



**The Federmann School of  
Public Policy and Government**

**Childcare Strategies for Children Aged 0-5,  
in Russia**

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## **Abstract**

Russia has gone through many dramatic changes since the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991. One of them was the fact that Russia became a capitalist state after being under the communist regime for seventy years. This new change harmed the support Russia gave in developing child care facilities as well as the movement towards working mothers and made the participation of women in labor market more incompatible. This paper presents the results of an analysis designed to understand the choices of child-care strategies that are made by households in Russia. In order to test the research hypotheses, this research has made use of information from the Generations and Gender Survey that is processed by means of the Multinomial Logit Model. The findings of this research showed that different constrains are involved in the choice of child-care strategies. We find that high educational level of the mother and full-time job of the mother, nonavailability of a partner, the age of the youngest child, and residence in a metropolitan area increase the odds of choosing remunerative childcare. Moreover, residence in an urban or rural area, availability of partner, unemployment or part-time job of the mother increases the odds of choosing care by relatives or friends. Finally, the odds of using a strategy of mother care rather than remunerative childcare are higher when the mother is unemployed, low educated, and has no co-resident partner.

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## **Introduction**

The difficulty experienced by women in their attempt to combine work and family life is one of the main reasons for the low fertility rates of women in developed countries. The incompatibility of these roles, not only effects fertility, but also the participation of women in the labor market, and results in gender inequality. Moreover, low fertility rates have political and social ramifications affecting the nature of society and the accepted norms concerning the role of mothers and the welfare of children.

Various researches show that the change in women`s participation in the labor market along with the rise in the educational level of women, the lack of economic security and the lack of supportive family policy in industrial and post industrial countries, have a negative effect on fertility (Avdaeva, 2011; Zeman, 2014; McDonald, 2006). In France, for instance, women who experienced periods of lack of occupational security, chose to postpone the birth of their first child, in contrast to women who enjoyed occupational security (Perelli-Harris, 2007). Low birth rates effect the exchangeability of the population of a country and become an economic burden on the younger generation that is expected to subsidize the older generation. Besides, low birth rates create a lack of young and qualified manpower contributing to the country`s economy and enhancing its capacity to compete with other countries. Therefore, low birth rates produce political and social changes, for example, many countries have already raised their retirement age, an issue that generates considerable political conflict (McDonald, 2006).

In most cases, European countries with lower than average birth rates are characterized by a set of traditional values, offering little help to women in household and child care, and by a lack of significant government support. Therefore, women are forced to choose between reducing their career aspirations or having fewer children, if they decide to have any at all (Perelli-Harris, 2007). On the other hand, government policy that supports gender equality in the labor market and in the family (including a change in the expectations concerning the roles of the man and the woman in the family) can prevent low birth rates in countries undergoing a change from a traditional to an industrial or post-industrial society. In the Scandinavian countries, for instance, women receive greater support and therefore their birth rates were never as low as those of Italy or Spain (Perelli-Harris, 2007; McDonald, 2006).

Before the industrial revolution, it was relatively easy to combine work and child care, without causing harm to any one of the two, but after the revolution, child care and work that required economic outputs, turned into two contrasting issues. Nowadays the work place is usually far from the home and a strict time table is dictated by the employer, a state of affairs that does not encourage flexibility required for childcare. The presence of children in the work place endangers the output, and, on the other hand, the physical environment of the work place can endanger the children. As a result, women, who usually care for the children, are obliged to limit their fertility or find alternative arrangements for them (Brewster and Rindfuss, 2000).

Therefore, if a woman`s role in the family competes with her commitment to her role in the work place or in any other institution, she is apt to feel tension whenever she attempts to meet the demands of both her roles. In order to reduce the tension between the roles, the woman will try to negotiate in an attempt to bridge over the gaps between them. One of the things she can do to reduce the tension, is to create a complete separation between her family life and her work life, in order to prevent mixing the two spheres. Another option is that of outsourcing part of the housework and childcare responsibilities, so that her role as the mother of the family will be less demanding, such as cleaning the house or part of the responsibility for the children, so that her role as the mother of the family will be less demanding. A third option is to ease the tension by deciding not to have children, not to have another child, not to enter the labor market or to find a job that is more family-friendly, or a fourth – to find a job that will enable her to work at home and care for her children (Goode, 1960).

From the above it results that the role of the state is to help alleviate the tension suffered by the woman, and to support her by a policy that enables integration of work and family without causing harm to any one of them, for instance, a policy oriented to child-care. Such a policy is important because it directly defines the extent of the mother`s responsibility for the care of her young children, and also defines her occupational options (Windebank, 1999).

The purpose of the current research is mostly descriptive – to explore what explains choice of childcare strategies in Russia, a country which is undergoing a re-familization process, and reducing the child-care facilities that were common in the Communist era, along with an application of the model of the man as the provider. This will be done using the Generation and Gender Survey (GGS) database. The

population of this research comprises a sample of 664 women living in Russia with children under the age of six, given that care arrangements are divided into three categories: care by the mother, care by relatives and remunerative care by a private agent, a nanny or an official public agent. The findings of the research were tested by means of multi-nominal regression because the dependent variable is divided into three non-ordered categories. This paper is divided into three parts. First, I will present the literature review. The next chapter show the method and the results, and the last part will discuss the findings and conclusions.

## 1. Literature Review

The objective of a family-oriented policy is to respond to the problems experienced by many families in society, and to promote their welfare. Family policies refer to a number of different but connected policies, addressing the following topics: care of the family, poverty, violence in the family and family-planning (Robila, 2010). Sound family-planning by the state can encourage productivity and improve the market outputs along with high birth rates. Such services are effective in reducing poverty rates and increasing employment rates, because they enable both parents to participate in the labor (Lancker and Ghesels, 2013; Gustafsson and Stafford, 1994).

The process of acknowledging the necessity of applying gender criteria to the welfare policy was a gradual process influenced by the low persistent birth rates in Europe. Between the years 1970-1980 demographers regarded the low rates as a temporary state of affairs, as a result of postponing the age of marriage and child birth of women. However the rates continued to drop and in the 1980s the fertility rates in many countries were even below the average of 1.5 children per woman. Secondly, states did not initiate pro-family policies fearing that these were costly and ineffective. Thirdly, states did not consider it appropriate to interfere in the private lives of their citizens. Finally, it was thought that mass immigration could solve the problem of low birth rates. Truly, immigration offers a specific solution to the problem of the lack of young manpower, but it also affects the political structure and does not supply the qualified manpower that the state requires. The four above mentioned reasons caused the states to delay the application of family-oriented policies (McDonald, 2006). The significant change occurred when the states understood that they had a responsibility to address these social issues by changing the policy that supported the idea of male breadwinner, to a more family-oriented policy. It granted individuals greater opportunities for autonomy and for establishing their own identities instead of those defined for them by social norms and institutions (McDonald, 2006). This change occurred in the wake of changes in the economic sphere, gender equality, industrialization and consumption. All these brought about a transition from the model of a single male breadwinner to a model with a less rigid division of the roles in the household between the husband and wife, and enabled



women to free themselves from their total commitment to the household, and enter the labor market while continuing to manage the family (Raz-Yurovich, 2012).

A government policy that enables effective integration of work and family, and reduces the incompatibility between these two roles, focuses on arrangements in the labor market including suitable jobs for women, time for breast-feeding, financial rewards and parental leave, and the most important component – day nurseries and other supporting frameworks for children. Parents are extremely sensitive to the cost of such supports and therefore, when subsidies are raised, the use of such supports rises. Such a policy can reduce incompatibility and raise birth and employment rates among parents (Brewster and Rindfuss, 2000; Windebank, 1999; Robila, 2010; Gustafsson, 1994).

Therefore, appropriate government support that encourages equality between parents, flexibility of work hours and availability of supporting structures for child care, can create an atmosphere in which women are free to pursue their careers and, simultaneously, raise their children. As long as the government makes sure that the day nurseries are popular in society, and the prices are attainable, motherhood and work can be integrated, otherwise women`s occupational activity might continue to reduce the birth rates (Hank and Kreyenfeld, 2003). For example, when the German government decided to reduce the subsidies for children, German families decided to have fewer children, or decided to remain childless. When the government`s policy is less child and birth oriented for a long time, the return to high birth rates becomes more difficult and problematic (McDonald, 2006).

Parental leave grants by the government to families with children, can also reduce incompatibility, but opinions on the issue are divided. On the one hand, such grants enable parents to choose the type of care they prefer for their children by employing care givers or relatives. Besides, parental leave grants compensate for the absence of suitable frameworks for child care (Robila, 2010). On the other hand such allowances, given for child care, enable parents to discontinue their work in order to take care of their children. Parental leave allowances by the government must be generous, given for a short period of time, and accompanied by safeguarding the mother`s work place. It was found that parental leave grants are preferable for achieving high employment rates for women, because they ensure a small loss of income and guarantee that the women are able to return to work full-time after birth,

especially if frameworks for child care are available (Lancker and Ghysels, 2013; Gustafsson, 1994).

Actually, countries providing limited support for child care and long periods of birth leave, produce a negative incentive for women`s employment and support the model of the male breadwinner. Such parental leave grants affect mainly women with a low educational level, since their low potential of income provides them with few incentives to return to work, and usually they also have scant resources to pay for child-care (Lancker and Ghysels, 2013). The higher the salary a woman earns, the more likely she is to prefer the programs that enable her to combine work and family, rather than receive maternity leave grants and remain at home (McDonald, 2006).

Governments should also promote policies to enhance birth rates and maintain high employment rates among women, by promoting gender equality, both on the macro and the micro levels. Enhancing gender equality in the household contributes to economic development, high birth rates and high rates of women`s participation in the labor market. Research has shown that while women contribute a larger share of the household income over time, men do not increase their share in household chores. The division of labor in the household between partners and the perception of fairness has demographic implications. Perceptions that the division of household chores is not fair, can create disappointment and negative feelings toward parenthood and motherhood, and also increase the divorce rate. In the U.S. for instance, women still invest twice as much time as men in household chores (Torr and Short, 2004).

One of the reasons for this state of affairs is that gender ideologies have not yet changed, nor have the rates of women`s participation in household chores. In the U.S., as in other countries, these differences become more pronounced in marriage and parenthood. Besides, the birth of the first child in a family, increases the number of hours invested in the household by the wife, without having any effect on the number of work hours by the husband. It was also found that the less time women spend in household chores, the greater is their chance of having a second child. It thus ensues that if men will increase their share of household chores and child care, women will be more able to combine work and family. A positive relationship between the time devoted by the husband to household chores and the chance of having a second child was found among couples in Australia, Hungary, Sweden and England (Fuwa, 2004; Torr and Short, 2004; Avdaeva, 2011).

## 1.1. Regimes of Child Care

Beliefs governing the paradigm and the type of welfare policy pursued by the state pertain first of all to normative beliefs concerning the role of the woman in society. Social policy, by its very nature, adopts views related to gender in matters concerning relations between family, state and the market. These views enable us to understand the different options concerning women's occupation and child-care arrangements of different welfare states, because they address the issue of how families and child-care policies effect the employment opportunities for women, as well as norms concerning the issue of motherhood (Robila, 2010).

The views on gender adopted by the state are divided into three categories: "familization", "de-familization" and "re-familization". "Familization" is the state's attitude of not interfering with the family unit and not providing services to families, based on the principle that the family's duty is to take care of its members without any state interference with its authority. In contrast to the "familization" there is the "de-familization" approach. States adopting this approach, regard child-care services and grants as their most important tools. The state relieves the family of the responsibility for caring for children by providing and subsidizing services that enable the mother to join the labor market. Since the Communist regime came to an end, Eastern-European states that adopted the "de-familization" approach in the past, changed their policy and nowadays prefer not to interfere with the family unit and transfer the responsibility for child-care to the family. This process is called "re-familization", namely, the state has changed its policy to a traditional policy and regards the husband as the main provider, and the wife as responsible for child-care. This policy encourages women to leave the labor market, to close child-care centers and reduce subsidies, i.e. we are referring to states in which the dominant cultural norm is opposed to working women. In a country like this it is difficult for mothers to behave differently, especially mothers with a low level of work qualifications, who usually have few employment opportunities and a low earning potential (Lancker and Ghysels, 2013; Robila, 2010; Hank and Kreyenfeld, 2003; Mahon, 2002a; Saxonberg and Szelewa, 2007).

There are three types of welfare states, defined by Gosta Esping-Anderson – "liberal", "corporate" and "socio-democrat". Each one of these models defines the government policy concerned with child-care and the provision of day centers,

differently (Esping-Anderson, 1990). Williams and Gavanas (2008) maintain that each model is distinguished from the others by four criteria: the range and nature of public and private child-care, especially for children under the age of six, the types of payments for parental leave grants to parents, financial rewards for children and the "culture of child-care " that expresses the local cultural narrative pertaining to what is the right type of care for children (Williams and Gavanas, 2008).

The "liberal" welfare policy is one that minimizes its effect and seldom intervenes in the labor market, except in cases of failure or failures of families. It affects only a small part of the population, usually the lower and middle classes by means of a negative income tax (Gustafsson and Stafford, 1992; Gustafsson, 1994; Esping-Andersen, 1990). This model is considered liberal because it liberates the market, thus offering maximum welfare to a maximum number of citizens. It encourages the mother to work but to rely on private arrangements for child-care, rather than on governmental supporting structures, and transfers responsibility for child-care exclusively to the parents. This model is applied in the U.S. and Britain. If the mother chooses to work outside the home, she does not receive any real aid for child-care from the state, even not coordinating the work hours to the needs of the child, or defining suitable arrangements to care for a sick child. Child-care settings in Britain are usually private and the parent is required to pay the full price (Windebank, 1999).

The "corporatist" welfare policy is the direct opposite of the "liberal" policy. The state is the main responsible party for providing welfare to its citizens. This model supports children`s education by both parents and at the same time provides subsidized frameworks for children in order to enable both parents to enter the labor market (Teplova, 2007; Williams and Gavanas, 2008; Mahon, 2002a, 2002b). As for the family policy, the allowances and grants are universal. States applying this policy believe that unless they are available to all citizens, some of the parents and children will not be able to maintain a minimal living standard. This policy is, for example, in Sweden (Gustafsson and Stafford, 1992; Gustafsson, 1994; Esping-Andersen, 1990).

The "social democratic" welfare policy is shaped by strong political powers and interest groups and strives to integrate the requirements of the family with its traditional needs (Gustafsson and Stafford, 1992; Esping-Andersen, 1990). This model takes the traditional roles of the man and the woman in the home, into consideration. It is based on the principle of one bread-winner in the family – the

husband – with the wife as the home-maker (Mahon, 2002a, 2002b). From the familial point of view this system provides support to the partner who prefers to stay at home with the children. The state provides long-term maternity leave to the mother, since she is the one who traditionally prefers to stay at home with the children. Maternity leave grants include funds for child-care, household management, etc. i.e. the mother is encouraged to stay at home and leave the labor market. This approach is applied in countries like France, Germany and Italy (Teplova, 2007; Gustafsson, 1994).

Moreover, Kremer (2006) presents five ideals for care that explain the current gender relations and express the political-cultural ideas, the contexts and obligations adopted in the society. The first, "full-time mother care", maintains that the presence of the mother at home, is the ideal state for raising a child. According to this ideal, the father's influence is indirect and his duty is to provide for the family. The second ideal "parental sharing" is based on the idea that the father can care for his children just as well as the mother can. According this ideal, care and education by the father improves the educational development of the child, and, therefore, shared care by both parents is preferable. The third ideal is "intergenerational care" based on the idea that the grand-parents (first generation) should help their children to care for their grand-children (third generation). In return their children (second generation) will take care of them and help them. This model ensures good care for all parties involved. A fourth ideal is that of "surrogate mother care", and refers to nannies, relatives or friends caring for the child inside the home, in return for remuneration. The fifth ideal is that of "professional care" – provided by community or government centers and carried out by professionals who can provide social and learning capacities to the children and that mother care cannot always provide (Kremer, 2006).

Each one of these ideals and the welfare system of a country, can be explained only through the history of that country and its ideology, shaping the actions and deeds of the politicians in the present (Gustafsson, 1994). This historical process evolves when a certain paradigm that was dominant in the society in the past, begins to erode, to become a subject of criticism, and then is destroyed and built anew by politicians, women's movements and the media. At the same time people start to behave like representatives of a different paradigm and experience new paradigms. The problems with the dominant paradigm begin to show. The period of "crisis" of the dominant paradigm is characterized by competition with different paradigms

attempting to replace it. Thus a substitute paradigm gathers strength with the help of strong arguments and a number of people supporting it, whereas competing paradigms are being forgotten. Moreover, a paradigm gathers strength not necessarily because of its qualities, but because its supporters have the necessary connections and alliances, i.e. a change of a paradigm is a political affair. Therefore, the essential condition for explaining why certain ideals defeat others is found in the power of the allies supporting similar beliefs. Coalitions are built not on shared interests but on shared beliefs. These are difficult to change and, therefore, such coalitions are stable over the years (Kremer, 2006).

## **1.2. Child-Care Arrangements**

The change in women`s status in the labor market, requires government policies with regard to child-care. The provision of day-care centers subsidized by the government, enable the mother to combine work and family in the best possible way. Therefore, subsidized day-care centers might raise households' income of the mother joins the labor market, thus enabling them to escape the poverty line. Moreover, it might raise the woman`s status in society by cancelling her dependence on her husband's salary (Teplova, 2007).

Services for child-care are expected to contribute to the economy by educating the children to be citizens contributing to the Gross National Product (GNP), reducing inequality at an initial stage in life and promoting women`s participation in the work force. Firstly, child-care services increase the rates of women`s participation in the work force and pave the way to gender equality by dividing the work between the spouses more equitably. Moreover, poverty rates among children are reduced on account of the increase in household income and the family has more resources to share. Research has shown that women tend to leave the labor market after giving birth, unless they can outsource the household services (Lancker and Ghysels, 2013). Therefore, there is a direct link between the availability of child-care services and women`s occupational rates. Secondly, settings for child-care are advantageous for the children as well, because they improve the human capital and contribute to better learning results and readiness for school in the short run. In the long run, settings for child-care provide better social skills to children and a better chance in the labor market. Thus, government settings for child-care reduce the extent of parental concern

about sending their children to settings outside the home (Lancker and Ghysels, 2013; Lareau, 2011).

The returns for low income parents are even more significant. Children from low income families are in inferior positions vis-à-vis other children, and, therefore they can gain more by participating in child-care settings. Since these children grow up in a difficult environment that undermines their development and learning capacities and their parents have less time and resources to devote to them in contrast to families with higher incomes, there is a greater chance for children from such families to grow up to become parents lacking means. Providing a framework for these children, encourages learning and the ability to compensate for the lack of equality in the capability of their parents to promote their development, their language capacity and their readiness for school, and to reduce the gap (between them and other children). Since learning leads to further learning, granting means to these children, improves their ability to succeed at school and their social capacities, i.e. providing quality settings of child-care enhances the human capital of both the mothers and the children, and is especially significant for children from a weak background. These effects emphasize the need for children from such a background to be registered in quality settings for child-care. Usually, their mothers are unemployed and they gain most in terms of child development (Lancker and Ghysels, 2006; Heckman, 2013).

However, services provided by the government must be universal, i.e. such services must be accessible to the entire population. Low functioning in ensuring their accessibility, can lead to inequality in the use of these services. First, for a service to be accessible, it must be available. There is evidence that in cases in which the government defined the number of settings for child-care financed by the state, their availability dropped at a disproportional rate in weak neighborhoods with a population of a low socio-economic background. Besides, the allocation of child-care frameworks, has a negative effect on the employment rates of mothers. Since mothers with low educational levels have lesser opportunities for gainful employment than mothers with high educational levels, inequality in the provision of child-care services will make it even more difficult for these mothers to obtain a job. Moreover, the greater the expansion of these frameworks, the higher the rates of their use, and so society will continue to spread the idea. The more child-care settings exist, the greater is their positive influence on the continuation of their use and on a change in existing social norms. Therefore it is important to provide child-care services mainly in places

where the demand for them is non-existent (Hedstorm, 1994; Lancker and Ghysels, 2013; Esping-Andersen, 1990).

In spite of the government's readiness to provide child-care settings, there are a few impediments on the household level – some normative and others concerned with the welfare of the child, that prevent families from sending their children to such settings. First, the child's welfare is an issue of crucial importance in matters concerning the outsourcing of child-care. Parents are apt to worry about the quality of the existing day-centers in as far as they are considered inappropriate (Hank and Kreyenfeld, 2003; Lancker and Ghysels, 2013). This problem is most likely to arise when the government decides to outsource child-care from the public to the private sector. The belief that welfare services should be provided by the private sector, could be considered an impediment for the outsourcing of these services, because such organizations are thought to be motivated by a desire to increase their gains more than to maximize the welfare of the individual. Therefore, uncertainty including worries concerning opportunistic behavior, a lack of integrity and a lack of confidence, might prevent families from such outsourcing (Raz-Yurovich, 2014).

Another impediment that could create problems is monetary. The cost of child-care is a major factor in the mother's decision to outsource child-care and take a job (Hank and Kreyenfeld, 2003). Research has shown that the significance of the cost of child-care centers is greater for mothers with a low income and limited skills. Available income determines the capacity of the household to purchase child-care services, the more so in the case of low income families. Moreover, if the cost of child-care frameworks is higher than the gain from employment, mothers tend to stay at home and care for their children. This is especially true for mothers with a low educational level who have a smaller chance of earning a good salary. High costs for child-care services can increase inequality in the use of child-care centers (Lancker and Ghysels, 2013; Lokshin, 2004). Therefore government grants to the family actually decrease poverty rates, but have no effect on the family's decisions with regard to child-care, and the government cannot decide for the family what will be the sum devoted to child-care out of their grant. Obviously, subsidizing child-care has a positive effect on the extent of the mother's work and on her choice to make use of the child-care settings (Lokshin, 2004).

However, in recent years there is a trend towards privatization of public services designed for the private sector. This trend influences the quality and cost of



the services and their accessibility to the population. The policy of child-care still reflects a mixed economy in most countries, in which the private and public sector, together with the voluntary sector, are all involved, in order to provide child-care services. Research has shown that the involvement of the private sector in child care is usually characterized by low quality, high cost and low accessibility, especially in neighborhoods with a weak population. Naturally, the provision of services by the market is not controlled by the government that affects regulation and licensing, subsidizing and direct supervision. When child-care settings are not under the auspices of the public sector, the government has certain tools enabling it to exercise some control over these institutions, for instance, granting subsidies to weak families or to the providers of the service who satisfy the government's requirements, such as: preference of children from families with a weak background. If the government chooses to interfere in an ineffective way limited only to licensing, quality child-care services will become very expensive, because they require costly inputs (higher salaries for the employees). As a result, quality service will be available only for families able to finance it. Families with low incomes will search for cheaper services, of lower quality, or prefer informal services. Since high quality services are essential for an improvement in the child's development, this could create gaps between families with different socio-economic resources. This effect can be neutralized by a more pronounced government involvement, so that high quality child-care services become accessible to all, or otherwise, the government can decide to provide such high quality services by itself. Therefore, it is desirable that services connected to child-care should be supervised by the government or provided by the public sector, in order to safeguard the child's welfare, improve his education and provide subsidized settings for the entire population (Lancker and Ghysels, 2013).

Moreover, normative impediments and social norms can hinder mothers from sending their children to child-care centers. Mothers often encounter restrictive behavior concerning their employment after birth, as well as normative expectations preventing them from using external child-care services, especially in the care of small children (Hank and Kreyenfeld, 2003; Kremer, 2006). Such normative expectations are dependent on norms and values concerning the role of the mother and the welfare of children. For instance, norms will define what tasks in the household or in child-care, can be outsourced and what tasks should be performed by the mother herself. Therefore, in traditional societies, retiring from family roles is apt

to arouse guilt feelings in mothers and lead to social pressure on her to return to fulfill her family duties (Goode, 1960). Therefore, if it is customary in a certain society, for the mother herself to raise her children up to a certain age, even a varied supply of child-care services, will not necessarily effect her decision to outsource her child-care duties (Raz-Yurovich, 2012; Raz-Yurovich, 2014; Lancker and Ghysels, 2013).

Therefore, cultural factors must be taken into consideration, as they can be both the reason and the result of the development of a social policy and influence the behavior and decisions of parents pertaining to child-care arrangements (Lancker and Ghysels, 2013). Thus, even if economically feasible high quality services are essential, they are not a sufficient condition for society to make use of them. Outsourcing of child-care services can be accepted and relevant in a society only if two essential conditions are present: firstly, profitability. Mothers must assume that utilizing child-care services is more profitable and advantageous than caring for children personally. Secondly, acceptance. Child-care services are accepted in a specific society from a cultural, ethical and psychological point of view as a substitute for personal care by the mother. This means that supply and demand for such settings are influenced by values related to child welfare and to gender roles in the family (Raz-Yurovich, 2012).

When the child-care services do not satisfy the parental concerns pertaining to their children`s welfare, because they are not provided by the government or not accepted in society, women have several alternatives, such as: the use of work migrants or social networks in the family. Macro-economic studies have shown that by purchasing services, women with high capacities, as expressed in high pay per work hour, can increase their participation in the labor market and reduce the number of hours devoted to household chores and child-care. This is made possible thanks to cheap labor migrants employed in services who can produce similar outputs in housework and household services. Evidence of such relations is available in industrialized countries such as the U.S.A., Italy, Spain, Hong Kong and Singapur. Relations between cheap labor migrants and women in these countries, show that not only did the economic activity rise, but also the birth rates. The cheap labor migrants in these countries, reduced the costs of household services and child-care and enabled highly educated local women, to reduce "the lack of fit" (Raz-Yurovich, 2012; Esping-Andersen, 2009).

The migration of cheap manpower is also known as "the global care chain". This is a concept that describes the relations between the need for child-care, and the migration of women to developed countries in search of work. Women from poor areas migrate to take care of the children of western women, in order to support their own children who are cared for by their relatives. This phenomenon is most widespread in the U.S.A. where the state provides very few child-care services and support, and the lack of government involvement is a significant factor in the continued existence of the chain. In Europe, governments support the mothers by means of parental leave grants enabling them to hire services supplied to the home. European women use the money to hire help that they need. In some Western-European countries, parental leave grants and subsidies enable the development of services rendered at home, in return for low wages, passed through the private market (Williams and Gavanas, 2008).

Another way of outsourcing child-care services is by using social networks, especially family networks. Restrictions and difficulties in obtaining public child-care services, are corrected by support and help from the family (Del Boca, 2002; Hank and Kreyenfeld, 2003; Philipov et.al., 2006). Such a support system is also known as "the informal welfare sector" (Graham 1999). Since the lack of confidence and concern about the child`s welfare, are regarded as the main obstacles pertaining to the outsourcing of child-care, the use of the family network, enables families to reduce the costs of outsourcing in this context. Firstly, family members are more motivated to forgo their personal benefit for the benefit of their offspring in the present and in the future. Secondly, since the economic relations in the family are integrated with personal connections, it is easier to follow assignments because family members usually share the same values, priorities and life style, for instance, family members are aware of the parents` preferences concerning their children`s nutrition, education etc. Thirdly, the affectionate ties in the family enable altruistic behavior and loyalty in child-care that can rarely be found in the private market. These three factors ensure lower transaction costs when outsourcing child-care to family members (Raz-Yurovitch, 2014; Polak, 1985).

Another reason for the use of social networks is the fact that people cannot afford to purchase the services provided by formal bodies. In spite of the fact that the availability of informal arrangements is decreasing at present, there is an assumption that more and more families with a weak background (families in low socio-economic

strata, low educational levels, minorities or immigrant parents) will depend on informal arrangements and obtain help from their extended families, grand-parents or other relatives as a major resource of care for their children. Research shows that such a choice results from a combination of personal preferences, accessibility and the cost of formal arrangements for child-care (Lancker and Ghysels, 2013).

The use of social networks as a resource for child-care, can have negative implications as well. The situation might generate conflicts and impatience with inefficient family members. Besides, the duration of such arrangements in the family is not known in advance (Raz-Yurovich, 2014; Polak, 1985). In post-communist countries, the use of social and family networks is widespread, in contrast to western states. A report on the policy of the European Union shows that norms concerning motherhood, employment and the use of more traditional settings for child-care, is common in Eastern and Central-European countries, as these countries are undergoing a process of reversal from a policy that supported "de-familization" to a policy of "re-familization" (Robila, 2010).

### **1.3. Child-Care Regimes in Post-Communist Countries**

The change to post-communist regimes in Europe is an interesting case of a change of child-care policy in the Eastern Bloc. Socio-political and economic changes in Eastern-Europe have re-shaped the social policy and affected the family unit. Under the Communist regime in Eastern Europe, women were encouraged to join the labor market by incentives, such as subsidizing the services for child-care. After the demise of the regime, the policy was changed and less emphasis was placed on financing child-care services, along with the duration and amount of maternity leave which was granted to the mother in order to keep her home. Cuts in family policy were often the solution to budget constraints and were justified by slogans emphasizing that maternity and rearing children are a woman's role. Eastern European states chose the model in which the husband is the main bread-winner, by closing many child-care centers or reducing their subsidies. The government policies in Eastern Europe actually changed from "de-familization" to "re-familization" of the family unit and the role of the mother. In most Eastern-European countries nowadays, the family policy supports the traditional family framework in which the mother is the main care-giver of the child (Robila, 2010; Szelewa and Polakowski, 2008).

One more explanation why Eastern European countries went against trend towards "de-familization" in spite of their past is the anti-feminist ideological legacy that emerged from the communist era. Post communist countries did not tolerate discussion about gender equality within the family. Women's organizations were not allowed, women's main identity was constructed as mothers and carers, women at first were forced to enter the labor market, which made them see work as negative rather than liberating, communist regimes were the first one to support gender equality what gave the concept a bad name after the collapse of the USSR and the communist's usage of Marxist-Leninist jargon made citizens of post-communist countries allergic to common phrases within Western feminist movement (Saxonberg and Szelewa, 2007).

The Czech Republic and Ukraine illustrate this change and the transformation to a "re-familization" policy with regard to the family unit and its implications for the birth rates in the two countries. In the Communist era the field of child-care was institutionalized to a large extent, a fact that enabled women to combine family and child-care. After 1990 the supply of day nurseries for children up to the age of 3, was almost completely discontinued. In 2011 only 46 active governmental day nurseries remained, caring for only 1.8 thousand children in the country, while kindergartens for children aged 3-5, were still available. The change to a post-communist regime, initiated a change in the family policy that lost its orientation that supported the encouragement and increase of birth rates. The policy stopped focusing on the rise of fertility rates and became integrated into a wider policy which aim was to reduce poverty and inequality of wages, and provide social security. The universal benefits granted to families in the past, became conditional and were granted only to families with low incomes (Zeman, 2014).

Today, parental leave in the Czech Republic is one of the longest in Europe and lasts for three years. Moreover, 28% of the women continue the maternity leave for their first child into the maternity leave for the second. Although their jobs are kept for them legally, in real life young mothers are discriminated in the labor market. Moreover, by 2002 private nursery share had risen to 84.1% of all nursery places. This shows that the cost of childcare nursery is very high in the Czech Republic. Besides, the Czech policy is considered a traditional policy, because it shares the common belief in Eastern Europe that small children suffer from the absence of their parents. Therefore the government gives the benefits to families in which one parent is

working and the other stays at home with the children (Zeman, 2014; Szelewa and Polakowski, 2008; Saxonberg and Szelewa, 2007).

Another example of a state that endorses "re-familization" of the family unit is Ukraine. Ukraine is one of the countries in Europe with the lowest birth rates that amounted to 1.1 in 2001. Although Ukraine became an independent state, many of the traditional social norms concerning the family structure, remained dominant in society. After the demise of the Soviet Union, the birth rates dropped sharply because women refused to have a second child although they had had their first child at a very young age, between the ages of 20 -24. Ukrainian women choose not to have a second child because of the high cost of such a decision, and because of the scarcity of available high quality settings for child-care. Therefore, young couples tend to request help in caring for the children from their parents and grand-parents, a fact that also reduces the expenses of child-care. Moreover, the tension between conservative norms concerning the roles of the woman and the man in the family and the economic need for the woman to work outside the home, is another reason for the low birth-rates in the country. The household chores are not shared equally by the husband and the wife, and government support in this field is almost non-existent. Nevertheless, a large part of the women in Ukraine attained high education and participate in the labor market (Perelli-Harris, 2007).

#### **1.4. Russia as a Case Study**

Russia represents an interesting case study, because, in the course of a short period of time, it was transformed from a model of "corporatist" policy to a model of "liberal" policy. This model was initiated in Russia after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, and changed its orientation regarding the role of the woman in the family, by rejecting the perception endorsing "de-familization" and adopting "re-familization" of the family unit. The Soviet era was characterized by the mobilization of all human resources – men and women – to the labor market. As a result, the Soviet Union succeeded in rehabilitating itself in a relatively short time, from the ruins of World Wars I and II. In order to introduce women into the labor market (to enable competition with the West), the Soviet Union provided many child-care settings. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the switch to a capitalist society caused a

large-scale reduction of the allowances and the provision of public services for parents (Robila, 2010; Lokshin, 2004, Teplova, 2007).

The large-scale entrance of women into the labor market in the twenties, brought about a significant decrease in the number of births in Russia. As a result, the scale of investments in child-care settings, increased even more. Moreover, the Soviets succeeded in achieving high participation rates of women in the labor market, in comparison to countries in the industrialized world, while birth rates remained relatively high, an average of 2 children per family (Avdaeva, 2001).

In the post-communist era, neo-liberals argued that the welfare programs create superfluous debts. According to them privatization of government institutions and high taxes on salaries, would reduce the state's deficit considerably. After the collapse of the Communist regime as an aftermath of these ideas, the Russian government initiated a large scale reduction of the social settings and the welfare policies following the financial deficit and the socio-economic atmosphere at the time. Almost 50% of the kindergartens were closed. In the Soviet regime, the majority of day nurseries and kindergartens were fully subsidized by the government, but after the switch to a capitalist regime, the business sector became the provider of social services for its employees. Since the private companies were anxious to reduce the expenses of their employees in order to be able to compete, the services provided to working mothers were inefficient. In addition, private settings were not yet sufficiently established to provide a solution for families with children (Lokshin, 2004). At the same time the GNP dropped by 17% in 1991, inflation was rampant and the price of goods rose by 140%. As a result, the government reduced the allowances to the citizens to a large extent. In 1992 inflation rose to 300% and salaries dropped by 50%. As a result, the living conditions of the Russian population worsened considerably and the number of people descending below the poverty line grew by 35%. The unemployment rates doubled in 1998 from 5.6% to 10.8% (Rieck, 2006). As a result of changes in family policy, families with children and families with scant resources were adversely affected. These changes brought about a decrease of approximately 50% of the births and a rise in the number of abortions among women in Russia (Teplova, 2007), for instance, between the years 1960-1980 the average number of children per women was 2.23 but from 1987 onwards, a gradual decline occurred and in 2005 the average stood at 1.17 children per woman (Rieck, 2006).

Besides, since the collapse of the Soviet Union, not only the fertility rates but also marriage rates declined and the rates of co-habitation increased (Alich 2009).

The dramatic decline in birth rates in Russia gave rise to the idea of obliging women to return home and thus increasing the birth rates. Removing women from the labor market seemed a good solution since it would enable the "release" of additional jobs, lower the tension in the labor market, and solve the demographic problem. Therefore, support for settings for child-care declined even more. As a result, more child care services were closed because they were not budgeted, or otherwise were converted into offices or other gainful uses. Whereas 87.9 thousand child-care settings existed in 1990, in 2000 only 53.3 thousand remained. The quality of child care also declined and approximately 50% of the children of pre-school age, were cared for at home. In spite of the neo-liberal ideology, the government increased the maternity leave grants for children in order to keep the women at home. In the first year after birth, the mother received a grant as high as her salary and later – 85% of her salary. Moreover, the woman could continue working and still receive her maternity leave grants from the state. The government also protected her work place for three years. Actually, since the maternity leave was very long and the payments that the private company was supposed to deliver to the mother, according to the law, were high, the employers were not disposed to employ women. Besides, since Russia did not really succeed in ridding itself of the debt and collect taxes properly – the maternity leave grant was not implemented as planned (Teplova, 2007).

The long-term maternity leave grants were detrimental to the status and rights of women in the long run. Although the law permitted the mother to entrust the care of her children to another member of the family who would then be entitled to receive the grant, in reality the situation was different. The Soviet achievements in changing women`s status and its welfare policy, only partly succeeded in encouraging sharing of household chores. The Soviet Union succeeded only partly in releasing the woman of her burden. Therefore, the mother was the one who remained at home and received the grant because she was considered the "main provider" of care in the family. The symbolism and significance of obtaining the maternity leave grant for child-care, changed. While in the Soviet era, the maternity leave grants were meant to encourage women to enter the labor market and help them to balance the care of the infant and the return to work – this time the objective of the grant was to keep the women at home and alleviate the financial burden (Klimenkova, 1994; Tchekorina, 2002).



In spite of the post-Soviet government's intention to return Russian women home in order to encourage child-birth, the policy not only failed but actually led to a further decline in birth-rates in Russia. Apparently some of the women preferred not to have children at all in order not to lose their jobs. Secondly, the Soviet heritage penetrated the culture and awareness of the Russians. Women continued to demand opportunities to acquire higher education equal to that of men, and regarded work as a surplus value, because during the Soviet regime, a working woman was a respected woman. Research has shown that a rise in the educational level of women leads to higher employment rates and negatively affects birth rates (Avdaeva, 2011). Thirdly, the economic situation in Russia forced women to enter the labor market. The employment rates of single mothers are among the highest. Besides, in Russia there are many part-time jobs with flexible work hours, enabling more mothers to enter the labor market (Teplova, 2007).

In addition to these facts and in spite of high employment rates among women, Soviet society has remained patriarchic. Although women work full-time, their income is considered secondary and their contribution to the country's GNP was never counted on. Inequality and lack of fairness between the sexes led to a further decline of birth rates among Russian women (Avdaeva, 2011). Moreover, the percentage of single mothers in Russia grows from year to year and reached 21% of all families with children under the age of 18 (Zaharov, 2013). Research shows that 40% percent of single mother families suffer extreme poverty, and the rate of single-mother families is expected to grow in Russia. The woman's familial status affects the quality of the care she is able to provide for her children, and enhances her need to go to work and obtain help in order to enable her to do so (Lokshin and Mullan-Harris, 2000).

Poverty and the lack of opportunities for employment in the poor areas of the world, have forced women to assume a dominant role in providing more income for the family. As a result of the neo-liberal policy in Russia, the government not only closed all the settings enabling a woman to combine work and family, but also refrained from providing the economic resources to keep her at home, but actually forced her to go to work. In the wake of the rising rates of women's participation in the labor market, more countries must establish child-care settings to ensure that birth rates remain high. Since the Russian government does not satisfy the need for kindergartens and day nurseries, a new market emerged among women – nannies.

These are mainly students looking for temporary employment, or women of retirement age who are still able to work and women who have acquired some training. These provide service for pay to the middle and upper classes. Moreover, there is a considerable increase in the employment of nannies because families have children at a young age when the grand-mothers are still working and do not have time to take care of their grand-children (Zdravomyslova 2010). Child-care by a relative is also quite popular. The grand-mother is regarded as the second person in charge of the children after the mother, and the retirement age for women is lower than it is for men, and also grand-mothers attach greater importance to the care of their offspring. In the Soviet era, the employment of a household help or a nanny was considered inappropriate in the light of the dominant ideological and economic values. The family and grand-parents, as a result of the economic situation in Russia, are engaged in helping the mother in order to enable her to work (Teplova, 2007).

Nowadays, mothers in Russia can remain at home on maternity leave for three years. This period is divided into two parts: during the first year and a half, mothers receive payment for maternity leave. Afterwards they can prolong the maternity leave for another year and a half without payment, until their child reaches the age of three. This law also enables mothers who wish to return to work, to do so after 140 days of birth leave, on condition that the pregnancy passed smoothly and the child was born healthy (Cherkasova, 2013). In addition, a law was passed, as from January 2014, enabling mothers who have born three children one after the other, to go on birth leave for four and a half years. These four and a half years are considered a trial period at their work place. The first monthly allowance that the woman receives during her maternity leave, lasts for a year and a half, and constitutes 40% of her average salary, up to the age of 1.5 years. From the age of 1.5 up to the age of 3, she receives only 57 rubels per month (BBS Russia, 2013). The minimal payment for the first 1.5 years is 2,718 rubels for the first child, 5,436 rubels – for the second, and 10,873 rubels - for the third (Rossiskaya Gazeta). From the age of 3, the parents can send their child to government day-nurseries, open from 07.00 – 18.00 and sometimes till 19.00. There is great scarcity of government day-nurseries and parents are, therefore, obliged to register their children in a waiting list before they are born. In case there is no vacancy, no government alternative is offered for the child (BabyRU, 2012).

In summary, child-care settings release the woman, enable her to enter the labor market and remove her from the poverty circle and contribute to the country's GNP. These settings are provided by the government, by private bodies such as nannies or family networks. Russia is an interesting case study because it has undergone a dramatic change from a Communist country providing all public services for child-care, to a capitalist country requiring families to solve the problem through the private market, or rely on the help of the close family. As a result of this, employment rates of women have remained high in comparison to other industrialized countries. Therefore, the current research will focus on the question: what are the factors that explain a mother's choice of child-care arrangements? In the current work these arrangements include three types of care: care given by the mother, care given by relative and remunerative child-care by a private agent: a nanny or a formal public agency.

## 2. Method

In order to answer the research question, this research has made use of information from the GGS (Generations and Gender Survey) database, which is part of the GGP (Generations and Gender Program). We are referring to a system of surveys conducted on the population of 19 European and non-European countries. This is a comparative, multi-disciplinary, retrospective and prospective research. The purpose of this database is to improve the understanding of demographic and social developments in the countries surveyed and of the factors explaining these developments. This survey emphasizes the priorities and behavioral patterns of parents with regard to their children. Moreover, it focuses on the factors explaining the changes in these relations, such as moving out of the parents` home, establishing or undoing relations with a partner, the birth of offspring etc. (Rieck 2006). The information from the Russia GGS was collected, was collected between June and August 2004, and included originally 4,223 men and 7,038 women between the ages 18 – 79.

In this research we used a sample of 664 women with children up to the age of 6<sup>1</sup> in their custody. Standardized weights were used in the sample in order to safeguard its representation. The sample will enable us to examine the child-care arrangements chosen and to find out what was the mother`s educational, family, occupational and personal status. The population was chosen because mothers of children in this age group are required to decide on their preferable option. The data that we will examine for every woman in the sample refers to the mother`s occupational, educational and family status, the number of children in the household, the number of people living in the household with her, the area in which she lives, the age of her youngest child and her age.

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<sup>1</sup> A woman with a child under the age of 6 who was incapable of working on account of chronic health problems was removed from the sample.

## 2.1. Variables

The research question pertaining to the choice of care arrangements for her children and the factors explaining this choice will be tested by means of multi-nominal regression, whose variables are detailed below.

### 2.1.1. The dependent variable

The dependent variables describes that main child-care arrangement chosen for the child, is measured by 3 values:

1) *Remunerative care provided by a nurse or an official public setting* – This category refers to remunerative child-care provided on a regular and intensive basis by a private nurse or by private or public child nurseries. In order to determine whether the mother uses the remunerative service on a regular and intensive basis, we included, in this category, women using such a service at least five times a week. This variable was chosen to be the reference, omitted category in the multi-nominal regression.

2) *Care by relatives* – This category refers to non-remunerative help provided on a regular and intensive basis by relatives and friends. Since there are no data in the GGS database concerning the number of hours of help received by the woman, we used data showing the number of days per week in which she receives help from relatives. In order to determine that the mother uses non-remunerative intensive help provided by relatives or friends, we included only women who reported that they used such help at least five times a week.

3) *Main care provided by the mother* - In this category we included women not receiving remunerative intensive child-care, who have no other sources of help, or those receiving remunerative care or care by relatives less than five times a week. In an examination it was found that there were 9 women in the database who combined remunerative care with care by relatives, but since such mothers do not use any option on an intensive basis and because there were only a few of them, it was decided that such care will be categorized as "main care provided by the mother".

In the light of the division into three non-ordered categories, this dependent variable is multi-nominal.

## 2.1.2. Independent Variables

### *Mother`s education*

The level of the respondent`s education was coded into three groups by using ISCED 79 (International Standard Classification of Education)

- 1) *Low level of education* – women with no education, secondary education or partial secondary education.
- 2) *Middle-level of education* – women with a matriculation certificate or professional training, such as: art school, nursing school, etc.
- 3) *High level of education* – women with an academic degree from a recognized university (This variable is the reference category).

The woman`s educational level is related to her occupational characteristics and, therefore, can affect her choice of a child-care option.

### *The presence of another adult person in the household*

Two groups were formed for the purpose of coding this variable:

- 1) *Another adult lives in the household* – This category relates to an adult who is not the mother's partner. In most cases this adult was a parent of the mother or of her partner (biological or adopted), or a grandparent of the mother or of her partner (biological or adopted), a partner of her brother/sister or another relative.
- 2) *No other adult lives in the household* – i.e. the mother lives in the household with no other adult or only with her partner.

Additional adults living in the household can affect the strategy chosen for the care of the children, because such adult can provide non-remunerative help for the household.

### *Occupational Status of the Mother*

In order to code this variable four dummy variables were created:

- 1) *The mother works full-time* (This category is the reference category).
- 2) *The mother works part time*
- 3) *The mother is not working*
- 4) *The mother is on maternity leave*

The mother`s occupational state can affect her choice of a child-care option. If the mother is working part-time, her working hours are more flexible and this allows

her to be more flexible in her child-care arrangement. Also, if the mother is on maternity leave or is not working, it is more likely that she will chose to take care of her children by herself and not send them to a remunerative setting.

#### *The presence of the partner in the household*

In order to code this variable three dummy variables were created:

- 1) *The mother has a partner but lives alone in the household* – she has a partner but her partner is not living with her.
- 2) *The mother doesn't have a partner* – she doesn't have any partner.
- 3) *The mother lives with a partner* – she is married and lives with her husband or has a partner out of wedlock who lives with her family in the household (This variable is the reference category).

The presence of a partner in the household, can affect the mother choice of a child-care option. If she is a single parent there is a greater chance that she will not be able to care personally for her children and will need help to enable her to produce an income. Moreover, if the mother is living with a partner she can afford to take a longer maternity leave since the household income is secured by her partner. Moreover, women with a partner might have a more extensive family network, who can provide help with childcare.

#### *The geographical location of the mother`s residential area*

In order to code this variable, three groups were created:

- 1) *Metropolitan* – a central residential area (Moscow or St. Petersburg) and its close environment (it was decided to make this variable referenced).
- 2) *Urban* – residential area in one of the towns in Russia which is not a metropolitan area.
- 3) *Village* – a residential area in one of the villages in Russia.

Russia is one of the largest countries in the world. Therefore the residential area within Russia indicates the accessibility of the family to governmental settings for child-care, the supply of working places for the mother, familial and social attitudes and other services.

#### *The mother`s age*

This variable is measured by years and is a continuous variable. The mother's age can affect several factors connected to the choice of a child-care setting, for instance, if the mother is young there is a greater chance that she will obtain help from her parents since the mother's age indicates the relatively young age of her parents and their physical capacity. Besides, the younger the woman the greater the chance that her earning capacity will not be high and she will, therefore, refrain from sending her children to a remunerative setting.

*The number of children in the household*

This variable refers to the number of children of the mother, and not necessarily to those living with her in the household. The number of children in the household can affect her choice of a child-care option. The larger the number of children in the household, the larger are the family expenses. Therefore, if the family has a large number of children and the earning capacity of the mother is low, there is a chance that she will prefer to stay at home and take care of her children.

*The age of the youngest child in the household*

This variable is measured by years and is a continuous variable. The child's age can affect several factors connected to the choice of a child-care setting. For instance, the youngest is the child, the more likely that the mother will prefer to take care of him by herself. Or, the older the child, the more likely that the mother will send him to a nurse or an official public setting or to a relatives care.

*Approximate range of monthly income of the household*

This variable is a log of approximate range of monthly income of the household and it is a continuous variable. Monthly income of the household can affect the factors connected to the choice of a child-care setting. For instance, the amount of resources that the family can spend on different type of strategies.



## 2.2. The Research Method

The data from the GGS database will be processed by means of the MNLM (Multinomial Logit Model). This regression test was chosen for the data processing because our independent variable contains three values that are not orderly: child-care by the mother, child-care by a relative and remunerative care. We used the multinomial logit model, the most widespread model for processing nominal variables with more than two categories, because it allows the effect of the independent variables to differ for every category of the dependent variable. The model defines the probability of every category as a non-linear function of the independent variables. Nevertheless this model is linear in the (p/1-p) odds.

This probability model is:

$$\Pr(y_i = m | x_i) = \frac{\exp(x_i \beta_m)}{1 + \sum_{j=2}^J \exp(x_i \beta_j)} \quad (m > 1)$$

In this model  $y$  is the dependent variable that contains  $J$  nominal categories. The categories are numbered from 1 to  $J$  but they are not arranged in an order.  $\Pr(y=m/x)$  is the probability of a nominal category  $m$  given  $x$ .

As mentioned odds is a linear model;  $\Omega_{m/n}(x) = x(\beta_m - \beta_n)$

The difference  $\beta_m - \beta_n$  called contrast is the effect of  $x$  on the log of category  $m$  in contrast to category  $n$ , namely a change in  $x$  in one unit leads to a change in the odds logarithm of category  $n$  in  $\beta_m - \beta_n$  units (Long 1997). With the help of this regression we can discover the coefficients of each of the two main independent variables and predict what is the main effect on the mother's option with regard to the care of her children. In so far as the significance between the dependent and the independent variable is less than ( $p > 0.5$ ) we will invalidate the relation.

### 3. Results

As mentioned before, the research sample included 664 mothers of children up to the age of 6. Table 1 shows the distribution of the independent variables studied. The examination of the dependent variable divided into three different categories of main child care, showed that 43.6% of the women in the sample use the strategy of care for remuneration for the care of their children at least 5 times a week, 18% chose help from relatives and friends for child care at least 5 times a week and 38.2% are the main care-givers for their children and have no additional source of intensive help.

The distribution of independent variables shows that more than one fourth of the mothers are unemployed (27.2%) or on maternity leave (29.7%) so that in total over one half of them were not working when the research was carried out. 40.7% of the mothers worked full-time and only a small percentage (2.4%) worked part-time. The geographical location of the mothers' residence was divided into three main locations: metropolitan area (39.4%), urban area (31.6%) and rural area (28.9%). Moreover, the majority of the women in the sample are educated women with a university degree (46.3%) or medium level education (46.4%) and very few with a low level of education (7.2%). With regard to the family status the majority (83.7%) live with a partner, 6.6% have a partner not living with them and about 9.6% have no partner at all. In 39.5% of the households there is another adult living with the family – who is not a partner or a son or daughter of the mother. The average age of the participants in the sample is 28.8 years, the average number of children is 1.6, the average age of the youngest child in the family is 2.4 years, and the average log income of the household is 5.9.

**Table 1** Descriptive statistics- Means and standard deviation of the independent variables (N=664).

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Percent/Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
<b>Activity status of the mother</b>		
Unemployed	27.2	0.44
Employed full-time	40.7	0.49
Employed part-time	2.4	0.15
On maternity leave	29.7	0.46
<b>Type of settlement</b>		
Center	39.4	0.49
Urban/town	31.6	0.47
Rural	28.9	0.45
<b>Highest educational level of</b>		

<b>the mother</b>		
Low	7.2	0.25
Medium	46.4	0.50
High	46.3	0.50
<b>Partner Status</b>		
Co-resident partner	83.7	0.37
Non-resident partner	6.6	0.25
No partner	9.6	0.29
<b>Additional adult lives with the family</b> (No=0, Yes=1)	39.5	0.49
<b>Age</b>	28.8	5.80
<b>Number of children</b>	1.6	0.83
<b>Youngest Age of the child</b>	2.4	1.66
<b>Average Income of the household</b>	5.9	1.30

*Note: For binary variables the mean represents the percentage of individuals receiving the value one.*

Table 2 shows a two-variable analysis in order to find out whether there were differences between the women according to the strategy chosen. It shows that the occupational status of the women affects the choice of the strategy: unemployed women chose help by a relative (33.3%) or exclusive care by the mother (34.6%) more than a strategy of remunerative care (19.2%). A similar situation characterizes women on maternity leave as well (43.3% and 47% respectively as against 10.1%). In contrast to these findings, women working full-time chose a strategy of remunerative care (68.4%) more than a strategy of care by relatives (19.2%) or exclusive care by the mother (17.8%). The minority of women working part-time prefer care by a relative (4.2%) as against remunerative care (2.4%) or exclusive care by the mother (1.6%).

An examination of the place of the mother's residence, shows that women living in metropolitan areas use more remunerative care (44.1%) and exclusive care by the mother (40.1%) than care by relatives (26.7%). Among women residing in an urban area, the use of the three strategies is divided almost evenly with a small preference for care by relatives (34.2%) in comparison to remunerative care or exclusive care by the mother (30.3% and 32.0% respectively). Women living in a rural area make use of care by relatives (39.2%) more than remunerative care or exclusive care by the mother (25.6% and 27.9% respectively).

An examination of the number of people living with a family in the household, besides the couple and their children, shows that in households where there is no at

least one additional adult living with the family, the strategy of care by the mother or remunerative care is more widespread (71% and 63.3% respectively) than care by relatives (24.4%). In households in which another adult lives with the family, the strategy of care by relatives is used by a higher percentage (75.6%) in comparison to strategies of remunerative care or exclusive care by the mother (33.7% and 29% respectively).

An examination of the mother's age shows that among those who chose the strategy of remunerative care, the mother's age was the highest on average (29.5 years) in comparison to those who chose intensive care by the mother or care by relatives (28.4 and 27.6 years respectively). It was also found that among those who chose remunerative care, the child's age was higher on average (3.2 years), in comparison to those using care by the mother or by relatives (1.7 and 1.8 years respectively).

The findings of the two variable analysis did not show significant differences between mothers using different strategies of care according to the mother's education, the number of children in the family, the average income of the household and the partnership status.

**Table 2** Differences between dependent groups (percent/mean).

Variable	Main source of childcare		
	Remunerative child-care	From relatives/friends	Mother Care
<b>Activity status of the mother***</b>			
Unemployed	19.2	33.3	33.6
Employed full-time	68.4	19.2	17.8
Employed part-time	2.4	4.2	1.6
On maternity leave	10.1	43.3	47.0
<b>Type of settlement*</b>			
Center	44.1	26.7	40.1
Urban/town	30.3	34.2	32.0
Rural	25.6	39.2	27.9
<b>Highest educational level of the mother (n.s.)</b>			
Low	5.4	7.1	9.3
Medium	44.4	46.0	49.2
High	50.2	46.9	41.5
<b>Partner Status (n.s.)</b>			
Co-resident	81.5	79.8	88.7
Non-resident	8.4	8.4	3.2
No partner	10.1	11.8	8.1

<b>Additional adult lives with the family***</b>			
No	66.3	24.4	71.0
Yes	33.7	75.6	29.0
<b>Age**</b>	29.5	27.6	28.4
<b>Number of children (n.s.)</b>	1.6	1.5	1.7
<b>Youngest age of the child***</b>	3.2	1.7	1.8
<b>Average Income of the household (n.s.)</b>	6.0	5.9	5.8

*Note: The analyses were done using Chi<sup>2</sup> or One-Way ANOVA test. \*p<.05, \*\*p<0.01, \*\*\*p<0.001; n.s.-not significant.*

In order to be able to control a large number of variables simultaneously, the research uses multi-variable analysis by means of multi-nominal regression in which the dependent variable is the strategy of child-care used, divided, as mentioned, into remunerative care, care by relatives and care by the mother. Table 3 shows the regression model that examines the effect of background variables on the strategy of care used, when the strategy of remunerative care is the omitted category in the dependent variable. As can be seen from the value of Nagelkerke Pseudo R-Square, the regression model explains 46% of the variance dependent variable.

The findings of the regression show that if other variables are controlled, the age of the youngest child in the family has a negative effect both on the strategy of care by the mother and that of care by relatives, as against remunerative care. Thus, the older the youngest child in the family, the greater is the chance of preferring remunerative care to the other options.

In households in which the mother is working part time, is on maternity leave or is unemployed, there is a greater chance of choosing the strategy of help by relatives and not that of remunerative care in comparison to households in which the mother works full-time. In households where the mother works part time, the odds of choosing the strategy of care by relatives is 5.4 times higher, in households where the mother is unemployed it is 3.4 times higher, and where the mother is on maternity leave – it is 5 times higher. The regression findings also show that in households where the mother is unemployed or on maternity leave, there is a greater chance of her choosing the strategy of exclusive care by the mother and not remunerative care, in comparison with households where the mother is working full-time. In households in which the mother is unemployed, the odds are 5.2 times higher and in households in which the mother is on maternity leave – it is 10 times higher.

The regression findings show that the geographical location of the mother's residence also affects the household's choice of a child-care strategy. Among households in an urban or rural area there is a greater chance of choosing a strategy of care by relatives than that of choosing a strategy of remunerative care, in comparison to households residing in a metropolitan area. In households in an urban area the odds are 3.2 times higher, and in those residing in a rural area – it is 5.7 times higher.

Another variable which was found to affect the household's choice of a strategy of care is the presence of another adult - who is not the mother's partner – in the household. In households in which no other adult lives with the mother, there is a 90 per cent lesser chance – of choosing a strategy of care by relatives as against remunerative care, in comparison to those with another adult living in the household. Besides, in households in which the mother's partner does not live with the family, there is a lesser chance – of 66% - to prefer the strategy of exclusive care by the mother to that of remunerative care, in comparison to those in which the partner lives in the household. In households where the mother has no partner, there is a 61% lesser chance of preferring care by relatives to remunerative care.

An examination of the mother's educational level shows that in households where the mother's educational level is low there is a 2.5 times greater chance of choosing mother care as against households in which the mother's educational level is high.

**Table 3** Multi-nominal regression predicting choice of main source of childcare. (Standard deviation in parentheses).

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Beta</b>	<b>Exp(B)</b>
<b>Age</b>		
Relatives care	.053 (.031)	1.054
Mother care	.016 (.023)	1.016
<b>Number of children</b>		
Relatives care	-.422 (.229)	.656
Mother care	-.109 (.153)	.897
<b>Youngest age of the child</b>		
Relatives care	-.496*** (.114)	.609

Mother care	-.298*** (.082)	.742
<b>Average Income of the household</b>		
Relatives care	-.059 (.109)	.943
Mother care	-.066 (.084)	.936
<b>The mother works part-time</b>		
Relatives care	1.684* (.719)	5.387
Mother care	.820 (.663)	2.270
<b>The mother is unemployed</b>		
Relatives care	1.227*** (.344)	3.410
Mother care	1.657*** (.257)	5.245
<b>The mother is on maternity leave</b>		
Relatives care	1.613*** (.424)	5.017
Mother care	2.304*** (.323)	10.016
<b>The mother lives in an urban area</b>		
Relatives care	1.163** (.348)	3.200
Mother care	.071 (.257)	1.074
<b>Mother lives in a rural area</b>		
Relatives care	1.745*** (.354)	5.725
Mother care	.439 (.275)	1.551
<b>No additional adult lives with the family</b>		
Relatives care	-2.258*** (.317)	.105
Mother care	.171 (.249)	1.186
<b>Mother's education- Low</b>		
Relatives care	.098 (.559)	1.103
Mother care	.904* (.429)	2.469

<b>Mother's education- Medium</b>		
Relatives care	.126 (.287)	1.134
Mother care	.345 (.223)	1.412
<b>No co-resident partner</b>		
Relatives care	-.931 (.530)	.394
Mother care	-1.072* (.511)	.342
<b>No partner</b>		
Relatives care	-.943* (.450)	.390
Mother care	-.184 (.372)	.832
<b>Chi-square</b>	341.608	
<b>df</b>	28	
<b>-2 log likelihood (intercept only)</b>	1376.58	
<b>Nagelkerke Pseudo R-Square</b>	.460	
<b>N</b>	664	

Note: \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\* $p < 0.001$ .

Remunerative child-care is the reference category.



## 4. Discussion and Conclusions

The integration of women in the labor market is one of the objectives of developed countries designed to enrich their human capital and liberate families from poverty. On the other hand, without proper governmental assistance, integration in the labor market creates difficulties for women, and is one of the main reasons for the decrease in fertility rates. A policy of support for families is one of the principal strategies for supporting women that enables them to integrate motherhood and remunerative work. One of the central initiatives which is also the subject of the present research is the provision of child care by the government. Such a service on part of the government, enables a woman to provide professional, trustworthy and subsidized care for her children. In return, the provision of child-care services increases the occupational rates of women and increases gender equality. It can also reduce poverty rates among children, as the increase in the household income provides the family with greater resources to divide between its members. Therefore the mother's preference to care for her children on a full-time basis, does not always derive from considerations of profitability, but rather from normative barriers concerning issues of motherhood, the child's welfare and the role of the woman in the family, or from structural barriers such as the lack of alternative options for child-care.

Russia is an interesting case study in this regard, because, while other developed countries implement a de-familization strategy, encouraging women to join the labor market by providing subsidies or child-care facilities, Russia is undergoing a re-familization process, and reducing the child-care facilities that were common in the Communist era, along with an application of the model of the man as the provider.

The population of this research comprises a sample of 664 women living in Russia with children under the age of six. This population was selected out of the GGS (Generations and Gender Survey) database. The aim of the research is descriptive - to understand what explains the choice of a strategy for the care of pre-school children in present day Russia, given that care arrangements are divided into three categories: care by the mother, care by relatives and remunerative care by a private agent, a nanny or an official public agent.

The findings of the research were tested by means of multi-nominal regression because the dependent variable is divided into three non-ordered categories. The

findings of the multi-variable analysis shows that, if other variables are controlled, educated women make use of the strategy of remunerative care instead of care by the mother, more than women of a low educational level. Perhaps the reason for this is the lack of training and skills of women of low or medium educational level, that reduces their ability to find remunerative work that makes it worthwhile for the household to choose a strategy of remunerative care. On the other hand, women with a high educational level have better occupational options and they are able to earn a high income in their work. At the same time the preference of child-care provided by a relative does not distinguish between mothers of different educational levels. Perhaps the reason for this is economic, cultural and institutional, i.e., care by relatives is more economical and the quality is higher on account of family ties and commitment and also because in Russia there is a paucity of public settings for child care (Teplova, 2007).

The findings of this research showed that different constraints are involved in the choice of child-care strategies. The findings of the occupational status of the mother show that households in which mothers work half-time, are unemployed or on maternity leave, prefer the strategy of care by relatives to the strategy of remunerative care in comparison to women working full time. A possible explanation is that when a woman is working part-time, unemployed or on maternity leave, she is more available to care for her children in addition to the care they receive from relatives, and therefore it is more economical for the household to make use of this strategy. In addition, the regression findings have shown that in households where the mother is on maternity leave or unemployed, she prefers the strategy of care by the mother as against remunerative care in comparison to households in which the mother works full time. This finding could possibly be explained as deriving from cultural barriers and the large disparity between Russian women who support gender equality which was common in the Soviet era, and those who adopted the process of re-familization after the collapse of the Soviet regime. Possibly, households in which mothers work full-time or part-time, are more liberal and express this in other fields of life as well, for instance: sending their children to public or private remunerative settings, that free the mother from the need to care for her children. On the other hand, households that prefer strategies of care by the mother, are more traditional and are influenced by normative barriers in the society in which they live, with regard to the issue of motherhood and child-welfare, and, therefore, tend to choose more traditional

strategies. For instance, the findings do not show a difference in the preference for a strategy of remunerative care over a strategy of care by the mother, between households in which mothers work part time in comparison to households in which they work full-time. Possibly what characterizes the level of the mother`s traditionalism is the issue of work outside the home (Hank and Kreyenfeld, 2003; Lancker and Ghysels, 2013).

Another interesting finding shows that in cases of another adult living with the family, the household will prefer a strategy of care by a relative over a strategy of remunerative care, in comparison to households where there is no other adult living with the family. Shared living arrangements with another adult in the household, guarantee that relatives will be available and committed to take care of the children of the main providers in the household – the mother and her partner. In return they promise to take care of them in case of need, i.e. The second generation (the parents) take care of the first generation (the grandparents) and they in return care for the third generation (the grand-children). These results suggest the existence of a child-care regime of an "inter-generational care" in Russia (Kremer, 2006). Correspondingly a multi-nominal regression test was applied in which the referenced variable was the strategy of care by the mother (the model is not presented) and it was found that households in a rural environment, prefer care by one of the relatives and not by the mother, in comparison to households in a metropolitan environment. In this case, the inter-generational model can explain why households in rural areas prefer the strategy of care by a relative over a strategy of exclusive care by the mother. The fact that households in rural areas in Russia are located in agricultural areas cultivated by the family, explains why households prefer that the parents, who are physically stronger, take charge of the agricultural and household duties, and the grandparents – take care of the children. In return, the parents will take care of the grand-parents in case of need.

An analysis of the mother`s family status also showed that households in which the partners live together prefer a strategy of exclusive care by the mother. On the other hand, households in which the mother lives apart from her partner or has no partner, tend to prefer a strategy of remunerative care or a strategy of care by relatives. A possible explanation is to be found in the financial means of the household and in the structural constraints of the family unit. On the one hand, households in which partners live together, enable the mother to stay at home and

rely on her partner`s income. On the other hand, mothers living by themselves in the household, do not have the option of staying at home because they are the providers. Therefore, if they have a relative who is available, they obtain help from him/her, otherwise their only option is that of remunerative care. Besides, if the mother has a partner living with her in the household, there is a better chance of her choosing a strategy of care by one of her relatives instead of a strategy of remunerative care, in comparison to households in which the mother does not have a partner. A possible explanation is that the very existence of a partner in the household, increases the number of potential and committed relatives from whom care can be obtained, thus creating a mechanism of inter-generational dependence between relatives.

As for the geographical area in which the mothers in the sample, live, households living in urban or rural areas, have a greater chance of preferring care by a relative to remunerative care, in comparison to households living in metropolitan areas. As mentioned in the review of the literature, another way that households can outsource child-care, is by making use of social networks, mainly family networks. Limitations, absence or difficulty in obtaining public child-care services are compensated by support and help from the family (Del Boca; 2002, Hank and Kreyenfeld, 2003; Philipov et al., 2006). A possible explanation of the trend among rural households, to prefer help by relatives instead of remunerative care, is the considerable distance between the place of residence of the rural population and the central public institutions. People living in rural areas in Russia are far removed from central institutions because of the widespread agricultural territories on which their homes are located. Besides, rural areas in Russia are usually poor areas, and there is almost no accessibility to public transportation. Therefore it is possible that on account of the lack of public facilities nearby, the expenses and the difficulty of bringing children to public or remunerative settings on a daily basis, mothers are more inclined to leave their children in the care of a relative. On the other hand, in metropolitan areas the supply and accessibility of public or remunerative settings is of greater significance than in rural areas. The family unit in metropolitan areas is dispersed, and because of the distances it can take hours for relatives to arrive at their destination, and, therefore, mothers in these areas are less inclined to make use of care by relatives in comparison to remunerative care. Another finding showed that even in urban areas, care by relatives is preferable to remunerative care in comparison to metropolitan areas. A common urban area is characterized by shorter distances

between relatives than a metropolitan area. A possible explanation for the tendency to choose the strategy of care by relatives is that the expenses involved in the alternative of remunerative care and the fact that both salaries and the supply of jobs for adults is smaller, makes it more profitable for grand-parents to take care of their grand-children instead of sending them to remunerative settings.

In addition, the findings of the regression show that the age of the youngest child has a negative effect both on the use of strategies of care by the mother and care by relatives, in comparison to remunerative care. The older the youngest child, the greater the chance of preferring remunerative care to other strategies. A possible explanation for this finding is the fact that it is generally believed that the younger the child, the better it is for him to be cared for by his mother. This is evident in the fact that public settings are provided only for children above the age of 3, as a child of this age is considered mature enough for such a setting, and therefore, it is impossible to prolong maternity leave.

The findings of this research shed light on the preferences for child-care in a country that has undergone a process of re-familization which affects both the accessibility of child-care settings and the occupational status of women. The research has shown that additional factors affect the choice of child-care settings, which were not widely discussed in the review of the relevant literature. For instance, living together with a partner or the presence of an additional adult in the household. Even though Russian society is usually regarded as a modern western society, the family unit and the factors affecting the household decisions, are still greatly influenced by traditional aspects.

The effect of these traditional factors is strengthened over the years as a result of re-familization processes and the lack of governmental support for the status of women and gender equality in Russian society. The closing of child-care settings and encouraging women to stay at home in return for a long-term maternity leave, render her more vulnerable to the labor market and more dependent on the close family unit. This state of affairs does not allow Russian women to establish large families, together with successful careers and requires her to sacrifice one of these options.

This research is a unique research since its findings help us to better understand the social changes that Russian women are subjected to as a result of the change of the regime and the process of re-familization and the constraints they must endure with regard to the care of their children. Since the collapse of the Soviet

Union, Russian society tries to create a new identity for itself, different from the familiar one in the Soviet era. The creation of the new identity requires Russian society to make various decisions concerning their social and economic character and to pay the price. As it appears today, the decisions concerning the nature of Russia, are detrimental mainly with regard to fertility rates and threaten the future of the country. The means employed by the Russian government to deal with the demographic problem are different from those of western countries, who believe in encouraging remunerative alternatives for child-care.

The findings of this research showed a state of affairs in which the mother is obliged to sacrifice her capacity to contribute to the human capital and the household income because of financial constraints. In spite of modern progress and exposure to the media and industry, the economic situation along with normative attitudes regarding the role of the mother in the family, characterize the family unit and the choices it makes. This is manifest in the preference of care by a relative, independent of the mother`s educational level or the frequency of the inter-generational model in households living outside metropolitan areas. Therefore, if the government does not provide a sufficient number of subsidized settings for child-care, it actually reduces the mother`s freedom of choice. Women with no accessible relatives are compelled to stay at home and take care of their children, thus negatively affecting their power of self-realization and their capacity to provide more resources and a better future for their family. Apparently a country in a state of economic crisis should first of all provide subsidized settings for child-care in order to encourage women to enter the labor market. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia decided to take the opposite direction and closed one half of these settings in order to save expenses for the state. However, the demographic and occupational state of the country indicates that it probably should have left the situation as it was and even increase the supply of facilities, as Sweden did during the economic crisis in 1990 (Saxonberd and Szclewa, 2015).

One of the problems of the research is the problem of endogeneity, i.e. the possible effect of the dependent variable on the independent variables. The question could arise in the context of the mother`s occupation, since the woman`s ability to work depends on the availability of child-care facilities and a sufficient supply of these to satisfy the mother`s requirements concerning its location and the child`s

welfare. In case such facilities are not available, even if the mother is eager to go to work, it will not be possible.

The second constraint of the research is that the characteristics of the mother's partner have not been taken into account. There is no analysis of all the family members that could affect the mother's decision such as the characteristics of the partner or those of the children's father. The decision to focus on the attributes of the mother and her background was made because the GGS database does not contain complete data concerning the woman's partner who is not necessarily the children's biological father, etc. for instance, if he has children of his own besides this specific partnership, the age that is represented in the GGS data is of the woman's partner who is not for sure the biological father etc. In case of a partner living with the mother in the household who is not the children's biological father, it is difficult to determine the extent of his influence with regard to the strategy of child-care. Third, sixth of the women in the sample did not have a partner, and finally, Russian society is a patriarchal society and therefore the care of the children is primarily the mother's responsibility. Therefore it is interesting to study the characteristics of the women who choose to sever their traditional commitments.

For the purpose of future study, I propose to study the effects of globalization on the nature of Russian society. The ways of encouraging the fertility rates in Western Europe are different from those adopted nowadays in Russia, for instance, parental leave for men or subsidized child-care facilities. Since Russian society has an educated population and is exposed to world media, it would be interesting to study the extent of the effect of processes taking place in Western Europe on the creation of a new Russian identity on issues of gender and child care. In the long range the question is whether internal processes initiated by the Russian rulers, will determine the way of dealing with demographic issues or whether global processes, will be the more powerful factor. If so, will it affect all of Russia or only the metropolitan areas?

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