 hours a week are eligible for up to 50 hours of CCB
Childcare Rebate (CCR)	Meets 50 per cent of out-of-pocket childcare expenses for approved care up to a limit of \$7,500 per child per annum. Claimants must be assessed as eligible for CCB and be working, studying, training or looking for work

Source: Centrelink

Table A4.3: Changes to the income test for Parenting Payment Partnered recipients before and after the Welfare to Work changes in Australia

Until 30 June 2006	From 1 July 2006
Income test free area = \$62 per fortnight	Income test free area = \$62 per fortnight
Income between \$62 and \$245 = 50 cents in the \$ taper rate per fortnight	Income between \$62 and \$250 = 50 cents in the \$ taper rate per fortnight
Income over \$245 = 70 cents in the \$ taper rate per fortnight	Income over \$250 = 60 cents in the \$ taper rate per fortnight
Partner's income over free area (\$775) = 70 cents in the \$ taper rate	Partner's income over free area (\$775) = 60 cents in the \$ taper rate

Source: Commonwealth of Australia, 2005 Para. 7.2

Table A4.4: Services for partnered parents under the former Job Network in Australia

Provision	Details
Job Search Support	Assistance to lodge a vocational profile into Australian JobSearch to receive daily auto-matching Access to touch-screen kiosks Access an interpreter (where required) Assistance to develop an Activity Agreement outlining job search requirements
Intensive Support after three months Intensive Support job search training Intensive Support customised assistance	Individually tailored assistance to improve job search skills, motivate jobseekers and expand their job search networks Job seekers who have not undertaken formal job search training activities in the previous year generally receive 100 hours of job search training activities Six months of tailored, intensive support, normally available after 12 months of unemployment Jobseekers identified as Highly Disadvantaged due to their barriers to employment can get immediate access to Intensive Support customised assistance
Work for the Dole	Administered by Community Work Coordinators to develop jobseekers' ability to work as part of a team
Job Seeker Account (JSKA)	A quarantined pool of funds to be used flexibly by Job Network providers to purchase appropriate services and products to help jobseekers move into work
Employment Preparation ³⁷⁰	Enabled JN providers to purchase specific assistance immediately for parents without recent workforce experience and for parents with more recent workforce experience received following three months of unemployment Includes updating of skills and/or qualifications, assistance with self esteem or self confidence issues and improvement of job search skills For parents in particular, encouragement and facilitation of engagement in the job market, including support to access suitable childcare
Training Credits	Covers the cost of accredited training

³⁷⁰ Funding allocated for Employment Preparation was \$47.7 million over three years from 1 July 2006 Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (2005a) *Annual Report 2004-05*, Canberra, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations.

Provision	Details
Working Credit ³⁷¹	Aims to incentivise work by allowing recipients to keep more of their income support when they begin work Beneficiaries with an income of less than \$48 a fortnight can collect up to 1000 credits, earning one extra dollar for every credit accrued (450 credits mean an extra \$450 can be earned before income support is affected) May also allow those entering work to keep their concession card and other benefits for up to 12 weeks
Literacy and Numeracy Training Supplement	For those undertaking literacy and numeracy training
Employment Entry Payment	Eligibility criteria broadened to include principal carer parents receiving NSA, PPs or PpP for at least 12 months and who took up paid work of at least 15 hours per week

Table A4.5a: Job Services Australia contract provider responsibilities - Stream 1

Intervention	Provider responsibilities
Initial face-to-face interview	Prepare resumé, explain job search facilities, provide list of appropriate job vacancies and advice about looking for work, agree Employment Pathway Plan
Skills Assessment before end of 4 th month	Determine jobseekers' current education, skills and experience in relation to the local labour market (also informs Intensive Activity). Skills training, training to address vocational or non-vocational barriers.
Intensive Activity (30 hours per fortnight for principal carers) by end 4 th month	Work Experience Activities, including Work for the Dole or Green Corps, work in a social or community enterprise, Language, Literacy and Numeracy Program, Adult Migrant English Program, job search training
Contact requirements	First three months - Centrelink Four months onwards - face-to-face contact with provider on at least monthly basis, but timing and duration to be agreed between jobseeker and provider

³⁷¹ Using reporting of earnings, Leigh and Wilkins found that Working Credit boosted the exit rates of both men on unemployment benefit and women on unemployment benefit, PPs, and PpP. See Leigh, A. & Wilkins, R. (2009) Working Credits: a low-cost alternative to Earned Income Tax Credits? Melbourne Institute Working Paper Series. Working Paper No. 7/09. Melbourne, Vic, Melbourne Institute.

Table A4.5b: Job Services Australia contract provider responsibilities - Streams 2, 3 and 4

Interventions - Streams 2 and 3	Provider responsibilities
<p>Initial face-to-face interview</p> <p>Provider judgment regarding timing of:</p> <p>Individually tailored assistance which may include</p> <p>Contact</p>	<p>Prepare Employment Pathway Plan</p> <p>Assistance with resumé</p> <p>Provide list of appropriate job vacancies</p> <p>Provide advice about looking for work, including Productivity Places Program</p> <p>Skills Assessment</p> <p>Identifying employment or study goals</p> <p>Skills development training</p> <p>Referral to education training, PPP</p> <p>Job search training and supported job search assistance</p> <p>Vocational and non-vocational assistance (using Employment Pathway Fund)</p> <p>Provider face-to-face contact on at least monthly basis, but timing and duration to be agreed between jobseeker and provider</p>
Interventions - Stream 4	Provider responsibilities
<p>Initial face-to-face interview</p> <p>Interventions</p> <p>Contact</p>	<p>Complete initial EPP to address most urgent barriers and specify crisis interventions required</p> <p>More detailed EPP may not be possible - provider needs to build rapport and trust with jobseeker over time</p> <p>Vocational and non-vocational interventions</p> <p>Skills Assessment before 12 months</p> <p>Provide information about PPP, job search</p> <p>Pre-employment and employment assistance including assessments, counselling or professional support, referral, advocacy</p> <p>Provider face-to-face contact on at least monthly basis, but timing and duration to be agreed - higher intensity of contact required for Stream 4 participants</p>

Table A4.5c: Job Services Australia contract provider responsibilities - All streams

Interventions - all streams	Provider responsibilities
Work Experience Phase after approx. 12 months following Stream Services Review, but jobseekers can participate at any time	<p>Lasting 26 weeks but can be reduced by other activities such as study or paid work, hours per fortnight can be flexible</p> <p>Further Work Experience Activities voluntary Bi-monthly contact with providers</p>

4.3 *Supplementary evaluation evidence*

4.3.1 *Working Nation*

Burke and Redmond (2002: 9) highlight that not all women gained equally from the changes to the income test and to financial support for families. Young women gained little and older women gained the most in terms of income; partnered women both with and without children were better off in 1996-7 than in 1982 (Burke and Redmond, 2002: 9). The number of partnered women without dependent children in employment increased from 63 to 75 per cent (Burke and Redmond, 2002: 21). In relation to women's access to an independent income, Bradbury (2004) examined consumption and within-household income distribution³⁷² following the Working Nation changes, comparing results with a similar experiment carried out by Lundberg et al (1997) following changes to the payment of Child Benefit in Britain. Whereas Lundberg et al found a substantial change in consumption patterns in Britain, Bradbury found no major changes in within-household expenditure patterns. Bradbury argues that: "the Australian experience of income support payment reform should remind us that, even though much household economic behaviour may be a result of bargaining processes within the household, it may not be easy for exogenous policy changes to influence the outcome of this bargaining" (p.533).

³⁷² In particular the changes to supplementary family payments (Additional Family Payment) in 1993 and the introduction of Partner Allowance in 1994.

4.3.2 *The Parenting Payment Intervention Pilot*

PPIP was a quasi-experimental³⁷³ research project involving a sample of around 5,000 Parenting Payment (PP) recipients, both single and partnered in 11 sites, conducted between 1999 and 2000. The intervention involved an interview with a Jobs, Education and Training (JET) Adviser³⁷⁴, beginning as a 45 minute review of circumstances, followed by an optional discussion of future plans and a follow-up telephone conversation two to three months later. PPIP involved more structured, holistic interviews not solely focused on employment outcomes (Pearse, 2000: 91). One aim of the pilot was to collect data concerning two aspects about which little was known: firstly, the types and levels of existing economic and social participation and, secondly, the barriers to increased participation (Coventry, 2000: 124). The evaluation also aimed to compare the effectiveness of voluntary and compulsory interventions for four target groups: (i) long-term Parenting Payment Single (PPs) customers on payment for more than five years, (ii) new entrants to PP in the preceding four months, (iii) Parenting Payment Partnered (PPp) and PPs customers with a youngest child aged 12-15 years old and (iv) customers receiving PPp for more than one year with a partner receiving Newstart Allowance for more than six months. The latter group were selected to test the capacity for swapping of earner/carer roles within households (Pearse, 2000: 89).

In total, around 10 per cent of participants were looking for work, more than 20 per cent were doing voluntary work, 10 per cent were in training and about 12 per cent were caring for someone, usually a relative (Pearse, 2000: 104). Although participants were selected for PPIP because they had no recent recorded earnings, by the time of

³⁷³ However, the voluntary and non-take-up categories cannot be considered to be random - there was the potential for bias in the collection of data, as well as selection effects. See Pearse, V. (2000) Parenting, participation and planning: the Parenting Payment Intervention Pilot. *Australian Social Policy* 2000(2):87-106.

³⁷⁴ Recipients could already voluntarily access the JET program which began in 1989 following the Cass Social Security Review. JET advisers provided information and referrals to education, vocational training and employment as well as childcare.

the initial interview 16 per cent had undertaken some paid work in the preceding four weeks, mostly part-time and for two-thirds this was of a casual nature (Pearse, 2000: 104). Employment outcomes were highest for new entrants to income support (25 per cent). In total, 26 per cent of those interviewed were assessed by JET advisers as job-ready, 52 per cent were assessed as needing additional training and 22 per cent as never likely to work (Pearse, 2000: 100). Table A5.1 sets out the types of referrals from PPIP (although these were not necessarily taken up).

Table A4.6: Types of referrals from the Parenting Payment Intervention Pilot in Australia

Referral	per cent
short term pre-vocational courses	20
other training	15
education	15
Job Network	14
career counseling	5
English as a second language	3

Source: Pearse, 2000: 104

In the next one to two years, over 50 per cent of participants said they expected to be in paid work, evenly split between full- and part-time, 25 per cent planned to undertake training (mainly part-time) and 25 per cent expected to undertake voluntary work (Pearse, 2000: 104). When asked what they thought they would be doing when their child turned 16, 48 per cent said they hoped to be in paid work, although the group with a youngest child aged 12 to 15 was most likely to expect to remain on income support (41 per cent) (Pearse, 2000: 104). Almost one-third (32 per cent) of all participants said that they had not thought about what they would do when their youngest child turned 16 (Pearse, 2000: 104). There was little significant difference between compulsory and voluntary participants in relation to plans for the future (Barrett and Cobb-Clark, 2000: 204).

Although 59 per cent of the treatment groups said they were interested in the JET program (compared with 35 per cent of the control), at the follow-up only 39 per cent

had commenced or completed a referral to JET (Pearse, 2000: 96). The main reason given was the 'time was not yet right' (42 per cent), although only 14 per cent said that they had changed their minds (Pearse, 2000: 96). Pearse (2000: 105) highlights that many parents were constrained in their ability to act on their intentions, which may have been linked to the timing of the follow-up interview, to a loss of interest or to a change in circumstances. Amongst those voluntarily participating, partners of NSA recipients were more likely to change their plans than other groups (Barrett and Cobb-Clark, 2000: 201).

Barrett and Cobb-Clark (2000: 193) found that length on payment was positively related to take-up of compulsory interviews, but negatively related to take-up of voluntary interviews. The rate of voluntary take-up was higher amongst women (17.8 per cent) than men (12.3 per cent) and new entrants to payment and those with an NSA partner were more likely to respond to compulsion (Barrett and Cobb-Clark, 2000: 197-9). In terms of exits from income support both the compulsory and voluntary workless couple groups achieved worse outcomes than the control group, although workless couples in both compulsory and voluntary groups displayed 'superior results' with respect to changes in the proportion reporting any earned income (Dockery and Stromback, 2002: section 7). Although some exited income support, they were likely to be on a low income (Dockery and Stromback, 2002: section 6).

Barrett and Cobb-Clark (2000) suggest that "It may be worthwhile to require certain groups of individuals to participate in specific programmes because they are relatively less likely to volunteer to do so, but when compelled they appear to respond positively and obtain benefits they had not anticipated" (p.204). However, Dockery and Stromback (2002) conclude that the net impact of the treatment was not positive and they did not recommend roll-out,³⁷⁵ arguing that stronger compliance measures

³⁷⁵ Dockery and Stromback also advise caution in expecting the effects of a pilot to be achieved when an intervention is extended, as there could be associated crowding-out effects Dockery, A. M. & Stromback, T.

may be relatively less effective for less entrenched welfare recipients: “when faced with the requirement of attending an interview, customers in this group have an awareness of whether they are likely to be remaining in benefits and those with higher expectations of ongoing reliance...are more likely to comply” (section 9).

4.3.3 *The Workless Families Pilot*

The Workless Families Pilot (WFP) was conducted between 2000 and 2001 and was one of three random assignment trials targeted at disadvantaged groups across 32 sites.³⁷⁶ It involved two customer groups, comprising a total of around 4,300 participants: (i) couples with school-aged children receiving income support and (ii) workless Parenting Payment customers with school-aged children and with repeated transitions between single and partnered status. In both cases, the partner was receiving Newstart Allowance (NSA). The first interview involved a benefit check and completion of a questionnaire to assist JET Advisers in making referrals to assistance, which were recorded in a Participation Plan and formed the basis of a follow-up interview two months later. The pilot contrasted with the existing situation in which beneficiaries of PpP had limited contact with Centrelink. For the intervention group, participation in the initial interview was mandatory and subject to sanctions,³⁷⁷ but further participation was voluntary (Cobb-Clark et al., 2006: 431).

One problem with the sample used in Cobb-Clark et al’s evaluation (2006) was the substantial attrition rate, particularly for people from non-English speaking backgrounds. However, they highlight the lengthy nature of the interview process and the possibility that low-income couples with children may have faced high costs for participation (Cobb-Clark et al., 2006: 433). The study found that overall the

(2002) *Evaluation of the Parenting Payment Intervention Pilot*, Canberra, ACT, Department of Family and Community Services.

³⁷⁶ The two other trials were the Mature Age Pilot (MAP) and the Tailored Assistance for the Very Long term Unemployed Pilot (VLTU).

³⁷⁷ In practice no sanctions were applied.

intervention produced significant increases in economic activity for participants in both the treatment and control groups: the key difference was that the economic activity of the treatment group was less employment-focused. Whilst those in the treatment group increased their amount of work-related study and training, the control group increased their participation in paid work (Cobb-Clark et al., 2006: 440).³⁷⁸ The intervention was linked with an increase of seven per cent in the proportion of individuals engaged in some form of economic activity, but did not appear to effect the number of hours (Cobb-Clark et al., 2006: 435). The impact of the intervention was similar for the partners receiving NSA: those in the intervention group worked less either in paid work or as a volunteer, but their job search activity increased compared to the control group (Cobb-Clark et al., 2006: 439). One possible reason for the negative impact on the hours of activity may be that those who are already planning to return to work may be less likely to attend interviews and Cobb-Clark et al attempted to address this possibility by examining outcomes two months after the intervention. Of those who began the trial, 85 per cent were still on PpP at the end of the two months and 3.9 per cent had left payments. Of the 11 per cent remaining on payments, half had moved to family assistance and the other half to NSA or disability payment (Cobb-Clark et al., 2006: 438).

There was no evidence to suggest that joint interviews were more effective than individual interviews in terms of increased economic activity (Cobb-Clark et al., 2006: 435). However, “interviews centring on future planning can lead to modest increases in...economic activity” (p.435). Cobb-Clark (2006: 438) conclude that the overall impact of the intervention was small, but concede that significant take-up of education and training may in the longer-term result in better outcomes, although in the shorter term the likelihood of remaining on payment is higher. They emphasise the importance of a longer-term perspective towards encouraging the workforce

³⁷⁸ Those in the treatment group spent less hours in paid work (around one hour and 45 minutes compared with the control, although the treatment group increased their participation in both work-related study or training (by one and a half hours per week) and in job search activity (one hour per week).

participation of this group, who are likely to be entrenched in disadvantage and require significant resources p.442).

4.3.4 *Australians Working Together*

Table A4.7: Participation status of Parenting Payment Partnered recipients in Australia at time of Personal Adviser interview

Participation status	per cent
Economic participant - paid work, looking for work, voluntary work or study for vocational reasons	46
Social participant - voluntary work, study/training for non-vocational reason	20
Carer - caring responsibilities for a family member or friend	6
Non- participant - not involved in paid work, job search, study, training or voluntary work and no caring responsibilities	27

Source: Social Research Centre, 2005a: 8

Table A4.8: Summary of evaluation evidence for programmes in Australia

Authors	Methods/sample
<i>Working Nation</i>	
Warburton et al (1999)	Departmental administrative data
<i>Parenting Payment Intervention Pilot</i>	
Barrett and Cobb-Clark (2000)	Randomised trial comprising 1,137 interviews in two waves (face-to-face then telephone)
Dockery and Stromback (2002)	Analysis of longer-term impacts using Departmental administrative longitudinal data
<i>Workless Families Pilot (WFP)</i>	
Cobb-Clark et al (2006)	Three-wave (face-to-face and by telephone) survey using propensity scoring & quota sampling at 32 intervention and 24 control sites, administrative data
<i>Australians Working Together</i>	
Social Research Centre (2005a)	Telephone survey of 600 Personal and JET Advisers
Social Research Centre (2005b)	2-wave longitudinal survey of 3,000 Personal Adviser customers + 40 face-to-face interviews
Social Research Centre (2005c)	583 interviews with Personal and JET Advisers

Authors	Methods/sample
Alexander et al (2005)	Literature review and two waves of semi-structured telephone interviews with 60 PP recipients and their youngest child
<i>Welfare to Work</i>	
<i>DEEWR (2010)</i>	Departmental administrative data and surveys, focus groups with jobseekers

Annex 5 – The Danish welfare state in relation to women from workless couples

5.1 *The Danish welfare state*

As with Britain, there were Poor Relief Acts in Denmark in 1798, 1802 and 1803 (Greve, 2005: 29). Pre-First World War reforms established a path towards the modern welfare state and the Unemployment Insurance Act of 1907 enshrined the involvement of the trade unions in the administration of benefits.³⁷⁹ The next stage of reforms took place in 1933 at a time of high unemployment,³⁸⁰ changing the basis of entitlement from discretion based on charity to the notion of the individual with rights as a citizen (Greve, 2005: 36). Of key importance to the Danish welfare state are the principles established in the 1970s concerning the ‘income loss principle’ and the ‘whole family principle’ (Greve, 2005: 45). The former describes how benefits are paid at a higher rate for short periods, with a principle of discretion. With regard to the latter, “it was not enough to look simply at the person and discuss the individual client’s problem. It was necessary to look at the whole family’s situation” (Greve, 2005: 45).

The Danish welfare model is reflective of the Nordic model, characterised by: comprehensiveness, universalism, individualism, the goals of both high employment and equality, high quality services, generosity of benefits and decentralisation to municipalities (Kvist and Pedersen, 2007: 101), but it has distinctive elements, such as its flexicurity model, comprising comprehensive social protection, a flexible labour market and activation.

³⁷⁹ This built on the 1899 Constitution of the Danish Labour Market, an agreement between employers and employees.

³⁸⁰ The Public Assistance Act, the National Insurance Act, the Employment Exchange and Unemployment Insurance Act and the Accident Insurance Act Greve, B. (2005) *Denmark - a universal welfare state*, Roskilde: Roskilde University.

5.2 Danish labour market reforms

Table A5.1: Labour market reforms in Denmark

Reform	Insured unemployed	Social assistance recipients
1978 Work Offer	<p>Voluntary early exit benefits scheme (<i>efterløn</i>) introduced in 1979</p> <p>The Work Offer Scheme (<i>arbejdstilbud</i>, ATB) introduced in 1979 provided right to a work offer in the form of job training with a salary, lasting for 9 months in the private sector and 7 in the public sector, qualifying the participant to a further period of unemployment insurance (UI)</p>	
1980 Education Offer for long-term unemployed (<i>uddannelsesstilbud</i>)	<p>For long-term unemployed who had completed one work offer</p> <p>Paid benefits equal to UI</p>	
1988	<p>Activation became an earlier intervention in the duration of unemployment</p>	
1993 Labour market reform I (implemented 1994)	<p>Abolition of re-entitlement to UI via participation in activation – only ordinary, unsubsidised work qualified claimants for re-entitlement</p> <p>Maximum UI duration reduced to 9 years</p> <p>Stricter work availability – offer of suitable work after 12 months</p> <p>Introduction of Individual Action Plans</p>	
1994 Service check of labour market reform (Budget 1995)	<p>Maximum UI duration reduced to 7 years</p> <p>Stricter work availability criteria</p> <p>Adjustment of leave schemes</p> <p>Right and obligation to full-time activation after 4 years of unemployment</p>	

Reform	Insured unemployed	Social assistance recipients
1995 Labour market reform II (implemented 1996)	Gradual reduction of maximum UI duration to 5 years Eligibility for UI increased from 26 to 52 weeks of work within 3 years Right and obligation to full-time activation after 2 years of unemployment	
1998 Labour market reform III (implemented 1999)	Maximum UI duration reduced to 4 years, after which social assistance may be claimed Stricter work availability – offer of suitable work after 3 months Earlier right and obligation to activation – after 1 year of unemployment	
1998 Law on Active Social Policy replaces Law on Social Assistance		Activation extended to social assistance recipients
2002 Labour market reform (<i>More people into work</i>)	Abolition of demand for 75 per cent activation in the active period Minimum demand for activation every 6 months and introduction of intensive contract schemes at a minimum every 3 months	Lower social assistance after 6 months for married couples Introduction of spouse supplement for member of married couple not available for work
2005 Social Assistance reform (<i>A new chance for all</i>)		Introduction of 300 hours rule
2006 Welfare Reform Agreement	Earlier right and obligation to activation - after 9 months of unemployment Job counselling and availability tests every 3 months	

Source: Goul Andersen and Pedersen 2007, Kvist and Pedersen 2007 and Kvist et al 2008

Table A5.2: Summary of evaluation evidence for programmes in Denmark

Authors	Methods/sample
<i>300 hours rule</i>	
Bach and Larsen (2008)	Interviews with 640 social assistance recipients affected by the 300 hours rule
Jensen and Lauritzen (2008)	Questionnaires to Danish local authorities, supplemented by interviews with 10 authorities, combined with departmental administrative data

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