

Babies and bosses: Reconciling work and family life (Volume 1): Australia, Denmark and the Netherlands ^[1]

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AVAILABILITY

Available in print for order (see SOURCE) and online for download.

- Pdf available for browsing. ^[3]

Abstract:

Reconciling work and family life involves two key goals for both individuals and society: being able to work, to earn an income while participating in the most important social activity of modern life, and providing the best care and nurturing for one's own children. These aspirations need not be mutually exclusive. A failure to balance work and care commitments has implications for either labour force or family decisions - or for both. Parents - or would-be parents - may decide to delay having children, have fewer than they really want, or not have children at all. Or they may change their labour market behaviour. Some who are out of the labour market, either short or long term, prefer to look after their children full-time, regardless of employment opportunities. But others would like to work, or work more - but cannot because they cannot get the child care services they need in order to continue their careers. Still others work longer than they want, putting their family under strain, in some cases resulting in broken relationships or young people being neglected or poorly raised.

This volume looks at the challenges parents of young children confront when trying to square their work and care commitments, and the implications for social and labour market trends. In deciding how to balance work and family life, parents face a great many issues: their preference for providing parental care; formal and informal child care; family income in- and out- of work; their access to family-friendly workplace arrangements and child-related leave programmes. This first OECD review of the reconciliation of work and family life considers the current mix of family-friendly policies in Australia, Denmark, and the Netherlands and explores how this policy balance contributes to different labour market and other societal outcomes in these three countries.

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