The Impact of Partnering, Parenting and other Caring Responsibilities on SSH Work and Careers

Heloísa Perista and Pedro Perista
CESIS – Centro de Estudos para a Intervenção Social
Section 1. Introduction

Background: the POCARIM project

Between 2011 and 2014 a multinational team of academics and researchers collaborated on a research project funded by the European Commission under the Framework 7 Programme: Mapping the Population, Careers, Mobilities and Impacts of Advanced Research Degree Graduates in the Social Sciences and Humanities (POCARIM).¹

One aim of the project was to assess the impact of partnering, parenting and other caring responsibilities on Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH) work and careers. In this policy report we present the project’s key findings on this topic. Our findings are based on original work carried out in each of the POCARIM countries and which includes: a review of the literature, policy and existing data, as well as original empirical survey and interview research. In the conclusion we draw out the implications of our findings for policymakers.

The project consisted of two core phases. Each phase was coordinated by a key partner and carried out across the 13 countries by all partners.

Phase one of the research consisted of:

- A review of over 350 studies on the themes of: employment trends, career paths and graduate destinations; and impact, engagement and the contribution of SSH research (Gustafsson and Hansen, 2013).
- A review of policy approaches to interdisciplinarity, doctoral education as the first phase of an academic career, and responses to the economic crisis in terms of funding of doctoral education (Bitusíková, 2013).
- A review of existing statistical data sources on the population of social science and humanities researchers in the POCARIM countries and beyond (Canibano et al., 2013).

Phase two consisted of:

- An online survey of over 2,500 SSH doctoral graduates which asked a number of questions on the key themes of the project.² These included the perceived impacts of respondents’ work, and their international, intersectoral and interdisciplinary mobilities. Survey data was cleaned and analysed in SPSS and EXCEL (Kupiszewska et al., 2013).
- In-depth, qualitative interviews with 25 respondents in each of the thirteen POCARIM countries.³ Each interview was transcribed, translated into English if necessary, and entered into a single NVIVO project file for analysis.

¹ The countries in which the study was carried out were: France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey and the UK. For further details of the project see http://www.salford.ac.uk/nmsw/research/research-projects/pocarim-home.
² We would like to thank the respondents for their willingness to participate in the survey.
³ We would like to thank the respondents for their willingness to participate in the interviews.
The impact of partnering, parenting and other caring responsibilities

Partnering, parenting and other caring responsibilities constitute a serious challenge to the careers, mobilities and impacts of PhD holders involved in scientific research in the Social Sciences and Humanities.

The thorough review of existing research at national, European and international level that took place as part of the POCARIM project identified as an issue the extent to which women (and other groups to a lesser degree) were disadvantaged in research careers in a number of ways.

In terms of who drops out from scientific careers, it was pointed out that some authors specifically highlight that gender shapes success in academic labour markets, women tending more than male researchers to drop out both after completing PhDs and in the post-doctoral phase (Velichová, 2003; BMBF, 2008; Chlosta, Pull et al. 2010). This is due to key decisions related to the establishment of a family, as well as job insecurity and unclear prospects (BMBF, 2008).

Female as well as older academics, without academic family backgrounds, living in partnerships, in dual-career constellations and with children, are less frequently supported by mentors, have low funding support and are disadvantaged in the labour market in terms of recognition and academic promotion (Leemann, 2010).

Furthermore, women show a slower progression in their academic careers and lower job satisfaction compared with men (Casaca and Lopes, 2008; Perista, 2013).

A further important dimension of career progression requirements in scientific work relates to the expectation of mobility and the ability to frequent travels. Previous research (e.g. Ackers, 2005; Ackers and Gill, 2008) has stressed that career progression in scientific research demands a very high level of mobility in order to achieve the level of international experience necessary for progression. This high ‘expectation of mobility’ associated with science careers is discussed in the literature mainly in terms of its interplay with family status and parenting in particular (e.g. Perista, 2013). According to Ackers (2010), the growing pressure on researchers to be mobile as a necessary step toward internationalisation and excellence in research is likely to produce discriminatory outcomes for women, given their disproportionate caring responsibilities. Temporary and short-term stays can diminish women’s personal risks by making careers international without forcing relocation and significant disruptions to family lives (Ackers, 2008).

Research has thus shown (e.g. Ackers, 2004, 2005, 2008, 2010; Ackers and Gill, 2008; Perista, 2013) the relevance of placing emphasis on the importance of gender and life-course, partnering and parenting in particular, in the migration decision-making processes of male and female scientists.

In this vein, Cañibano et. al. (2013) shows how women researchers are adapting international mobility - occurring in specific ways in terms of frequency, duration, and destinations, i.e. temporary, flexible, and close to home - to fit gendered circumstances and conditions - occurring at specific times in terms of ages and career-stages. These patterns indicate that women may be responding to both the opportunities of international mobility, and to constraints in the ways that they undertake it, permitting women to fulfil both work and family responsibilities.

Evidence from the POCARIM survey and qualitative interviews contributes to further explore how these family-driven gendered dimensions, parenting in particular, actually impact differently on men’s and women’s migration decision-making processes, and how this gendered differential ability to respond to the ‘expectation of mobility’ represents a key factor in understanding the progression and impacts of women and men in science careers in the SSH.
Section 2. Evidence and Analysis: Discussion of Main Findings

Partnering, Parenting and other Caring Responsibilities

Partnering (/marriage) and parenting have strong impacts in the lives of women and men in science careers in the SSH.

It is almost like if, as a Portuguese female respondent to the POCARIM interviews said, having an ‘abnormal’ life, i.e. being single and childless and having no personal life, was a pre-condition to be able to fully commit to scientific work.

I am single. I don’t have children. If I did not have an ‘abnormal’ life, I think I would never manage to do so much. I explained you what my life was in the PHD year. I live alone and I have support from my family, in what concerns food. I also have an employee but I don’t have family responsibilities. If I had I could not have made so many things. There were some friends of mine who told me that I could manage to do things because I didn’t have children. They said I have children and you have the PhD. It is not true. Everyone has its own course. I didn’t decide to make it. It happened. The more I got focused on my professional career, the more I got focused. My personal life was affected. I can say that I’m very tired because I had to finish my last functions, but I never take a rest, neither on Saturdays, nor on Sundays. I’m always working which is not normal, right? [PT17].

One key implication of partnering was that it shaped the location and mobility decisions of the respondents. Access to opportunities was important for dual-career academic couples, for example, who preferred to settle in cities and regions with a larger number of potential employers. Others had their range of opportunities limited by partners who refused to move from a particular place due to professional or extended family or social ties. These factors became more prominent with the birth of children. In particular, the freedom to undertake work-related mobility was curtailed.

It’s gotten complicated because our oldest son starts elementary school next year, so it’s not so simple to move, and then anyway the contracts that you get abroad are basically for two years or a bit more, and so you’re moving four people for a two-year contract. Really I’d prefer to think about that in seven or eight years when if I’m still in a situation like I am now, then I could try to find something part-time, elsewhere in Italy, where I could commute there on a weekly basis, maybe leave the children three days a week and then come home, and do something new like that [IT22].

Especially women in time of pregnancy and following maternity leave have to reassess what direction their career will have. Almost in every case the family is first on the list of priorities and it influences also their next work activities. For example, one respondent from Germany decided to refuse a job offer as a professor in Switzerland, which could have moved her very high on her career path, because the offer came at the time of her first pregnancy.

In my personal case, I had an offer to a post of a professorship in Switzerland in the end of last year. That was when I recognized I was pregnant. I decided not to handle both because I know lot of women who are turned off in their professional or private lives. [Interviewer: OK that’s interesting. Was that a difficult decision?] Of course it was. But it has nothing to do with leaving comfort zones or whatever is said about the glass-ceiling phenomenon. It’s more the practical lack of time and support. And probably an infrastructure to raise a child with a challenging new post on the top [DE03].

Also deciding whether to migrate or not weighs on both partners. This issue becomes difficult around the time of the birth of children, especially in cases where only one partner can migrate. It opens the question whether to leave, upgrade their skills and earn money, or to stay at home close to the family. Many respondents chose the first alternative. Generally men leave for work more
often, even though personal contact with the family is limited to a short time during the weekends or less.

In the long term, definitely; in the short term, I’m not so sure. I just applied for a 3-month scholarship in London, if that works out, I’ll go this spring, but it’s not certain yet. She for sure has to stay here in the spring; she’s studying and has a job too. So if I get my grant, I don’t know what we’ll do. But 3 months isn’t that long and London isn’t so far [HU03].

Some others, mostly women, chose to stay. This was the option of the following French married woman who put her project of moving to the United States on hold, in order to support her husband’s new business; now that she has her PhD ‘it is his time’.

But the project was to do visiting in the United States but the thing is that my husband is creating a company now. He is in the phase of incubation and so it takes a lot of energy, a lot of time and he needs me. So when I was doing my Ph.D., my husband helped me a lot. He was very supportive and everything was about me/my Ph.D., me/my Ph.D. and now that I have my Ph.D. it is his time. So I have to support him and it is a pleasure to do it. And we will see what happens when we start up. If it works well, fantastic. If it doesn’t, he will go back to his job as an engineer and we will try to move to the United States for a year [FR06].

In order to manage the necessity of mobility in their professional lives, some respondents reported spending extended or frequent periods away from their partners or families, that is, ‘living apart together’.

Couples where one works in science and the other one does not have to adapt their current paths. In some cases one of them must be prepared to give up his/her career for the other one. Naturally, after some time this decision must be revised in order to avoid misunderstanding and ensure stable family life and career opportunities for both. As a French married man with two children reported:

I have to admit that I was typical selfish PhD student at the early stage of my career because I had only one thing in mind, which was finding the best university. And then after three years of PhD I will move and then I will move again et cetera. And most of my friends I had at that time have this kind of pathway, changing of country year after year, and I wanted to do that at the very beginning. Now I have got two children and the older is three-years old. I know my wife made a lot of sacrifices in her own career. She is a psychologist, so it is not that difficult for her to find job opportunities but it is also a domain where so many people are asking for jobs. So I am lucky enough, she is a good psychologist and she always finds jobs but it is hard for her to start again after two or three years. So for those reasons, it has become more and more important for me to have stability, at least in my location, personal location even if I would like to continue to change at professional level. That is why we are looking for place where we have good luck to find a large branch of company or public organization having interest or it might be one day that they have interest in having an anthropologist like me. And the conclusion is that, if that job maybe, we have more chance to achieve that, that is here in the countryside of the Burgundy region [FR18].

Sometimes it is difficult to fully adapt to each other. Especially if neither of partners wants to give up their career or a good current position.

At the same time, of course, the dual career, it’s always the wife who stays behind and the husband who either doesn’t go or goes somewhere. And for me my career is very important and he didn’t follow us because his career is also very important. [Interviewer: He was not able or it was not possible for him to move?] It’s always possible but he didn’t want to because he has a very successful independent architecture office in Geneva which he didn’t just want to drop, which I understand, also [CH01].
In the case of the following French married woman, she had to adapt her initial choice for a destination to finish her PhD to the better employment possibilities her husband had in Paris.

Well, for instance, the choice to go to Paris to finish my PhD, it was a decision we took together because my other idea was to go to Quebec. But the private reason was that my husband didn’t have any real opportunities of finding a job in Quebec whereas he had already good contacts in Paris. And also inside France, the choice of Paris was directed by the fact that the best possibilities for him was in Paris [FR21].

At the age when it is common to start a family, women scientists have to decide whether to postpone the beginning of their career path until after raising children, or to try to combine the two. Only a few of the respondents decided to postpone starting their family to later time because of work.

The following two female respondents, both from Slovakia, illustrate this option for postponing family formation, in order to be able to pursue a career:

I never thought about giving up family because of career. But I couldn’t imagine being on a maternity leave for 10 years. I feel I’d like to have a family one day. [Interviewer: What is more important for you? Your professional or your private life?] My professional life is quite important for me. I want to concentrate on it and I want my partner to accept it. When I feel good at work, I feel happy in the relationship. Work really helps me. Work solved many of my problems in life [SK13].

There cannot be a separate path between family and career. I don’t have children yet, so the career path was the easier choice where I didn’t have to face more complicated tasks. There was always a huge support from my family as well as my partner. I’d like to have a family in the future, but I also want to continue in what I’m doing [SK22].

If a woman opts for a family, she must decide how long she will stay on parental leave. In every country the length and conditions of parental leave are different. In some cases the female parent loses her job whilst on maternity leave because in the meantime her contract expires. For example, a contract might be for a limited two year period only; for a woman who already has a career, it is difficult to leave and cut herself off from professional contacts, projects, status and money. During the first years, when children are fully dependent on adult care, it is the woman who usually gives up science to raise the children. Even if she keeps in touch with academia throughout that time, her work commitment cannot be so great.

Even when the children have grown, other family-related responsibilities, traditionally imposing on women, still have an impact. As the following Latvian woman stated, domestic work and household tasks cannot be avoided:

The children have grown. But still they need me and they get sick. I don’t have to take them by their hands anymore, but still dinner has to be made and floor has to be washed. That’s daily, you cannot avoid it. Sometimes you can delay it or make someone else do it, but it has to be done [LV10].

For men, instead, as reported by the following French married men with children, family acts more as a supportive structure rather than an inhibiting one.

I’d not say that the family is an inhibition, considering that the different and rather instable professional phases have been made sustainable thanks to the family. I would never be able to survive with my dreams in social sciences and history without the support of my family [FR07].
The tensions referred to above are often captured in policy circles by the concept of ‘work-life balance’ or ‘reconciliation of work and family life.’ Taken together this complex web of time pressures manifests itself in decisions to delay or forego parenting, and especially motherhood.

The thing was to have children as late as possible, that was common knowledge and we even joked about it among ourselves [IT07].

Or, as one Slovakian married women reported, in principle she still has six years, even though she was already told that ‘someone like’ her ‘shouldn’t have children’.

We still don’t have children. We’d like to wait until 35, so we still have 6 years. But we’ll see. I was told someone like me. I’m of the opinion that you shouldn’t have children if you cannot provide [SK12].

There was also a common reference to the increasing prevalence of divorce but it is not clear if this is simply a reflection of societal processes as a whole or a specific feature of research careers.

Besides parenting and partnering, other caring responsibilities also had an impact on the work and career of some respondents. As one Norwegian single man reported, elderly parents may constitute ‘an important factor’:

I’m not married and I don’t have children, but I have had elderly parents, er, my mother died last year, so until then I… that was an important factor [NO05].

The situation becomes more challenging when a serious health problem in the close family adds to a first pregnancy followed by the birth of a second child, as it was the case of the following Swiss married woman, who is now ‘paying’ for the longer time she took to complete her PhD and start publishing.

### Anne [CH12]: trying to combine the need for publications with health and care issues
Anne is a French woman who got her master degree in economics, option development in France. Since there was not a lot in development studies in her home country she decided to apply for a PhD in a specialised research institute in Switzerland, where she got a post as teaching assistant.

Her PhD was accepted in 1999 but she only submitted in 2008. Her thesis took over nine years to be completed due to a number of reasons. In 2005, her brother had Leukaemia so she had to give him her bone marrow, having to stop for one year. Following her recovery Anne got married and had a child. It then became ‘very hard to focus on writing’.

Furthermore, back then, since she was six years of teaching assistant she didn’t have a job anymore and she was unemployed and the condition in Switzerland to get unemployment benefits was to find a new job and so she ‘had to do a lot. I was asked to find what they call intermediate revenue for them to accept to go on paying me my unemployment benefits. So I had to work and to do a lot of things’.

She managed to submit her PhD but she was never able to publish on her findings. In 2010, she got pregnant again and had her second child. Since her second pregnancy she ‘had a big, big let-down on writing and it took me one year to write 18 pages in English with all my teaching and everything I am doing’, having two kids.

Anne now believes that taking such a long time to complete her PhD was very negative for her career, and that she is now ‘paying for it. Because now I am facing people who have finished their PhD in a very shorter time and so they are not my age but more advanced in terms of publications’.
And having publications ‘that’s what mattered in the CV. That’s what mattered. It doesn’t matter how many hours I am teaching. It doesn’t matter how many kids I have. It doesn’t matter how many research projects I was in, what matters at the end is what you wrote.’

Or, as in the case of the following Norwegian married women, at a certain point her ‘career changed’; when she had to deal both with her husband’s cancer and a child with psychic problems:

“We went to Greece and there was no problem, I could take my family with me and they were agreed and so at that point my career changed. After that, er we have had some serious illness in the family, er, my husband has had cancer and I also have a child who has some major psychic problems, and of course that has influenced me a lot. That has been ... the last four years has been very tough. So in that period I must say that the job has been just surviving doing what I have to do and family pressures [NO02].

The Work/Family Articulation

At certain times, the family influences the flow of work of everyone. At these times people change their life priorities, work responsibilities and their career ambitions. Only a few PhD holders who participated in the research did not intend to have a family in a foreseeable future. This decision was closely linked with career path and a fear of complications that could occur with childcare. A German woman who has a long-term partner but no children expresses a common view that women must make a decision to ‘either pursue a career or have children’, suggesting the impossibility of combining professional research with children. She relates this directly to working hours (and out of hours working) and perceptions of ‘commitment’:

“We are not planning any kind of family because I want to do my professorship and I think there is no time for children (laughs). And he too wants to earn real money before we can do anything else. [Interviewer: Do you not think it would be possible to do both, become a professor and have children?] No because now I have a 20-hour week and I work about 33. So the overtime is not paid so there is no time for nothing. [Interviewer: Is that a difficult sacrifice to make?] Yes, I am not very happy but I think it is the only way. Because if I don’t work I think my supervisor next time there is a question about my contract or whether to prolong my contract I need his support and if he thinks I am lazy or whatever he will not support me on my contract [DE10].

The following German woman who is married with one child talks of time pressures requiring women to decide between motherhood and professional life, especially in a specific stage over the life course:

“The problem is concentration of the ‘rush-hour’ of life courses. Especially women experience the gap between academic qualification and family life. There is no question why motherhood is, if ever possible, in the mid to end thirties or even early forties. If I turn back to empirical field research I would like to combine it with a post for a junior professorship. But there is time and personal support missing [DE03].

The influence of life course stage was also noted by a Norwegian woman who now holds a full position and did her PhD when her children ‘were grown enough’:

“I’m lucky to have a full support from the family. I have currently a full position obtained 5 months ago. When doing PhD my children were grown enough, so it was not so problematic. My husband was supportive enough for me to concentrate on the work I did [NO11].

It is interesting to note that male respondents also raised these issues. The following Norwegian male researcher identifies a ‘critical period’ in terms of achieving his planned career progression into
academic research was the doctoral/post-doctoral transition. He suggests this is much harder for women, which constitutes gender discrimination, though recognising that family is a ‘top factor’ affecting his own career.

What I am emphasising is this period of just after finishing PHD and getting forward from that. And that was a critical junction you know, I can see it clearly in my case. And if I hadn’t got the post doc then it could all go very different. And it is even more complicated of course for women, which I see in the case of my wife right now. As a male researcher I am still in a much better position to somehow manage through this period than female researchers. There is another layer of complexity for them in this period. I would like you to take really seriously the gender dimension and possibly this discrimination of women in this in the funding possibilities. I can see it clearly from my wife and it does affect the family. Many researchers are married, so the career path for women in early post doc area I think is something that you can easily find like low hanging fruits, and problems that should be addressed, and especially when it comes to maternity and the problem of combining early post doc periods of research, and small kids and family life for female researchers. [...] And family is absolutely important and my wife is a researcher as well, early in her career as she is applying for post doc now, so I have to, and I gladly adjust my plans to her career opportunities and plans for the future. I have a small kid, which also adds some constraints on my work time and future plans. So you can click out family is absolutely top, top importance in our portfolio of factors that affect my career [NO18].

Time and temporalities emerges in complex and multi-faceted ways in the interviews. Time use and time pressure often show intertwined in the respondents’ reports, also among married men with children.

I have three children of various ages, and each child need its father’s involvement in its own way. I have children aged 4, 10, and 16, these are different worlds. To be a good father, and being a good father is a good commandment for me, so I try to cooperate with them, influence their minds, help them develop in the direction I want. It definitely is a big factor limiting my freedom of activity; the time I have at my disposal is limited and isn’t made of rubber [PL19].

My problem is that I have to continuously think about what I am going to do with my time – am I going to do work business or am I going to spend time with my family. And all the time I spend for my family is time I don’t spend for work, and vice versa. And this compromise I have to make is probably the most abhorrent thing I have in my life right now. I continuously have to think – is the thing I’m doing important enough for me not to spend time with my children, and conversely. For example now, I don’t know, if I do something with my children the whole weekend, and I don’t do any work that has a deadline, it can respectively affect in some way to my income [LV09].

These and other problematic issues related to the articulation between academic work and family, parenting in particular, are mentioned by a female German respondent when referring to the features of her research community:

I already mentioned that I think academia and family at first sight might look perfect. But, from my personal experiences and also what I could learn from the community it is very difficult. I think for two reasons. One is mobility and the other is the type of character of professors. You have to look for yourself and must be to a certain extent egoistic, otherwise you won’t succeed in the system. From my female colleagues, I think there is only one or two who have children. All other female professors I know say that the decision to stay in academia is a decision against children. This is a horror in my opinion. Because I think if you
have succeeded it can work very well. But to get the job then children are problematic. There are exceptions; there are quite a few colleagues with good families. Also in my environment there have been positions where there was a lot of exchange every two to three years and all of them have been divorced. So it is also difficult [DE16].

The following Portuguese woman argues that ‘the thing that changed my [her] life completely was having a child’. The devaluation of women researchers, due to maternity leave-related reasons, makes the situation even more problematic.

By that time it was absolutely easy. The thing that changed my life completely was having a child. My partner is a PhD in Biology so he is fully aware...though in the beginning of the PhD I was single and thus I owed satisfactions to no one. But even after that, I never felt any problems and rather much incentive and sharing. However, if it was today, that would be problematic because there isn’t the slight understanding... I once wrote an article on women in science and maternity issues where I say that the woman researcher is not valued. There isn’t a valorization because it lacks will, because six months do not interrupt a career, at least the way I see it [PT11].

As a counterpoint to the above points, one male respondent reported that, when recruiting, he favoured candidates who had demonstrated the high-level time-management and multi-tasking skills evidenced by those managing careers and families:

I think from the other side, because I am sitting now on the selection committee, I think it is very positive when people have a family and children. Because it really demonstrates that they are able to do everything. To manage family plus career. It is also an issue of whether you are a stable or reliable person, so there is a signalling from being a family, which is positive [DE16].

On top of these practical problems were perceptions of cultural expectations of mothering which placed the burden of care on women. This sense that women ought to devote themselves to child-rearing was expressed by a number of female interviewees, though they did not say why, if it was necessary at all, it could not be a male responsibility. The following German woman, married with two children is now working in publishing in Germany. She raises a number of issues all connected in some way to time use. She starts by saying that, as a married woman with a partner, she felt that one of them should devote all of their time to the children. She articulated this as a choice in the framework of a two-parent family with adequate income. It is not clear why she felt it should be her as the mother.

It is hard because you need to work a lot but on the other hand you are quite flexible with organising your time. So I think the decision was not because I wanted children, I think it was more that I wanted at least one parent to spend time with the children and it seemed to be more logical that it was me. So this is a slightly different rationalisation I think [DE12].

Another German woman describes herself, somewhat pejoratively, as a ‘sitting hen’. She is married with three young children and was a housewife at the time of interview. She suggests that children need ‘time’ with their mother/parent and made the conscious choice to spend time with her young children. She is happy with her family situation but realises that it will affect her professional progression.

Barbara [DE17]: not in paid employment, being a mum
Barbara is a German woman who holds a PhD in Geography. She got married 11 years ago and when she completed her doctoral thesis she already had her first child, who is now 6. After she finished her PhD she worked at a research institute as a scientific assistant. She had a very short part-time
work and. ‘It was basically perfect. It was a small job, a part-time job of ten hours. And this fitted my idea of being a mum very well. The problem was that you don’t achieve so much in ten hours.’

She got pregnant again and her job contract expired. ‘I got my twins [who are now 3 years old] in the meantime. They didn’t have to keep me employed, as my contract expired before the legal maternity protection. That was very difficult. It was difficult, because pregnancy in this field – as nice as this people are there – it is not in their plans ... it was eyed with suspicion.’

Furthermore she had to leave her job earlier than expected and she had to stay in the hospital since the 25th week of her pregnancy. Her boss did not really like to see this and could not understand why she did not come to the institute. The institute finally accepted her situation. ‘They sent me flowers. And the junior director was more appreciative. They also told me to get in touch, when I’m ready. But I was bitter anyway.’

Then her twins were born and she has dedicated one hundred percent of her time to concentrate on raising her children. Barbara describes herself as ‘a mum who is a sitting hen’. She believes that her family background ‘is the most important! This is absolutely a constraint for a career. A millstone around the neck.’ She declared to be happy with her current situation, at least regarding her personal and family life. ‘Very happy! With my private situation anyway! And occupational: yes and no. My priority is looking after my children. But the job is certainly missing. The professional development is just placed back at the moment. For me this is not a top priority.’

Although this view is very common in Germany it is also expressed in other contexts. The following Slovakian mother makes a similar comment. She talks about the difficulty of finding the balance between family and professional life and suggests this is a particular problem for women. Her response echoes the sense of guilt many professional women express in relation to their mothering. 

This line of work always carries the risk that you’ll have to stay active on your maternity leave. You have to be careful to balance it out otherwise it’s the kids that are affected. On the other hand I think that a woman also wants to do what men do and it’s hard finding the meaning after maternity leave. I don’t think this is the way for a person who has different priorities or ideas about life. Mothers often give it up for the family. It is never easy to get back on track after being home for a year or two. You have to function differently. I was really worried that my children suffer because of it. It was really hard and even though I try to balance it out as well as possible, I still feel I could give my kids more [SK14].

The same sense of self-penalisation for not being there when her child needed her was expressed by a Portuguese married woman mother of two small children who, although ‘loving’ travelling and highly valuing mobility experiences, has ‘had to refuse and reject several things’.

**Teresa [PT10]: mobility costs dear when one has children**

Teresa worked as a secondary school teacher before becoming a literature teacher at a Portuguese university, where she recently got a definitive appointment as an auxiliary professor.

When she applied for a post at her current university, she and her family were living 130 km away, in another city where she used to give classes at a secondary school and where her husband teaches at the local university. At the time, her daughter was 10 months old. Her daughter came with her. Since this was her home town, Teresa had family there who could support her taking care of the baby, who stayed with a nanny, during the week. They both returned home for the weekend. Eventually, the all family then including also a second child moved to their current location and it is now up to her husband to commute.
Teresa has many experiences of international mobility, mostly short-term mobility to attend conferences or give lectures. In a year she can be away for quite some times. Last year was atypical because she had a sabbatical leave. She was in East-Timor the whole of January and two weeks more in May-June. She was for three weeks-one month in Santiago de Compostela [Spain] but, in this case, ‘I was not completely out as it is relatively near and I was able to come home sometimes’. And she had several stays in India, usually for a week.

She would like to go somewhere abroad for a semester but she cannot do that due to family reasons. ‘These mobility experiences require effort. As the expression says, they cost dear. First, they require a big, strong and consistent support network in family terms. Second, I am never completely away, I am never completely at ease. It’s hard, it’s hard... Sometimes it's not just the time one is away, it’s also the distance. I have been there in Santiago and I was there for almost a month but there was the feeling that if something was needed, I would quickly be here. (...) While East-Timor is on the other side of the world…’

When she was in East-Timor one time the phone rang at 4am and it was her son telling her that ‘he had puked and that he was home alone because the grandmother had gone to the neighbour's home and the first telephone number he remembered to call was mine. It wasn't nothing serious but very penalising for me.’

Teresa thus struggles between the sense of guilt she experiences whenever she is away from their children and her love for travelling. ‘It is very enriching. When I go to a congress it is important to disseminate and to present my work but it is also a widening of the network of contacts, to meet other people and to understand other standpoints regarding the things we are working with. I love this mobility.’

One respondent suggests that the problems are less severe in Norway where the culture and policy encourage a more active involvement of men in care work:

> Since we are Norwegians we have quite a high level of gender equalities so it’s Okay for women to be directors and my husband is comfortable with doing his part of the work at home [NO19].

As noted, many of the implications of partnering and family more commonly and to a greater degree affected women. Most men, for instance, did not see family as major obstacle to career. In contrast, some women reported that family obligations were their highest priority, and that they had postponed their careers.

Other women keep on working, although according the highest priority to their families. The following Latvian woman mother of ‘many children’ invested in her PhD as a pathway to ‘have more opportunities to go somewhere else’, in an academic context she dislikes. However, this female doctor, who defines her family as her ‘essence’, has favoured security and never opted for applying for a program that could support her studies or work abroad, also because she lacks confidence in her own capabilities.

> Well in essence, my life to a great extent is my family. I have many children. It is my identity. My essence. And that means that I do not live only my life. I live our life. Life of a family. I definitely need quite a lot of stability. I need security. I need security; I need to know that I will be able to provide them all, all that they need. And in our country it is not that easy. I have experienced all kinds of situations, when... well... How to say that more solidly... when you have dumb superiors, whom you have to obey. I find it very hard. I want to be free from this dependence and oppression. And I think, that doctoral degree for me was from this
perspective. Because if I have doctoral degree, then I am more... I have more opportunities to
go somewhere else. It is important. It bears a weight, when you are a doctor. I never could
orient myself for such longer study or work travel abroad, because of the family. I have to
watch children. May be that is an excuse, for my not so.... how to put it.... well, maybe I am
not as smart. May be I would not get there. In those programs. And then I excuse, that
because I have my family it is not possible. We will never know that [LV03].

Another Latvian female respondent expressed a similar point. She had ‘subordinated’ herself, her
‘job and the rest’ to her family. Although career is not her ‘priority’, this academic woman
acknowledges that she ‘might have achieved far more’.

The motivation, firstly, well, working in a bank, you’re completely tied down from 8 am to 6
pm. I wanted a free work schedule so I could see my child, because, analyzing that time
period now, I could have possibly achieved more in the science field and all, but I guess my
family was of priority to me, so I subordinated myself and my job and the rest to my family,
and that’s why it was important to go to work and the university seemed like a perfect option
to me, because you can plan your lectures and then I could plan my day. I gave up many
lectures purely because I wanted to spend more time with my children. I have many plans,
ideas, but I somehow try to leave more time for my children and family. [Interviewer: I
presume it’s the current period of your life where your children are little and all.] Yes, maybe.
I’ve thought about and I have talked about it with my husband that I could have achieved far
more, but that’s not my priority, not career. I do as much as I can, what interests me; at the
same time my family has the priority. That is my position. Of course, what concerns my
career, I have missed a lot. Those options could have been much better [LV06].

In some countries, such as Slovakia, motherhood and maternity leave were associated with the loss
of work and exit from academic careers, due to the fact that contracts were short-term and
institutions were not obliged to hold positions open. A Slovakian 33 years old researcher mentioned
this fact as a reason to postponing starting her family, as well to carefully ‘schedule’ pregnancy:

My contract was renewed three times and next year I have to enter the competition again.
My colleague did, and her contract was renewed for three years, then she needed to become
pregnant as soon as possible to stay on maternity leave for a year and then to come back
quickly, there would be still a place for her. This is how female researchers have to plan their
life they would have at least a small chance to come back. That is exactly the situation at our
institute. During the last two years there were 6 or 7 women who went on maternity leave.
And soon there will be another boom, because we are compelled to. I have some colleagues
at the same age. I’m 33 and I think that I would like to have a family already, but I have to
wait for the renewal of my contract [SK25].

Personal Social Networks
Personal social networks may be an important way of securing informal support. The POCARIM
respondents mentioned their parents most frequently in cases of helping with children’s’ upbringing.
Not all of them had this opportunity to live close to their parents. Many respondents had to move to
other parts of country or abroad because of work. If they can, they stay close to their families and
use the possibility of support from parents, who help them in many ways.

This family support is even more crucial for single-parents. The following Slovakian woman got
divorced during her studies when her daughter was still a baby. She was only able to ‘fully
concentrate’ on her work because her parents helped her ‘very much’:

[Interviewer: Have you been on any trips abroad?] No, though I have been offered it during
my doctorate. [Interviewer: Where were you supposed to go?] Czech Republic. [Interviewer:
Why didn’t you go?] Mainly because my priority was to finish my doctorate on time and fulfill my post-grad duties. Also, my personal life played a big role at the time. [Interviewer: Because of your child?] Yes, and that was a three month trip and it was impossible to pull everything together. So I declined immediately. [Interviewer: How do you manage to coordinate your personal life with your work?] It’s not so much of a problem now. Everyone parent has to work and it’s the same in any family although I got divorced during my studies. After she went to pre-school and now school, the situation is a little easier. She is now 7 so there’s no problem now. [Interviewer: How did you manage during your doctorate when she was only 1?] There were some problems, of course, but my parents helped me very much so I could fully concentrate on my responsibilities [SK03].

Other respondents, such as the two following Latvian women, made a similar point, although referring in particular to her mother:

Well, I have to say big thanks to my family, because when I started to study, it came to… When there were first periods of theory and writing... In such way, I have to say huge thanks. And my mother had at least a bit of strength earlier. ‘Go, write!’, ‘I’ll weed this.’ ‘Go, write! We’ll manage without you.’ Without that it would be very hard [LV21].

My mother helps a lot, my husband helps, when he can, of course [LV12].

Interestingly, this last woman also refers the ‘help’ her husband gives, but ‘of course’ only ‘when he can’. Men are thus still perceived as having the choice to care or not to care, i.e. they may or may not ‘help’ women in care work, paid work being their main responsibility.

A Slovakian married woman, who ‘wouldn’t manage without grandmas’, introduced the topic of financial security. For her, the option was to reduce her contractual working time, after she got pregnant while doing her doctorate.

I got pregnant during my doctorate. When we did the dissertation exam with the paper (in the middle of PhD studies – an exam and a few chapters of the thesis), I already had a two month old baby. My mother took care of him whilst I wrote my paper. He was one when I finished. [Interviewer: How did you cope with everything?] I wouldn’t manage without grandmas. Before I got pregnant, I changed my work contract to 60% so I’d manage the doctorate as well. You can’t live off the money they give you in Bratislava [SK09].

Another female respondent from Slovakia mentioned that her parents/father supported her also on a financial level. She did not have enough money to move to another city to find a job and start a new life there:

To tell you the truth, if it wasn’t my father, we wouldn’t be able to even cover the rent. My father bought us a flat [SK12].

Despite the importance attached to personal social networks, and to the role of grandparents/grandmothers in particular, the impacts of the current economic and social crisis in terms of job precariousness and unemployment may lead some PhD holders in the SSH to reconsider their former options and to move where a job is available.

Yes, they help out a lot. We have strong ties and it’s great they can be with their grandchildren. That’s why we didn’t want to move. But if the situation is so bad and my husband won’t have a job or I won’t have a job, we would have to reconsider [PL16].

Family and Mobility

Mobility, and/or immobility, was the most frequent issue when the POCARIM respondents talked about family.
Work in science and academia brings a lot of opportunities to migrate to other universities and research centres. If our respondents want to increase their qualifications, they search for a post-doc position or professorship at universities in other countries. There they can participate in international projects and gain new experiences in research. The expectation of mobility in academic careers is also underpinned by the role of mobility in building networks and collaborations, disseminating work and maintaining a professional profile. The consequences of immobility therefore are in many cases to inhibit or bring to an end an academic career.

It is important to place international mobility practices and opportunities in context. For example, personal dispositions might inhibit or motivate mobility, as might family situations (children, elderly parents) at different times. Such contexts may also make certain locations more desired than others, and mobility or immobility may therefore follow. These factors and others, with particular gender dimensions, can have a significant impact on mobility practices.

One of the objectives of the POCARIM survey was to get some insight into international mobility undertaken by PhD holders in the SSH. This was examined by asking questions about the frequency of international collaboration and the extent of international mobility. The following table shows the frequency of international collaboration and sex, partnering and parenting.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency of international collaboration</th>
<th>Almost always work in collaboration with partners from abroad</th>
<th>Regular contacts with partners abroad</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>30.5</td>
<td>41.7</td>
<td>19.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>24.4</td>
<td>41.5</td>
<td>25.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse/partner</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With partner</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>28.5</td>
<td>41.9</td>
<td>21.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No partner</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>22.6</td>
<td>40.4</td>
<td>29.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With children</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>28.1</td>
<td>42.9</td>
<td>20.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No children</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>26.2</td>
<td>40.4</td>
<td>25.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: POCARIM

The majority of the POCARIM survey respondents, both male and female, were occasionally in contact with partners/colleagues abroad, followed by a large minority who were in regular contact with partners/colleagues abroad, and also quite a large minority who were never in contact with partners/colleagues abroad. Having a partner and especially having children has some impact on the frequency of international collaboration, which tends to be more occasional or even to never occur.

The impacts of family on international mobility were also highlighted by most POCARIM interviews respondents.

*Family definitely did have a great impact on my career planning. It influenced the decision not to go to another place for work. I commute now but it is still possible to live together with my husband and my children. So the decision for this city was basically family-related [DE11].*

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For a detailed analysis on this topic, see POCARIM Policy Report 10 on international mobility (Coey, 2014).
Everything depends on family factors. Our respondents who were single and had no caring responsibilities at the time of research did not see any obstacles with mobility. The following two Swiss men expressed how having ‘no obligations’ gives them the ability to ‘do anything’:

*I have been quite flexible, so I have no family so can do anything* [CH14].

*Family is a big issue, it’s nice to be closer to my family, yeah I remembered when I was working overseas for 10 years, I did not see my family that much, so I’m in much better contact with them. Particularly my parents, but I’m not married, I have no children, so I have absolutely no obligations. I will get married I will have children eventually, and that will be consideration. But now I’m very mobile* [CH20].

Contrary, if our respondents had a family, they had limited options to undertake these work stays. Medium and long-term mobility present specific challenges.

*But I confess it would be extremely hard for me to move to another country, especially considering I have small children and a husband. It would be extremely difficult. If life leads to that, ok, but it is not on my perspectives* [PT05].

Many of them usually go only for short-term stays or conferences, as the following Hungarian man reported:

*I would say that now I am in a somewhat more difficult situation – our children are small, and there are always everyday issues to deal with, so I wouldn’t be able to leave for even a month. At most I can go to international conferences, and be away for 4 to 5 days* [HU04].

The extent of international mobility is thus shaped by having a spouse/partner and parenting in particular, as well as by gender, as shown by the outcomes of the POCARIM survey.

According to the survey, mobility was not necessarily lower for people with children. Males are slightly more mobile than females, including when they have children.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Parental status</th>
<th>(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Has a child/children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>85.1</td>
<td>86.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>86.5</td>
<td>87.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>83.9</td>
<td>84.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: POCARIM

The shares of respondents with mobility experience (of any type: short-term, medium-term or long-term) are similar for those with and without children, even a little bit higher for those with children. This is true for both men and women.

The explanation of the slightly higher mobility of respondents who have children could be that they may be older, so had more time to experience some kind of mobility. Therefore, analysing the data by time since awarding PhD or by age might bring additional insight.

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5 We would like to acknowledge the contribution of Debbie Millard to this section of the report, namely regarding part of the analysis of the findings of the POCARIM survey.
Figure 1 suggests that among respondents who were recently awarded a PhD degree, childless persons had higher mobility than those with a child/children: among respondents who were awarded PhD less than 2 years earlier, the share of persons with mobility experience was 77 per cent for the childless and 69 per cent for those having a child or children. Among respondents with four years since PhD or more, the opposite was true, i.e. the childless had lower mobility.

The frequency and duration of international mobility experiences also clearly relates to marital and parental status of men and women scientists.

Table 3. Respondents by extent of international mobility experience and sex, partnering and parenting (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professionally motivated travels/stays abroad</th>
<th>Often or regularly in travels of up to one month</th>
<th>At least two times in medium-term stays abroad of over one month to one year</th>
<th>At least once in long-term stays abroad for more than a year</th>
<th>More than once in long-term stays abroad for more than a year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>66.1</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>12.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>58.1</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>11.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse / partner</td>
<td>With partner</td>
<td>63.1</td>
<td>21.0</td>
<td>11.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No partner</td>
<td>57.3</td>
<td>23.0</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children</td>
<td>With children</td>
<td>63.6</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>9.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No children</td>
<td>59.8</td>
<td>25.1</td>
<td>14.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: POCARIM

On average in the POCARIM countries, 85% of the respondents to the survey who replied to the question about mobility had some international mobility experience. Not surprisingly, short-term international trips referred to conferences, consultancy, business trips, meetings with collaborators, study visits, training and other short-term stays abroad not exceeding one month are the most
frequent form of mobility. Medium-term mobility concerned stays abroad exceeding a month but not longer than a year, including fixed-term contracts, posted work, study visits, research visits and lectureships. Long term-mobility referred to trips abroad for professional purposes for a period above one year and could include for example contracts abroad, posted work and post docs.

Male respondents have a more frequent experience of all forms of international mobility considered. Partnering and parenting seem to be compatible with short term professionally motivated travels/stays abroad. On the contrary, having children, as well as having a partner although in a lesser degree, inhibits medium and especially long-term international mobility.

The negative impact of parenting on international mobility varies over the life course. It is particularly experienced by the younger respondents aged 30 or less, followed by those in the age cohorts 41-50 and 31-40.

The results presented above show that if we look at the impact of trip duration, it turns out that while children are not a barrier for short-term mobility, they do reduce medium-term and long-term mobility, especially for women. These results are confirmed by Figure 2 that shows that the percentage of female respondents with medium-term mobility experience was 52% higher for those without children than for those who have a child/children: 44.3% versus 29.2%. For long-term trips this difference is even larger. The percentage of female respondents with long-term mobility experience was 2.2 times higher for those without children than for those who have a child/children: 17.3% versus 7.8%.

Figure 2. Share of respondents with mobility experience, by trip duration and parental status
Many of the female respondents to the interviews rejected the alternative of migration abroad because of the need for stability when raising a child. Nevertheless, they did not give up their career plans, rather they just postponed them to a later stage in their life course, a time when their children will be grown up or more self-sufficient.

Yes, I am a mother with many responsibilities. [Interviewer: Do you see this influence as a restriction on your possibilities? Do you think that without a family you would be somewhere else?] I really don’t know. Probably if I were single and without a family I would continuously look for new possibilities. At the moment I am rather stepping back from such possibilities. When you are married, have a husband with his own work, have children and their friends (from kindergarten or school) around you that is demanding. If I were not in this situation, I would probably try something new, cooperate with other universities probably also from abroad. I would have liked to go abroad for three or six months, so not for too long, because I like living in Hungary. But right now is not the right time for me [HU15].

A similar point was made by the following married British men with children:

[Interviewer: Do you feel, is your family a sort of grounding factor then?] Absolutely, yeah, yeah, yeah. But my wife she’s, you know she’d be fairly open to... it just depends, you know, would the kids be at the right age to move [UK08].

In the best cases, respondents with caring responsibilities can travel with their family.

I’m very mobile. Of course there are family connections, but when I go on longer trips – such as my one-year stay in Germany – then my wife accompanies me. It did not cause any problems for her to come with me. If a person has closer family ties, then he or she might not be able to be this mobile. In my case, our family is mobile (my son was born out of the country), and when the three of us go somewhere for a longer time, my son would go to kindergarten there. This year I was away seven or eight times, which was a lot. When you have a family, it’s not good to be away so often [HU09].

Yeah of course, of course it is, having my family always makes you think twice, and you are always asking on behalf of several people not just, not just yourself. Actually we had a few situations where we chose to go abroad but I took my family with me. Yep, we went to Denmark and that was working at another university. There I took, I had to take the kids with me [NO08].
Male PhD holders did not declare family as an obstruction in their career very often, but they admitted particular changes in their work life and work tempo since the time they had children.

There wasn’t much trouble until the moment my son was born. However, till the present moment, all my family went with me, except for one time! It is a bit curious and a bit insane maybe! But he is still less than two, so... My wife works by shifts and so she has free days during the week and that becomes an advantage as she is able to exchange with colleagues. So, she has flexibility enough allowing her to take four or five consecutive days without spending vacation days. Usually, that is more than enough for attending a seminar and she is also willing to travel and go with me. With the baby it is more complicated. It is more complicated. We will see how we are going to sort that out. For me to travel alone while she stays at home alone it is not a problem. With a baby and working, for me to stay out for two or three days starts to be a problem. My parents in law also work... We should try something else. The easiest thing would be for us all to go though this is physically very hard! [PT06].

Anyway, it is not always possible to travel with partners, because they cannot or do not want to leave their jobs and start again somewhere else.

After my MA, I could get my PhD in Manchester University. I was planning to set my life in England, but there was a personal obstacle. My wife did not want to live abroad [TR13].

The following Swiss female PhD holder had refrained from travelling due to family reasons but she is well aware of the negative impact this has on her image as an ‘excellent scientist’:

I don’t apply for certain jobs because of the family. I mean, I think it’s not a wise a decision to travel because of my family. More and more people are having this kind of comprehension. For people like me who aren’t able to travel around like fools but actually being excellent scientists. There is comprehension that for being read as an excellent scientist, it would be necessary for me to go abroad. I would have a bigger network, I mean I do have quite a broad network but obviously it would be bigger. More international. I think I don’t suffer because of that but I think it’s obvious that I couldn’t do a lot of things because of my family. And I think that perhaps this is not the problem, but I think the problem is that certain people think that because I couldn’t do that, I’m not as good as they are. I think that this is the problematic point [CH03].

The same awareness about the negative consequences of not moving on her ability to networking and publishing was also expressed by the following Turkish married woman with a child.

I haven’t gone abroad for research purposes. [Interviewer: Were there any obstacles to that?] My child. [Interviewer: What were the consequences for you?] If I went away for PhD, I would have a better network and I would have been easier to publish my articles. That is the only lack I feel [TR07].

The birth of a child with a disability ‘changes your life’, also regarding the possibilities for travelling, as reported by the following Swiss married woman whose youngest daughter has autism:

If you have a family it is difficult to leave young children at home and start travelling three or four times a month and sometimes very often leaving on a Sunday and coming back on a Saturday for example. So your weekends are cut so you cannot spend that much time with your kids and I mentioned before that I was travelling a lot in the past and now I am travelling much less because I have my youngest daughter with autism so that changes your
That you have to be, you cut a little bit on the professional, the ambitions or... work life bothers issues. Especially when you have a special child is really difficult to combine with professional ambitions and professional advancement and so career prospects. So it has really been difficult but that’s life. So I've tried to keep travel as minimum as possible [CH18].

Many female, as well as some male, respondents changed their opinion of their career path after their children were born. When they wanted to travel, they had to discuss it with their partners. Sometimes our respondents decided not to go abroad because of small children and social contacts which they had at home:

*I prefer to stay here now. I want to spent time for my family.* [Interviewer: What experiences and consequences have there been from these different types of mobility?] Travelling abroad or living abroad is a problem with respect to the family. I went back to Lebanon to join my wife and my children, which were already leaving there. The family is important. In professional terms: networks, promotion, outputs, experiencing different working cultures, dissemination of work and generating impact. It was a very rich experience with some interesting successes at professional level, in teaching and in publication. [Interviewer: In personal terms: relationships, family, social life?] It was important to go back home for family reasons [FR12].

This personal re-focus on the children needs is expressed in a particular way by single-parents, such as the following German single woman with a 2 years old son:

*At the moment I have an offer from another university in London that is really financially better than my current job, but I don’t want to live with a small child in London. I think the social side of life has played more and more of a role for me. Before when I was younger, right after the PhD it was just about career and recognition of the place and the salary but now it is also more about the personal side. Because I now have a 2 year old to look after, and to give him the best chances. I mean, so since it is just me and my child I just make career decisions as they fit my personal life. So I always moved to where I wanted, I never had to coordinate with a partner. But I think my impression is that if there is a partner, one always has to make compromises but I never had to do that. But it also makes life much harder because you know I am a single parent family, I have one income, and so lately the situation has impacted my career decisions, as I said I moved because I did not get the support I thought I would get from the department in the situation with a small child. And now the situation is I had to decide whether to move to London and my decisions was mainly influenced by having a child. Probably if it was just me I would move to London, no problems. But having a small child, because of schools and also the living situation. Because here I had a relatively big place, so I have space for an au pair and that makes my life so much easier and I don’t think that would be the situation in London. So I think now having a child changes my perspective on how to make career decisions [DE13].

Some respondents, such as the following Portuguese woman, who have a long-term partnership decided to manage their mobility and their family life without the presence of this partner.

*Well, I kept living in Braga but coming [...] this is strange for some people but for us it was, er, my daughter came with me because I have family here and so, as she was so small, she stayed with me here during the week and we returned home for the weekend. Or we tried to stay here only for three days. As she was still a baby she was with a nanny and there wasn’t the issue of her missing school. Thus, I managed things between Aveiro and Braga that, in the end, are not that far away from one another. We created a system of having two homes, one here and another there and to move from one to the other [PT10].*
However, some respondents identified situations of permanent moves or the everyday absence of one of the parents as cause for children to be stressed.

[Interviewer: And were there any obstacles because of moving internationally?] Well the family of course, now the kids you know. To take a position that is ten hours away from my husband also means that my children will suffer a little bit because my husband is there and then he’s gone and then he comes again, it’s very hard for the kids. As a couple you can live this without any problem for many years which we’ve done before but for the kids it’s difficult: my daughter she was only one not even one when we left so that was very difficult [CH01].

A few respondents sacrificed their careers because of family factors. Sometimes they decided not to travel abroad because of their partner. One French respondent reported:

There are a lot of discussions with my husband because he prefers to stay in Madagascar. So this closed a bit the range of possibilities, at the end of my thesis. Yes, that. It is very important, the family factor [FR15].

Some others, though, such as the following Portuguese woman who is married for 35 years and has three children and grandchildren, never ‘felt hampered’ in terms of professional ambitions. Besides the mutual ‘respect’ she and her husband had for the respective careers, this respondent raised the topic of economic capacity. This was essential to be able to be ‘replaced’ for the period away. Economic capacity was thus essential to have a domestic employee, i.e. to buy the time of other woman to ensure (part of) the care work.

For me it has been easy. It has to do with my marriage. I am married for 35 years and I have three children and grandchildren. But it has been easy because both I and my husband have been having our own professional path and we have been respecting that. Neither of us felt hampered in terms of professional ambitions by the fact of being a parent. I always had a partner that understood and helped. Another important aspect is economic availability. That is essential. When there is mobility and the need to be away then there is a combination of who is doing what and replacing the other person for the period away. That is stressful, of course. For someone single and without responsibilities it is probably easier than for someone with family responsibilities. But I have never felt hampered, never, never [PT08].

To stay because of a partner was not an option to a few respondents, such as the following divorced British woman:

My boyfriend from the beginning told me he’d follow me anywhere and that is one of the reasons I’ve stayed with him because I need to be free in that respect. I wouldn’t stay in England just because of the partner – I couldn’t do it. It is an important thing but I am very engaged in my work [UK37].

Finally, respondents alluded to the specific situation of ‘living apart together’ as a factor encouraging many to leave academic research careers. The following German woman is married with three children and works in the private sector. She talks about her plans to move abroad to work in an international organisation, but she then got married and her husband refused to move. As a result of this immobility she used her skills as a lawyer to become self-employed locally:

At first I hoped that I would be able to [work in] an international organisation and I was hoping that the PhD would help to get a career in this job. But then I got married and my husband refused to leave so I had to stay here and I didn’t get a proper job in the field I
wanted. Now it is quite helpful for me being a lawyer but it was not perfect when I was starting. [The decision to become self-employed] was pure necessity. It was because my husband refused to move and so there were no other plans then. I had to give up on this because I would not have a chance [DE21].

The ‘expectation of mobility’ in academic careers is perceived as an imposition by a few respondents. As reported by the following Swiss married men with caring responsibilities, this expectation of having ‘to go where you have to go’ prevented him ‘to live in the place I like’:

Yeah, I manage… actually one thing I dislike about academia is that you have to go where you have to go, so if it’s little village in the US and you have to go there. And I actually wanted to live in the place I like [CH04].
### 2.5 Caring, Gender and Working Conditions

The interplay between family care work and scientific careers shapes working conditions in a number of ways.

At the most immediate level, respondents refer to the tensions during the typical working day. Here we see discussions about long (daily) working schedules and over-hours or anti-social working hours, especially at the end of the working day when parents and especially mothers have to collect children from nursery and school.

The following Slovakian woman was married with one child and still on parental leave at the time of interview. She suggested she maybe should have stayed in academic research as it was ‘ideal’ when you have a child, but expressed concern that academic work is associated with long working hours:

> If I had to choose now, I think I would choose the academic ground because it’s ideal when you have a child. On the other hand I don’t want to get back to basic research. But we’ll see. In my other job I was often there until 7 p.m. and I couldn’t imagine that with a child [SK20].

A common concern was not simply that work may continue into the early evening, but also that the nature of the work commitments at that time of the day may be of particular significance. The practice of calling meetings at the end of the day is frequently referred to. The following German woman referred to this dimension and mentioned her role as a gender representative in her department. This has enabled her to try to reduce the tendency to table critical meetings in ‘anti-social’ (after work) hours:

> One of the problems for women who had children was that the department meeting started at 5pm and went on until 9pm. This is the worst time for people with children. So why not move meetings like that? [DE12].

Another French woman made a similar point:

> At my place of work, for example, it’s definitely that case that I have constraints related to timing, the fact that I am a mum. I have to pick up my son from the nursery etc. That sometimes bothers me because I would like to stay longer and participate in certain meetings [FR13].

In addition to the structure of the working day, respondents note pressures across the typical working week. These include an expectation of very long working hours (well in excess of the European Working Time Directive) often involving evening and weekend working, but also serious concerns about the impacts of part-time working. This includes the importance attached to attending conferences either nationally or internationally (business-stay mobility) in performance management systems (for networking and/or dissemination).

The following Swiss married woman, who is working 80%, expressed her lack of time to prepare her classes related to her inability to do paid work on weekends, when she has ‘all the house work to do and the kids’:

> So I took 80% but now I’ve got a 80% because I need to stay home on Wednesdays for the kids because my kids are going to school and Wednesdays I need to be home sometimes for the kids and, you know, because it’s not... you are leaving every day at eight and you are coming back at seven, six or seven in the evening and there are the weekends. I’ve got so many classes to give this semester that if I take this break in the middle of the week, I don’t have time to prepare my classes because on weekends I do not work. I can’t. I’ve got all the house work to do and the kids and so it’s not possible [CH12].
Linked to the perceptions of competitiveness, the following Italian mother of two children refers again to time and the impact that having maternity leave and subsequently working part-time has on her productivity. She says that for her it wasn’t so much a prejudice against people with children per se but the fact that if you are not there you are ‘invisible’ – out of networks/group etc. and unable to be as productive and in academic research. You are at the end of the day only judged by one form of productivity and this is a direct relationship with time invested. Effectively, not working full-time results in you being less competitive. So it is an indirect form of inequality:

_The problems are that if you want to take time [out of academic research] whether it’s in the private sector or maybe for maternity, in effect you disappear, and in my department if you’re not there then you don’t exist. So if you don’t come in, if you’re not there then people forget you exist, you don’t get into projects, you don’t figure in the research groups, you don’t get in, and so according to me in fact it’s impossible to have the maternity leave that’s necessary, in a responsible way [IT22]._

Several female PhD holders declared that when they have small children they would like to work part-time other than have a full-time 100% contract:

_It plays an important role because actually I am not, I don’t want to work more than 70% and I think because I consider it important for me that I have at least one day a week with my children and I consider it also important than that my friend and me, we make it half-half with the children as well so I think I would not take a job where I would have to work 100%. Though this -- it constrains the possibility more because most of the jobs which are more open and are just one step more or two steps more of me, there you have to work at least 100% on the paper but 130% or 140% normally, so, I really, I think it would not be an option for me at this moment because I really like the time at home [CH02]._

One male German respondent was the only one reporting that both he and his partner have opted by not working full-time, as the ‘ideal’ arrangement in a family with small children.

_I am here, because I have the possibility to organize my time independently. I partly work at home and partly in the university, this is actually ideal for a family with small children. We both do not have a full-time job, but a job with reduced time commitment. Therefore, there is always one of us at home for the children, but we are nevertheless both able to carry out a regular job [DE25]._

Clearly there are life course implications here. Many other women commented on how issues of time management persisted beyond early career, and led to indirect forms of inequality. In short, the cumulative effect of maternity leave and then part-time working often precluded women from activities through which networks are formed or maintained, leading to what one described as a kind of professional ‘invisibility’. One Italian respondent spoke of the resentment she perceived from managers, who she felt were unhappy that she could not be present as much as her child-free or male colleagues:

_It’s also a practical issue in the sense that, ‘as soon as you have a child and I can’t call on you’, with good reason because you have hours and responsibilities that are for a while going to be different, maybe in the sense too of [perceived difficulty in] establishing what days you will work etc. especially at the beginning. Later on things change some - it’s seen as no good because you’re not at 100% availability. So I said to myself that I couldn’t’ do the career that I might have done [IT07]._
A number of obstacles to network formation and development were reported by the interviewees. Inhibiting factors included family and time. The combination of academic workloads and family obligations, for example, left little time for travel or other non-essential activities.

Some of the male respondents answered that family constrains social networking with colleagues on an informal level. They did not have enough time for after-work socialising and ‘talking about science’, where usable social contacts about next projects usually arise from.

Moreover, the effects can be cumulative and become part of a circular process, with limited access to networks and opportunities resulting in lower profiles, further exclusion and limited impacts.

One of the aims of the POCARIM study was to identify the impacts SSH PhD graduates had. The types of impact, as examined by the survey, are given in the table below.

Table 3: Respondents by impact instrument/activity and sex, partnering and parenting (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Teaching students</th>
<th>Supervision of Masters/PhDs</th>
<th>Management/coordination of projects</th>
<th>Publication of books and articles</th>
<th>Participation in policy-relevant events</th>
<th>Participation in knowledge transfer</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sex</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>91.0</td>
<td>72.1</td>
<td>65.9</td>
<td>92.5</td>
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<td>63.8</td>
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<td>Female</td>
<td>87.7</td>
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<td>60.0</td>
<td>91.2</td>
<td>60.6</td>
<td>64.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>With partner</td>
<td>90.2</td>
<td>70.4</td>
<td>64.7</td>
<td>92.5</td>
<td>65.0</td>
<td>66.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>No partner</td>
<td>86.5</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>55.0</td>
<td>89.9</td>
<td>59.1</td>
<td>60.5</td>
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<td><strong>Children</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>With children</td>
<td>91.6</td>
<td>72.7</td>
<td>67.2</td>
<td>92.9</td>
<td>66.3</td>
<td>68.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>No children</td>
<td>87.0</td>
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<td>58.2</td>
<td>90.6</td>
<td>60.7</td>
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<td><strong>Advisory work for policy actors</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Participation in social and political committees</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Board membership/advisory work/volunteering in NGO</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Board membership in company</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Development of innovative products</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Interviews in the media</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sex</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>42.1</td>
<td>37.9</td>
<td>25.3</td>
<td>12.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Female</td>
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<td>23.2</td>
<td>8.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>With partner</td>
<td>38.1</td>
<td>35.0</td>
<td>26.1</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>23.5</td>
<td>52.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No partner</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>32.2</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>39.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Children</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>With children</td>
<td>41.8</td>
<td>37.2</td>
<td>29.7</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>25.6</td>
<td>58.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No children</td>
<td>31.8</td>
<td>31.2</td>
<td>18.7</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>19.4</td>
<td>41.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: POCARIM

The gendered nature of the impacts is clearly evidenced by the POCARIM findings: men overcome women in all the types of impact considered, except for participation in knowledge transfer. The gender gap is particularly significant regarding supervision of Masters/PhDs; management/coordination of projects; participation in policy-relevant events; advisory work for policy actors on the local, regional, national or international level; participation in social and political committees; and interviews in the media (radio, TV or newspapers).

Surprisingly, according to the responses to this quantitative survey, parenting and partnering do not seem to have a negative influence on the impacts SSH PhD holders have, on the contrary. However, age shows again as a key-factor, since having positive impacts, regardless of type, tend to increase over the life course.
Furthermore, parenting only shows as negatively influencing impact among younger scientists aged 30 or less, especially regarding participation in policy-relevant events; advisory work for policy actors on the local, regional, national or international level; and participation in social and political committees, i.e. policy-related types of impact. In the older age cohorts SSH PhD holders seem to be able to better accommodate having children with having a positive impact.

The same evidence about the influence of parenting among younger scientists aged 30 or less is found concerning a lower level of publications of textbooks, monographs, books, articles, etc.

Differences in terms of working conditions between academia and private sector organisations were reported in the POCARIM interviews. For several respondents differences between universities and private sector reflected favourably on academia. They reported having more freedom to pursue their interests, less pressure and more flexibility. This tied in to family priorities, as illustrated by the following comments:

\[\ldots\text{being an academic allows me to be flexible with respect to family life. It doesn’t mean that I work less but my work hours are more flexible. So if my child is ill and I have to stay home for a couple of days then I just do that and I don’t even have to inform anybody. On the other hand it is really the academic freedom in the academic sector so you really work on something you like and are interested in, so it’s not somebody telling you what you should produce [DE13].}\]

\[\text{We had a child just after I started my job here in the UK and I had very flexible working hours so I could help my wife a lot. And see my daughter, which would have been hard in a standard private sector jobs suited to the type of qualifications I have got [DE15].}\]

On the other hand, the PhD researchers who stayed at the academia often accentuate an excessive workload which has an impact on the quality of their work and stays without an adequate financial reward. The nature of their responsibilities is often not delimited by their working place and they take their work home and their personal and professional life shade into each other. There are many workplaces where the working time is not strictly set for 8 working hours on the prescribed workplace. However, this can result in such situation that researchers work on their projects or undertake the administrative tasks in their personal time. That is the case of the following Slovakian female university lecturer:

\[\text{On one hand, we are not bound by strict working hours and on the other, one has to take the work home. The preparation of the lectures is done at the dining table, and then, when finalizing the projects, sleepless nights come and one has to be with it in his personal time. On the other hand, I can pick up my daughter from the nursery at the time I need to or take her to the doctor. There is no control over that whether I’m physically present at work, except the lectures and consultation hours, of course. The physical presence isn’t required, but it doesn’t mean that I don’t have to present the results of my work, because I was with my daughter. When she goes to sleep, I sit in front of my computer until late at night. And I keep thinking for myself what the sense of this toil for the pittance is [SK03].}\]

A final point is that respondents indicated the importance of stable work and job security. Securing stable and long-term work was an ambition for many, and was particularly important for women. In addition, whilst travel and other experiences may be desirable (or even a professional necessity), the priority once children are born becomes stability of income and location. It was common for various kinds of arrangement, such as part-time work, to be in place which allowed women to combine
careers and caring. Broader issues of welfare and social benefits were also noted, for example those associated with children, disability or age.

Many female respondents declared that one of the most important things in their professional lives is stable work, especially if they have a family. In these cases they recognised the priority of the social stability of the family. A lot of them dreamed about permanent job contracts, which can ensure a stable job location. This is especially the case of single-mothers such as the following German and Norwegians mothers:

[Interviewer: I see you have two children, how does your family circumstance influence your career and the contacts you decide to take?] It made the gambling more breath-taking; it hurt my nerves a lot. I know I am not just for myself but I have to earn money for other human beings as well. That responsibility is a topic for me. Well yes I didn’t want to move that far away, they are in this region so I pick Berlin and Berlin is ok. When I was like 30 it wasn’t a problem to have no job but now it would be. I need to have money every month. [Interviewer: So it makes it important that you keep getting contracts?] Yes much more important and the level of anxiety is raised by that, it is multiplied the level of anxiety to must have a job when it comes up. This is why 4 and a half years [contract] is very good to have [DE06].

I make decisions. I have the sole responsibility for my kinds and prefer the steady positions in terms of the kids, and of course the salary. Therefore I prefer permanent positions rather than temporary, salary level would also be important [NO09].

Although they like working in science or in international projects, and they like travelling to other countries and making professional contacts, since they have a family they usually change priorities and prefer social certainties. However, in academia or in science it is very rare to have permanent job contract. Therefore they are forced to seek work in other sectors beyond academia. It is important to keep the social benefits which are necessary for the future of a family:

It is a major issue for us. I am married with two kids and when I take a decision regarding my career, the first thing I am looking at is I don’t want to put my family in financial trouble [...] For example, now with the grant system in Switzerland, if I go abroad as a senior researcher, I can get a grant for two or three years but I won’t be paid everything that has to do with social security, we call that AVS. So that is the insurance when you become a senior citizen. [...] So it is going abroad with a grant for a senior researcher means that you are losing a lot of your social benefits. So I am considering if I were not to be picked as a senior lecturer here in Lausanne, I am not sure I would keep on with my career as a senior researcher because that would mean I would leave the country for three years, lose my social benefits and when I am back, what do I have, I am not sure. I am not sure of anything. It means my wife lost her job and when we come back, we are poorer than when we left. So that is not helping for a career. So we decided with my wife that if my career is ending here in Lausanne and I don’t find rapidly something in Switzerland or maybe in America, that is it, I am out and I should reconsider my career or a new career [FR01].

Another requirement for academic career progression is publication. Again here more female respondents acknowledged the difficulties in combining publication with caring responsibilities:

I’m very bad at publishing. I never pull it together, I have all the data. I was very bad about that. Twice that I had to publish, I had twice a baby. And then I thought that I could maybe publish a bit later, or while I had the maternity leave and that was just impossible. That I
A few male respondents, such as the following Polish married men with children, made a similar point:

*Everyone, even my smallest child has an impact, because I can’t write when I get up three times at night and also at 5.30 a.m.* [PL11].

However, as the following Italian women reported, since in academia ‘the end objective of the work has to be publication’, once you have children and stop working for some time, ‘there’s no evaluation criteria that can restore equality’. And she concludes, maybe in a critical view or maybe in a conformed way, ‘That’s the way it is’:

*I work really independently and since a large part of the time I work alone then I can stop for a year, but in that year I won’t have published and so my career is by definition temporarily stopped. There isn’t that system that there is for women in private work where you’re at home for 11 months, then when you come back you just start to up again to do your work. Seeing us, for us the end objective of the work has to be publication, then if you don’t have the publications, and then you don’t have them! Then there’s no evaluation criteria that can restore equality, because once you have children you have less chance. That’s the way it is.* [IT22]
Section 3. Conclusions
This report has highlighted some of the main features of the interplay between care work and science careers.

Partnering (/marriage) and parenting have strong impacts in the lives of women and men in science careers in the SSH. It is almost like if having an ‘abnormal’ life, i.e. being single and childless and having no personal life, was a pre-condition to be able to fully commit to scientific work.

One key implication of partnering was that it shaped the location and mobility decisions of the respondents. These factors became more prominent with the birth of children. In particular, the freedom to undertake work-related mobility was curtailed.

In order to manage the necessity of mobility in their professional lives, some respondents reported spending extended or frequent periods away from their partners or families, that is, ‘living apart together’.

At the age when it is common to start a family, women scientists have to decide whether to postpone the beginning of their career path until after raising children, or to try to combine the two. Only a few of the respondents decided to postpone starting their family to later time because of work.

Even when the children have grown, other family-related responsibilities, domestic work and household tasks in particular, traditionally imposing on women, still have an impact. For men, instead, family acts more as a supportive structure rather than an inhibiting one.

Besides parenting and partnering, other caring responsibilities also had an impact on the work and career of some respondents. As respondents reported, elderly parents or a serious health problem in the close family may constitute a difficult challenge.

At certain times, along the life course, the family influences the flow of work of everyone. At these times people change their life priorities, work responsibilities and their career ambitions.

Time and temporalities emerges in complex and multi-faceted ways in the interviews. Time use and time pressure often show intertwined in the respondents’ reports, also among married men with children, but especially among mothers.

On top of practical problems were perceptions of cultural expectations of mothering which placed the burden of care on women. Some respondents who are mothers talk about the difficulty of finding the balance between family and professional life and suggest this is a particular problem for women. These responses echo the sense of guilt and self-penalisation many professional women express in relation to their mothering.

In some countries, such as Slovakia, motherhood and maternity leave were associated with the loss of work and exit from academic careers, due to the fact that contracts were short-term and institutions were not obliged to hold positions open.

Personal social networks may be an important way of securing informal support to care work. The POCARIM respondents mentioned their parents most frequently in cases of helping with children’s’ upbringing. This family support is even more crucial for single-parents.

Whenever the respondents can, they stay close to their families and use the possibility of support from parents, who help them in many ways.
Despite the importance attached to personal social networks, and to the role of grandparents/grandmothers in particular, the impacts of the current economic and social crisis in terms of job precariousness and unemployment may lead some PhD holders in the SSH to reconsider their former options and to move where a job is available.

Mobility, and/or immobility, was the most frequent issue when the POCARIM respondents talked about family.

The majority of the POCARIM survey respondents, both male and female, were occasionally in contact with colleagues abroad, followed by a large minority who were in regular contact with colleagues abroad, and also quite a large minority who were never in contact with colleagues abroad. Having a partner and especially having children has some impact on the frequency of international collaboration, which tends to be more occasional or even to never occur.

The impacts of family on international mobility were also highlighted by most POCARIM interviews respondents. Our respondents who were single and had no caring responsibilities at the time of research did not see any obstacles with mobility. Contrary, if our respondents had a family, they had limited options to undertake these work stays. Medium and long-term mobility present specific challenges.

The extent of international mobility is thus shaped by having a spouse/partner and parenting in particular, as well as by gender, as shown by the outcomes of the POCARIM survey.

Many of the female respondents to the interviews rejected the alternative of migration abroad because of the need for stability when raising a child. Nevertheless, they did not give up their career plans, rather they just postponed them to a later stage in their life course, a time when their children will be grown up or more self-sufficient.

Respondents who had refrained from travelling due to family reasons are well aware of the negative impact this has on their image as an ‘excellent scientist’, as well as on their ability to networking and publishing.

The interplay between family care work and scientific careers shapes working conditions in a number of ways.

At the most immediate level, respondents refer to the tensions during the typical working day. Here we see discussions about long (daily) working schedules and over-hours or anti-social working hours, especially at the end of the working day when parents and especially mothers have to collect children from nursery and school.

A common concern was not simply that work may continue into the early evening, but also that the nature of the work commitments at that time of the day may be of particular significance. The practice of calling meetings at the end of the day is frequently referred to.

In addition to the structure of the working day, respondents note pressures across the typical working week. These include an expectation of very long working hours (well in excess of the European Working Time Directive) often involving evening and weekend working, but also serious concerns about the impacts of part-time working. This includes the importance attached to attending conferences either nationally or internationally (business-stay mobility) in performance management systems (for networking and/or dissemination).
A number of obstacles to network formation and development were reported by the interviewees. Inhibiting factors included family and time. The combination of academic workloads and family obligations, for example, left little time for travel or other not essential activities.

Moreover, the effects can be cumulative and become part of a circular process, with limited access to networks and opportunities resulting in lower profiles, further exclusion and limited impacts.

One of the aims of the POCARIM study was to identify the impacts SSH PhD graduates had. The gendered nature of the impacts is clearly evidenced by the POCARIM findings: men overcome women in all the types of impact considered, except for participation in knowledge transfer. The gender gap is particularly significant regarding supervision of Masters/PhDs; management/coordination of projects; participation in policy-relevant events; advisory work for policy actors on the local, regional, national or international level; participation in social and political committees; and interviews in the media (radio, TV or newspapers).

Surprisingly, according to the responses to this quantitative survey, parenting and partnering do not seem to have a negative influence on the impacts SSH PhD holders have, on the contrary. However, age shows again as a key-factor, since having positive impacts, regardless of type, tend to increase over the life course.

Differences in terms of working conditions between academia and private sector organisations were reported in the POCARIM interviews. For several respondents differences between universities and private sector reflected favourably on academia. They reported having more freedom to pursue their interests, less pressure and more flexibility.

On the other hand, the PhD researchers who stayed at the academia often accentuate an excessive workload which has an impact on the quality of their work and stays without an adequate financial reward. The nature of their responsibilities is often not delimitied by their working place and they take their work home and their personal and professional life shade into each other.

Respondents also indicated the importance of stable work and job security. Securing stable and long-term work was an ambition for many, and was particularly important for women. In addition, whilst travel and other experiences may be desirable (or even a professional necessity), the priority once children are born becomes stability of income and location. It was common for various kinds of arrangement, such as part-time work, to be in place which allowed women to combine careers and caring. Broader issues of welfare and social benefits were also noted, for example those associated with children, disability or age.

Another requirement for academic career progression is publication. Again here more female respondents acknowledged the difficulties in combining publication with caring responsibilities.
Section 4. Policy implications and recommendations

1. Taking in due consideration the importance of time use and temporalities over the life course, with particular gender dimensions. For example, time pressures still requiring women to decide between motherhood and professional life, especially in a specific stage over their life course.

2. Making structural change happening: from cultural expectations of mothering which place the burden of care on women to culture and policy encouraging a more active involvement of men in care work. That is, care as a shared responsibility between men and women, fathers and mothers.

3. Taking in due consideration that postponing family formation or to forego parenting, and especially motherhood has impact on fertility rates, in our ageing societies.

4. Ensuring by law that pregnancy and maternity/parental leave are not associated with the loss of job and exit from academic careers, namely due to the fact that contracts are short-term and institutions are not obliged to hold positions open.

5. Ensuring that women researchers are not devalued in science careers due to maternity leave-related reasons.

6. Ensuring that evaluation/assessment take career breaks in due consideration so that those using parental/care leaves will not come off badly.

7. Taking in due consideration that a child with a disability, as well as other severe illness in the family, conditions work and career choices also regarding the possibilities for travelling, and that those who experience these situations will not come off badly.

8. Promoting flexible working arrangements allowing for the combination of leave periods and contact with research for female and male researchers who wish to.

9. Valuing multi-tasking and organisational skills related to the articulation of scientific work and family life alongside other traditional indicators for performance metrics, such as publications.

10. Taking in due consideration that the cultures of ‘presenteeism’ in academic workplaces, long working hours and frequent and/or long-term mobility may constitute a form of indirect gender discrimination. These practices, based on the assumption of the 100% availability as a pre-requisite for career progression, do not affect women exclusively or by design, but contexts of family life, gendered roles and cultural expectations mean they are felt far less frequently and/or to a lesser degree by men.

11. Taking in due consideration that some dominant practices in the academia, such as the scheduling of meetings for late afternoon, actively exclude women and men carers from playing an active role in decision-making restricting their participatory rights.

12. Taking in due consideration that moreover the effects can be cumulative and become part of a circular process, with limited access to networks and opportunities resulting in lower profiles, further exclusion and limited impacts as social scientists.

13. Taking in due consideration that the effects of the current economic and social crisis in terms of job precariousness and unemployment are leading some PhD holders in the SSH to forced migration, despite the importance attached to personal social networks, and to the role of grandparents/grandmothers in particular.

14. Taking in due consideration that in a context of ‘expectation of mobility’, the consequences of immobility are in many cases to inhibit or bring to an end an academic career.

15. Taking in due consideration that partnering and parenting in particular shape the location and international mobility decisions.

16. Taking in due consideration the specific needs regarding access to opportunities for dual-career academic couples.
17. Placing international mobility practices and opportunities in context, taking into account that personal dispositions might inhibit or motivate mobility, as might family situations (children, elderly parents) at different times. These factors and others, with particular gender dimensions, can have a significant impact on mobility practices. Furthermore, medium and long-term mobility present specific challenges.

18. Securing stable work and job security, with labour and welfare rights, in scientific work.
References


