
What is the direction of Czech childcare policy?

Principles, objectives and functions.

Blanka Plasová, Jana Válková
Masaryk University
Faculty of Social Studies
Brno
The Czech Republic

Type of childcare for children in the age of 0-6

1) Crèches (children 0 -3 years, health service facilities of the day nursery type)

2) Kindergartens (children 3 - 6 years, pre-school education)

3) Childcare services as a business activity

- **Day care of a child up to three years of age**
(professional trade)

- **Provision of services for families and households** (unqualified trade, type of baby-sitting)

New proposed type of childcare:

4) Mutual parental assistance (type of family day care)

5) Kindergartens/crèches in companies

Institutional dimensions – public care

| Institutional dimensions | Educational model | Work-care reconciliation model | Kindergartens in CZ | Crèches in CZ |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|---|---|
| Access | Universal | Targeted | Universal for children in the age of 3 and older (especially for children who are 1 year before school attendance) | Formally universal/ informally targeted |
| Entitled person | Children | Parents/child with special needs | 1) all children from 3 to 6 years 2) children under 3 years with special needs | Children (especially of working parents). |
| Pedagogical concept | Educational goals (learning) | Mainly care | 1) educational goals 2) children under 3 – equal opportunity (disadvantaged children) | Mainly care (but also education) |

Source: Modified schemes of Scheiwe a Willekens (2008: 9)

Continuing...

| | | | | |
|--|--|--|---|---|
| Professionalization of staff, payment | Teachers | Lower level of professional education and payment then teachers | Teachers | Professional health personnel (nurses, lower health personnel) |
| Fees | No fees for school (eventually for meals etc.) | Subsidised, but parental fees | Fees (up to 50% of non-investment costs maximally, the last class is for free) | Fees (decision of municipality: usually (a) depends on family income (b) flat rate) |
| Financing bodies | As for school (national or regional financing) | Mixed financing with a share of communal authorities (less centralized) | Mixed financing – composed of three sources (parents fees, municipality and state budgets) (national and regional financing) | Mixed financing - composed of two sources (parents fees and municipality budget) (local financing, less centralized) |
| Time patterns | Opening hours and holidays like schools | Varying | Opening hours and holidays like schools | Opening hours (flexible, parents' needs are usually considered) |

Source: Modified schemes of Scheiwe a Willekens (2008: 9)

Institutional dimensions – new types

| Institutional dimensions | Mutual parental assistance | Kindergartens/ crèches in companies |
|--|--|---|
| Access | Universal | Targeted (employees) |
| Entitled person | Parents | Employed parents |
| Pedagogical concept | Mainly care (with respect to the health/right development of child) | Mainly care (with respect to the health/right development of child) |
| Professionalization of staff, payment | Parenthood as qualification (+ clean criminal records) | Health professionals and professionals in the social services – social workers or some accredited educational programs |
| | | |

Continuing...

| | | |
|----------------------------------|---|--|
| Fees | Fee – limit is given by law (tax free for caring parent) | Fee – set up by provider |
| Groups size | 5 children at maximum (including caring parent's own child) | 4 children at maximum |
| Financing bodies | Paying parent | Provider/employer (+ parental fees) |
| Administrative competence | Municipal authorities | <i>???</i> (necessity of new law) |
| Time patterns | Varying due to the agreement between paying and caring parents | Varying due to the agreement between employer and employees |

Some problematical aspects of childcare

- **„Magic border“** of 3 years
 - **Very low support for crèches and services for children under 3 years** (still labeled as a „*bad communistic institution*“, continual canceling, zero contribution from national government, relations to the eligibility for parental allowance, desire to the highest quality but →)
 - **Mutual parental assistance as a new solution?** (would help to legalize the black market with childcare and to reconciliation work and family BUT the question of quality, jeopardizing the competitiveness of private providers(?))
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Which type of childcare are preferred by parents?

| Preferred forms of childcare by parents of children from 0-6 | 6-11 months | | 1 – 2 years | | 2-3 years | | 3-4years | | Older 4 years | |
|--|-------------|------|-------------|------|-----------|------|----------|------|---------------|------|
| | M | W | M | W | M | W | M | W | M | W |
| By myself on parental leave | 4,8 | 96,5 | 4,5 | 91,5 | 3,5 | 76,5 | 2,3 | 34,4 | 1,3 | 13,0 |
| By partner on parental leave | 92,5 | 0,5 | 90,5 | 1,5 | 78,9 | 1,5 | 41,9 | 1,7 | 14,5 | 0,5 |
| (Both) parents' care – in rotation | 1,3 | 2,0 | 2,5 | 3,0 | 5,8 | 8,0 | 4,0 | 5,7 | 2,3 | 2,5 |
| Grandparents/relatives | 0,5 | 0,2 | 1,8 | 2,2 | 5,3 | 6,7 | 12,5 | 14,2 | 8,0 | 7,0 |
| Mutual assistance by other parents/friends | 0,5 | 0,2 | 0 | 0,2 | 1,8 | 2,2 | 2,3 | 3,7 | 3,3 | 1,8 |
| Au-pair/child minder/baby sitter | 0,3 | 0,2 | 0,5 | 0,7 | 1,0 | 1,2 | 4,0 | 3,5 | 3,0 | 3,0 |
| Crèches/kindergartens | 0,3 | 0,2 | 0,3 | 0,7 | 3,8 | 4,7 | 33,1 | 36,7 | 67,8 | 72,3 |

Source: Data RZV06 (Family and Employment VI)

Using limited contracts on temporary basis during parental leave

| | |
|---|--------|
| Yes, almost whole parental leave | 5,7 % |
| Yes, large part of my parental leave | 8,4 % |
| Yes, short period during parental leave | 19,8 % |
| No, I did not worked during parental leave at all | 66,1 % |

Source: Survey Rodina a zaměstnání VI./Family and Employment

So, when we consider in this respect that:

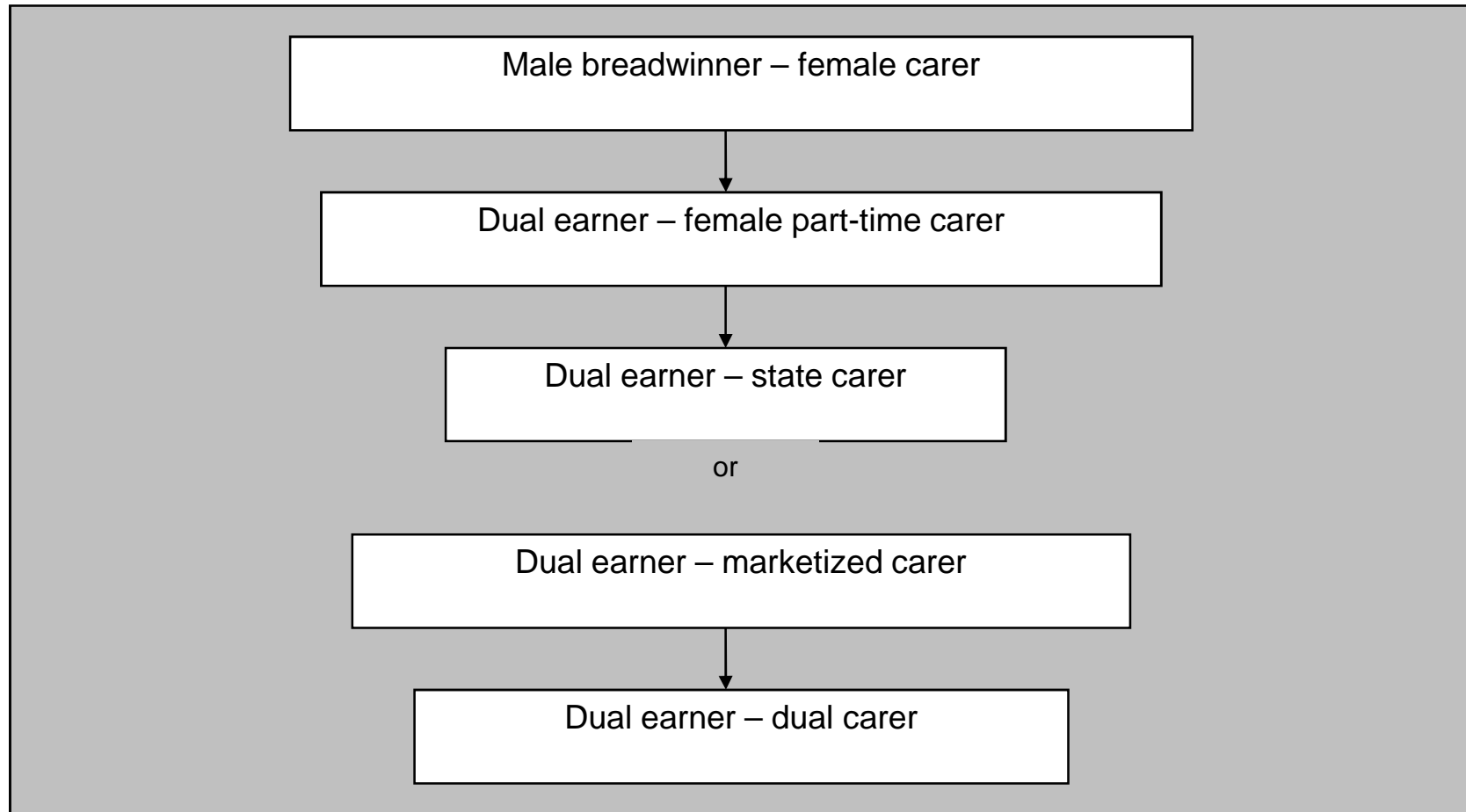
- **25% of children in the kindergartens are younger than 3** years of age AND
 - Some qualitative researches show that **2 years of age is sufficient for institutional childcare services** in some cases. Even if **not for whole day/for full time work** (see e.g. Bartakova, Plasova 2007, Bartakova 2008) AND
 - **Young generation of parents** would like to use childcare services more than older generation (Haskova, Krizkova 2003) AND
 - Almost **44% of parents have some kind of paid job** (in some way) during parental leave
 - We should more think about: **To what extend parents need to externalize the care out of the nuclear family?**
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Models regarding children – electoral programmes

| Institutional Dimension | Educational Model | Work-care Reconciliation Model |
|---------------------------------|---|--|
| Approach | Universal | Targeted |
| Entitled person | Children | Parent/ child with special needs |
| Pedagogic concept | Pedagogic objectives (education) | Mainly care |
| Size and organization of groups | Relatively large groups (similar to school classes) | Smaller groups |
| Fees | No school fees | Both (state and parental contribution) |

Scheiwe a Willekens (2008: 9)

Division of care between parents, state and market



Electoral programmes of the Czech political parties in regard to the model of care

| Political Party | Educational Model | Work-care Reconciliation Model |
|---------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------|
| Conservative | - - - | + + + |
| Neo-liberals | + | + + |
| Christian Democrats | - - | + + |
| Green Party | + | + + + |
| Social Democrats | + + | + |
| Communists | + + | + + |

Electoral programmes of the Czech political parties in regard to the division of care between parents

| Political Party | Male breadwinner – female carer | Dual earner – female part-time carer | Dual earner – marketized carer | Dual earner – state carer | Dual earner – dual carer |
|---------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| Conservative | + - | + | +++ | --- | + - |
| Neo-liberals | + - | ++ | ++ | + - | + - |
| Christian Democrats | + - | +++ | ++ | + - | -- |
| Green Party | --- | + | + | +++ | + |
| Social Democrats | + | + - | + | +++ | + - |
| Communists | + | + | + | +++ | + - |

Electoral programmes of the Czech political parties in regard to the model of care and the division of care between parents

| | Male breadwinner – female carer | Dual earner – female part-time carer | Dual earner – marketized carer | Dual earner – state carer | Dual earner – dual carer |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Educational Model | | | | Comm. Soc. Dem. Green | |
| Work-care Reconciliation Model | Comm. | Neo-lib. Crist. Dem. | Cons. | | |