Dynamic Inequalities

The Impact of Social Stratification Determinants on Poverty Dynamics in Europe

Leen VANDECASTEELE

KATHOLIEKE UNIVERSITEIT LEUVEN

FACULTEIT SOCIALE WETENSCHAPPEN

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Proefschrift tot het verkrijgen
van de graad van
Doctor in de Sociale Wetenschappen
aangeboden door
Leen VANDECASTEELE

2007

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Doctor in de Sociale Wetenschappen

Nr. 119

Samenstelling van de examencommissie:
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2007

De verantwoordelijkheid voor de ingenomen standpunten berust alleen bij de auteur.
Gepubliceerd door:
Faculteit Sociale Wetenschappen - Onderzoekseenheid: Centrum voor Sociologisch Onderzoek [CeSO], K.U.Leuven, Parkstraat 45 Bus 3601 - 3000 Leuven, België.

D/2007/8978/7

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Het schrijven van dit doctoraat was een boeiende ervaring, soms aangenaam en inspirerend, bij tijden ook lastig en moeizaam. Tijdens deze tocht werd ik door heel wat mensen gesteund.

Allereerst gaat mijn dank uit naar mijn beide promoters: Professor Dr. Jos Berghman en Professor Dr. Ruud Muffels. Professor Dr. Berghman heeft dit project van begin tot einde opgevolgd; hij gaf mij allereerst de kans om aan de slag te gaan op het FWO-project waarop dit doctoraat gebaseerd is (FWO-project G.0398.02N.). Deze tewerkstelling bood me de nodige vrijheid om het onderzoeksproject uit te werken tot een doctoraatsthesis. Verder hielp Professor Berghman me waar mogelijk en het werken binnen de onderzoeksgroep 'sociaal beleid' was zonder twijfel een leerzame ervaring. Professor Dr. Ruud Muffels gaf een hoop goede raad bij het uitwerken van dit onderzoeksproject en zorgde voor inspirerende gesprekken samen met Professor Dr. Jeroen Vermunt.

Ik wens ook mijn dank en appreciatie te betuigen aan de overige leden van de examencommissie: Professor Dr. Chris Whelan, Professor Dr. Ides Nicaise, Professor Dr. Frans Lammertyn en Professor Dr. Jaak Billiet. De commentaren op dit proefschrift hebben mij een beter inzicht gegeven in mijn materie en hielpen bij de voorbereiding van de verdediging.

Professor Jaak Billiet komt ook om een andere reden in dit dankwoord terecht. Hij hielp me van bij mijn eerste onderzoeksstappen voor de licentiethesis en bleef mijn werk altijd met interesse volgen. Het voorbije jaar bood hij me een job aan, die me niet alleen nuttige ervaring bijbracht, maar me ook de nodige flexibiliteit en financiële middelen bood om dit doctoraat af te werken.

Het is ook mede dankzij het Marie Curie Project van de Europese Commissie dat het financieel haalbaar werd om dit doctoraat af te werken. Maar mijn onderzoeksuitwisseling in Manchester was ook op andere vlakken een interessante ervaring. In dit kader wens ik vooral Professor Ludi Simpson te bedanken om er mijn

tijdelijke ‘supervisor’ te willen zijn. Zijn kritische geest en sociale bewogenheid hebben mijn motivatie aangewakkerd, en zijn pragmatisme en projectmanagement-vaardigheden zijn nuttig gebleken. Ook op sociaal vlak was het bezoek aan Manchester een inspirerende ervaring; vooral Lee, Karen, Bethan & Albert wil ik bedanken voor het warme onthaal in hun phd-studenten-kantoor en de leuke uitstapjes en discussies daarbuiten.

Ook mijn collega’s binnen het CESO verdienen een bijzonder plaatsje in dit dankwoord. Ik heb het geluk gehad deel te mogen uitmaken van twee afdelingen, en ook daarnaast heb ik met heel wat verschillende mensen kunnen samenwerken. Voor alle boeiende discussies, korte praatjes, tips, hulp en leuke momenten, dank u aan: Adam, An, Ann, Anne, Annelies, Ans, Bart M., Bart V., Christien, Delphine, Dirk, Elke, Eva, Jan, Eva Jansova, Eva Jaspaert, Eva P., Geert, Gijs, Giselda, Hans, Hideko, Koen A., Koen B., Koen H., Lesley, Liying, Maarten, Marc, Markieta, Mieke, Nathalie R., Nathalie S., Sofie P., Federico, Gert, Kristine, Koen V., Tine, Steven, Ines, Véronique, Vicky.

Annelies wil ik heel speciaal bedanken voor alle inhoudelijke gesprekken en de samenwerking over armoedemobiliteit. Lesley en Hideko verdienen mijn dank voor de tips en steun als ervaringsdeskundige in het afwerken van een doctoraat. Carla, Margot, Marina, Martine en zeker ook Kristien Hermans stonden altijd klaar met hulp bij het organiseerwerk.

Sommige mensen werden ook goede vrienden en maakten mijn vrije tijd heel wat leuker: dankjewel Anne, Eva, Hanne en Liying. Stijn, ik ben blij dat we elkaars sociologie-studies zo lang van dichtbij hebben kunnen volgen. Jouw geduld, steun en vriendschap zijn van onschatbare waarde geweest; weet dat ik dat niet vergeet. Jolien en Lut, ook al wonen jullie wat verder weg en hadden we niet altijd frequent contact: bedankt voor de jarenlange vriendschap.

Mama & papa & Mathias, dank je voor alle zaken die me van thuis uit meegegeven werden: een kritische geest, inzicht in maatschappelijke ongelijkheid & het onvoorwaardelijke geloof in het belang van opleiding. Natuurlijk hebben jullie me altijd gesteund in mijn studies, dat was enkel evident. Ik weet dat jullie trots zijn, en dat maakt me blij.

En Christian: het waren natuurlijk niet alleen de ontelbare discussies over goed sociaal beleid, statistische modellen en de beginselen van steekproeftrekking… jouw bijdrage was veel groter, maar jij houdt niet van lange voorwoorden in thesissen, daarom: Vielen Dank.

INTRODUCTION

Social inequality has always been at the core of the sociological discipline. It refers to a condition whereby different actors have unequal access to valued resources, services and positions (Kerbo, 2000). Sociologists have tried to find patterns and structures in these inequalities, and in that way social stratification structures were developed. Traditionally, income and poverty inequality is regarded as one of the most salient inequalities. Research results have shown that poverty is unequally spread over different social classes, gender groups, education levels, ethnicity groups etc.

Until recently, however, research into the social stratification of poverty has been mainly considered from a static perspective. Socio-economic surveys generally measure the poverty incidence at a single moment in time. Hence, the temporal aspect of poverty inequality has long been overlooked. This has changed towards the end of the 20th century, and a growing body of literature now emphasises the importance of the dynamic aspect of the poverty phenomenon. Time is seen as an important dimension in the study of the poverty phenomenon (Walker, 1994b, 1998). Research results have revealed that poverty is often a temporary phenomenon and that the mobility into and out of poverty is more important than assumed before. Most poverty spells in industrialised countries are short-term and poverty is nowadays often seen as a phase in one's life rather than a persistent state. Furthermore, it has been shown that when a longer time-frame is taken into account, more people experience periods of poverty than can be assessed on the basis of a cross-sectional study (Bane & Ellwood, 1986; Beck, 1986; Berger, 1994; Dirven & Berghman, 1995; Duncan, Gustafsson, Hauser, Schmauss, Messinger, Muffels, Nolan, & Ray, 1993; Jenkins, 1999; Muffels, 1993).

The switch towards a dynamic perspective on poverty inequality was facilitated by two developments. Firstly, the new perspective on poverty should be seen in the light of social change in broader spheres. From the second half of the 20th century onwards, European societies have been characterised by more flexibility, more plurality and more emphasis on individual choice. The labour sphere is characterised by a development towards more flexible working arrangements, characterised by temporary contracts and part-time work. But also the family sphere is characterised by less security, as shown by

the increasing divorce rates. These developments have brought opportunities, but also more insecurity into the life of individuals. Accordingly, it could be expected that a relatively large share of European citizens are at risk of entering a period of income poverty. A second important factor in the development of a dynamic perspective is the availability of mature socio-economic panel data in Europe. These have given an important impulse to the study of socio-economic dynamics over the life course of individuals. As the first research results based on these panel studies have spread, the awareness of the need for more longitudinal studies has grown in the research community.

The main argument made in the thesis is that the switch towards a dynamic understanding of sociological phenomena poses important challenges for the study of current-day social stratification in the field of poverty inequality. The dynamic view on the structure of society seems to be in contradiction with the rather static strata division conceived by classical theories of social stratification. When poverty is more often short-term and more people experience it, then it is unclear whether the group of people at risk of poverty could still be clearly delineated in terms of social stratification groups. The dynamic perspective thus challenges previous viewpoints in the field of social stratification and calls for renewed investigations into the stratification processes at work in European societies. The important question that arises is whether the different social stratification determinants are still relevant as correlates of poverty inequality. Therefore, the validity of these stratification concepts will be tested on the basis of analyses of poverty dynamics.

Due to the fact that the field of social stratification has multiple facets, the research topic at hand will be approached from different angles. This will enable a deeper insight into the phenomenon of social stratification of poverty. I shall argue that the shift towards a dynamic perspective on poverty inequality correlates with three main challenges for the social stratification of poverty. Questions will be addressed related to each of these challenges.

Firstly, in the stratification literature there has emerged a debate over the continuing relevance of social stratification in general and of social class in particular. Ever since Clark and Lipset's announcement of the 'death of class' in the early 1990's (Clark & Lipset, 1991), the controversial debate over the viability of the social class

concept has continued (Beck, 1992; Hout, Brooks, & Manza, 1993; Marshall, 1997). But also other social stratification determinants are under fire as contemporary societies are said to be more fragmented and individualised. In this context, social stratification determinants are believed to lose their structuring impact on life chances, standard of living and life style. Also in the context of contemporary poverty research, the link between social stratification determinants and poverty dynamics has been questioned. This thesis looks at the effect of social stratification determinants on poverty entry and different forms of temporal and longer-term poverty.

The second challenge is concerned with the link between intragenerational social class mobility and poverty mobility. Poverty is seen as a dynamic phenomenon, but also someone's social class position is not necessarily stable over the lifetime. The phenomenon is especially relevant in the light of a flexible labour market with a good deal of temporary employment. The link between intragenerational social mobility and, income and poverty mobility has not yet been investigated in previous research. However, this is an important research topic as it can give an indication of the poverty inducing effect of typical social mobility trajectories. Thus it contributes to a better understanding of the social stratification of poverty dynamics. In this thesis I take the stance that if income and poverty inequalities are structured alongside the social class scheme, then moving from one social class to another also yields specific income/poverty dynamic consequences. A special focus will be placed on the income dynamic effects of mobility between manual and non-manual classes. This is important because the occupational structure is changing and typical manufacturing occupations are being replaced by non-manual service sector jobs. However, it is not clear to what extent this development leads to either an upgrading or downgrading of jobs (Bell, 1973; Braverman, 1974; Goldthorpe, 2000; Halpin, 1999). In this context, it is relevant to investigate whether moving up the social structure has the expected beneficial income consequences.

Thirdly, the research topic will be approached from the life course perspective. Experiencing a poverty spell is often understood as a passage in a person's life trajectory. With increasing flexibility and precariousness in the labour market, increasing divorce rates and the diversification of family forms, more and more people experience life courses which deviate from the standard biography (Beck, 1986; Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 1996a). A deviation from the standard biography is risky because life events like change of job, divorce, unemployment or leaving the parental home can

create breaks in one's biography. Exactly these breaks in the standard biography often entail social risks like becoming poor but because there is a wide range of possible life trajectories, there is also a diversification of the ways into poverty and hence heterogeneity within the population of poor people (Berger, 1994). Consequently, the argument is made that this plurality of possible life paths has led to a subversion of the typical hierarchical model of social stratification (Beck, 1992). It is believed that hierarchical stratification structures like social classes lose their impact and that simultaneously new inequalities appear on the basis of life styles and life trajectories. In this thesis, analyses will be presented in which the combined effect of both life course events and social stratification determinants on the poverty risk is investigated.

The main questions of this thesis will be addressed on the basis of longitudinal analyses with the European Community Household Panel Survey. An important innovation of the research lies in the combination of a theory overview of all relevant aspects of the research topic with advanced analyses on longitudinal data of different European countries.

The body of this thesis contains nine chapters, and is structured in the following way. The first three chapters provide an insight in the relevant literature. Chapters 4 and 5 focus on research questions and methodology respectively. The last four chapters contain the empirical body of the research project.

At the start of the thesis, it is important to clarify the main concepts used in this thesis. Therefore, the first chapter provides an introduction to several definitions and dimensions of social stratification; as well as proposing an operational definition for the research at hand. After also introducing the main milestones in the history of social stratification theorising, the focus is on the most common determinants of social stratification. The discussion will recapitulate the main conceptual decisions of the thesis.

The second chapter presents an overview of previous research findings concerning the social stratification of poverty inequality. The review is based on cross-sectional studies and shows that the poverty incidence is unequally distributed over occupational positions, gender groups and education level.

In Chapter 3, the dynamic perspective on inequality is presented as challenging for the study of the social stratification of poverty. It will be argued that social change in

the family and labour sphere provides the context for a dynamic perspective on poverty. Consequently, I introduce some important challenges for the study of the stratification of poverty inequality.

The challenges put forward in the first three theoretical chapters form the basis for the conceptual model of this research. In Chapter 4 the research questions and the conceptual model are outlined.

In the fifth chapter, the methodology of the empirical research is explained. The data source is introduced and methodological choices as well as decisions concerning the operationalisation are explained.

Chapter 6 provides an exploration of the social stratification of poverty dynamics. Social stratification determinants are linked to the poverty entry chance on the one hand, and to a longitudinal poverty pattern on the other hand. In that way, the relevance of social stratification determinants for poverty dynamics will be investigated.

The seventh chapter focuses on the effect of several social mobility patterns on the risk of poverty entry. The chapter first investigates whether social mobility is associated with income and poverty mobility. Consequently, the validity of the social stratification structure is investigated by examining whether respectively upward and downward social mobility have the expected reducing and increasing effect on the poverty risk.

In Chapters 8 and 9, the focus is on the relative importance of both life course events and social stratification determinants for the poverty mobility outcome. Chapter 8 presents hazard models in which the effect of both life course events and social stratification determinants on the risk of poverty entry is investigated. Interaction terms show whether the poverty-triggering effect of the negative life events differs according to gender, education level and social class. In Chapter 9, a longitudinal perspective is taken on the poverty spells triggered by partnership dissolution, job loss and leaving the parental home. Different groups will be discerned among the people experiencing one of these events according to the poverty trajectory they take in the first five years after experiencing the life event. Subsequently, social stratification determinants will be linked to the different poverty trajectory groups in order to investigate whether the medium-term poverty risk after one of the life events is stratified according to gender, education level and social class.

Who gets what, and why? (Lenski, 1966)

1 SOCIAL STRATIFICATION: DEFINITION AND HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

At the outset of this study into social stratification, it is necessary to explore the conceptual field in which the research topic is situated. In the first section the main characteristics of social stratification are described and distinguished from other related concepts. Consequently, a historical overview of modern social stratification theory is presented. In the third section, the focus is on the most important determinants of social stratification determinants, which have developed since the beginning of sociological interest in inequality. I will also clarify how social stratification researchers have dealt with the availability of multiple determinants. Section 1.4 elaborates on the issue of fairness of social inequality. The discussion of this chapter summarises the main stances of the debate, as well as recapitulating the operational definition of social stratification and clarifying the choice of social stratification determinants.

1.1 WHAT IS SOCIAL STRATIFICATION?

In this section, I will first distinguish between social differentiation, inequality and social stratification; since they are all three concepts used in the context of social stratification research but their meaning differs to some extent. Following this, I outline the possible bases and reward packages associated with social stratification structures. Consequently, adequate attention is given to the characteristic dimensions of a social stratification system. The section ends with the formulation of an operational definition of social stratification.

1.1.1 Differentiation, inequality and stratification

The concept of social stratification is related to the concepts ‘social differentiation’ and ‘social inequality’.

Social differentiation, which lays at the basis of modern society, refers to the differences between members of a society. These differences relate to individual characteristics, such as hair colour or age; or to the social roles people take up. Increasing differentiation is seen as a characteristic of more complex societies; this is when the task divisions and specialisation of separate fields grow (Marshall, 1996). Social differentiation does not necessarily imply a hierarchical rank ordering between the different positions (Heller, 1969). Yet, social differentiation forms a necessary precondition for both social inequality and social stratification.

Social inequality also refers to differences between people, but in contrast to social differentiation, it implies a hierarchical rank order. Social inequality is a condition whereby people have unequal access to valued resources, services and positions in society (Kerbo, 2000). This results in disadvantages for some and privilege for others in society (McMullin, 2004).

Social stratification means that the unequal access to valued resources in society has been 'institutionalised' (Grusky, 2001c; Kerbo, 2000). As an alternative to 'institutionalised', other authors prefer terms like 'structured' or 'systematic' (Breen & Rottman, 1995; Marger, 2005; Marshall, 1996). Under an institutionalised form of inequality, individuals are not allocated randomly to certain unequal positions in society. Most authors agree that a social stratification system is characterised by (1) a clear demarcation between the unequal groups in society, and (2) some degree of persistence in the social stratification structure.

To speak of social stratification there needs to be a clear demarcation between, and common acknowledgment of, the privileged and unprivileged groups in society. Scott (1996) defines social stratification as an internal division into a hierarchy of distinct social groups, each having specific life chances and a distinctive style of life. Breen & Rottman (1995) describe it as the bases - e.g. gender, ethnicity, class - through which individuals come to share particular positions of social power.

Next there is a need to clearly distinguish between privileged and unprivileged groups. Therefore most social stratification theorists agree that there needs to be some persistence in the social stratification structure. Marger (2005) argues that the stratification pattern in a society remains in place for many generations. He speaks

about structured inequality and refers to the solidification of inequality through the working of social institutions such as the government and the education system, or the legitimising influence of ideologies. According to Duncan (1968) social stratification refers to the persistence of positions in a hierarchy of inequality, either over the life time of a birth cohort of individuals or more particularly between generations.

1.1.2 Determinants and resources

Social stratification is a broad term and different forms of institutionalised inequality falls under its heading. Firstly, there are different determinants through which individuals come to share social positions with unequal access to valued resources in society. Unequal groups can be formed through gender, race, occupational position, sexuality, age etc. Additionally, the resources associated with a certain social position are diverse too. Social stratification theorists have focused on a wide range of resources which are distributed unequally in society. Weber made a first distinction between political power, social status and economic rewards (Weber, 1946 [1998]). Later on, sociologists have also investigated the unequal distribution of educational credentials, civil rights, distinguished consumption patterns, social networks and so forth.

Table 1.1 presents an overview of the different types of assets and valued resources that can underlie a social stratification system (Grusky, 2001c). For additional discussions I refer to Runciman (1968) and Duncan (1968).

The determinants on which inequality studies are focused depends on the society that is being studied and the theoretical framework of the researcher. It is also possible to understand the social stratification structure in a multidimensional way, combining several determining factors of inequality (McCall, 2001; Schwenk, 1999a; Sorokin, 1927 [1998]). Yet, mainstream social stratification research developed mainly one-dimensionally (Grusky, 2001c). The field of social stratification has given much attention to social classes and socio-economic strata, based on occupational positions

and leading to inequalities in the economic sphere (wealth, income…)[1].

Table 1.1 - Types of assets and resources underlying stratification systems

Asset group	Selected examples	Relevant scholars
1. Economic	Ownership of land, farms, factories, professional practices, business, liquid assets, human (i.e. slaves) labor power (e.g., serfs)	Karl Marx; Erik Wright
2. Political	Household authority (e.g., head of household); workplace authority (e.g. manager); party and societal authority (e.g., legislator); charismatic leader	Max Weber; Ralf Dahrendorf
3. Cultural	High-status consumption practices; "good manners"; privileged lifestyle	Pierre Bourdieu; Paul DiMaggio
4. Social	Access to high-status social networks, social ties, associations and clubs, union memberships	W. Lloyd Warner; James Coleman
5. Honorific	Prestige; "good reputation"; fame; deference and derogation; ethnic and religious purity	Edward Shils; Donald Treiman
6. Civil	Rights of property, contract, franchise, and membership in elective assemblies; freedom of association and speech	T.H. Marshall; Rogers Brubaker
7. Human	Skills; expertise; on-the-job training; experience; formal education; knowledge	Kaare Svalastoga; Gary Becker

Source: Grusky, 2001a, p.4

1.1.3 Dimensions of a stratification system

Different forms of social stratification can be compared on the basis of different dimensions. Based on the overviews given by Caplow (2003) and Grusky (2001c), I distinguish between five dimensions: (1) inequality, (2) persistence, (3)

[1] In the greater part of the literature and also here, social class analysis is seen as one form of social stratification research. However, some authors have defined social stratification as a specific form of inequality and oppose it to social class analysis (Kingston, 2003; McMullin, 2004; Noll, 2003), I do not follow that line of argument.

compartmentalisation, (4) consistency and (5) ascribed versus achieved stratification determinant. The degree of *inequality* in a given resource (e.g. income) reflects its concentration or dispersion in the population. Some resources are more equally distributed than others. Most civil rights for instance are valid for all inhabitants of a country but the ownership of factories and firms is often controlled by a small elite. The degree of *persistence* or rigidity concerns the stability of an existing social stratification structure over time. It is often measured by comparing the current social position of an individual with either their social position at an earlier time or the social position of the parents. The *compartmentalisation* dimension refers to how distinct the different groups are in a social stratification system. If a social stratification structure scores high on the compartmentalisation dimension, then the different social groups will be separated by barriers that inhibit social interactions like friendship or marriage, and social mobility. *Consistency* or crystallisation is the degree to which a person occupies a similar ranking in the distribution of different valued resources in that population. If the correlation between for instance education level, occupational level, political power and income is strong, then the same individuals will consistently appear at the top of all hierarchies, and other people are consistently at the lower end of the stratification ladder. A weak correlation between the different resources will lead to all kinds of status inconsistencies, think for instance about a low educated millionaire. Finally, the determinants through which social stratification groups are formed can rest on *ascription or achievement*, or a combination of both elements. An ascribed characteristic is something we are born with (e.g. sex, caste, ethnicity, nationality), whereas an achieved characteristic can be obtained through individual effort during a person's lifetime.

1.1.4 Operational definition of social stratification

In this first section, I have given an overview of the most common concepts used in the field of social stratification research. A review of the explanations used by other scholars brings me to the following operational definition of the concept of social stratification. Social stratification is (a) the institutionalisation of (b) distinct social groups, which are (c) unequal with respect to their access to valued resources in society.

In the following section, I give an overview of the main ideas in modern social stratification theory.

1.2 AN OVERVIEW OF MODERN SOCIAL STRATIFICATION THEORISING

In this section the cornerstones in the history of social stratification debates are outlined. Social stratification and social inequality belong to the core of the sociological debate since the beginning of industrial society. It would be hard to ignore the impact of many generations of researchers on the topic. In order to understand contemporary debates in social stratification, an overview is given of the main thinkers in the history of social stratification. First, the context in which early social stratification theory was shaped is outlined. Consequently, we will look at the ideas of two founding fathers of social stratification theory, Karl Marx and Max Weber. Finally, a brief discussion on social stratification theorising after the Second World War is provided.

1.2.1 The context of early social stratification theory

Although social inequality and social stratification have been present in every society in history, only from the age of Western industrialisation onwards, it started to gain any significant scientific interest.

In feudal times, Western European society was mainly structured along the three estates of clergy, knights and common people. The estate to which someone belonged was mainly hereditary[2] and provided one with specific socio-political rights and obligations (Seiyama, 2000). Before the industrial revolution, the cause of social inequality was also perceived as natural and divine, and this blocked the need for any further scientific explanation (Crompton, 1998).

With the transformation to modern society however, social stratification patterns experienced a major shift. Early industrial societies were led by the belief that human

[2] Except for the clergy.

beings were born equal, rather than unequal, and achievement became a more important determinant for the allocation of social positions (Bottero, 2005). This new perception of inequality laid the foundation for a sociological interest in social stratification (Crompton, 1998). If equality rather than inequality is assumed to be the 'natural' condition of human beings, then questions arise as to how existing inequalities are socially explained and justified. But together with the changed perception of stratification, also the social order changed dramatically with the industrial revolution. The rise of towns and early industrialisation challenged the estate scheme with new social realities. The capitalist way of production brought about a new occupational structure with new social divisions. It is in this context that two major founding fathers of social stratification theory, Karl Marx and Max Weber, have formulated their ideas. A review of the principal ideas of these two authors will allow us to better understand the roots by which current social stratification theory is shaped.

1.2.2 Two founding fathers: Karl Marx and Max Weber

Karl Marx' writings are characterised by a combination of social theory with the political ambitions of a prominent revolutionary off his time. According to Marx' historical materialism, the history of human societies is a history of class struggle. Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guild-master and journeyman stood in constant opposition to one another (Marx & Engels, 1946). By considering the nature of capitalist industries, he writes about the characteristics of classes and their dynamics in modern society. According to Marx, the industrial era is characterised by a simplification of antagonisms. Society is splitting up in two hostile classes: bourgeoisie and proletariat. The proletariat is oppressed by the bourgeoisie, who owns the means of production (Marx & Engels, 1946). The industrial work of the proletarian class is alienating, in the sense that the labourers do not identify themselves with the work. For the bourgeoisie this is symbolising their power but for the proletariat, it is a sign of their inhuman existence (Marx, 1963). For Marx, the dynamic character of class relations is crucial. In the Communist Manifesto, he deals with the topic of historical change in stratification systems, which happens through a revolution originated by the oppressed groups in society. He describes the bourgeois revolution, which brought about a

collapse of the feudal estate system. In the capitalist era, the only potentially revolutionary group is the proletarian class. Although often criticised, Karl Marx' ideas have been very influential for the work of later theorists, supporters as well as opponents. Scholars who have written in his tradition are, among others, Dahrenforf, Wright, Wallerstein and Poulantzas.

Max Weber is the second most profound author whose theories on social stratification are highly note worthy because he focuses on factors other than economic foundations of social stratification. He distinguishes three determinants for the distribution of power in society: class, status and party (Weber, 1946 [1998]). A group of people who have in common a causal component of their life chances are found in the same class-situation. Contrary to Marx' perceptions, Weber's classes do not necessarily form a community or lead to class action. Social status groups consist of people who share a common lifestyle and have a certain level of prestige. In contrast to social classes, they do form a separate community. While classes must be placed within the economic order and status groups within the social order, parties can be seen as power groups. Weber does not elaborate much on the party concept but it can be seen as a group of people who work together because they have common aims or interests (Breen & Rottman, 1995). Parties may represent interests determined through 'class situation' or 'status situation' but this need not necessarily be the case (Weber, 1946 [1998]). Weber's three-dimensional framework for thinking about social stratification has been very influential throughout the 20th century. Many authors have shaped their social stratification view along one or more of these dimensions. Some of Weber's followers are Barber, Lipset, Giddens and Lockwood.

1.2.3 A brief overview of post-war social stratification thinking

In the immediate post-war years, social stratification theory had mainly a functionalist and neo-Weberian character. Functionalist inspired writers have emphasised the functions of social inequality and stratification to maintain order and stability in society. Davis and Moore (1946 [2001]) were first to set out the functionalist argument in the context of social stratification. They argue that the stratification of society meets the

functional necessity of allocating individuals to different social positions and motivating them to fulfil the respective tasks and duties of their position.

Furthermore, post-war theorists have also written in the tradition of Max Weber. The influential post-war social stratification reader by Bendix and Lipset focuses on neo-Weberian aspects like the cultural dimension of inequality and linkages between social class and political power (Crompton, 1998; Grusky, 2001b).

By the end of the 1950's, there is a renaissance of critical theories that benefit from the Marxist tradition. Authors like Ralf Dahrendorf and Anthony Giddens were widely read for their innovative intellectual combinations of Marxism and liberalism, or Marxism and Weberianism (Grusky, 2001b). Much of the debate focused on the linkage between class structure and class action (Crompton, 1998). In Western social science, the revival of Marxist ideas mostly faded away in the late 1970's, while the influence of Weber continued to be of significant importance (Grusky, 2001b).

The French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu offered a new perspective on social class analysis. He broadened the base of the class concept to other aspects than just the economic sphere. Bourdieu defined four forms of social capital: economic capital, social capital, cultural capital and symbolic capital. According to the total volume of capital, the composition of this capital and the change in these two over time, Bourdieu came to distinguish between three classes: the bourgeoisie, the petite bourgeoisie and the labour class (Crompton, 1998; Pels, 1992; Van de Meerssche, 2002).

Empirical research in the second half of the twentieth century largely focussed on the factors generating and perpetuating social inequality. Social mobility researchers have investigated the connection between someone's parental social background and his/her current social position (Erikson & Goldthorpe, 1993; Sorokin, 1959). Blau and Duncan (1967 [2001]) demonstrated that a person's current occupational status is not only influenced by his/her parents' social position, but also by their level of education and level of their first job. Grusky summarises three research streams that focus on the structural factors which generate barriers between social layers (Grusky, 2001c). First there are studies into the dual labour market. Second, on the mesolevel there is the analysis of the effect of social networks and social capital on the attained social

position. Thirdly, macrolevel studies have focussed on the effects of the institutional context on social mobility (Di Prete, de Graaf, Luijkx, Tahlin, & Blossfeld, 1997).

Towards the end of the 20th century, the predominance of social class as a basis of social stratification is increasingly criticised. Some authors have proposed alternative determinants of social stratification and class analysis. The interest in gender and race/ethnicity as determinants of stratification has grown as well. These ascribed determinants of social stratification are discussed in Section 1.3.2. Since the end of the 1980's onwards, there has been a continuing debate over the relevance of class analysis in a post-modern era. In Chapter 3 I will focus on the questioned relevance of social class stratification in the post-industrial age.

1.3 SOME IMPORTANT SOCIAL STRATIFICATION DETERMINANTS

In this section I continue with an elaboration of the most common determinants for social stratification. In Section 1.3.1, we set off with a discussion of occupation-based social stratification determinants. Next, the importance of the level of education is highlighted. In Section 1.3.3, the focus is on ascribed determinants of social stratification, such as gender, race and ethnicity. Consequently, we will see that some sociologists propose to focus on cultural differences, rather than structural inequalities. The section ends with assessing the ways to deal with multiple social stratification determinants.

1.3.1 Occupation-based social stratification determinants: social class and social status

The classic way of studying social stratification is to look at socio-economic groups, based on someone's position in the occupational system. This focus on the occupational sphere is a legacy of the founding fathers of social stratification theory. Especially Karl Marx' perspective on antagonistic work relationships in the industrial society has set an example for what the basis of inequality is. But also Max Weber's concept of social status has been interpreted in occupational terms later on. There are different ways in

which occupations have been classified to construct a social stratification scheme. Three groups of occupationally based stratification schemes can be distinguished: (a) social class schemes, (b) occupational prestige scales and (c) socio-economic scales. In what follows I will elaborate on each of these three occupationally based stratification schemes.

The term social class has first been coined by one of the grandfathers of current social stratification theorising: Karl Marx. The basis of his class conception consists of the position in relation to the production process (Breen & Rottman, 1995). The bourgeoisie owns the means of production (factories, offices, machines etc), while the proletarian class only owns its own labour, which it sells as a commodity. Where Marx defines class in terms of production relations, later scholars have focussed on differential chances within the labour market and employment relations. Max Weber for instance, defines social classes according to the resources an individual can use as a commodity and in the labour market. (Weber, 1946 [1998]). According to Weber, there are two groups of valuable resources, i.e. on the one hand *possession of goods,* which might be compared with Marx' idea of owning means of production, and on the other hand *opportunities for income,* referring to things like skills, education, offering services etc. Weber distinguishes between four social classes: (a) the working class as a whole; (b) the petty bourgeoisie; (c) the 'intelligentsia' without independent property, together with persons whose social position is primarily dependent on technical training such as engineers, commercial and other officials, and civil servants; and (d) the classes occupying a privileged position through property and education (Weber, 1946 [1998]). The social class concept has been particularly popular in European social research. Elaborate social class schemes, such as the ones by Wright or Goldthorpe have contributed to the widespread use of the class concept. Both authors constructed a social class scheme on theoretical grounds and used it in empirical research. Wright, who works in the Marxist tradition, has based his class schema on relations of exploitation. Social positions can be more or less exploited with respect to four dimensions: the means of production, authority, skills and number of employees. Goldthorpes class schema intends to differentiate positions in terms of their employment relationships. An essential aspect of his class schema is the division between employers, self-employed and employees. Furthermore the employee group is subdivided according to managerial role and whether one works with a labour contract or a service contract. Typical for the

class concept is the emphasis on relational aspects. Social class positions define social relationships within markets, especially within labour markets and within firms (Sorensen, 1991). Belonging to a class implies certain social relations with persons from different classes. In Marx' class scheme for instance, the relationship between bourgeoisie and proletariat has an exploitative character, as the capitalist can exploit the labourer by creating surplus value out of the work of the latter.

Lockwood (1958) argues that whereas social classes focus on the divisions which result from the brute facts of economic organisation, social status relates to more subtle distinctions which stem from the values that people set on each other's activities. The difference between class and status is often also simplified along the distinction 'economic/social' (Bottero, 2005). In Weber's definition, status groups consist of people who share a common style of life and have a certain level of prestige. Members of a status group gain social prestige through a certain mode of living, a formal process of education, their birth or their occupation. Besides bearing the respective status honour, status privileges consist of several material monopolies, such as wearing specific clothes, eating certain dishes, practising certain kinds of art etc. Intermarriage within the status group is normal and highly desirable (Weber, 1946 [1998]). Status schemes have first been operationalised and mainly been used in an American research context. For the study of social status, two main measurement instruments can be distinguished: prestige scales and socio-economic indices. Prestige scales are based on survey research questioning the prestige of different occupations. They are often referred to as 'subjective measures' because they reflect the subjective assessment of the relative prestige of occupations within a population (Crompton, 1994). In contrast to the relational approach taken in social class analysis, occupational status groups are seen as gradational or hierarchical. Treiman (1976 [2001]) finds a large degree of consistency in how people rate different occupations. This consistency appears within societies, as well as between nations, and is often seen as a justification of the functionalist argument that occupational inequality is legitimate and that status rankings reflect the functional importance of different occupations for society (Bottero, 2005; Crompton, 1994; Davis & Moore, 1946 [2001]). The functionalist interpretation has been criticised by opponents of the prestige scales. According to Goldthorpe and Hope (1972), the fact that there is consensus about a certain prestige ranking does not imply agreement on the fairness of the ranking. They argue that prestige rating is a cognitive exercise and not an

evaluative one. In contrast to the prestige scale, the socio-economic scale offers an objective basis for the social status of different occupational groups. The socio-economic scale aims to reflect the general lifestyle associated with a particular occupation (Bottero, 2005). The basis of the scale is formed by a combination of the income level and the level of education associated with that occupation. At the end of the 1950's the Canadian social researcher Blishen first developed a socio-economic scale (Blishen, 1958). Yet, the socio-economic index gained only large-scale interest with the work of Duncan (1961) who made the connection with prestige scales. Although they are differently constructed, both prestige scales and socio-economic scales are seen as measures of social status. They refer to a gradational difference between social layers, rather than to a relational connection as in social class measures (Grusky, 2001c). Socio-economic scales and prestige scales generally correlate well (Blau & Duncan, 1967) and they are used in similar types of analysis. Especially status attainment studies have used both prestige scales and socio-economic scales (Featherman & Hauser, 1976).

In this section we have seen that the social class and social status approach differ in their theoretical understanding of the social stratification structure. In Table 1.2 the main differences between these two occupational stratification perspectives is summarised.

Table 1.2 - Social class and social status perspective on social stratification

	Social class	**Social status**
Basis of social inequality	Economic	Social
Connection between positions	Relational	Gradational

The main differences consist of the economic/social basis of social inequality and the relational versus gradational approach to social stratification. What both approaches do have in common is their use of information about the occupation as basis of social position. As a consequence, most social stratification research has been dominated by the investigation of occupation-based inequalities. In the two following sections the focus is on alternative bases of social stratification.

1.3.2 Level of education

During the 20th century, level of education has become a key factor in the explanation of life chances and success in later life. In the labour market, recruitment procedures are formalised and follow standards of merit and achievement. For many employers, level of education is a clear determinant of merit and a main indicator of a person's abilities and job performance (Teichler, 2001; Van Hoof, 1998).

Accordingly, this meritocratic idea has also guided policy measures and regulations leading to a democratisation of educational participation. The principle of 'equality of opportunity' has informed policy decisions such as compulsory school attendance and free access to education (Heath, 2001). In their turn, these policies have allowed a higher share of the population to attend school longer and consequently the average level of education has increased. During the second half of the 20th century, the educational participation has increased considerably in all Western European countries (Blossfeld & Shavit, 1993). Despite the ideas of meritocracy, however, several studies have shown that the educational expansion has not driven away inequality with respect to educational opportunities. The education level a person attains is in most countries still largely linked to the family background (Blossfeld & Shavit, 1993; Coleman, Campbell, Hobson, McPartland, Mood, Weinfeld, & York, 1966).

Moreover, in a society where educational participation levels are so high, low-educated persons find their labour market chances heavily reduced. The increase in educational participation is often said to lead to degree inflation. It means that there is a surplus of higher educated people and as a result a devaluation of degrees. This phenomenon occurs when the growing educational participation does not correlate with a similar upgrading of the occupational structure. Job candidates with a higher education level feel compelled to take on jobs which require a lower skill level and the lower educated groups see themselves being crowded out of jobs which they previously held (Wolbers, Graaf, & Ultee, 2001). As this process goes on, the labour market chances of lower educated groups decrease further and education level becomes an ever more important determinant of social inequality.

The importance of educational credentials has been emphasised in the social stratification theory of the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu. A merit of his work is the emphasis he puts on cultural aspects of social stratification, which is also called cultural capital. Bourdieu comes to a class division by taking into account different forms of capital: economic, social, cultural and symbolic. According to Bourdieu, cultural capital can occur in three forms: (1) in an embodied state, i.e. in the form of long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body; (2) in the objectified state, i.e. in the form of cultural goods like books, instruments; and (3) in the institutionalised state, e.g. in the form of educational qualifications (Pels, 1992). Bourdieu first used the concept to explain differences in educational achievement between different social classes (Pels, 1992). Later on, the concept of cultural capital has been used to refer to a wide range of attributes: ranging from knowledge, skills and educational degrees to art participation, cultural taste and preference, reading behaviour and art objects like paintings or books. (Borocz & Southworth, 1996; Bourdieu, 1979; Kingston, 2001; Lareau & Weininger, 2003; Pels, 1992).

1.3.3 Ascribed social stratification determinants: gender, race and ethnicity

Although the discriminatory forces of gender, race and ethnicity have always played a significant role in modern societies, they have initially been confined to the sideline of the field by classical social stratification theorists. The earliest attempt of social stratification theorising was done under the assumption that modern life is organised around increasingly impersonal market and rationalistic criteria. The belief that achievement is more important than ascription as the basis of social organisation once dominated the field (Bottero, 2005). Whereas gender, race and ethnicity have an ascribed character, social class and social status have been seen as achieved positions. Consequently, early social stratification theory has mainly developed around occupational positions in the economic system. As women were mainly excluded from the labour market for most of the industrial period, gender inequalities remained unstudied until feminist writers pushed the topic forward in the 1970's. Furthermore, also racial and ethnic inequalities were not salient in the European early industrial context where initial social stratification theory was shaped. Yet, the emphasis on

someone’s occupational position as the main structural force of social life is understandable from a social historical viewpoint. However, after the Second World War a growing interest in and awareness of the impact of gender, race and ethnicity emerged.

With the growth of feminism in the 1960's, the interest in gender divisions has grown. It has been acknowledged that in virtually all societies and throughout history women have been subordinated by men. (Marger, 2005). The female gender stands lower in the social hierarchy as women have less access to valued goods in society like wealth, power, material resources, privileges and prestige (Blumberg, 1984; Lemieux & Möhle, 2003; Marger, 2005). Early feminist works are written in the Marxist tradition. The fact that women are ignored in class analyses has been a point of criticism. Especially the neglect of the unpaid but also exploitative character of domestic labour has been a subject for debate. (Crompton, 1994; Levine, 1998). Furthermore, scholars have demonstrated the disregard of women in the labour market and a debate over the proper unit of class position has risen: is it the family or the individual? The practice of defining the household's social class on the basis of the employment situation of the male breadwinner has sparked a huge debate (Crompton, 1994; Breen & Rottman, 1995). Simultaneously to the increasing social scientific attention for gender inequality, actual gender inequalities have diminished. During the past four decades, women have gained more equal chances in the education system, the labour market and the political system (Kerbo, 2000; Lemieux & Möhle, 2003). Nonetheless, a number of inequalities have persisted. For instance, as we will see in the next chapter, gender inequalities with respect to poverty remain salient.

For race and ethnicity, a large amount of theoretical and empirical work stems from the United States. As Breen and Rottman (1995) argue, race rather than class dominates public policy debate and racial labels are the common currency of street-level social stratification. Much of the debate situates around the question of how class and race/ethnicity are interrelated, and what the dominant form of stratification is: race/ethnicity or class. Authors like Julius William Wilson have linked the race/ethnicity question to the phenomenon of spatial segregation, ghettoisation and the development of an underclass (Wilson, 1999 [2001]). Loic Wacquant translated the spatial segregation idea into the European context (Wacquant, 1996, 2000).

1.3.4 An alternative to structural inequality: cultural difference

At the end of the 20th century, cultural accounts of social stratification offer an alternative to hierarchical stratification structures. In this context, new ways of social differentiation have occurred occur on the basis of cultural preference. Post-modern accounts speak of a shift from production to consumption, from the social to the cultural sphere and from life chances to lifestyles (Crook, Pakulski, & Waters, 1992). Some authors claim that individual choice has become dominant in determining a person's lifestyle (Bottero, 2005). According to Waters (1994), people can belong to different status groups, depending on their choice and interests. Some cultural accounts of change have also emphasised the independent role of ideologies, social movements and cultural practices. Authors following this approach focus on the importance of new social movements, such as feminism, environmentalism and so on (Grusky, 2001).

1.3.5 Multiple determinants of social inequality: how to combine them?

Up until now, this section has reviewed the most common determinants of social stratification. Naturally, the question arises of how to combine these multiple determinants.

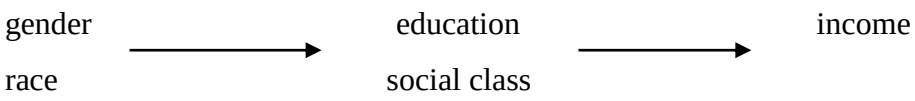
The literature review shows that the vast majority of the social stratification literature focuses on just one stratification determinant. It is frequently argued that the complexity of social inequality can be understood by reducing the study to one fundamental dimension of social stratification and this is usually someone's social class position in the economic sphere (Bottero, 2005; Grusky, 2001b). Also, when other social stratification determinants are taken into account, the predominant importance of social class is often proclaimed (Breen & Rottman, 1995).

Despite the predominantly one-dimensional approach, several authors have tried to combine different social stratification determinants in a useful way. In his social stratification theory, Sorokin (1959) elaborates on this issue with the notion of social space. Somebody's position in social space is determined by a combination of several

characteristics: family status, nationality, race, religion, occupation, political affiliation etc. Consequently, when two individuals are identical in these characteristics, then their social position are the same. When two individuals differ on these dimensions, then the social distance between them is larger.

Also in more recent work the focus on multiple determinants of social stratification has proven useful. There are three main perspectives. Firstly, some authors claim that individuals have different statuses in different situations (Grusky, 2001a). Saunders nicely describes it as follows: "On holiday in Spain we feel British, waiting for a child outside the school gates we are parents, shopping in Marks and Spencer we are consumers, and answering questions, framed by sociologists with class on the brain, we are working class" (Saunders, 1989). Other authors come to useful insights by looking at subgroups, consisting of a combination of several social stratification determinants. In this perspective, individuals belong to subcategories formed on the basis of occupational position, level of education, race and gender (e.g. white middle class man, black working class woman…) (Grusky, 2001b). McCall (2001) and Cotter, Hermsen and Vanneman (1999) for instance have investigated interactions between several social stratification determinants. A third perspective combines the different social stratification determinants in a causal way. Dronkers and Ultee (1995) for instance propose the next connection, in which gender and race are predictive for a person's education and class, which in their turn influence someone's income.

Figure 1.1 - Causal relationships between different determinants of social stratification



In the empirical part of this thesis, multiple determinants of social stratification will be considered. Occupational position, as well as gender and level of education are seen as important determinants of poverty inequality. The perspective is taken that there is not one dominant social stratification determinant. It is rather understood that the several determinants of social stratification have a combined effect on income poverty.

1.4 INEQUALITY BASED ON 'ACHIEVED' SOCIAL POSITIONS: JUSTIFIED INEQUALITY?

This section deals with the issue of fairness of social inequality. Some authors have argued that social inequality can be justified as long as it is based on individual effort and talent. In this perspective, social inequality founded on 'achieved' determinants of social stratification such as education level and occupational position is not seen as unfair (Marshall, Swift, & Roberts, 1997). The issue of fairness is important because it guides the perceived importance of inequalities among policy makers and in the public opinion. Inequality based on individual achievement is seen as more fair and acceptable.

Fundamental in this respect, is the distinction between 'inequality of opportunity' and 'inequality of outcome' (Heath, 2001). Inequality of opportunity refers to the unequal access to advantageous social positions for individuals with the same ability. Inequality of outcome on the other hand merely refers to inequalities in the access to advantageous social positions. The latter form of inequality comprises inequality of opportunity but could also refer to differences in individual ability. Both the equality of opportunity as well as the equality of outcome principles, therefore influence policy actions (Heath, 2001; Saha, 2001). In general, liberal democratic policy primarily focuses on eradicating inequality of opportunity. Equal opportunity measures are taken in several domains. We can think of actions taken to ensure that persons from different ethnic groups are treated equally in the labour market, given that they have equal educational credentials and job experience. Some socialist oriented politicians go a step further than the equality of opportunity principle and strive for equality of outcome (Heath, 2001). A labour market policy based on the equality of outcome principle will strive for an equal representation of for instance both gender groups in influential occupational positions, regardless of the abilities of the individual candidates. Generally, social policy measures following the equality of opportunity principle are based on the underlying assumption that inequality on the basis of individual achievement is justified. On the other hand, policy actions following the equality of outcome principle aim to eradicate all inequalities.

Several sociologists have contested the justification of social inequality based on achievements in the educational and occupational sphere. They question the importance of individual merit in the acquisition of education level and occupational position. Empirical evidence shows that someone's occupational position is related to the parental social background, even when controlling for that person's attained education level (Marshall et al., 1997). Furthermore, also someone's attained level of education is linked to the parental social background. This is not necessarily because children from the higher social classes genetically inherit larger educational capacities but also because of the school-oriented home culture and the dominating middle class culture in schools. Arguments include the evidence that schools are run by middle class teachers who tend to identify more with middle class children; in the fact that the middle class linguistic skills are more rewarded in tests; that successful schools are often residentially segregated; and that children from the lower classes experience a culture clash when trying to adapt to school life. These socially determined factors could contribute to the poorer educational outcome of children from lower social backgrounds (Marshall et al., 1997; Walters, 2001).

As one can see, the issue of the fairness of social inequality is a complicated matter. The aim of this section was to present a short overview of the debate but no further research will be done about the justice of social stratification. However, we have seen that a relatively large stream of literature shows that achievements in the educational and occupational sphere are often related to someone's background. Therefore, both ascribed as well as so-called achieved determinants of social stratification are regarded as useful indicators of social inequality.

1.5 DISCUSSION

In this chapter, some important issues and dimensions of social stratification systems have been outlined. I started with a conceptual overview of the field and inferred an operational definition of social stratification. In the light of this thesis, social stratification is understood as the institutionalisation of distinct social groups, which are unequal with respect to their access to valued resources in society. Consequently, I have

shown that the founding fathers of sociology continue to have a large impact on current social inequality research. Following the influential work of Karl Marx and Max Weber, the research literature is dominated by accounts of social class and other occupation-based determinants. However, during the 20th century, the importance of educational achievement and ascribed social stratification determinants such as gender, race and ethnicity have been highlighted as well. Rather than assuming the dominant position of a single social stratification determinant, multiple determinants of social stratification will be combined in this thesis. The last section of this chapter elaborated on the issue of fairness of social inequality. Some authors believe that inequalities on the basis of achieved social stratification determinants such as education level or occupation are justified. However, there is ample sociological evidence that the chance of achieving an influential position is linked to someone's parental social background and subculture. Therefore, I consider both ascribed as well as achieved determinants of social stratification as important indicators of social inequality.

2 THE SOCIAL STRATIFICATION OF INCOME INEQUALITY AND POVERTY: EVIDENCE FROM EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, social stratification has been defined as the institutionalisation of distinct social groups, which are unequal with respect to their access to valued resources in society. Traditionally, income is regarded as one of the most important valued social resources. In this chapter, I will present empirical evidence of the relationship between some important determinants of social stratification and the inequality of income and income poverty. This focus is chosen because the empirical chapters of this thesis deal with the study of social stratification and income poverty. After assessing the gender-related, educational and occupational stratification of income and poverty inequality, I will present multidimensional accounts of the association between occupation, education and income. These include research in the status consistency approach and complex models of the causal pathways towards income attainment.

2.2 IMPORTANT SOCIAL STRATIFICATION DETERMINANTS OF INCOME INEQUALITY AND POVERTY

In this section we will see that social stratification determinants such as gender, level of education and occupational position have an influence on income inequality and the inequality of income poverty. The emphasis is on gender, level of education and occupational status/class because they are three crucial determinants of social stratification.

2.2.1 Gender and income poverty

During the second half of the 20th century, income poverty became rapidly a female problem and the term 'feminisation of poverty' was introduced (Pearce, 1978). In most

industrial countries, there is a gender poverty gap, in the sense that the share of women in poverty is larger than the share of men (Casper, McLanahan, & Garfinkel, 1994; Christopher, England, McLanahan, Ross, & Smeeding, 2001). The reasons for this gender poverty gap are sought in three major areas: the labour market, the family structure and the welfare state (Bianchi, 1999; Budowski, Tillmann, & Bergman, 2002; Christopher, England, Smeeding, & Phillips, 2002; McLanahan & Kelly, 1999; Peterson, 1987).

First of all, the labour market position of women is generally worse than that of men. Even though the labour force participation of women has increased a lot over the past decades, women still earn less than men and are overrepresented in a limited range of low-paid and less influential jobs.

Next to that, demographic trends have instigated changes in the family structure. During the past decades the number of single female families has increased. The age difference in mortality between men and women has led to the phenomenon that many women live alone in later age. Additionally, the high divorce rates and the increased rate of children born outside marriage have caused a substantial number of women to live alone or in single mother families. For many women, their position in the labour market does not allow them to gather a sufficient income and live an independent life. Children bring an extra financial burden in single parent families and especially single mothers suffer from high poverty rates (Christopher et al., 2001).

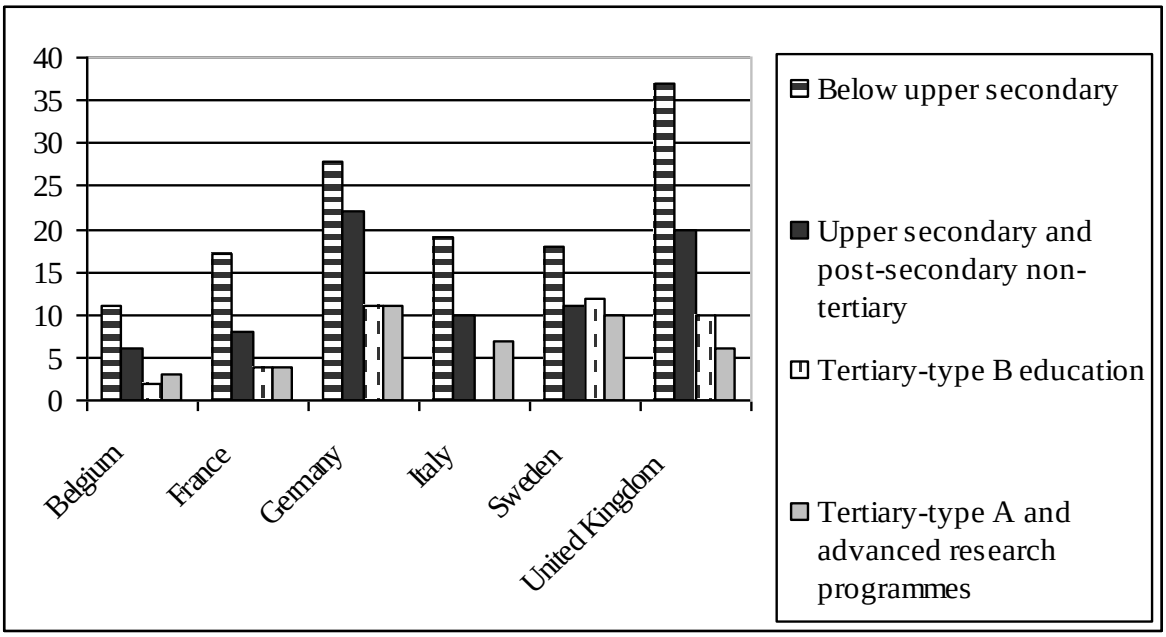
Lastly, also the welfare state affects the gender poverty gap and this creates differences between countries. In the Netherlands for instance, the gender poverty gap is especially low. And in Sweden, the gender poverty gap is actually reversed; women's poverty rates are lower than men's rates. This is attributed to generous social transfers in the Netherlands and the government's focus on full labour market participation in Sweden (Casper et al., 1994; Christopher et al., 2002; McLanahan & Kelly, 1999).

2.2.2 Education and income inequality

It is widely established that the income distribution is stratified by education level. Theoretically, Pierre Bourdieu argues that cultural capital, often operationalised as education level, can be transformed in economic capital (Pels, 1992). The majority of empirical studies in this area, however, are based on the economic notion of human capital. In this perspective, education is seen as an investment and it is supposed to increase an employee's productivity. Provided that higher productivity leads to higher wages, a higher education level will increase an employee's lifetime earning power (Tachibanaki, 2001). The human capital approach gained importance in the social sciences with the work of Gary Becker (1964). His work was pioneering because it attempted to measure the economic returns of investing in human capital. Following Becker's analyses, many researchers have found significant effects of education level on a worker's lifetime earnings.

Figure 2.1 presents figures on the distribution of people with earnings lower than half of the country's median, according to education level (OECD, 2005). It is clear that in all countries, the proportion of people in the low income category is lower for higher levels of education. Especially the group of individuals with no upper secondary qualification has a relatively high risk to earn less than half of the country's median earnings. The dispersion according to education level is largest in the United Kingdom and lowest in Sweden. This finding is in line with the European comparative study of Harmon, Walker and Westergaard-Nielsen (2001). They find the highest returns to education in Ireland and the United Kingdom; the lowest returns are found in Sweden, Norway and Denmark. Moreover, in several countries the returns to education are larger for women than for men (Harmon et al., 2001). Over the years, there have been many additions to the initial model of earnings returns to education. Some authors have argued that the higher earnings of educated employees reflect their better abilities or family background (Woodhall, 2001). To distinguish the real effect of education level on earnings, several models have been proposed that take into account additional factors such as work experience, employment mobility, innate ability and family background (Tachibanaki, 2001).

Figure 2.1 - Proportion of 25- to 64-year-olds with personal earnings one half of the country median or less, by level of educational attainment, selected European countries, 2002-2003[3]



Source: Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD, 2005)

2.2.3 Occupational stratification of income inequality

After the industrial revolution and up until the 1960's, social class and social status were perceived as so crucial that the link with economic resources was almost self-evident. In more recent work, however, there is a tendency to separate the study of occupational inequality from income inequality (Osberg, 2001; Savage, 2000). With the division of academic areas, occupational inequality has mainly been studied by

[3] *Tertiary-type A education* (ISCED 5A) is largely theory based and is designed to provide sufficient qualifications for entry to advanced research programmes and professions with high skill requirements, such as medicine, dentistry or architecture. Tertiary-type A programmes have a minimum cumulative theoretical duration (at tertiary level) of three years' full-time equivalent. *Tertiary-type B education* (ISCED 5B) is typically shorter than those of tertiary-type A and focuses on practical, technical or occupational skills for direct entry into the labour market, although some theoretical foundations may be covered in the respective programmes. They have a minimum duration of two years full-time equivalent at the tertiary level. Figures about the tertiary-type B education are not available for Italy (OECD, 2005).

sociologists, whereas economists have dominated the area of income inequality. However, as we shall see, empirical evidence shows that occupational stratification can still be seen as a crucial correlate of income inequality. In this section, I present an overview of the relationship between someone's occupational position and income or income poverty in European countries.

Generally, data from the 1960's and 1970's show an income cleavage between manual and non-manual occupational positions. Townsend (1979) finds that poverty in the United Kingdom rises steadily with falling occupational class. 9% of those in the professional class, compared with 59% of the unskilled manual class have to survive with incomes below or just above the state's poverty line. Wright (1979) finds that social class together with number of employees working for someone, explain 10% of the variance in income. Employers and managers earn more than the reference category of supervisors and petty bourgeoisie; workers earn less. Furthermore, Wright's regression coefficients reveal that the higher the occupational status, the higher one's income. Dronkers and de Jong (1979) also found direct effects of occupational status on income in the Netherlands. George and Howard (1991) reviewed research concerning the effect of parental social background on economic attainment of individuals. They conclude that both in the United States as well as the United Kingdom the parental social class has an important effect on educational chances and economic prospects of individuals. According to their assessment, poverty is mostly concentrated with the working class who 'walk along economic paths that are familiar to their parents'.

More recent research does not report a strict manual/non-manual occupational divide anymore in income terms, especially when distinguishing the different occupational groups within these two broad categories. Savage (2000) finds the main division in the United Kingdom between a service class of managers and professionals on the one hand and manual together with routine non-manual occupations on the other hand. He finds no intermediate social class, at least not for what concerns the economic outcome. Several authors confirm the conclusion that low skilled, routine non-manual occupations obtain similar or even lower incomes than people in blue collar occupations (Crouch, 1999; Schooler & Schoenbach, 1994). This pattern is largely similar over different Western European countries (Crouch, 1999).

Savage (2000) shows that towards the end of the 20th century social class inequalities in income terms have sharpened in the United Kingdom. Between 1975 and 1998 both professionals and managerial occupational groups experienced a relative improvement in their situation. On the other hand, both manual and routine non-manual occupations have experienced relative deterioration in their income level. Especially routine non-manual workers have experienced a relatively large decline in their income level which has moved it towards the level of manual occupations.

Crouch (1999) explains that both gender aspects and the required skill level are important determinants of the economic inequality between social classes. He finds that over several Western European countries lower levels of the non-manual hierarchy are less well off in income terms, compared with the more highly skilled manual class. In addition, lower non-manual jobs are mainly occupied by women, while the skilled manual occupations are male dominated. Schooler and Schoenback (1994) also emphasise the importance of education level. They find that when controlling for education level and occupational status, non-manual workers have lower predicted income than manual workers. This is the case in the USA, Japan[4] and Poland.

2.3 MULTIDIMENSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN EDUCATION, OCCUPATION AND INCOME

2.3.1 Status consistency

Studies into status consistency explicitly address the topic of how several dimensions of social stratification correlate with each other. The classic dimensions in this context are occupational prestige, level of education and income. A person experiences status consistency if his/her income is connected with his/her level of education and occupational position. Someone occupies inconsistent positions when the correlation between these different dimensions is low. For example a person with a doctoral degree

[4] In Japan, also self-employed have lower predicted income than the reference category of manual workers.

who is unemployed experiences status inconsistency. Gerhard Lenski (1954) introduced the idea of status consistency[5] and measured the effect on voting behaviour.

Especially during the 1960's and 1970's a wide literature has evolved around the topic, and both conceptual matters as well as methodological formulae have been refined and discussed (Hartman, 1974; Meyer & Hammond, 1971; Zimmermann, 1973). For an overview, I refer to Smith (1996). Status inconsistency is often seen as a consequence of social mobility (See for instance Hope, 1975). Many studies have also focussed on the effect of status inconsistency on psychological stress and health issues (Ashford, 1990; Horan & Gray, 1974; Hornung, 1977; House & Harkins, 1975; Jackson, 1962). This research field is particularly interesting as it establishes a link between social structure, psychology and the medical field.

There are two prognoses for the development of status consistency with the advancement of industrial nations (Covello & Bollen, 1979; Forse & Lemel, 2003). The first scenario predicts that status consistency becomes stronger when societies industrialise further. The idea behind this is that social positions are allocated in increasingly rational and efficient ways. Moreover, the education system has become more democratic and more people achieve an education level that reflects their personal ability. Therefore, the level of education, occupational level and income will be connected more closely in advanced industrial societies (Erikson & Goldthorpe, 1993; Forse & Lemel, 2003). The second thesis draws a scenario of growing inconsistency with the further development of modern societies (Forse & Lemel, 2003; Kohler, 2005; Meulemann, 1985). It can be argued that smaller status consistency is a result of individualisation in society (Kohler, 2005). Furthermore, also the functional and structural differentiation of societies provides an explanation (Forse & Lemel, 2003). Advanced industrial societies are characterised by complexity and heterogeneity and this heterogeneity also extends to the different positions an individual occupies in the social stratification system. Forsé (1999) and Forsé and Lemel (2003) investigated the evolution of status consistency over time in France, Germany and the United States. Overall they found little variation in status consistency over time. However, it is also possible to compare countries with different levels of industrialisation. In their

[5] He uses the term status crystallization.

comparative studies Covello and Bollen (1979) and Kohler (2005) both found that countries with respectively higher gross domestic product and higher consumption level show more status consistency. This finding is in line with the first scenario of more rationalisation and status consistency in advanced industrial societies.

2.3.2 Causal pathways towards income attainment

Another multidimensional way of explaining income inequality is inspired by the status attainment framework. In this approach, a person's income is predicted by several related determinants, such as parental background, educational attainment and occupational position (Atkinson, Maynard, & Trinder, 1983; Bowles & Gintis, 2001; Dronkers & Jong, 1979). Typically, complex causal relationships between the different determinants of income attainment are modelled. The advantage of this technique is that the strength of several determinants can be assessed both as direct effects as well as intermediating variables.

Research results for the United Kingdom have shown that there is both a direct effect of the parental economic position on a person's income, as well as an indirect effect through educational qualifications (Atkinson et al., 1983). For the Netherlands, Dronkers and De Jong have investigated the direct and indirect effects of parental socio-economic position, cognitive level, educational attainment and occupational position of the individual (Dronkers & Jong, 1979). They find that there are substantial direct effects of both the father's socio-economic background, as well as the own occupational status on an individual's income level, controlled for the other factors. The effect of education level on a person's income works indirectly, through someone's cognitive ability and the occupational status of one's job.

2.4 DISCUSSION

In this chapter, an overview has been given of the social stratification determinants of income inequality. Income and income poverty can be considered as crucial aspects of

social inequality. Hence, there is a wide research literature linking income inequality to common social stratification determinants such as gender, level of education and occupational position. Furthermore, the association between education, occupation and income indicates the degree of status consistency a person experiences. Researchers in the status consistency approach have found that people with higher occupational status typically have a higher attained education level and a higher income. In addition, research inspired by the status attainment approach shows that there is a causal relationship between parental social background, education level, occupational position and income. Overall, I conclude that the income distribution and the risk of poverty in Western societies is stratified by gender, level of education and occupational position. Research results have revealed that the risk of low income and poverty is higher for lower non-manual and manual occupations, for people with a lower education level and for women. However, all empirical evidence presented in this chapter refers to cross-sectional findings. In this research project, longitudinal data will be used and hence, I will have the opportunity to take mobility in the social stratification structure into account. In the next chapter, I shall argue that this dynamic approach poses challenges for the social stratification understanding of poverty and income inequality.

3 DYNAMICS OF INEQUALITY: CHALLENGES FOR A LATE MODERN SOCIAL STRATIFICATION PERSPECTIVE ON INCOME INEQUALITY AND POVERTY

In this chapter, it will be argued that societal transformations during the second half of the 20th century have had their influence on both the conceptualisation of poverty/income inequality and accounts of social stratification. The starting point of the thesis is formed by the dynamic approach to poverty and the challenges this poses for a social stratification understanding of income and poverty inequality. This dynamic perspective on poverty is influenced by major social developments in the fields of labour and the family. In the first part of this chapter, I will outline how social changes in these fields have created opportunities but also insecurities for individuals, which leads to flexibility and dynamics in the life course. The second part of this chapter focuses on the challenges of social change for the social stratification of income inequality and poverty. I start with outlining the significance of poverty dynamics in late modern European societies. Next, the focus is on the consequences for the perspective of social stratification. The dynamic approach towards poverty inequality is correlated with three important stances in the field of social stratification: (1) a debate over the relevance of social stratification, (2) accounts of social mobility and (3) the life course perspective on poverty. These three stances will be clarified in respectively Section 3.2.2, 3.2.3 and 3.2.4. The chapter is concluded with a discussion.

3.1 THE BACKGROUND: INSECURITIES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN LATE MODERNITY

The period from the second half of the 20th century onwards is characterised by rapid social change in several fields. Many authors argue that we live in a new era, which is diversely known as post-industrialism over post-Fordism to post-modernity, reflexive modernity or the risk society. All these terms have a slightly different focus but the main idea is that the principles guiding the industrial period have lost their relevance (Crouch, 1999). Old securities have gone and people are confronted with new and flexible social arrangements. The predominant work pattern has shifted from stable

manual manufacturing work to more flexible working arrangements, predominantly in the service sector. Also in other domains, the former social institutions (family, social class…) are on their return. Instead, a plurality of new social forms has appeared, think for instance about the many possible private living forms, such as the traditional marriage, single households, stepfamilies, Living-Apart-Together-relationships and so forth. Furthermore, individuals are ought to make autonomous decisions and reflect on the organisation of their life. These new social arrangements also bring new insecurities and risks, which lead to new forms of inequality. To better understand contemporary issues in the field of income poverty, a sketch of the major social changes is necessary. The focus of this chapter is on social change in the labour and work domain as well as in the family sphere. These two areas are chosen because insecurities in these domains have a strong impact on someone's economic situation, and hence poverty risk. Moreover, social change in the labour market is particularly influential for a person's occupational position. Occupational position belongs to the core of the social stratification field, as it is an indicator of social status and social class.

3.1.1 Changes in the occupational structure

The current occupational structure is often described as post-industrial because it is mainly characterised by a decrease in manufacturing employment on the one hand and an expanding service sector on the other hand (Crouch, 1999).

From the start of the industrial revolution, ever-increasing automisation has caused a gradual decline in the number of labourers needed in manufacturing. Additionally, during the last decade, the globalisation of the economy has sped up the decline of the manufacturing sector in Western economies. As the competition market becomes larger, the manufacturing industry gradually moves to Southern and South-Eastern countries because they are cheaper. The loss of blue-collar jobs in Western Europe, caused by automisation and globalisation, is distinctive for the reshaping of contemporary occupational structures in Western European societies.

Together with the decreasing manufacturing sector, there has been an increase in service sector employment. The service sector has become broader because new segments have

appeared, such as the financial, leisure, business and the welfare state sector (Crompton, 1998). These new segments have provided a wide range of new professions and jobs. Think for instance about the welfare state and the job opportunities it created in state-organised social services. New professions were also created by the increasing bureaucratic and technological character of the production process. Examples of this are managers or technological and scientific specialists who fulfil white-collar jobs in the production sector (Van Hoof, 1998). Research by the European Commission shows that the service sector is the main source of job growth in Europe in recent decades (Anxo & Storrie, 2001). In the United Kingdom, a higher proportion of white-collar jobs is found in the younger cohorts (Halpin, 1999). Also politically, the aim has been formulated to replace losses in the manufacturing sector by non-manual knowledge economy jobs (Brown, 2005; Seager, 2005).

However, opinions differ on whether the described occupational evolution has to be assessed as an improvement or degradation. Decades ago already, Bell (1973) argued that the transition towards an information-based society brings with it an upgrading of the occupational structure. However, two more pessimistic interpretations mention (1) degradation within the non-manual occupation group, and (2) exclusion of certain employee groups from the labour market. Some authors argue that the occupational shift also leads to degradation within the non-manual occupation group. With an evolution to more non-manual occupations, the nature of white-collar work has changed too. In the 1970's it had already been established by Braverman (1974) that technical specialisation and the control to which contemporary employment is subjected will lead to job degradation. In the past, white-collar employees used to be independent, whereas nowadays they are also increasingly subject to control. It has been argued that some occupations will move from a service relationship to a more constrained one in the future (Goldthorpe, 2000; Halpin, 1999). Some authors refer to this as the polarisation in the service sector. A situation is foreseen, in which a growing segment of professional jobs on top of the occupational structure goes together with growth in the lower regions of low-skilled service sector jobs. So the knowledge economy creates a number of high-skilled professional jobs but simultaneously a service sector proletariat arises, consisting of low qualified and low paid employees (Burgers, 2003; Esping-Andersen, 1993a). Conversely, the exclusion prognosis draws a scenario of job upgrading at the top and exclusion out of the labour market down in the occupational

structure. From this angle, there is an underclass of victims of the information-society. They are mainly people with a low level of education experiencing long spells of unemployment (Burgers, 2003). It can be argued that social policy measures will influence which of these two scenarios, polarisation or exclusion, prevails. Steijn and others have found that in the case of the Netherlands, the exclusion outcome takes place in industrial jobs, whereas the polarisation option mainly appears in post-industrial service jobs (Steijn, Snel, & van der Laan, 2000).

Research results show different occupational structures in different European countries. The service sector is larger in Britain than in Germany for instance (Fagan, Halpin, & O'Reilly, 2004). Esping-Andersen (1993a) investigated the low-skilled service sector in different countries. In the United Kingdom, the low-skilled service sector is sizable and consists mainly of private service sector employment. In Germany, on the other hand, the occupational structure consists mainly of skilled manual and non-manual occupations, whereas the low-skilled service sector is rather small. Lastly, Scandinavian countries are characterised by a relatively large state provided service sector.

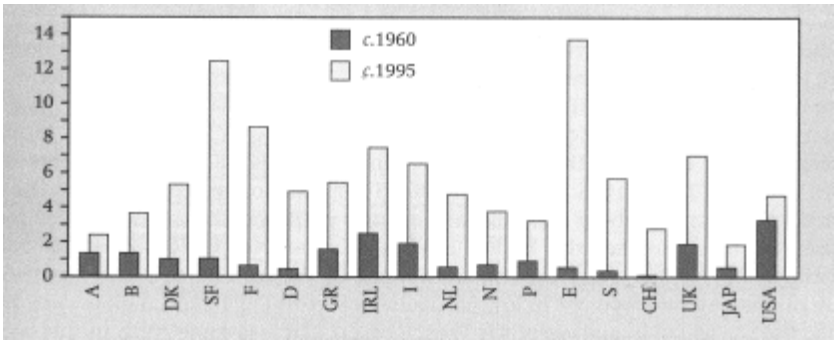
3.1.2 Flexibility in the labour market

Simultaneously with changes in the occupational structure, the organisation of the workforce has also changed in recent decades. During their working life, contemporary employees are confronted with a flexible labour market. Accordingly, an increasing number of people work under flexible working schemes, such as fixed-term and part-time labour contracts. Some commentators have argued that the work organisation is departing from the principles of Fordism. The Fordist production principle was based on a combination of mass production and mass consumption. It could flourish with the support of a strongly intervening Keynesian state (Crouch, 1999; Dawson, 2004). In post-war years, Fordism had a very strong influence in industrial countries. Almost all men in the working age were employed in a full-time, stable and life-long job (Dawson, 2004). During the last decades of the 20th century, instead of Fordism, a post-Fordist era is announced. Flexibility and innovation are maximised in the post-Fordist production process. In that way, increasingly customised market demands can be met (Giddens,

Duneier, & Appelbaum, 2003, p.451). Also for employees, the stable job for life has made way to more flexible work arrangements (Littek & Charles, 1995).

Statistics show that in virtually every European country, there is an increase in the share of employees with a part-time labour contract (Crouch, 1999; Dawson, 2004; De Beer, Van der Meer, Van Ruysseveldt, & Wielers, 2006). Additionally, the share of people with a temporary work contract also increases (Dawson, 2004). These phenomena's have led to an increased risk of unemployment. In Figure 3.1 we see that between 1960 and 1995 unemployment has risen in all Western countries (Crouch, 1999).

Figure 3.1 - Unemployment as proportion of non-dependent population, 1960 and 1995, 18 countries



Source: Crouch, 1995, p.71

Most prominent is the concentration of flexible work arrangements among the female work population. The trend towards post-Fordist work organisation has gone together with the entry of women in the labour market. This new employee group has been relatively more exposed to flexible work patterns. Especially part-time work is predominantly found among women. But Crouch (1999) also shows that in most European countries a higher proportion of women are in temporary employment or unemployed compared with men.

The current trend towards more labour market flexibility has been interpreted in both a positive as well as a negative way. Optimistic commentators argue that people can be more creative because there are more possibilities to plan one's own work career. Flexibility also opens up possibilities to adjust the working arrangement to the own lifestyle. The more pessimistic interpretation points towards the negative effect of large

insecurity in a work career. Especially the risk of becoming unemployed is seen as detrimental (Giddens et al., 2003; Van Hoof & Van Ruysseveldt, 2006).

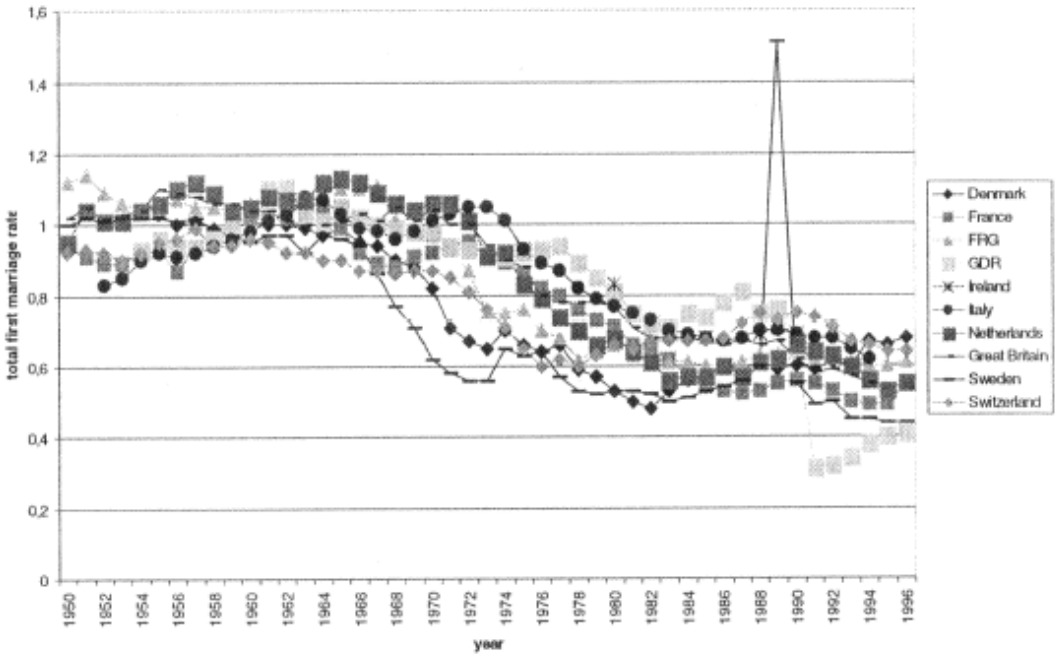
Some authors have argued that there is segmentation in the labour market. In this perspective, there is on the one hand a core of highly skilled employees. They perform the essential work in the company and hold the most secure and stable jobs. Flexibility for the core group manifests itself mainly in the form of flexible work content, with possibilities for self-fulfilment. The periphery on the other hand, consists of unstable jobs exposed to temporal and contractual flexibility, such as part-time work and temporary contracts (Atkinson, 1988; Piore, 1975). However, this segmentation of the labour market has been disputed. Some researchers have shown that core employees also experience pressure towards temporal flexibility. Pollert (1991) argues that for what concerns flexibility, the matter is more one of an 'endangered core', rather than sheer dualism. Furthermore, the periphery appears not to be a new or growing segment. I refer to Ransome for an overview of findings in this respect (Ransome, 1999, pp. 74-76).

3.1.3 Insecurities in the family sphere

After the industrial revolution, private life was mostly organised in married families. The family pattern was characterised by a strong link between marriage, sexuality, love and reproduction. All over Europe, marrying and having children was the norm. Both the flourishing economy and government incentives set the material conditions for the viability of this traditional family type. Additionally, the catholic religion also had a large influence on the way people organised their family life (Van den Elzen, 1998; Zwaan, 1993). From the 1960's onwards however, this traditional family type has become less important. In Figure 3.2 we see that in all European countries, there has been a sharp decrease of the total first marriage rate. The total first marriage rate gives the proportion of the population who would marry during their life if the age-specific marriage rates of the year of measurement would remain stable during their life course. The statistic is often used to assess how common marriage is in a specific year. The Figure shows clearly that people marry nowadays less and also later, compared with the

1950's and 1960's (Boh, 1989; Crouch, 1999; Kuijsten, 2002). The trend is similar over the different Western European countries.

Figure 3.2 - First marriage rates in selected Western European countries, per 100 of the population, 1950-1996



Source: Kuijsten, 2002, p.24

From the 1960's onwards, marriages have also become less stable. In Table 3.1 we see that the total divorce rates in Western European countries increased considerably between the 1970's and early 1990's. The total divorce rate refers to the proportion of marriages that would end in divorce if the divorce rate of the reference year remained the same during the entire marriage (Statistics Finland, 2007). Even though the divorce rates have increased all over Europe, there are some interesting variations between the countries. The Scandinavian countries Denmark, Sweden and also Great Britain are characterised by high divorce rates. In 1993, divorce rates in these countries exceed the 0.40 level. The rate thus predicts that 40% of marriages would end in divorce. Italy, on the other hand is characterised by an especially low divorce rate. Kiernan (2004) finds that low divorce rates are also prevalent in other Southern European countries. According to her figures, the divorce rate in Spain, Greece and Italy remains under the 0.10 level in 1999.

Table 3.1 - Divorce rates in selected Western European countries, 1970-1993

	1970	1975	1980	1985	1988	1989	1990	1993
Italy	0.05	0.03	0.03	0.04	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.07
France	0.12	0.16	0.22	0.30	0.31	0.31	0.32	–
Netherlands	0.11	0.20	0.25	0.35	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.30
Sweden	0.23	0.50	0.42	0.45	0.41	0.44	0.43	0.46
FRG	0.15	0.22	0.22	0.30	0.31	0.30	0.29	0.33
Denmark	0.25	0.37	0.40	0.46	0.47	0.49	0.44	0.42
Switzerland	0.15	0.21	0.27	0.30	0.33	0.32	0.33	0.37
Ireland	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
GDR	0.31	0.30	0.32	0.38	0.37	0.37	0.22	0.14
Great Britain	0.16	0.13	0.38	0.42	0.40	0.40	0.42	0.44

Source: Kuijsten, 2002, p.31

The declining importance of marriage and increasing divorce rates are often seen as an outcome of the individualisation process in late modern societies (Beck-Gernsheim, 1998; Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 1995; Lewis, 2001). The individualisation perspective finds its roots in the work of the German sociologist Ulrich Beck (Beck, 1986). In his view, contemporary society is in a transition towards reflexive modernity. This entails that in different life domains, traditional structures are losing their grip and this is also the case with the marriage pattern. As a consequence, the family life path has become much less predictable and a plurality of alternative life forms has appeared (Kuijsten & Strohmeier, 2003). As an alternative to marriage, many people engage in a cohabiting relationship. Moreover, an increasing number of people spend substantial periods of their life as single or single parents. Individuals are ought to reflexively shape the family relationships throughout their life. Personal autonomy, choice and responsibility have become new parameters of the successful life course. Beck speaks of the transition from a standardised biography to a do-it-yourself biography (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 1996b).

Towards the end of the 20th century, the economic implications of having children have also changed. In the pre-industrial time, children were seen as economically vital in the

family. They could help in the household or on the farm and played an important role in looking after their aging parents later on. With industrialisation and the establishment of the welfare state, the importance of the family as an economic unit has declined. The economic meaning of children simultaneously changed from an asset to a financial burden. During the past two decades, this has become especially clear as the cost of raising a child has risen faster than incomes have done (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 1995). Especially single parents are faced with the economic burden of children. With increasing divorce rates and a declining importance of marriage, a rising proportion of children grow up in single parent families. In Table 3.2 we see that the percentage of single parent families has increased in almost all Western European countries between 1980 and 1990. The United Kingdom, Denmark and Finland are characterised by the highest level of single parenthood, whereas the Southern European countries mostly have relatively low levels of single parenthood.

Table 3.2 - Single parent families as a percentage of all families with dependent children, selected years, Western Europe

Country	1980-1981	1990-1991	1996
United Kingdom	14	16	23
Denmark	18	21	-
Finland	-	-	17
France	8	11	15
Belgium	9	15	15
Germany	10	15	13
Ireland	7	11	13
Portugal	12	12	12
Luxembourg	9	12	11
Netherlands	8	12	11
Italy	7	6	11
Spain	5	8	8
Greece	4	6	7

Source: Kiernan, 2004, p. 27

Kiernan (1996) explains that children in single parent families face an especially high risk of growing up in relative deprivation. Single parenthood involves mainly mothers, and female parents are often in a weak economic position due to low earnings from

employment. Combined with insufficient financial support from the father and the welfare state, these single mother families become vulnerable to poverty. Yet, the welfare position of single parent families differs between countries. Sweden offers the highest protection for single mothers with high benefit levels and a high labour market participation of women.

3.1.4 Discussion: late modernity as breeding ground for dynamics in the social structure

From the 1950's onwards, both the spheres of work and family have undergone influential social transformations. Central to social change in late modernity is the disappearing significance of the well-established institutions of industrial times. The manufacturing industry with its Fordist organisational procedures is on its return in Western European economies. The typical manufacturing jobs are disappearing and most new jobs are in the service sector. Furthermore, the labour market has become more flexible and people are confronted with part-time and fixed-term working arrangements as well as the risk of unemployment. In the family domain, the traditional married family life is gradually being replaced by a plurality of living forms, often with a momentary character.

The social change of recent decades forms the background for new insecurities and forms of inequality. It is striking to see that both in the labour domain, as well as the family sphere, social configurations seem to centre round accounts of flexibility and temporality. We will see in the next section that this trend of flexibility and temporality also has repercussions for the stability of someone's economic position. A dynamic perspective on poverty has gained ground and that calls for a reassessment of the social stratification of poverty. In the following section, I will discuss the main challenges for a social stratification understanding of poverty.

3.2 CHALLENGES FOR THE SOCIAL STRATIFICATION OF POVERTY AND INCOME INEQUALITY

In the previous section, some influential social transformations of the second half of the 20th century were outlined. Recent decades are characterised by more flexibility and insecurity in the family and labour sphere. In this section, I shall argue that these social changes pose several challenges for the social stratification of poverty. Firstly, in Section 3.2.1 we will see that, as there is less stability in several life spheres, the poverty risk has become more dynamic too. Yet, social change has also had its impact on the broader social stratification area. In Section 3.2.2, an overview is given of the debate over the declining relevance of social stratification in late modern societies. Consequently, the literature on social mobility is introduced because both poverty mobility and social mobility challenge one of the main dimensions of social stratification, namely the idea of persistence. Finally, we will see that it is often argued that the dynamics of social inequality should be studied in a life course perspective. In Section 3.2.3, I shall evaluate the relevant literature in the field of life course research.

3.2.1 Dynamics of poverty

The vast majority of poverty research has a static character, measuring poverty at a single moment in time. However, especially during the last decades of the twentieth century, the research agenda has increasingly shifted towards the temporal aspects of income and poverty. However, this dynamic perspective on poverty is not new because in 1902 Rowntree had already called attention to the temporal aspect of poverty. In his famous study on poverty he stated: '*The proportion of the community who at one period or other of their lives suffer from poverty to the point of physical privation is much greater, and the injurious effects of such a condition are much more widespread than would appear from a consideration of the number who can be shown to be below the poverty line at any given moment'* (Rowntree, 1902, pp. 169-172). Although Rowntrees research results are based on cross-sectional analyses, he was clearly aware of the longitudinal dimension of the poverty phenomenon.

During subsequent decades, surprisingly little attention was given to the temporal aspect of poverty experiences. Longitudinal poverty studies of that time predominantly focussed on downward careers into long-term poverty or the intergenerational transmissibility of poverty (Leisering & Walker, 1998).

Only in the 1980's, with the availability of mature socio-economic household panel data and the advancement of longitudinal research techniques, a major upsurge in empirical studies on poverty mobility saw daylight. In the USA, Bane and Ellwood (1986) innovated the field by taking periods or spells of poverty as the unit of analysis. Their results have shown that the greater part of people who at some point become poor only have a short stay in poverty. However, at the same time the majority of people in poverty at a given time will experience a long poverty spell before they escape. As soon as the European panel data became available, European researchers also showed a wide range of interest in the topic (See, among others: Dirven & Berghman, 1995; Duncan et al., 1993; Jenkins & Rigg, 2001; Muffels, 1993{Layte, 2003 #2)}.

Walker (1994b; 1998) pointed out that researchers who assess the temporal dimension of poverty should combine information on poverty prevalence, the length of the observation period and poverty duration. Fouarge & Layte (2003, see Table 3.3) classify the poor in transient poor, recurrent poor and persistent poor. They have shown that a third of the European Union population have experienced poverty at least once between 1994 and 1998. Whereas the majority of poverty spells are short, yet a substantial share of the ones experiencing poverty go through repeated spells. Most people, who exit poverty, will re-enter it within a relatively short time. Furthermore, a significant minority of people in Europe are trapped in persistent poverty (Fouarge & Layte, 2003; OECD, 2001). Fouarge and Layte (2003) have also found that European countries differ with respect to the poverty trajectories their citizens experience. In Social Democratic countries, both short-term and persistent poverty is largely avoided. Liberal and Southern European countries are characterised by both high rates of poverty entry and the longer duration of poverty. Conservative countries display an intermediate pattern with average rates of short-term and persistent poverty. In his comparison of Sweden, Germany and the USA, DiPrete (2002) finds a similar pattern of poverty trajectories among welfare regimes (DiPrete, 2002).

Table 3.3 - Poverty Profiles in Europe, 60% of Median Income, ECHP, 1994-1998 (Percentages)*

	Never poor	Transient poor	Recurrent poor	Persistent poor
Denmark	77.4	13.2	6.0	3.5
The Netherlands	77.9	9.6	6.1	6.4
Germany	73.4	11.1	7.7	7.8
Belgium	63.9	13.4	10.8	11.9
France	68.4	10.4	7.9	13.3
Ireland	63.8	10.7	10.6	14.9
UK	61.4	13.4	11.1	14.1
Italy	62.1	12.6	12.3	13.2
Greece	58.5	13.9	12.4	15.2
Spain	60.0	13.5	15.1	11.4
Portugal	58.8	13.7	9.5	18.1
Europe	66.2	12.0	10.1	11.7

* No attempt has been made here to account for left and right-censoring when constructing the poverty profiles.

Legend

Never poor: never poor during accounting period

Transient poor: poor only once during accounting period

Recurrent poor: poor more than once, never longer than 2 consecutive years

Persistent poor: poor for a period of at least 3 consecutive years

Source: Fouarge & Layte (2003)

The empirical evidence of its dynamic character has influenced the poverty perception among academics and policymakers. As this citation of Walker shows, the time dimension becomes crucial in defining poverty. *'Time is not simply a further dimension over which poverty can be measured. It is the medium within which poverty occurs and shapes the experience of being poor.'* (Walker, 1994a). Some authors speak of 'temporalisation' or 'Verzeitlichung' when they refer to the time dimension of poverty experiences. This approach emphasises the fact that poverty is not necessarily long-term or associated with negative spirals to marginalisation. Poverty spells have different durations and occur at specific moments in a person's life (Berger, 1994; Leisering & Leibfried, 1999).

The study of poverty dynamics is also interesting because it gives an indication of the openness of a particular society. When there is a lot of movement between social positions, a society is said to be open. The society has a closed structure when there are barriers between different social positions. In the general opinion and most political milieus, an open society is preferred over a closed one because openness has the connotation of equal opportunities. Open societies allow more mobility between social positions. However, to gain a good understanding of the meaning of this openness, one should also assess whether mobility patterns are mainly upward or downward. Liberal and Southern European welfare states for instance, are very open for what concerns downward mobility into poverty but closed for what concerns moves out of poverty. Social Democratic countries on the other hand, are relatively closed for downward mobility into poverty but open with respect to upward mobility out of poverty.

3.2.2 The relevance of social stratification at the end of the 20th century

During the last decades of the 20th century, some commentators have shown distrust regarding the relevance of social stratification. In Section 3.2.2.1, the individualisation perspective on poverty is outlined. According to this perspective, temporary poverty has become more widespread in society as it is no longer restricted to the lower social strata. The individualised view on the poverty phenomenon places less emphasis on social stratification, and more on risky events and episodes in a person's life. But the claims about the diminished significance of social stratification are not restricted to the context of the poverty risk. In Section 3.2.2.1 we will see that there is a general pessimism concerning the relevance of the social class concept. The most important stances in the 'end of class' debate will be reviewed.

3.2.2.1 Individualisation and democratisation of poverty

The dynamics of poverty are often seen as an outcome of the individualisation process in late modern societies. In this perspective, traditional structural determinants of inequality are losing their impact as life becomes less standardised. Phenomena like flexibility and precariousness in the labour market, increasing divorce rates and the diversification of family forms are believed to contribute to this de-standardisation and

also increase the number of possible risks in the life course of an individual (Beck, 1986; Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 1996a). The argument goes that if more people deviate from the standardised life course, then more people also encounter the risks associated with de-standardisation. Beck coins the term 'democratisation', by which he means that a larger portion of people share in the risks of the society they live in (Beck, 1986). In this viewpoint, the experience of risky life periods is not restricted to the lower social strata. This is also the case for poverty experiences (Berger, 1994; Leisering & Leibfried, 1999). There is believed to be a diversification of the ways into poverty and hence heterogeneity within the group of poor people (Berger, 1994). In their study on social assistance claimants in Bremen, Leisering and Leibfried (1999) find that poverty is a social risk, not only for marginalised groups but increasingly for a larger section of society. The 'democratisation of poverty' refers to the phenomenon that the poverty risk transcends social boundaries, such as social class, so that many people run the risk of becoming poor. However, this democratised poverty is seen as mainly transitory. Leisering and Leibfried state that 'temporalisation and biographisation of poverty are part of the risk society, in which both social structures and individuals' life projects rapidly and flexibly change, and in which breakdowns and transitional life crises are likely to hit even the middle classes' (Leisering & Leibfried, 1999, pp. 119-121).

The individualisation perspective on poverty and inequality instigated criticism from social stratification defenders. Layte and Whelan (2002) disapprove of the validity of the democratisation and biographisation aspects of poverty. They show that traditional social stratification variables, such as social class, education and employment status are still important predictors of poverty duration outcomes. The inequality in poverty risk between the manual working class and the non-manual class did not diminish when data from 1989 were compared with figures from 1995.

3.2.2.2 End of social class?

The accounts of democratisation of poverty can be understood in the context of a general pessimism concerning the relevance of social stratification. Especially with respect to social class, a debate has risen over the continuing relevance in late modern societies. The questions are clear: do social classes still have a structuring impact on

contemporary inequalities? Are processes of individualisation, economic or social transformation eroding the meaning of the traditional class concept? Did new structural forces emerge (Hradil, 1987), or are we moving towards inequality without stratification (Kingston, 2000)?

Some authors argue that post-industrial developments, like the decline of large-scale manufacturing, the rise of service employment, rising affluence and the increasing diversity of consumer behaviour have undermined class divisions (Bottero, 2005). Clark and Lipset (1991) triggered off the debate by their article 'Are social classes dying?'; in which they assert the fragmentation of classes. They find evidence for their statement in the political, economic and family sphere. Among others, the decrease of class voting, the growing wealth, differentiated consumption patterns and the decline of the paternalistic family are signs of the fading away of classes. Several authors have continued to debate about classes in subsequent years (See, for instance: Pakulski & Waters, 1996). Beck (1992) also argues for the disappearing significance of classes, which he bases on the increased individualised character of present-day societies. Other authors like Hout et al. (1993) and Marshall (1997) have challenged these views and still believe in the importance of classes.

Predictions of the loosening of social ties, raises questions with respect to the dominance of individual agency or else social structure. The complex relationship between ‘structure/action’ has always been a point of concern for social stratification theorists. Authors like Marx, Parsons and Giddens have dealt with this issue. Most classical social stratification theorists and quantitative empirical researchers have emphasised the structural aspects of social stratification. Yet, some authors believe that the social class concept has lost relevance and individuals have become the agents of their own fate (For a discussion, see: Bottero, 2005). Accordingly, agency and individual choice are seen as major determinants of lifestyle, life patterns and life chances. In this context “social life is seen as patternless, or rather such patterned social relations that do exist are presented as inherently unstable, subject to constant change and revision” (Bottero, 2005, p.56).

Subsequently, the stress on agency and also the emphasis on symbolic and cultural aspects are striking alternative accounts of stratification. Post-modern authors speak of a

shift from production to consumption, from the social to the cultural sphere and from life chances to lifestyles (Crook et al., 1992). Other authors, who write from a cultural perspective, emphasise the independent role of ideologies, social movements and cultural practices. They focus on the importance of so-called new social movements, such as feminism, environmentalism and so on (Grusky, 2001b). Waters speaks of 'status', instead of class. People can belong to different status groups, depending on their choice and interests (Waters, 1994).

But not all class critics apply a structural approach to social stratification. Grusky (2001c) mentions new perspectives from the structural camp too. According to the latter perspective, human and political capital are becoming more important than economic capital as bases of social stratification. Moreover, education and knowledge are seen as the basis of new accounts of social stratification.

3.2.3 The dynamics of social class: intragenerational social mobility

Just as with poverty and income, someone's occupational position can also change over time. Patterns of social mobility provide additional insights when investigating social inequality in a dynamic fashion. Hence, in order to assess the social stratification of poverty and income dynamics, a better understanding of social mobility is necessary.

Social mobility can be defined as the movement in time of social units between different positions in the social stratification system of a society (Muller, 2001). A distinction is made between intergenerational and intragenerational mobility. The main part of interest in social mobility has been in intergenerational social mobility. This form of mobility refers to the difference between parental social position and the own achieved social position. Important research traditions have focussed on the evolution of social mobility in line with the development of industrial society (See, among others: Erikson & Goldthorpe, 1993; Sorokin, 1959 [2001]) and cross-national variations in social mobility (Lipset, Bendix, & Zetterberg, 1959 [2001]). Intragenerational social mobility studies have a much shorter tradition than intergenerational mobility research. It typically compares someone's occupational position at two discrete points during the

lifetime. The emphasis of this research work will be on the social stratification of poverty dynamics during the lifetime. In this context, it is useful to gain insight in patterns of intragenerational social mobility.

During recent decades, several European researchers have found that intragenerational social mobility is mainly going from manual to non-manual occupations (Dronkers & Ultee, 1995; Halpin, 1999; Mayer & Carroll, 1987). This is not so surprising given the structural changes in the occupational structure. As we have seen in the first part of this chapter, there has been an increase in non-manual employment, coinciding with a decrease in manual employment. DiPrete et al. argued that in the USA and Sweden, contraction of an occupational group or industrial sector leads to increases in social mobility. In the Netherlands and Germany on the other hand, the effect of contraction occurs primarily through lay-offs and quits (Di Prete et al., 1997).

Research has shown different levels of mobility between different countries. The USA can be described as an open society, it is characterised by a great deal of occupational mobility. Compared with most other countries, where social mobility is relatively more in the upward direction, social mobility in the USA occurs in an upward as much as a downward direction (DiPrete, 2002). In contrast to the USA, Germany is characterised by a closed occupational structure and stable careers. Within the European context, there is clearly more occupational mobility in the United Kingdom than in Germany, in the upward as well as the downward direction (Fagan et al., 2004). Sweden occupies an intermediate position, with predominantly upward life course mobility (DiPrete, 2002).

For what concerns the evolution of intragenerational mobility during the 20th century, Halpin (1999) has found that for the United Kingdom the degree of mobility within the salariat is increasing, whereas the mobility level for non salaried workers remains unchanged. He also found an increase in intragenerational occupational mobility between non salaried and salaried positions and this in both directions. Researchers for Germany and the Netherlands came to the conclusion that intragenerational mobility is more or less stable over time (Dronkers & Ultee, 1995; Mayer & Carroll, 1987). Differences in the degree of mobility are found to depend on changes in the economic conjuncture.

3.2.4 A life course perspective on poverty inequality

It has often been argued that the occurrence of poverty should be studied from a life course perspective. According to this perspective, the experience of a poverty spell is understood as a passage in a person's life trajectory. One of the pioneering social scientific works on poverty that of Seebohm Rowntree (1902) in the English town York, reported of a life cycle of needs and resources for working class people. Rowntree mentioned five alternating periods of want and comparative wealth during a labourer's life. The labourer experiences periods of hardship in childhood, in early middle life when he brings up his children and in old age, when he cannot work anymore. The periods in between are characterised by relative wealth.

Currently, the term life cycle is replaced by life course, denoting an elaboration of the number of possible pathways an individual takes during his/her lifetime. The life course approach is used multidisciplinary and considered as more flexible than early life-cycle theories (Dewilde, 2003). Mayer and Tuma (1990) describe the life course as an element of social structure that is a product of individual action and organisational processes as well as institutional and historical forces. It refers to socially patterned trajectories, not to individual biographies. Leisering and Walker (1998, p9) consider the life course as a temporal order of life shaped by institutions and public policies and propelled by continual biographical decisions made by the individual. According to them, life course analysis is a useful tool for transcending the difference between micro- and macro-analyses of society.

In sociological research, poverty has often been linked to other biographical life events and life phases (Burkhauser & Duncan, 1989; Leisering & Leibfried, 1999). In their work on social assistance claimers, Leisering and Leibfried (1999) use the term 'biographisation' of poverty. They have studied temporary periods of benefit claiming in the context of biographical life phases of unemployment, child bearing, migrating etc. Fundamental breaks in the life course, such as losing one's job or divorce bring about the risk of falling into poverty. With the availability of mature socio-economic panel data, the empirical interest in life course events associated with poverty entry has grown. A large literature about poverty mobility has focused on the triggering events

preceding a poverty transition. Especially employment situation changes like becoming unemployed or retiring and household composition changes, like for instance divorce, the birth or a child or when young people start their own family, can temporarily influence the chances of poverty entry. Risk periods for poverty are among others young adulthood, the retirement phase, being unemployed, single parenthood and periods of sickness. (Apospori & Millar, 2003; Bane & Ellwood, 1986; DiPrete & McManus, 2000; Finnie & Sweetman, 2003; Jenkins, 1999; Jenkins & Cappellari, 2004; OECD, 2001). Long-term poverty occurs in jobless households and for persons experiencing unemployment or with a history of unemployment. Self-employed without employees and lower educated individuals face a larger risk of experiencing long-term poverty. Furthermore, single people; especially single parents, separated people and households with three or more children are more sensitive to persistent poverty (Fouarge & Layte, 2003; Whelan, Layte, & Maitre, 2003).

The life course perspective on poverty has been linked to the individualisation debate. As individuals are expected to take the responsibility of shaping their own life course, a plurality of life styles and trajectories occurs (Beck, 1986). The life course is not standardised anymore and events like change of job, divorce, unemployment or leaving the parental home can create major breaks in one's biography. Precisely these breaks in the standard biography often entail social risks like e.g. becoming poor. Consequently, the argument is made that new inequalities appear on the basis of life trajectories and life style, while hierarchical stratification structures like social classes lose their impact. Traditional structures of social inequality are losing their relevance because 'old' vertical inequality is supplemented by 'new' horizontal inequalities, "beyond classes and stratums" (Beck 1986:121). Following this logic, several authors make the claim that social inequality should be studied in a biographical respect (Kohli, 1990; Leisering & Leibfried, 1999). Mayer (1991) argues that proponents of the individualisation debate have replaced 'inequality' by 'life course' as the chief structuring principle of society.

Some authors have tried to unite structural and biographical accounts of social inequality. There is a research stream focusing on the question whether structural inequalities persist, diminish or even worsen over a person's lifetime. O' Rand (1996) speaks of stratification over the life course whenever a process of cumulating advantages or disadvantages over the life time leads to increasing differentiation and

inequality when cohorts grow older. Maume (2004) found that in the USA, wage inequalities according to race and gender widen over time. Miech, Eaton and Liang (2003) have investigated occupational stratification over the life course. They found for the USA that occupational status inequalities between race and gender groups persist over time, except for African Americans for whom they grow larger over their life course. Mayer and Blossfeld (1990) show that occupational status inequalities increase rather than diminish over time.

In the context of poverty dynamics, Walker claims that it is necessary to investigate the processes leading to poverty, thereby focusing both on life events as well as structural factors (Leisering & Walker, 1998; Walker, 1994b, 1998). His argument is based on the finding that poverty inducing life events are widespread but they rather rarely result in poverty. The probability that a certain event triggers a spell of poverty also depends on personal characteristics and a wide range of structural factors related to the welfare state or social stratification structure. Therefore, Walker explains, it is essential to focus on the structural context in which poverty-triggering life events occur, and also on the factors and circumstances mediating the process by which a risky life event becomes a poverty trigger.

American research in this context has demonstrated that the events leading to poverty are not the same among different social groups (Duncan, 1988). For young people, poverty entry is often associated with leaving home whereas older people are relatively more affected by a fall in assets. Duncan also found that women and children are very susceptible to the negative income effects of divorce. Reaching the same conclusion, DiPrete and McManus (2000) found that the negative income effects of partnership dissolution are larger for women than for men in the USA and Germany. In recent years, European researchers have also focused on the differential economic consequences of divorce for men and women (Fritzell, 1990; Jarvis & Jenkins, 1999; Poortman, 2001; Sorensen, 1994; Uunk, 2004).

3.3 DISCUSSION

This chapter has handled about societal change in late modernity and how it influences the social stratification of income and poverty inequality.

The last decades of the 20th century are characterised by substantial social transformations, such as a changing occupational structure, labour market flexibility and the increased instability of family life. In the first section of this chapter we have seen how transformations in the labour and family sphere have created a more flexible and less secure life.

This flexibility and instability forms the basis for developments in the field of poverty and social stratification. The second section of this chapter is started with a review of the literature on poverty dynamics. In the recent poverty literature, the importance of the temporal dimension of poverty has been emphasised and research results have shown that many more people experience short-term poverty than can be seen on the basis of cross-sectional statistics.

This dynamic perspective on poverty provides a challenge for the relationship between social stratification determinants and income poverty. In order to gain an insight in the current-day social stratification of poverty inequality, the findings of poverty mobility should be confronted with the following three contemporary issues in the field of social stratification.

First of all, several authors have questioned the relevance of social stratification in late modernity. According to the individualisation perspective on poverty, it is difficult to discern clear social strata when the economic resources of individuals fluctuate over time. Hence, the risk of temporary poverty is seen as widespread in society and less bound to traditional social stratification determinants. Furthermore, we have seen that the scepticism regarding the relevance of social stratification is especially strong for accounts of social class. Some commentators have even argued that social class is dead. The transformation of the occupational structure, increased labour market flexibility as well as more individualisation are seen as main causes of the declining impact of social class.

Secondly, next to income and poverty dynamics, also the occupational position of individuals fluctuates over time. Changes in the occupational structure and flexibility in the labour market have given rise to intragenerational social mobility, often between manual and non-manual occupational positions. Just like poverty dynamics, intragenerational social mobility patterns give an indication of the openness of a society.

Lastly, contemporary life courses are less stable and life course risks such as unemployment or divorce can make someone's economic position less secure. It has therefore been argued that inequalities should be studied in a life course perspective.

4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND CONCEPTUAL MODEL

In recent literature, poverty has been conceptualised as a dynamic phenomenon. The aim of this research is to investigate the consequences of a dynamic approach to poverty for the field of social stratification. Therefore, an assessment of the impact of social stratification determinants on poverty and income dynamics in European countries has been made. This chapter will outline the rationale of this study.

Earlier in this thesis social stratification has been defined as the institutionalisation of distinct social groups, which are unequal with respect to their access to valued resources in society. Traditionally, one of the most valued resources has been income. Income is a determinant of life chances and at the same time it forms the basis of a certain pattern of consumption and life style. Income poverty has thus been seen as one of the most important indicators of social inequality. When considering poverty in a static way, social stratification determinants allow meaningful insights into the poverty distribution. A substantial body of research has evaluated/ the stratification of poverty and it has found that income poverty is associated with determinants such as social class, education level and gender.

More recently however, the research interest has shifted towards a dynamic view of poverty. The time dimension of poverty is seen as crucial and it has become clear that poverty is composed of more complicated temporal forms other than the simple distinction poor/not poor. Studies of poverty dynamics have shown that contemporary poverty comes in many different temporal forms, ranging from transient poverty through recurrent poverty to persistent poverty.

This new conceptualisation of poverty inequality calls for a reconsideration of the connection between social stratification determinants and poverty. Therefore, not only theory-formation about inequality and social stratification needs to be elaborated; it is apparent that a continuous effort has to be made to test empirically the validity of social stratification determinants in the explanation of contemporary social inequalities.

This work aims to contribute to the existing research literature by investigating the link between social stratification determinants and the dynamics of poverty in an empirical way. The main research question addressed in the thesis is whether social stratification determinants are still relevant as structuring factors of income poverty. Ideally, I would like to empirically assess the change of the influence of social stratification determinants over time. However, this would require longitudinal data running over several decades or alternatively minimum two comparable panel data sources with a time gap of several decades. Unfortunately, this kind of data will not be available. That is why the research questions in the thesis can not empirically assess issues of social change in the strict sense. Therefore, the thesis will be restricted to evaluating the effect which social stratification determinants exert in the decade of the 1990's. The research questions will be more focussed on specific aspects of the nature of social stratification than on the 'big' question of social change.

The dynamic perspective on poverty provides a number of challenges to the social stratification of poverty. Three main challenges have been discerned in the literature:

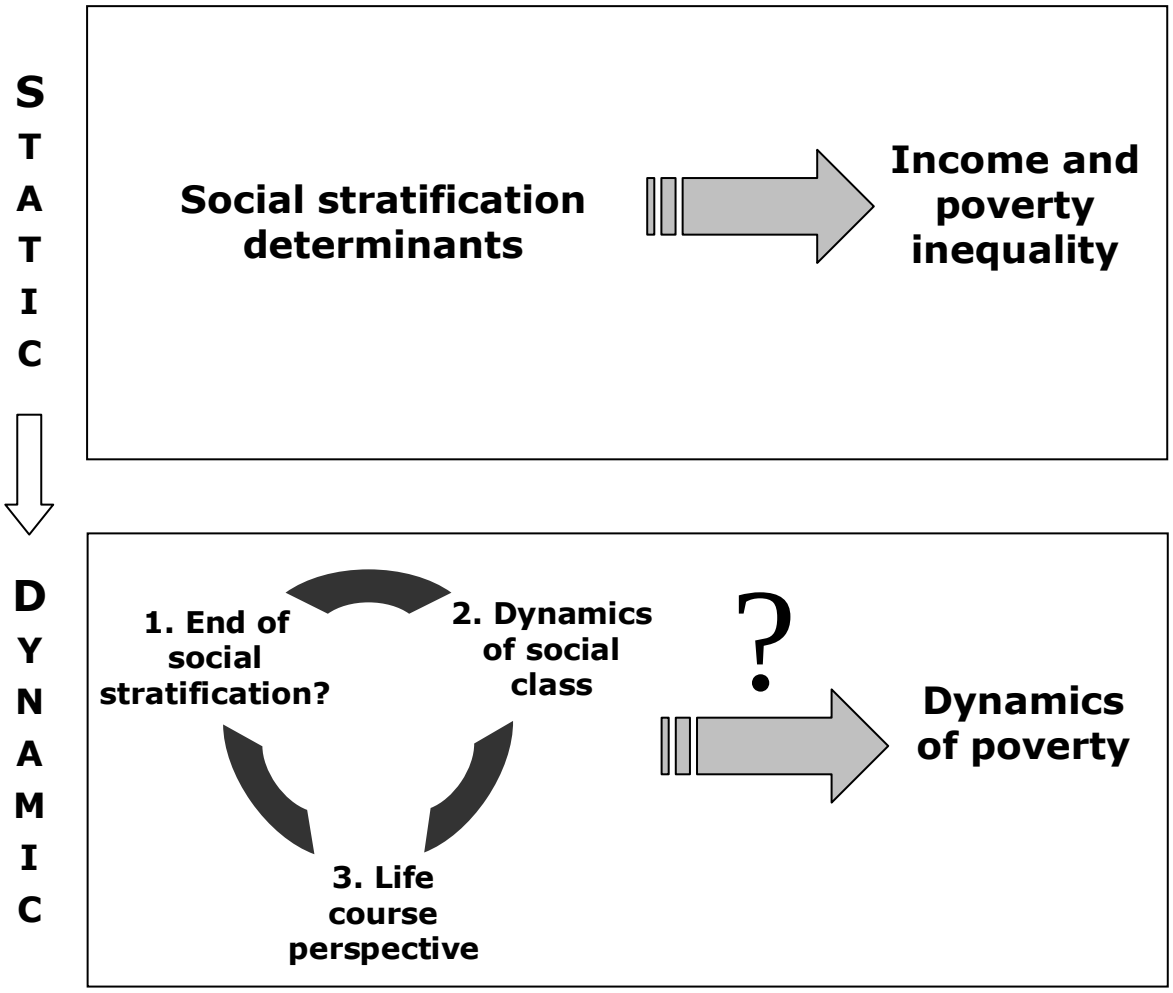
1. There is a debate about the ***relevance of social stratification***. In Chapter 3, we have seen that several sociologists point towards the diminishing importance of social stratification determinants; especially the impact of social class structure has become questionable. In the context of poverty inequality, accounts are made of a 'democratisation' of poverty, which would mean that present-day dynamic poverty is only to a limited extent bound to traditional social stratification determinants.

2. Poverty dynamics, ***dynamics of social class*** also play a role in the form of social mobility. Focussing on poverty and income inequality, the issue of how social class mobility relates to income and poverty mobility becomes apparent.

3. It is often argued that poverty inequality should be studied from a ***life course perspective***. Some authors have contrasted the new horizontal life course inequality with old vertical social stratification accounts of inequality. While old forms of vertical inequality have lost relevance, new horizontal life course inequality has gained ground. Also for the study of poverty in a dynamic context, assessing the importance of these two supplementary perspectives provides a genuine challenge.

These three challenges together provide a sound basis for re-examining the relationship between social stratification and poverty. Figure 4.1 graphically depicts the different elements of the conceptual model.

Figuur 4.1 - Conceptual model of the research



The static perspective on social inequality is represented in the upper box. Therein, social stratification determinants have a structuring effect on income inequality and poverty. The lower box shows the shift towards a dynamic perspective. Poverty is now seen as a dynamic phenomenon, whereby mobility into poverty and poverty duration is taken into account. However, this new perspective poses challenges for the structuring effect of social stratification determinants on income poverty. It is unclear, whether social stratification determinants still structure the distribution of income poverty, and how exactly they do. Therefore, the effects of social stratification determinants on income poverty need to be reconsidered. The research agenda follows the three crucial

challenges posed by (1) the debate over the continuing relevance of social stratification, (2) the dynamics of social class with a view to the issue of social mobility and (3) the life course perspective on poverty inequality. These are depicted on the left side of the lower box in the conceptual model.

The back bone of this thesis is based on the questions surrounding the relevance of social stratification determinants for poverty dynamics and runs as a thread through the different chapters. Additionally, each of the empirical chapters evaluates the central question from a specific angle. Chapter 6 will firstly provide a thorough exploration of the relevance of social stratification for poverty dynamics. Chapter 7 will deal with interesting questions with respect to the connection between social mobility and poverty dynamics. Subsequently, Chapters 8 and 9 will focus on the relative effects of both life course events and the social stratification determinants of poverty dynamics.

The rest of the chapter at hand provides a chapter-by-chapter overview of the addressed research questions. This will allow an insight into the way the main research lines are integrated in the thesis. In each chapter, the research questions will be further clarified and specific hypotheses will be formulated.

Chapter 6 examines the relationship between social stratification and different forms of dynamic poverty; this enables a deeper insight into the **relevance of social stratification** theory for the incidence of poverty dynamics. There are two main questions which will guide this exploration: 1. Are there empirical signs of a democratisation of the poverty risk spreading over broad social strata? 2. Is the social stratification of poverty inequality less stringent when poverty is temporary?

Advocates of the individualisation perspective have claimed that the importance of social stratification has declined. Contemporary poverty is believed to be democratised, as the risk of poverty has become more widespread. The descriptive statistics in Chapter 6 will reveal how social stratification determinants are related to the risk of poverty entry and a longitudinal poverty pattern, respectively. The aim is to investigate what positions the temporary and longer term income poor typically occupy in social stratification schemes. It is useful to evaluate whether the people with a short or longer term poverty profile are easily delineated in terms of gender, level of

education and social class. This will provide an understanding into whether and to what extent the democratisation of poverty has penetrated European societies.

A specific issue concerns the social stratification of temporary and long-term poverty. According to theories regarding the democratisation of poverty, the expectation is that temporary poverty occurs within a broader range of social classes and is more equally spread over the gender and education level groups. Descriptive statistics and multinomial regression analysis will reveal the gender, level of education and social class distribution of both temporary and long-term poor.

Chapter 7 also contributes to the understanding of the structuring impact of social stratification on poverty dynamics. The chapter particularly focuses on the link between **social mobility** and income/poverty mobility. The main purpose is to investigate to what extent social mobility has a structuring effect on income and poverty dynamics.

Studies into intragenerational career or life course social mobility have appeared only relatively recently. Yet, they generally show a substantial amount of mobility. Therefore, it can be argued that when income and poverty mobility are studied, a link with intragenerational social class mobility can provide additional insights. Earlier research did not address the link between social mobility and income dynamics at the micro-level. In social stratification research, not much attention has been paid to the consequences of upward or downward social mobility for an individual's access to valued resources. The reason is that upward occupational mobility has been treated as a goal in itself, and a lot of attention has been paid to the attainment processes leading to social mobility over the life course. Social class is often used as an explanatory factor in poverty research but then social class is generally conceptualised as a static situation and social class mobility during the life course is not taken into account. The innovation of this research line is that an explicit connection is made between the fields of social mobility and poverty dynamics. This will allow me to draw a more complete picture of the effect of social class on poverty dynamics. A simple, yet unanswered question is asked: if people move from one class to another, how does that affect their position in the income hierarchy?

The research question concerning the structuring impact of social mobility on income and poverty dynamics unfolds in two parts. The first research ambition has an exploratory nature because of the new focus of linking social mobility to income and poverty mobility. Both the occurrence of social mobility and income mobility will be

compared between different European countries. In this way, I will be able to assess whether countries with more social mobility also display more income and poverty mobility. The association between social mobility and income/poverty mobility will also be explored at the individual level. Secondly, the focus is on the income and poverty consequences of specific social mobility patterns. Under the hypothesis that occupational class mobility has a structuring impact on income dynamics, I expect that upward social mobility will coincide with upward income mobility, and downward social mobility should lead to income reductions. Particular attention is paid to transitions from manual to non-manual classes and the question being addressed is: to what extent this mobility into non-manual classes can be seen as an upgrading for the individual?

Both Chapters 8 and 9 focus on the **link between social stratification determinants and life course events for the explanation of poverty**. The life course is often referred to in the context of poverty research in the 1990's. Life course events and passages are seen as important determinants of the poverty risk. The literature study has shown that particular life events can temporarily influence the chances of poverty entry. Especially employment situation changes like retirement or becoming unemployed and household composition changes like divorce and childbirth are important factors preceding poverty. They are seen as so-called triggers for poverty entry. Often, the life course perspective and the social stratification field are seen as explanations from contradictory camps (Layte & Whelan, 2002; Leisering & Leibfried, 1999). The reason is related to the understanding that poverty is seen as a temporary phenomenon which is principally associated with certain life course events and less likely to be influenced by traditional social stratification characteristics (Leisering & Leibfried, 1999).

This thesis aims to contribute to existing literature by investigating the relative and intermediating importance of both life course events and social stratification determinants as predictors of the poverty risk. Thereby, I follow the argument of Walker (1994b; 1998), who claims that for a good understanding of the processes leading to poverty, it is necessary to investigate the effect of both the structural context as well as the effect of poverty-triggering life events. According to Walker's perspective, researchers should understand the structural context in which poverty-triggering life events occur as well as investigating, which structural factors mediate the process by which a life event becomes a poverty trigger (Walker, 1998).

In Chapter 8, the focus will be on the relative effect of both social stratification determinants and life course events on the risk of poverty entry. A special focus will be placed on the role of social stratification determinants as mediators in the process whereby life events lead to poverty entry. Household composition changes and household employment situation changes have been found to be predictors of poverty dynamics but not all people experiencing the triggering events do consequently experience a movement into or out of poverty. Previous research has, for example, shown that the negative income effects of partnership dissolution are larger for women than for men. Furthermore, the mediating effects of social class, gender and education level will be investigated. The life course events under study are changes in household composition (partnership dissolution and birth of a child, young adult moves out of the parental household) and changes in the household employment situation (a household member loses a job).

Chapter 9 answers questions with respect to the duration of income poverty after a negative life event. It is anticipated that poverty spells occurring after divorce, job loss or leaving the parental home do not take the same length of time for everyone. Latent class models will provide an insight in the duration of typical poverty trajectories after the experience of one of these life events. The following main question is addressed: for which social groups does the experience of a critical life event consequently lead to a poverty transition? But additionally, the focus is on how long these poverty spells typically last for different social groups and whether there are recurrent or late poverty effects for the people who experienced the life event. I will investigate which inequalities can be found in the distribution of the poverty trajectories after a life event and whether these inequalities are structured according to traditional social stratification determinants.

5 METHODOLOGY

This chapter provides an overview of the basic methodological choices of the thesis. Every empirical chapter additionally contains a methods section. The latter serves two purposes: (1) providing details about the followed method and the variables used in the analyses of the chapter and (2) clarifying the specific data analysis techniques for testing the hypotheses at hand. In the first section of this chapter the focus is on the general decisions that have guided the research design. Consequently, I go on to further explain the particularities of the chosen dataset and provide an assessment of the response patterns in the dataset. In Section 5.3 the operationalisation of the main concepts used in this thesis is clarified.

5.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

The empirical part of the thesis is based on a quantitative analysis of the European Community Household Panel Survey (ECHP). This section unfolds the most important aspects of research design. It explains why a quantitative survey approach was chosen and why longitudinal data provide the best basis for the analyses. Consequently, the advantages of a multi-country study will be outlined and finally, I will clarify that secondary data analysis is the best option for answering the research questions at hand.

5.1.1 A quantitative survey approach

The chosen research method is based on quantitative data analysis. I believe that a quantitative survey is the preferred technique to provide insights into the relationship between social stratification and poverty dynamics. The reason is that the study focuses on social stratification in the entire population. The interest lies also in the occurrence of longitudinal poverty patterns beyond the borders of typical marginal groups. Therefore, it is necessary to investigate a representative sample of the population. Additionally, by choosing a quantitative approach, this work can be connected to the well-established quantitative research tradition in poverty dynamics. Yet, it is understood that some research findings could be complemented with future qualitative research. It would for instance be useful to investigate how the members of different social strata cope with

risky life events, and why exactly life events entail a risk of poverty entry for some people and not for others.

A range of different descriptive and inferential statistics will be presented to support the conclusions of the thesis. The choice of research techniques is guided by the longitudinal design of the study. Here, a brief overview of the inferential research techniques used will suffice. The specifications of the chosen research techniques will be presented in the methods section of each empirical chapter. The following three broad groups of data analysis techniques will prove useful in the research framework at hand:

1. *Event history analysis* will be used to study poverty mobility patterns and for modelling transitions into personal low income.
2. *Multilevel analysis* will be useful for dealing with the different analytical levels included in the proposed framework. As we will see later in this chapter, longitudinal panel data is characterised by dependence between the different time points for each individual. So, the observations for the several time points of the study are clustered at the individual level. The random effects model will be proposed to take account of the clustered structure of the data.
3. *Latent class analysis and latent class regression analysis* will be used to distinguish poverty trajectories after risky life events. The technique will enable me to investigate whether poverty triggers like partnership dissolution or the experience of unemployment affect all groups in society to the same extent in the short and medium-term.

The descriptive analyses provided in the thesis are carried out with the SAS–software package. For the change-score analysis and event history models the STATA programme was used. The latent class models are estimated with the LatentGold-programme.

5.1.2 Longitudinal panel design

The choice for a longitudinal design is almost self-evident since the main object of the study is poverty dynamics. Cross-sectional data have a limited scope and can give only a snapshot of a society's stratification structure. Longitudinal data has the potential to provide a more accurate assessment of the poverty mobility patterns and the duration of poverty spells.

Depending on the specific objectives of the research, several types of surveys are available to measure change over time (de Vaus, 2001; Duncan & Kalton, 1987; Taris, 2000). The main types are the following:

- *Panel study*: a representative sample of the population is re-approached on several occasions to measure a set of changeable characteristics
- *Retrospective study*: the respondents are asked to recall events from earlier in their life history
- *Repeated cross-sectional design*: a new sample of the same population is drawn repeatedly and presented with the same set of questions.
- *Cohort design*: a sample of people born at the same time are interviewed on several occasions to measure a set of changeable characteristics
- *Linked administrative data*: official data of several years are linked to create a longitudinal file.

These survey types all have specific advantages and disadvantages and and different combinations of these types are possible. For this study, the *household panel survey* is the most appropriate survey type because a frequent measurement with the same sample of people allows for a relatively accurate measurement of the timing of events. Besides, the collection of data about all members of the household is useful because in this way a more complete picture of the social and economic position of the person is derived. Also, a *retrospective study* could have provided useful insights in the research questions because of the longer time perspective that is usually available in such designs. However, most retrospective surveys contain no income information, due to the complexity involved in asking people retrospectively about their income history. Additionally, recalling the exact timing of events is often problematic and a source of bias. The other three longitudinal survey types are less appropriate for the following

reasons. With a *repeated cross-sectional design*, individual-level change cannot be assessed. In order to study temporal forms of poverty and the mobility into poverty, it is necessary to follow people over time. Evidently, the *cohort design* is not suitable because it does not involve a representative sample of all age groups in the population. Finally, *linked administrative data* is quite rare and mostly not available for academic purposes.

5.1.3 A multi-country study

In dealing with poverty dynamics and social stratification, a multi-country framework is proposed. The main purpose of this is to assess whether the research phenomena is generally valid in Western Europe. The research theme of this thesis, namely the changing relevance and impact of social stratification determinants, is a core issue in sociological debates and is often highlighted as a product of social change in Western societies. In this light, it is essential to corroborate that the found effects of social stratification are robust over different countries and not limited to a specific cultural context.

In the empirical chapters of the thesis, the multi-country aspect of the study unfolds in the following three ways:

1. Most descriptive research findings are presented per country for the whole range of European countries under study.
2. For the main findings of the regression analyses an overall European model is assessed, where the country-specific effect is included as a covariate and sometimes also interacted with other important explanatory variables.
3. Where the investigation of the research question in all separate countries is impossible or impractical, the phenomenon is studied in more detail for a limited number of European countries. In this case, one country will be selected for each welfare regime.
4. National variation in poverty dynamics and social stratification can be linked to the type welfare regime. For this purpose, Esping-Andersen's welfare regime typology (1990) will be used, complemented with a Southern European regime

(Arts & Gelissen, 2002). We can distinguish can be made between the Social Democratic regime, the Conservative welfare regime, the Liberal and Southern European regimes. The Social Democratic regime, as represented by the Scandinavian countries, is characterised by a high priority to minimise poverty and unemployment (Goodin, Heady, Muffels, & Dirven, 1999). The Conservative welfare state, for which Germany is a model, is traditionally based on a household type with one male main breadwinner. It focuses on the maintenance of the living standard and social class hierarchy (Myles & Quadagno, 2002). In contrast the Liberal welfare state is characterised by minimal interference with the market and poverty preventing policies play only a residual role. Social policy measures to counter for income losses are limited and only a last safety net is provided universally (Breen & Rottman, 1995, p. 138; Fouarge & Layte, 2003; Room, 1995). Finally, in Southern European regimes too, benefit systems are marginal (Fouarge & Layte, 2003) but the welfare regime is characterised by more emphasis on family support.

In this study, the following countries are considered to belong to the Conservative welfare regime: Germany, Belgium, France and Austria. The Social Democratic regime consists of Denmark, the Netherlands and Finland whereas the Liberal regime is represented by Ireland and United Kingdom. Finally, the Southern European regime consists of Italy, Greece, Spain and Portugal.

5.1.4 Secondary data analysis

The methodology is based on a secondary data analysis. This section elaborates on the advantages and disadvantages of using secondary data for the thesis.

Longitudinal and multi-country survey data require large-scale data collection, which is expensive and complex to design and administer. The framework of this research project does not provide the financial means, logistics, nor the expertise and time to conduct a longitudinal cross-national panel survey. Large-scale secondary data have the advantage that often a lot of effort has already been spent in the coordination and

quality of the data collection process. Additionally, by making use of such data the comparability of findings with other research in the field is facilitated.

Making use of secondary data has many advantages. However, there are also disadvantages and caveats. Dale, Arber and Procter (1988) and also Burton (2000b) provide an overview. Here, a selection is made of three aspects which need careful consideration in this research project. Firstly, when making use of secondary data, the researcher has no say in the questions asked and the categorisation used. Therefore it is necessary to choose the best secondary data for the research questions at hand. In this thesis, the European Community Household Panel Survey data is useful because of the broad range of socio-economic variables it covers. This will become clearer in Section 5.3, in which the operationalisation of the main concepts will be considered. A further disadvantage of using secondary data is that it allows the researcher no immediate control over issues of validity and reliability of the study. Burton (2000b) suggests an assessment of the sampling design, sample size and response rates before choosing a dataset. In the next section, these issues will be considered. Lastly, the data management of large-scale data is particularly time-consuming and data analysis requires relatively advanced statistical skills. This however, is compensated by the time saved by not having to collect new data.

5.2 THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY HOUSEHOLD PANEL DATA

5.2.1 An introduction to the dataset[6]

The analyses for this thesis will be performed on the European Community Household Panel Survey (ECHP). The ECHP survey comprises eight waves and ran yearly between 1994 and 2001. The questionnaire covers a broad range of socio-economic variables, such as individual and household income situation, household composition, employment aspects, training and education issues etc. (CIRCA, 1998-2005).

[6] This introduction is based on descriptions of the dataset used in the following working papers: Vandecasteele, 2005a, 2005b, 2006a, 2006b

The ECHP dataset is particularly useful in this study because of the topics covered. Furthermore, the panel structure enables me to link social stratification determinants, social mobility, life course events and income/poverty dynamics at the micro-level. Next to that, the harmonisation in data collection, data management and questionnaires makes it possible to compare findings between different European countries.

The longitudinal scope of the ECHP survey offers the opportunity to investigate individual change on a yearly or medium-term basis. Yet, this time frame does not allow the empirical study of social change. An empirical investigation of the changing relevance of social stratification would require longitudinal data over several decades. Unfortunately, this type of panel data is currently not available for Europe. In fact, the ECHP data is the longest running socio-economic household panel survey that is available for a wide range of European countries. The current study has to be seen as an assessment of the relevance of social stratification for poverty dynamics in a limited time span at the end of the twentieth century, rather than as an empirical account of social change.

Although the ECHP survey covers eight years, in this study only the first seven waves will be used, i.e. from 1994 to 2000. The reason is the time lag in annual income measurement in the ECHP survey. The annual income components refer to the previous wave and as a result annual income is not available for the calendar year of the last wave i.e. 2001[7].

Thirteen European countries are included in this study: the United Kingdom, Germany, Denmark, the Netherlands, Belgium, France, Ireland, Italy, Greece, Spain, Portugal, Austria and Finland[8]. Two countries, Luxembourg and Sweden, are present in the ECHP dataset but not in the analyses of this thesis. The small sample of Luxembourg makes poverty analyses difficult. Sweden did not provide longitudinal data but repeated cross-sectional data to the ECHP survey. Finally, for Germany and the United Kingdom respectively, the SOEP dataset and the BHPS data are used. Eurostat integrated these national panel data into the European Community Household Panel.

[7] Section 5.3.1.2 describes further how income data was collected.

[8] Austria and Finland joined the panel study in 1995 and 1996 respectively.

5.2.2 Sampling design

In the first wave of the ECHP, i.e. in 1994, a sample of 60500 nationally representative households – i.e. approximately 130000 adults aged 16 years and over – were interviewed in 12 member states (Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Spain, France, Italy, Ireland, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Portugal and the United Kingdom). In later years, Austria, Finland and Sweden also joined the ECHP. All members of the households initially selected were classified as initial sample persons and were followed over time. In later years, the sample frame was enlarged, as new household members of initial sample persons were included in the study[9] (Eurostat, 2003b). Most of the analysis in this thesis is restricted to the longitudinal sample of initially selected respondents, indicated in the thesis as initial sample persons. In this way, I can follow a sample of respondents over time. Yet, the information on new household members is taken into account in household level variables such as household income, household size and the number of employed adults in the household etc.

Most countries have adopted a stratified two-stage sampling procedure[10]. It is understood that this deviation from the simple random sample typically decreases statistically precision (Sturgis, 2004). Unfortunately, these sampling design features can not be taken into account because information on the strata and primary sampling units is not consistently available for all countries under study. In the ECHP User Database, cross-sectional and longitudinal weights are provided to correct for both non-response bias and sampling design effects. The weights are partly based on a post-stratification of the data with external control data. In the empirical part of the thesis, these weights are applied wherever possible (Eurostat, 2003a).

In Table 5.1 the achieved sample sizes for each country are given for the first wave in 1994. The size of the individual samples varies between 7437 in Austria and 17893 in

[9] New sample persons remained included for the time they were a member of the household of the initial sample person.

[10] In Denmark, the Netherlands and Luxembourg, the sample is actually a simple random sample of households (Watson, Maître, & Ryan, 2004).

Spain. In all countries together, 142863 individuals were interviewed in the first wave[11]. These sample sizes should allow users to pursue a wide range of statistical analyses. However, just like most longitudinal surveys, the ECHP was plagued by a problem of attrition during the subsequent waves of the panel study. The attrition problem in the ECHP will be assessed in Section 5.2.4.

Table 5.1 - Household and individual achieved sample sizes in the ECHP (wave 1, by country)

Country	Sample of households	Sample of individuals
Austria	3380	7437
Belgium	3490	6710
Denmark	3482	5903
Finland	4139	8173
France	7344	14333
Germany	6207	12233
Greece	5523	12492
Ireland	4048	9904
Italy	7115	17729
The Netherlands	5187	9407
Portugal	4881	11621
Spain	7206	17893
United Kingdom	5126	9028

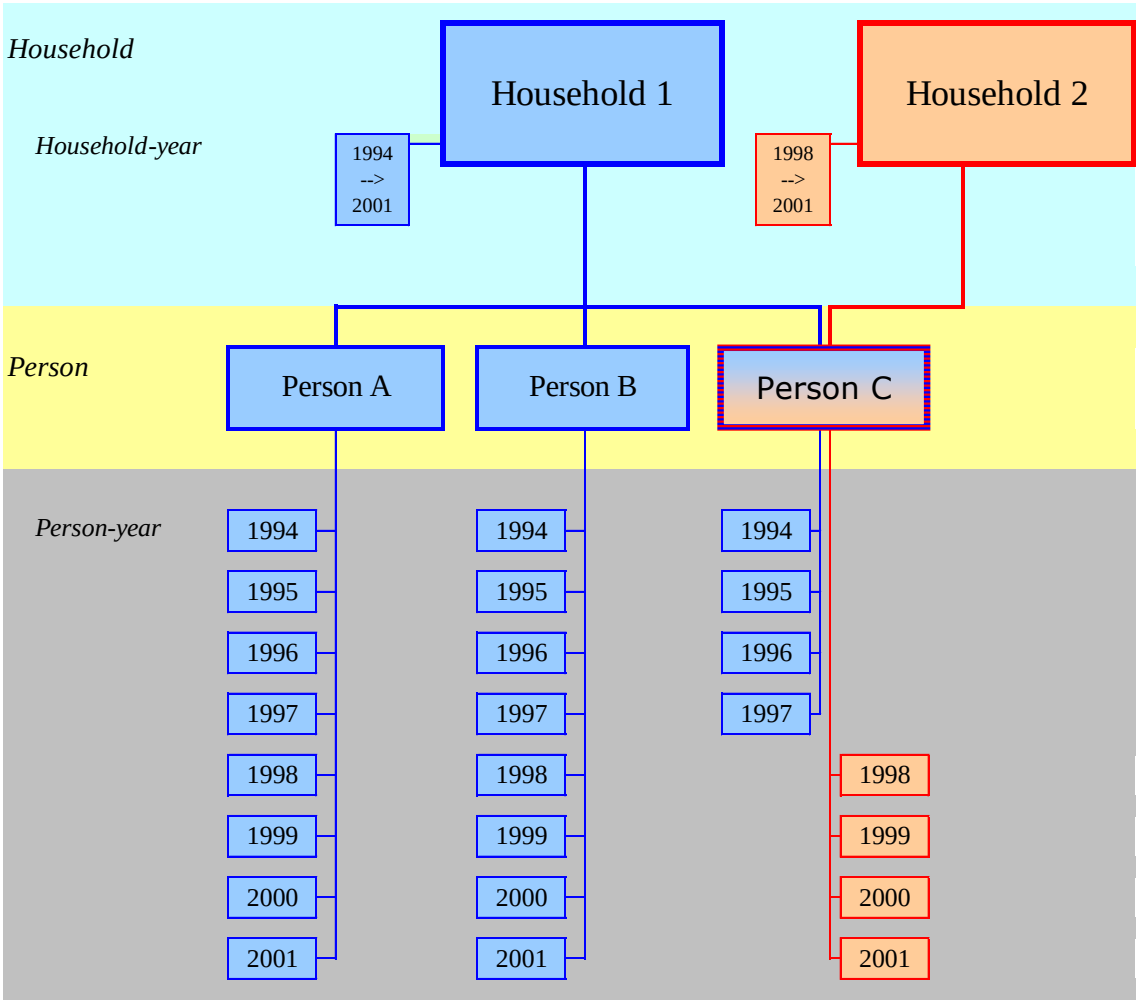
5.2.3 Structure of the household panel

In a household panel, data are collected both at the household as well as at the individual level. Furthermore, the information at these two levels is collected yearly for the duration of the panel study. Because information is available at several levels – household, individual and year –, an operational choice has to be made regarding the unit of analysis. Apart from justifying the unit of analysis, this section also discusses the consequences of the clustered structure for the assumptions of statistical analyses.

[11] The number of participating initial sample persons amounts to 162600. This number is higher than the number of wave 1 participants, because not all initially sampled persons participated in the first wave.

In the organigram of Figure 5.1, the clustered structure of the ECHP data is represented. As we can see, individuals are clustered within households and time-points are clustered within both individuals and households. It is also clear from the Figure that individuals can belong to more than one household cluster. This happens when a person moves from one household to another during the period of the panel study. Person C in Figure 5.1 for instance belongs to household 1 from 1994 to 1997, and afterwards this person forms his/her own single-person household from 1998 to 2001.

Figure 5.1 - Clustered structure in the ECHP dataset



What the best unit of analysis is; depends on the research questions at hand and the measurement level of the main concepts in the study. This study focuses on poverty dynamics and determinants of social stratification. The best option for this longitudinal research context is to take the yearly measurements as the lowest level of the analysis. Furthermore, a decision has to be made whether individuals or households will be

followed overt time. Yearly measurements are registered both for households and for individuals. Yet, it is a common approach amongst poverty mobility researchers to study people over time. At first sight, this choice does not seem straightforward because the poverty status is typically measured in a household context. It would thus seem logical to focus on households in the analyses. However, Figure 5.1 shows that the household is not a suitable unit of analysis because its size and composition can change over time when individuals die and are born or move between households. The standard approach, which I have also chosen, is to follow people over time rather than households. In all the analyses of this thesis, the person-year unit forms the unit of analysis. This implies that the dataset will be transformed in a person-year format (See: Singer & Willet, 2003, pp. 17-23).

The clustered structure of the ECHP data and the choice of person-year as the unit of analysis has consequences for the assumptions of statistical techniques. Most statistical regression techniques assume that observations are independent of each other, which implies that the residuals are not auto-correlated (Berry, 1993; Field, 2006). The phenomenon that several observations in the dataset are not independent but grouped together in clusters, leads to an underestimation of the standard errors in statistical tests (Allison, 2004; Vermunt, 2005). Consequently, test statistics are overestimated and the parameter effects are judged to be significant too easily (Allison, 2004; Frees, 2004). In my research design, there is dependence between the different time-moments measured with the same person; i.e. the person-year units are clustered within persons. This creates a dependency problem for the regression-based analyses in Chapters 7 and 8[12].

Except for the change-score regression in Chapter 7, most regression analyses in these two chapters are specified as event history regression models. As Allison explains, standard event history models with a single event do not induce a dependency problem (Allison, 1995, pp. 223-224). However, when repeated events are taken into account, the dependency between time measurements within individuals becomes problematic (Allison, 1995, p. 240).

[12] As the regression analyses in Chapter 9 are based on the outcome of the latent class analysis, they include only one observation per individual. Hence, dependency between time measurements per individual does not pose a problem in Chapter 9.

Poverty entry is a repeatable event and therefore the thesis will model multiple poverty entry events. Table 5.2 shows that among all initial sample persons, 16.11% have one poverty entry during the panel survey; and 2.53% enter poverty two or three times. For all respondents who enter poverty during the panel study; 12.92 % have more than one poverty entry.

Table 5.2 - Number of poverty entries during participation in ECHP (all countries)

	Initial sample persons	**Initial sample persons with at least one poverty entry**
0	81.35	-
1	16.11	86.38
2	2.41	12.92
3	0.13	0.70
Total (N)	100% (162600)	100% (30330)

When multiple poverty entry events are taken into account, several observations are clustered at the individual level. Different methods can be applied to take the clustered data structure into account. Here, the two chosen alternatives are briefly introduced. In the respective chapters, more details will be given about the chosen method and its implications.

1. A first alternative entails using robust standard errors that adjust for clustering at the individual level (Diggle, Heagerty, Liang, & Zeger, 2002, pp. 70-80). This is the strategy followed in Chapter 7.
2. To take into account the cluster structure of the data, multilevel models can be used. The most commonly used models in panel analysis are fixed and random effects models (Frees, 2004). In Chapter 8, the random effects model will be applied.

Poverty is measured at the household level; and this also poses a possible problem of dependence between individuals belonging to the same household. In this thesis, there is no correction for the clustering of individuals within households. This has to do with computational limits. Due to the problem that individuals do not necessarily belong to the same household during the panel study, clustering within households cannot easily

be corrected for. One way of taking this complicated cluster structure into account would be with a multilevel model with multiple membership. However, due to computational limits, multiple membership models are not yet possible for a large number of clusters, like the number of households in the ECHP. Moreover, increasing the number of levels in a multilevel analysis increases the computation time substantially. However, it can be assumed that the effect of clustering is limited in this research design because most households have only one or two adult household members in the first place.

5.2.4 Assessment of response in the ECHP

Before conducting the research, it is important to investigate the data quality of the ECHP with respect to response rates and non-response bias. Serious methodological problems can occur when not all sample persons participate in the study. Non-response poses the following two problems. Firstly, it reduces the sample size and hence increases the random error of the sample (Burton, 2000a). Secondly, it leads to problems with respect to the representativity of the sample and induces biased estimates whenever non-response is not random (Groves & Couper, 1998).

Panel data are plagued by two types of unit non-response. There is initial sample non-response when selected respondents fail to participate in the first wave of the panel study. Dropout or attrition on the other hand occurs when an initially participating sample person discontinues the participation in a wave before the end of the panel survey.

The inspection of response rates gives a first indication of the non-response problem in the ECHP. In Table 5.3 initial household response rates are given for the ECHP. For Germany, the United Kingdom and Belgium the figures are based on the starting year of the national panels, which are integrated into the ECHP framework. The lowest response rates occur in Belgium, Ireland and the Netherlands. On the other hand, Greece and Italy both have over 90% response; these high figures could be explained by the

fact that participation in these two countries is obligatory (Peracchi, 2000; Vandecasteele & Debels, 2004).

Table 5.3 - Initial response rate in the ECHP, household sample, by country

	Initial response rate	Year	*Source*
Austria	68.0%	1995	*ECHP*
Belgium	44.2%	1992	*PSBH*
Denmark	62.4%	1994	*ECHP*
Finland	n.a.		
France	79.5%	1994	*ECHP*
Germany (West)	62.2%	1983	*GSOEP*
Greece	90.1%	1994	*ECHP*
Ireland	55.8%	1994	*ECHP*
Italy	90.7%	1994	*ECHP*
Netherlands	(+-50%)*		
Portugal	88.9%	1994	*ECHP*
Spain	67.0%	1994	*ECHP*
United Kingdom	74.0%	1991	*BHPS*

*: Estimated (Eurostat. 1997)

Sources: Vandecasteele & Debels, 2004; Austria & Finland: Own calculations on ECHP-User Data Base

Next to initial response rates, patterns of dropout or attrition are also assessed. Vandecasteele and Debels (2004) distinguished three types of participation patterns: 1.) always participating, i.e. staying in the panel until the end of the observation period, 2.) monotone attrition, i.e. dropping out of the panel but not returning to it, and 3.) variable participation, i.e. dropping out and returning to the panel at least once. In Table 5.4 these participation patterns are given for participants of the first wave.

Table 5.4 - Participation patterns in the ECHP (wave 1 participants, 1994-2001, by country)

	always participating	monotone attrition	variable participation	N
Austria	58.17%	37.21%	4.63%	7437
Belgium	48.03%	44.87%	7.09%	6710
Germany	63.30%	30.46%	6.25%	12233
UK	67.25%	27.08%	5.67%	9028
Denmark	43.30%	43.88%	12.82%	5903
Italy	54.74%	37.68%	7.58%	17729
Greece	52.70%	39.27%	8.04%	12492
Spain	44.02%	45.13%	10.85%	17893
Finland	50.61%	44.32%	5.08%	8173
France	51.02%	41.11%	7.87%	14333
Ireland	29.77%	67.13%	3.10%	9904
the Netherlands	49.68%	41.39%	8.93%	9407
Portugal	64.20%	27.90%	7.90%	11621

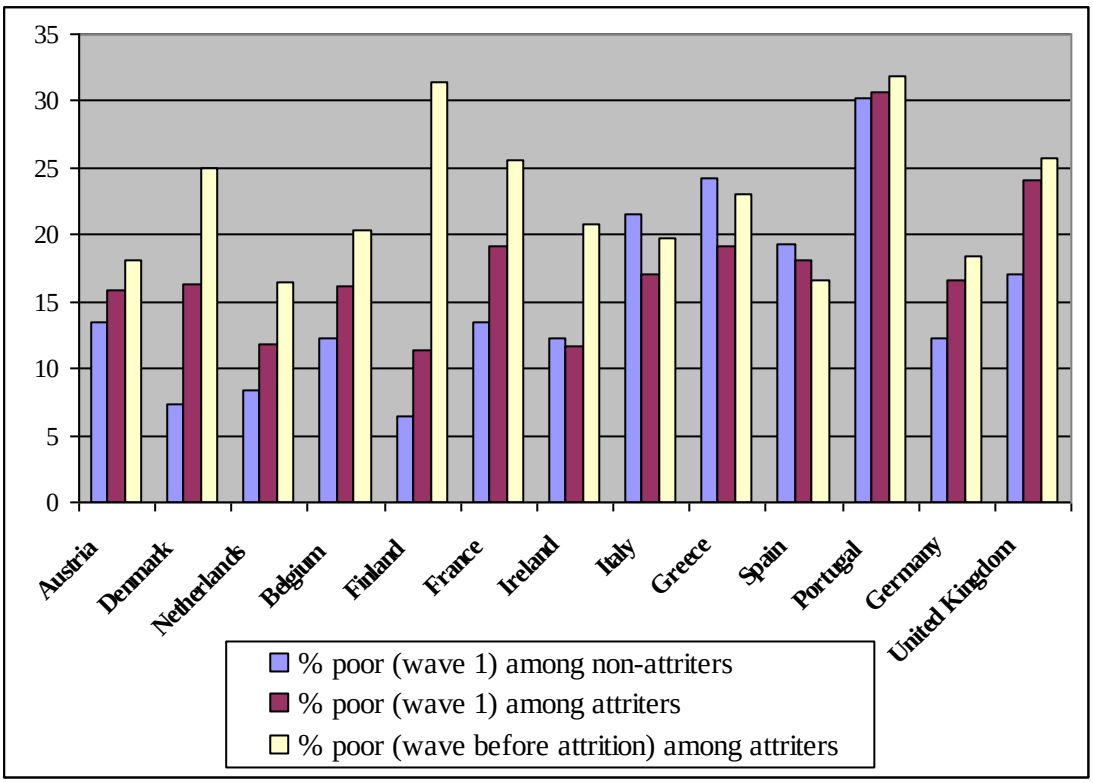
Sources: Vandecasteele & Debels, 2004; Austria & Finland: Own calculations on ECHP-User Data Base

The Table makes clear that the always-participating pattern is most frequent in the majority of countries, except in Denmark, Spain and Ireland. The share of wave 1 participants staying in the panel until the end is highest in the United Kingdom with 67.25% and lowest in Ireland with 29.77%. The high figure in the United Kingdom and Germany might be related to the earlier start date of the panel in these countries. In 1994, when the ECHP started, some initial participants had already left these panels and the persons remaining present in the panel are already a selected group (Vandecasteele & Debels, 2004). The occurrence of attrition – monotone or variable – is substantial in all countries; it varies between 32.75% and 70.23%. In Denmark, Spain and Ireland, monotone attrition is actually the most frequent participation pattern. Attrition occurs mostly in the form of monotone attrition. The attriters who later participate again – in other words – in other words, persons with a variable participation pattern – form a relatively small group in all countries.

To evaluate the bias created by initial non-response and attrition, it is important to find out how selective the non-response is with respect to main variables in the research design. Previous studies have found that attrition in the ECHP is connected with age,

home ownership, length of residence at the current address, marital status, household type, education level and income (See: Behr & Bellgardt, 2002; Nicoletti & Peracchi, 2005; Watson, 2003). I will focus here on the research findings concerning selective attrition according to income and poverty status, as these are the main dependent variables of my analysis. Behr, Bellgardt and Rendtel (2003) and also Watson (2003) have used the first five waves of the ECHP to investigate the effect of attrition on the distributions of income and poverty. Watson (2003) finds a North-South divide for the relationship between income and dropping out. In Northern European countries, there is a higher attrition rate among people with low income, whereas in Southern Europe and Ireland, the top of the income distribution has a higher dropout rate. Figure 5.2 shows that there is also a relationship between attrition and income poverty when eight waves of the ECHP survey are analysed

Figure 5.2 - Histogram with poverty percentages among different groups of first wave participants (ECHP, 1994-2001, by country)



.In Figure 5.2 the poverty percentage of the first wave is given for the group of people not dropping out and the ones who drop out of the study. There is also a North-South

divide. In all Northern European countries except for Ireland, incidence of poverty is higher among those who drop out. This result is even clearer when comparing with the poverty state of the year before attrition. In the Southern European countries, the poverty percentage of the first wave is lower among attriters[13].

In this thesis, weighting is chosen as the appropriate strategy to correct for the bias created by survey non-response[14]. In the ECHP User Database (ECHP-UDB), both cross-sectional and longitudinal weights are provided. Cross-sectional weights adjust the sample in order to provide a correct representation of the population in a given year. The longitudinal weights – called base weights in the EHCP-UDB - will be used to correct for design effects, first wave non-response and attrition bias in the longitudinal sample. The variables used for the construction of the weights are age, sex, household size, number of economically active persons in the household, region, arrivals to or departures from the household, tenure status, equivalised household income, main source of income, and whether or not the household is a split-off household[15] (Eurostat, 2003a). Vandecasteele & Debels (2007) have assessed the effectiveness of ECHP-UDB provided weights and found that weighting reduces the bias in distributions of education and social class, two variables which are central in this study. A side-effect of weighting is that it decreases the precision of the estimates because standard errors are larger[16]. However, Sturgis (2004) shows that this feature does not weigh up against the bias correction thanks to the weighting. This argument is followed here because the bias reduction is considerate in a complex longitudinal survey like the ECHP, whereby the weighting process takes into account several sources of bias – i.e. design effects, initial non-response and attrition.

[13] Except for Portugal where the poverty occurrence of the first wave does not clearly differ between attriters and non-attriters.

[14] For a discussion of other methods, see: Allison (2002), Little & Rubin (1989) and Raab, Purdon & Buckner (2005).

[15] When a household splits in two, e.g. after a divorce, then one of the households is categorized as 'splitt-off' household.

[16] In STATA robust standard errors are provided for regression models where probability weights are applied.

5.3 OPERATIONALISATION OF MAIN CONCEPTS

This section gives an overview of the main concepts used in the research proposal. It concerns the operationalisation of poverty, social stratification determinants, social mobility and life course events[17].

5.3.1 Poverty

The first part of this section elaborates on the conceptualisation and operational definition of poverty. Consequently, how the equivalised household income is constructed on the basis of the information available in the ECHP is explained. We will also see how patterns of poverty mobility are operationalised.

5.3.1.1 Conceptual and operational definition of poverty

The poverty definition of the European Commission has been used here: 'The poor shall be taken to mean persons, families and groups of people where resources (material, cultural and social) are so limited as to exclude them from a minimum acceptable way of life in Member States in which they live' (EEC, 1985). This definition implies that poverty is measured relative to the living standard in the country of residence.

In the area of poverty studies, there is a consensus among researchers to measure poverty at the household level. This practice rests on the assumption that individuals within a household pool and share their resources. As we have seen in Section 5.2.3 person-years form the units of analysis. Poverty will thus be measured at the household level of a certain wave and disaggregated to the individual level of that wave. For most of the analyses, the unit of measurement is a person's household of a certain year but the unit of analysis is the person-year.

The limited scope of this work constrains me to the use of only one poverty measure. In the context of the thesis, poverty is operationalised as relative household income

[17] Parts of the operationalisation has also been outlined in the following working papers: Vandecasteele, 2005a, 2005b, 2006a, 2006b.

poverty. The poverty threshold is set at 60% of the median net equivalised[18] household income in a given year and country. Defining the poverty line as 60% of the median household income of a country is a frequent practice in European poverty research (See among others: Apospori & Millar, 2003; Cappellari & Jenkins, 2002; Eurostat, 2007; Fouarge & Layte, 2005; Layte & Whelan, 2003; Pantazis, Gordon, & Levitas, 2006). The chosen poverty line is a relative threshold, variable between countries and over time. This makes it especially flexible and valid to use in longitudinal and comparative research. Moreover, the fact that this 60% poverty line is often used in other research makes it easier to compare the findings with these of other research.

5.3.1.2 Construction of equivalised household income poverty

The construction of the poverty threshold is based on the total net household income in a certain year. In the ECHP User Database, a measure of the total net yearly household income is provided with a time lag of one year. At the moment of interview, respondents cannot yet report the total income of the relevant year. This is why income questions in the ECHP-questionnaire refer to the calendar year prior to the survey. Consequently, the yearly net household income provided by Eurostat also refers to the calendar year before the interview. For the purpose of the analyses in this thesis, using this time-lagged income measure in the wave where it is provided is considered inaccurate. The reasons are twofold. Firstly, the research questions encompass the investigation of life events and social mobility patterns occurring just before or at the same time of poverty entry. So it is important to measure the timing of the poverty entry concurrent with the timing of these life events. Secondly, using the lagged income measure entails difficulties because there is a mismatch between the time frame of income measurement and the measurement of the social stratification characteristics of a person. For these two reasons it is deemed necessary to make use of the income measure referring to the actual wave of the interview. I will use the total net household income referring to the wave of the interview but supplied in the following wave.

[18] The modified OECD-equivalence scale is used.

For the construction of the net household income, the operationalisation outlined by Debels and Vandecasteele (2005) will be followed. They reconstructed the household income by adding up the income components (measured in wave t-1) of persons belonging to the same household in wave t-1. The total net household income consists of the sum of personal incomes of all the household members, together with household income components like rental income/assigned property, housing allowance and social assistance. After counting together the different income components of the household, the total net yearly household income is divided by the modified OECD-equivalence scale. Consequently, the poverty threshold is set to 60% of the equivalised median household income in the respective country. As argued above, the individual is a better unit of analysis in longitudinal research. Therefore the poverty variable is assigned to all household members before further analysis is conducted.

Debels and Vandecasteele (2005) have assessed the difference between the time-lagged ECHP-provided household income measure and the time-lag corrected income measure[19]. Both the distribution of equivalised household income and the poverty distribution are substantially different when the time lag is corrected for. Table 5.5 shows that the difference between the two household income measures is significant in all countries under study. Furthermore, in all countries except Austria the weighted mean income is higher when the time-lag corrected household income is applied. This has to do with the effect of yearly income rises (Debels & Vandecasteele, 2005).

[19] This is possible since the used income components and imputation methods are the same as recommended by Eurostat.

Table 5.5 - Summarising statistics for the lagged and time-lag corrected equivalised household income measures: weighted mean and Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test of paired-differences between the means (ECHP, wave 3, by country, weighted)

Country	A. Lagged income measure Wave 3		B. Time-lag corrected income measure Wave 3		C. Signed Rank Test of difference between A. & B.	
	Weighted Mean	N	Weighted Mean	N	Test Value	p
Denmark	138947	4992	141288	4806	1082353	***
Netherlands	30133	9177	31242	8546	7498634	***
Belgium	617835	6118	629095	5802	1150106	***
France	97886	12670	98825	12967	4767725	***
Ireland	8503	7477	9111	7035	4432883	***
Italy	18117	17515	18494	17125	10059548	***
Greece	1955168	11510	2148812	11042	7932440	***
Spain	1254456	15497	1324645	14933	11847974	***
Portugal	1133869	11634	1221211	11238	10622022	***
Austria	220653	7258	216213	6891	-478301	**
Finland	79724	8171	79529	7886	2043270	***
Germany	30936	12240	32100	11298	7969748	***
Luxembourg	918029	5612	964072	5323	2344246	***
United Kingdom	9762	8934	10824	7988	8809943	***

Note: *** = p<.0001; **p<0.01

Source: Debels & Vandecasteele, 2005

In Table 5.6 the association between the time-lagged and time-lag corrected poverty measure is given. The marginal distributions of both poverty measures are similar. However, the amount of poor persons who are misclassified amounts to one-third. From the 17.74% cases classified as poor according to the time-lag corrected poverty measure; 6.68% is classified as non-poor according to the time-lagged poverty measure.

Moreover, the effects of certain life events on the poverty risk are significantly different when the time-lag corrected measure is applied instead of the time-lagged poverty measure (Debels & Vandecasteele, 2005). Hence, for the research in this thesis it is worthwhile to correct for the time-lag in the poverty variable.

Table 5.6 - Association between time-lagged and time-lag corrected poverty measure, expressed in percentages (ECHP, wave 3, pooled dataset, cross-sectionally weighted)

		TIME-LAG CORRECTED POVERTY MEASURE		
		non poor	**Poor**	**Total**
TIME-LAGGED POVERTY MEASURE	**non poor**	76.91%	6.68%	83.59%
	poor	5.35%	11.06%	16.41%
	Total	82.26%	17.74%	100.00%
				N=132540

Source: Debels & Vandecasteele, 2005

5.3.1.3 Poverty in a longitudinal perspective

In the thesis, poverty entry mobility is operationalised as a movement below the poverty line. The risk of poverty entry is assessed for people who are not poor in the year before (T-1). Consequently, the analyses are performed on a sub-group of people who are at risk of poverty entry.

In Chapter 6, a summary variable is used to describe the longitudinal poverty pattern over seven waves. To assess the poverty pattern over a number of years, principally two ways can be followed (Kuchler & Goebel, 2003). Firstly, the most commonly adopted approach is to count the number of years in poverty over a given time-span. Secondly, the income can be smoothed by looking at the average income over a specific time-period. This smoothed income measure reveals the persistence of the poverty problem (Gangl, 2005). The assumption made in the smoothed income approach is that all individuals are able to average their income over time. However, it is arguable whether this assumption holds because insecurity about future income streams makes it very

difficult for individuals to make long-term income plans. For this reason and due to the limited scope of this thesis, only the first approach is followed in this study.

Household panel researchers have often looked into the number of years a person is poor (Bane & Ellwood, 1986; Biewen, 2003; Duncan et al., 1993; Layte & Whelan, 2003; Stevens, 1999). A variant is to compare the percentage of always poor people with the percentage of people experiencing poverty at least once during the panel study (Oxley, Dang, & Antolín, 2000). An interesting descriptive poverty summary has been found in the typology developed by Muffels, Fouarge and Dekker (2000). It takes into account the length of the poverty spell but also the stability and recurrence of poverty. Muffels, Fouarge and Dekker distinguish between persistent non-poor, transient poor, recurrent poor and persistent poor people.

In Chapter 6, I will use an adapted version of the scheme of Muffels, Fouarge and Dekker (2000). Whereas they describe all persons poor for more than two years as persistent poor, this study takes a more selective indicator of long-term poverty. The length of the ECHP survey allows me to distinguish between mid-term poverty, i.e. a two to three year poverty spell, and longer poverty spells. Moreover, Hulme and Shepherd (2003) argue that poverty spells of five years and more can be catalogued as chronic poverty. By putting the cut-off value for long-term poverty at four years, the long-term poor more closely resemble people in a chronic poverty state. In the poverty pattern, the following five categories are distinguished:

- Never poor
- Transient poor: poor once for a period of 1 year
- Mid-term poor: poor once for a period of 2 to 3 years
- Recurrent poor: poor more than once, never longer than 3 consecutive years
- Long-term poor: poor for a period of 4 years and more

In the construction of the poverty pattern, left and right censoring is not taken into account. Censoring occurs when a person experiences a poverty spell of which the beginning or the end could not be measured. This typically occurs when the person is already poor during the first year of its observation and/or when the person is still in poverty in the last wave of the panel study. Whenever a person has a censored poverty

episode, the real poverty duration cannot be assessed. The poverty pattern in this research is only based on the observed years in poverty and the poverty duration of censored cases is thus underestimated. This will result in an overestimation of the occurrence of transient poverty and an underestimation of the occurrence of long-term poverty. Indeed, some people with a transient poverty spell would belong to the mid-term or long-term poor when information on the full seven-year reference period was available. Ignoring the censored cases will thus lead to a certain bias and this has to be kept in mind when interpreting the analyses. However, there seems to be no better solution to this censoring problem. If I were to follow the alternative strategy of ignoring the sample persons with censored poverty spells, then the poverty incidence would be largely underestimated because all people with a censored poverty spell would be excluded from the analysis. In Table 5.7 the magnitude of the censoring problem is assessed.

Table 5.7 - Percentage of sample persons with a censored poverty pattern (ECHP, 1994-2001, by country)

	Not censored	**Censored**	**Total** (N)
Denmark	77.85	22.15	100% (4361)
Finland	80.47	19.53	100% (5966)
The Netherlands	82.08	17.92	100% (8162)
Germany	79.77	20.23	100% (11337)
Austria	78.08	21.92	100% (6150)
Belgium	77.84	22.16	100% (5365)
France	74.82	25.18	100% (11618)
Italy	67.95	32.05	100% (16367)
Greece	63.58	36.42	100% (10669)
Spain	68.88	31.12	100% (14138)
Portugal	59.54	40.46	100% (11300)
United Kingdom	71.96	28.04	100% (7782)
Ireland	70.94	29.06	100% (6171)

The percentage of sample persons with a censored poverty pattern[20] varies between 17.92% in the Netherlands and 40.46% in Portugal. In order to assess the bias created by the censored cases, the distribution of their poverty pattern will be investigated in Chapter 6.

The reference period of the panel study consists in principle of seven panel years of the ECHP[21]. However, not all the initially sampled individuals have full 7-year coverage on the poverty variable due to attrition, wave non-response and item non-response. One way to deal with this would be to include only the balanced sub-sample of people with full coverage on the poverty variable. However, this reduces the number of sample persons substantially. Table A 5.1 in the appendix shows that only between 21.9% (Ireland) and 47.2% (Italy) of the initial sample have full wave coverage on the poverty variable. So, when taking only the sub-sample of persons with full information on the poverty variable, more than half of the cases are omitted from analyses. Furthermore, for the purpose of creating a summary variable, I do not necessarily need information about all waves. For a substantial proportion of persons, the information is missing on only a small number of waves and consequently, it is still possible to reveal an overall poverty pattern. The cumulative percentages in Table A.5.1 shows that a large percentage of sample persons are available, generally more than 65%[22] if respondents with a maximum of three missing waves are included. Consequently, for all persons with a value on the poverty variable for at least four waves, a longitudinal poverty pattern is specified. This approach is taken to guarantee the inclusion of a maximal number of initial sample respondents, omitting observations with substantial dropout or non-response on the poverty variable.

[20] A sample person is defined as a censored case when he/she experienced minimum one poverty spell of which the beginning could not be measured during the panel study. According to this definition, non-response during the panel study could also lead to censoring.

[21] Due to the later entry into the panel study, the reference period for Finland and Austria is respectively five and six panel years.

[22] Except for the Netherlands and Ireland, where this is only 53.2% and 56.9%.

5.3.2 Social stratification determinants

The thesis takes the stance that a social stratification system is multi-dimensional (Grusky, 2001a). In contemporary societies, a mix of several social stratification determinants is important in determining someone's life chances. In this thesis, it is perceived that multiple bases of social stratification have a combined effect on the stratification of poverty risks (Compare with: Cotter et al., 1999; Grusky, 2001b; McCall, 2001). Multivariate methods permit me to distinguish the independent and combined effects of these social stratification determinants. The social stratification determinants used in this research are gender, level of education and social class. In what follows, the operationalisation of these social stratification determinants will be outlined.

5.3.2.1 Gender

One of the main explanations of the gender poverty gap is sought in the changing household structure. Single female headed households are found to be especially vulnerable to the risk of poverty (Christopher et al., 2002; McLanahan & Kelly, 1999). Consequently, studies on the gendered nature of poverty have often combined household structure information with the gender dimension (Abowitz, 1986; Fuchs, 1986; Lichtenwalter, 2005; McLanahan & Carlson, 2001; Pearce, 1978). This approach will partly be followed in this thesis. In the thesis, gender is mostly used as a household-level variable (see Section 5.3.2.4). The aim is to use the following combined variable measuring the gender of the main breadwinner of the household and whether it concerns a single or couple household:

- Single male household (with or without children)
- Single female household (with or without children)
- Couple household with male household head
- Couple household with female household head
- Other

However, for some analyses, the number of observations for each cell is too small to use this combined measure. In this case, an alternative variable indicating the gender of the household's main breadwinner is included. Additionally, in Chapter 7, gender is used as

a control variable at the individual level and consequently no household structure information is included (see Section 5.3.2.4.).

5.3.2.2 Level of education

For the operationalisation of the level of education, the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) is adopted. In the ECHP data, level of education is provided in three categories: high education level, i.e. recognised third level education (ISCED 5-7), middle education level, i.e. second stage of secondary education (ISCED 3) and low education level, i.e. less than second stage of secondary education (ISCED 0-2).

5.3.2.3 Social class

The social class variable is based on the Erikson, Goldthorpe & Portocarero typology. Ganzeboom's and Treiman's conversion tools have been used to convert ISCO88 codes in the typology of Erikson, Goldthorpe & Portocarero (Ganzeboom & Treiman, Summer 1994). The conversion is based on ISCO88-codes, supervisory status and self-employment status of a person's current or previous occupation[23]. The information in the ECHP dataset is not perfect to make the conversion as Ganzeboom and Treiman have prescribed it. Firstly, the conversion tool is based on 4-digit ISCO88-codes but the ECHP contains only ISCO88 codes at the more aggregate 2-digit level. Mostly, however, this does not pose a problem because the ISCO88-codes are recoded in new provisional groups at an even more aggregate level. Furthermore, the supervisory status is measured in a categorical way in the ECHP survey whereas the conversion tools are based on a count of the number of employees someone has under his/her supervision[24]. The thesis employs a reduced version of the Goldthorpe, Erikson & Portocarero class

[23] Where variables PE006A and PE006B have missing values or not applicable, the main activity status is imputed through the variables PE001, PE002 or PE003 where possible.

[24] To deal with this issue, it is assumed that the category 'non-supervisory' is equal to having no employees under supervision, 'intermediate' to having 1-9 employees under supervision and 'supervisoty' in the ECHP dataset is assumed to stand for 'more than 10 employees under supervision.

scheme. Throughout the chapters, both a five- and seven-class typology is used[25]. In Table 5.8 the obtained classifications are presented. Smaller groups like manual workers and agricultural workers are merged into two categories: manual supervisors and skilled manual on the one hand, semi and unskilled manual workers together with agricultural workers on the other hand. In addition, the different groups of self-employed belong to the same class in this thesis. For white collar positions, there is less reduction in the number of classes as compared with the original scheme of eleven categories. This is because the non-manual classes comprise a large share of the workforce in contemporary European societies.

Social class schemes are traditionally based on the occupational structure and do not provide a position for the unemployed/inactive. Empirical researchers faced with this problem have mostly determined the social class position on the basis of last occupation. In this thesis, this practice is followed in cases where the unemployed/inactive state lasts less than 12 months[26]. However, it has been proved that especially enduring unemployment/inactivity affects life chances to a large extent (Whelan et al., 2003). Therefore, the presented social class scheme reserves a separate category for the long-term unemployed and inactive. The latter is operationalised as being more than 12 months in inactivity or unemployment. This is consistent with the definition of long-term unemployment of the International Labour Organisation (ILO, 2005).

[25] The choice between the five and seven-category class scheme will depend on the number of observations per cell of the analysis at hand.

[26] A variation on this practice occurs in Chapter 7, where the unemployed/inactive state refers to the current year. This is because social mobility is measured as year-to-year change in social class; and social class as a variable is introduced only to control for the baseline social position before mobility.

Table 5.8 - The proposed social class scheme

Full version of the Erikson, Goldthorpe & Portocarero scheme (Erikson & Goldthorpe, 1993)		**7-class version**		**5-class version**	
I	Higher-grade professionals, administrators and officials; managers in large industrial establishments; large proprietors	I	Higher professional-managerial class	I & II	Professional-managerial class
II	Lower grade professionals, administrators and officials; higher-grade technicians; managers in small industrial establishments; supervisors of non-manual employees	II	Lower professional-managerial class		
IIIa	Routine non-manual employees, higher-grade (administration and commerce)	III	Routine non-manual class	III	Routine non-manual class
IIIb	Routine non-manual employees, lower grade (sales and services)				
IVa	Small proprietors, artisans etc. with employees	IV	Self-employed	IV	Self-employed
IVb	Small proprietors, artisans etc. without employees				
IVc	Farmers and smallholders; other self-employed workers in primary production				
V	Lower-grade technicians; supervisors of manual workers	V & VI	Skilled manual class	V, VI & VII	Manual class
VI	Skilled manual workers				
VIIa	Semi- and unskilled manual workers (not in agriculture, etc.)	VII	Semi-unskilled manual class		
VIIb	Agricultural and other workers, in primary production				
			Long-term unemployed-inactive		Long-term unemployed-inactive

5.3.2.4 Level of measurement of social stratification determinants

The unit of analysis in the research is the individual but household level information is used to measure social class, gender and education level. In this section we will see that social class is commonly measured at the household level. I give arguments for following the same approach in my research.

There has grown a consensus that the appropriate unit for the measurement of social class is the household (Breen & Rottman, 1995; Erikson & Goldthorpe, 1993). The reason is that when people live together in a household, they share material conditions, basic orientations and future life chances.

Originally, social class research included only male respondents because under the male breadwinner model women were not active in the labour market. The husband's social position was seen as determining for the social class of the household. In the 1960s this practice came under severe criticism from feminist authors and several attempts have been made to include the female labour market position in the household class measure (Erikson & Goldthorpe, 1993; Heath & Britten, 1984). Erikson and Goldthorpe (1993) proposed the dominance principle. Under this principle, the social class of a household is based on the occupational position of the main breadwinner of the household, regardless of the gender of the main breadwinner.

The dominance principle will be followed in this thesis. The main breadwinner of the household is seen as the household head. In this thesis, not only the social class but also gender and education level will be measured with the household head and assigned to the individual. This makes it possible not only to follow a widely-accepted way of measuring social class, but it makes also sense because poverty is measured at the household level too. Thus, it could be expected that the social stratification characteristics of the main breadwinner have the strongest impact on the household income.

5.3.3 Intragenerational social mobility

Intragenerational social mobility occurs whenever an individual moves from one social class to another over time. Although there is a wide consensus that the appropriate measurement unit for social class is the household, intragenerational social mobility researchers have always focussed on individuals (See, among others: Di Prete, 2002; Dronkers & Ultee, 1995; Halpin, 1999; Mayer & Carroll, 1987). This makes sense since household mobility cannot be measured, as its composition and size changes over time. In my research, I follow the practice of measuring social mobility at the individual level.

In the analyses of Chapter 7, the interest lies in the income and poverty consequences of social mobility patterns. The different social mobility patterns are divided in categories. The choice of categories is based on both theoretical as well as pragmatic reasons. Theoretically, it is important to distinguish between different groups within the non-manual classes, i.e. the division between mobility into the professional-managerial and into routine non-manual class is important. Furthermore, to obtain a sufficient number of cases for each category, the number of social mobility patterns had to be limited to seven.

The following broad categories are discerned:

- From other occupation into professional-managerial class
- From professional-managerial class to routine non-manual class
- From self-employed/manual class to routine non-manual class
- From other occupation into manual class
- From other occupation into self-employment
- Mobility into unemployed or inactive
- Mobility out of unemployed or inactive

There has been a discussion on whether measuring absolute mobility rates, without controlling for changes in the occupational structure, is useful. In intergenerational social mobility research, relative mobility measures have been proposed (Müller, 2004). They control for these structural effects and look at the relative mobility chances of a given social group compared with other groups. It is less useful to work with relative

social mobility measures in intra-generational mobility research when only a short time-span is available, as in the ECHP data.

5.3.4 Life course events

The life course events under observation in the thesis are chosen because they have proven to increase the poverty chance (Apospori & Millar, 2003; OECD, 2001). The life course events under study are on the one hand changes in a person's household composition (childbirth, partnership dissolution, young adult leaves parental home) and on the other hand changes in the employment situation, when someone loses his/her job.

The life event of childbirth occurs when there are new-born children in the household in year T.

Under partnership dissolution, I understand both marital break-up and break-up of a co-habitational union. Partnership dissolution in an individual's household occurs when there is a partnership-dissolution between last year (T-1) and the current year (T), among one of the persons of the current household (year T).

Leaving the parental home occurs when a young adult of maximum 35 years old leaves the parental home between T-1 and T.

Job loss is an employment related life course event. It occurs in the household when one or more household members have lost their job between last year and the current year.

In Chapter 8, the effect of a life event in the household is estimated for the risk of poverty entry. In Chapter 9, the focus is on the effect of life events for the medium-term poverty trajectories of the individual experiencing the event. Therefore the life event is measured at the individual level.

6 THE SOCIAL STRATIFICATION OF POVERTY AND ITS DYNAMICS: THE STATE OF THE ART

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This first empirical chapter provides a description of the social stratification of poverty dynamics. Authors connected to the debate on individualization have argued that the importance of social stratification has declined, while some even speak of the death of social class (Clark & Lipset, 1991; Pakulski & Waters, 1996). In the field of poverty inequality, a similar argument is made and explanations are sought in the insecurity of the life course. As a consequence, the poverty risk is believed to be democratised. The latter refers to the phenomenon in which broad layers of society share in the poverty risk (Berger, 1994; Leisering & Leibfried, 1999). This chapter aims to provide an insight into this phenomenon. As stated in Chapter 4, the exploration will be guided by this general question: Are there empirical signs of democratization of the poverty risk over several social strata? Consequently, the more specific question will be whether the social stratification of poverty inequality is less stringent when poverty is temporary.

According to the individualisation perspective, the contemporary poverty risk transcends social boundaries. However, this phenomenon is believed to be correlated with the temporalisation of poverty. In this viewpoint, especially the temporary poverty risk is believed to have spread over several social strata (Leisering & Leibfried, 1999, pp. 240-243). In the social stratification literature, the same issue is linked to income (in)stability. In their empirical investigation, Hauser and Warren (1997) find that occupational status is a good indicator of long-term income. Sorensen (2000) argues that a social class structure should be especially powerful in predicting long-term wealth. From this perspective, it can be expected that the structuring effect of social stratification determinants on poverty inequality will be less powerful when poverty is short-term or when there is a great deal of movement into and out of poverty.

Previous research has shown the main determinants of poverty duration. Persistent poverty mainly occurs in the manual class, for self-employed and for persons with an unemployment spell (Whelan, Layte & Maitre, 2003, Fouarge & Layte, 2003).

Additionally, less educated people have been found to face a larger risk of long-term poverty (Fouarge & Layte, 2003). The exit rate out of poverty is lower for women (Dewilde, 2004), so it could be expected that women are overrepresented in the group of persistent poor.

In the rest of this chapter the following method will be applied. The social stratification determinants under study will be linked to (1) the probability of poverty entry, and (2) a longitudinal poverty pattern. For poverty entry, the focus is on country-per-country bivariate statistics of the poverty entry occurrence and the respective determinants of social stratification. Confidence intervals will be calculated to assess differences between social stratification categories. The findings of these statistics form the basis for the multivariate regression models in later chapters of the thesis. For the longitudinal poverty pattern, I set out with a bivariate descriptive approach per social stratification determinant. This will be presented for a selection of four countries. The last section of the chapter investigates whether the found social stratification effects on the longitudinal poverty pattern can be corroborated in a multivariate multinomial regression model for all countries. This model will also provide the significance level of the effect of social stratification determinants[27].

6.2 A LONGITUDINAL POVERTY PATTERN

Later on in this chapter, the social stratification of the different outcomes of the longitudinal poverty pattern will be assessed. In this section, the distribution of the longitudinal poverty pattern will be explored in the different European countries under study.

Table 6.1 presents the country-specific distributions of the longitudinal poverty pattern. The distributions in Table 6.1 are weighted with an average of the base weights provided in the ECHP User Data Base[28]. The following categories can be discerned:

[27] As the multinomial regression model provides test statistics for the parameter estimates, confidence intervals will not be calculated for the bivariate statistics with the longitudinal poverty pattern.

[28] In appendix A.6.1 an explanation and justification for this approach is provided.

- Never poor
- Transient poor: poor once for a period of 1 year
- Mid-term poor: poor once for a period of 2 to 3 years
- Recurrent poor: poor more than once, never longer than 3 years
- Long-term poor: poor for a period of 4 years and more

Table 6.1 - Distribution of the longitudinal poverty pattern in European countries (ECHP, 1994-2000 , initial sample persons, weighted)

	Never poor	**Transient poor**	**Mid-term poor**	**Recurrent poor**	**Long-term poor**	**Total** (N)
Denmark	69.83%	13.63%	5.59%	6.52%	4.44%	100% (4361)
Finland	75.50%	13.03%	4.16%	3.98%	3.33%	100% (5966)
The Netherlands	73.30%	12.45%	4.23%	6.23%	3.77%	100% (8162)
Germany	73.03%	10.88%	4.92%	5.53%	5.63%	100% (11337)
Austria	74.52%	9.70%	5.09%	5.12%	5.57%	100% (6150)
Belgium	67.75%	13.20%	4.62%	7.75%	6.69%	100% (5365)
France	68.49%	10.75%	5.41%	7.54%	7.81%	100% (11618)
Italy	59.71%	13.16%	6.37%	10.49%	10.27%	100% (16367)
Greece	56.25%	13.18%	7.82%	12.25%	10.50%	100% (10669)
Spain	59.41%	12.99%	7.13%	12.74%	7.73%	100% (14138)
Portugal	59.15%	11.21%	7.37%	10.19%	12.08%	100% (11300)
United Kingdom	62.73%	11.45%	7.28%	7.50%	11.04%	100% (7782)
Ireland	60.56%	13.91%	7.24%	7.87%	10.42%	100% (6171)

A first observation concerns the country differences in the share of people who never experience poverty during the reference period. The country-specific percentages range from 56.25% in Greece to 75.5% in Finland. The high percentages of never poor in Finland (75.5%) and Austria (74.52%) could partly be explained by the shorter reference period in these countries. However, other countries also with Social Democratic and Conservative regimes show high percentages of 'never poor'. Overall, in the countries belonging to the Social Democratic and Conservative welfare regime, more than 65% belong to the 'never poor'. On the other hand, in the Southern European and Liberal welfare states, this percentage lies consistently under 65%.

Among the people experiencing poverty, transient poverty is the most frequently occurring pattern in all countries under study. Furthermore, the percentages of mid-

term, recurrent and long-term poverty clearly differ according to welfare regime. In the countries under the Social Democratic regime, mid-term, recurrent, as well as long-term poverty are much less substantial than transient poverty. The poverty pattern in the Conservative regime is comparable to the one in the Social Democratic regime, but it does entail a slightly larger share of long-term poor. In both the Southern and Liberal countries, there is a substantial proportion of long-term poor. In Southern European countries the share of recurrent poverty is also relatively large. The results are largely consistent with the findings of Fouarge and Layte (2005) for the first four waves of the panel.

In Chapter 5, I have explained the issue of censoring and its impact on the distribution of poverty patterns. We have seen that between 18% and 40% of the sample persons have experienced a poverty spell of which the length is not known because the data was left or right-censored. In order to assess the bias created by this phenomenon, we will have a look at the distribution of individuals with a censored poverty pattern. Table 6.2 shows that the sample persons with a censored poverty spell are relatively widely spread over the different poverty patterns.

Table 6.2 - Distribution of the longitudinal poverty pattern for censored cases (ECHP, 1994-2000, weighted)

	Transient poor	**Mid-term poor**	**Recurrent poor**	**Long-term poor**	**Total** (N)
Denmark	38.04%	16.35%	26.23%	19.38%	100% (1662)
Finland	50.23%	16.44%	18.02%	15.31%	100% (2461)
The Netherlands	37.80%	16.52%	27.95%	17.74%	100% (2583)
Germany	31.60%	18.18%	24.25%	25.97%	100% (3293)
Austria	30.98%	18.07%	23.57%	27.39%	100% (1986)
Belgium	30.01%	14.02%	29.23%	26.74%	100% (1874)
France	26.39%	15.20%	27.52%	30.89%	100% (4558)
Italy	22.25%	14.29%	31.16%	32.30%	100% (6552)
Greece	21.06%	16.04%	32.96%	29.94%	100% (5091)
Spain	22.14%	16.71%	36.95%	24.20%	100% (6150)
Portugal	18.78%	16.55%	29.31%	35.37%	100% (5825)
United Kingdom	23.93%	16.63%	23.56%	35.87%	100% (3436)
Ireland	29.49%	17.37%	22.03%	31.11%	100% (3042)

A large group of censored cases belong to the long-term poor, especially in Southern European and Liberal countries. For this group of long-term poor censored cases, there is no impact of the censoring, since they would still belong to the same category if they were measured over a longer time-span. In the Social Democratic and Conservative countries, a relatively large group of censored cases belong to the transient poor category. Because their full poverty spell is not measured, a part of this group will actually remain more than one year in poverty and perhaps belong to the mid-term, recurrent or long-term poor category. Also the censored cases in the mid-term and recurrent poverty category could actually be long-term poor. It is thus the case that censoring leads to a certain overestimation of the group of transient poor and an underestimation of the group of long-term poor. The effects for the mid-term and recurrent poverty group are unpredictable. Yet, it is expected that the impact of censoring will not necessarily change the main conclusions with regard to the distribution of poverty patterns. The distribution of the poverty pattern for the sub-group of not-censored cases[29] has also shown a predominance of transient poverty and a small group of long-term poor.

In conclusion, with respect to the distribution of the longitudinal poverty pattern, welfare regime differences prevail. Firstly, there is a country difference in between the countries on terms of the proportion of people affected by poverty. This percentage is higher in the Southern European and Liberal welfare regimes. Furthermore, transient poverty is the most prevalent poverty pattern in all countries under study but differences in the share of long-term and recurrent poverty can be connected to the welfare regime. Summarised, it can be stated that the poverty risk becomes more likely and more persistent when moving from the Social Democratic countries, via the Conservative welfare regime, to the Liberal and Southern European countries. It should be noted that the poverty pattern of transient poor will be overestimated to some extent due to censoring; accordingly the long-term poverty category will be underestimated. The further study of the longitudinal poverty pattern in this chapter will be focused on four countries, each representing one of the welfare regimes: Germany, Spain, Denmark and the United Kingdom.

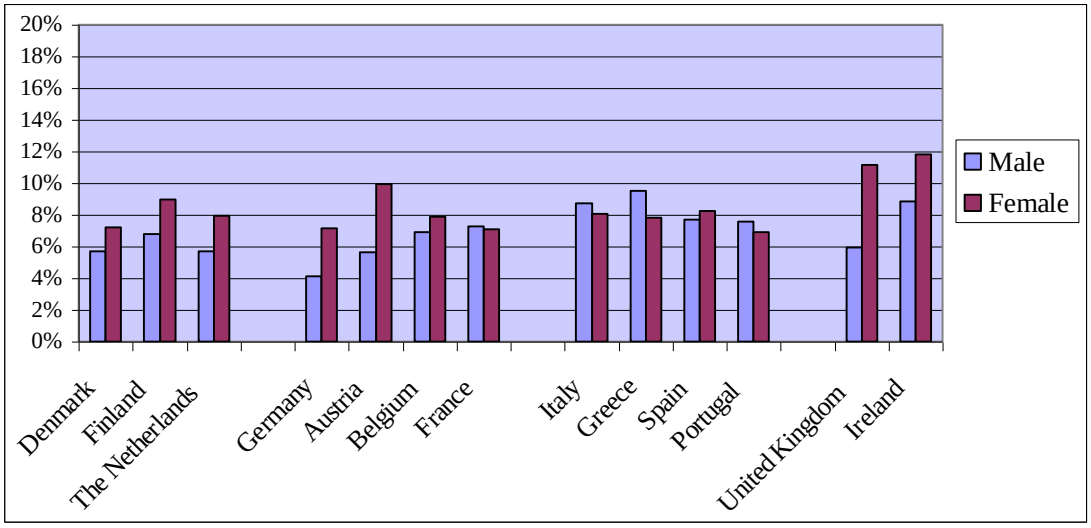
[29] The distribution is given in table A.6.3 of the appendix.

6.3 THE GENDER STRATIFICATION OF POVERTY DYNAMICS

This section provides an exploration of how gender stratifies an individual's risk of poverty mobility. In the first instance, poverty entry probabilities are given according to gender of the household head. Consequently, the longitudinal poverty pattern is cross-tabulated with the variable combining information about gender and the household structure. We will see that the combination variable provides more insight into the poverty risk.

Figure 6.1 and Table 6.3 present the poverty entry percentages for individuals with a male and female household head. It refers to the poverty entry probabilities between the first two waves of the ECHP[30]. The probability of poverty entry for individuals with a male household head ranges between 4.13% (Germany) and 9.49% (Greece). For those with a female household head this percentage ranges between 6.91% (Portugal) and 11.82 % (Ireland).

Figure 6.1 - Poverty entry probability for individuals with a female and male household head (ECHP, 1994-1995, longitudinally weighted)



[30] These waves are chosen because they are least plagued by the attrition problem. Austria and Finland started their participation in the ECHP later than the starting year 1994. For these two countries the figures in this table refer to the first waves of participation; i.e. 1995-1996 for Austria and 1996-1997 for Finland.

At first sight, the estimated poverty entry percentages in most countries seem slightly higher for individuals with a female household head. However, from Table 6.3 it appears that the gender differences are in most countries not significant at the 95% confidence interval level. Only in Germany, Austria and the United Kingdom, do those with a female household head have a significantly larger probability of poverty entry than people with a male household head.

Table 6.3 - Poverty entry probability for individuals with a female and male household head (ECHP, 1994-1995, initial sample persons, per country, longitudinally weighted)

	Male	Female	Total N M=Male F=Female
Denmark	5.68% [4.84% - 6.65%]	7.24% [6.02% - 8.68%]	M: 2904 F: 1577
Finland	6.78% [5.86% - 7.83%]	8.97% [7.45% - 10.75%]	M: 4364 F: 2195
The Netherlands	5.71% [5% - 6.5%]	7.93% [6.51% - 9.64%]	M: 5734 F: 1314
Germany	4.13% [3.5% - 4.87%]	7.15% [5.53% - 9.2%]	M: 7053 F: 2109
Austria	5.61% [4.75% - 6.63%]	9.94% [8.1% 12.14%]	M: 4188 F: 1198
Belgium	6.88% [6.01% - 7.85%]	7.89% [6.5% - 9.54%]	M: 3597 F: 1364
France	7.29% [6.72% - 7.9%]	7.11% [6.16% - 8.19%]	M: 7597 F: 2583
Italy	8.70% [8.06% - 9.38%]	8.08% [6.85%.- 9.5%]	M: 10089 F: 286
Greece	9.49% [8.79% - 10.25%]	7.83% [6.61% - 9.25%]	M: 6671 F: 1659
Spain	7.67% [7.08% - 8.3%]	8.23% [7.03% - 9.62%]	M: 9348 F: 2427
Portugal	7.60% [6.73% - 8.57%]	6.91% [5.38% - 8.84%]	M: 5728 F: 1627
United Kingdom	5.93% [5.21% - 6.74%]	11.16% [9.54% - 13.01%]	M: 4112 F: 1522
Ireland	8.87% [7.9% - 9.96%]	11.82% [9.71% - 14.31%]	M: 5065 F: 1351

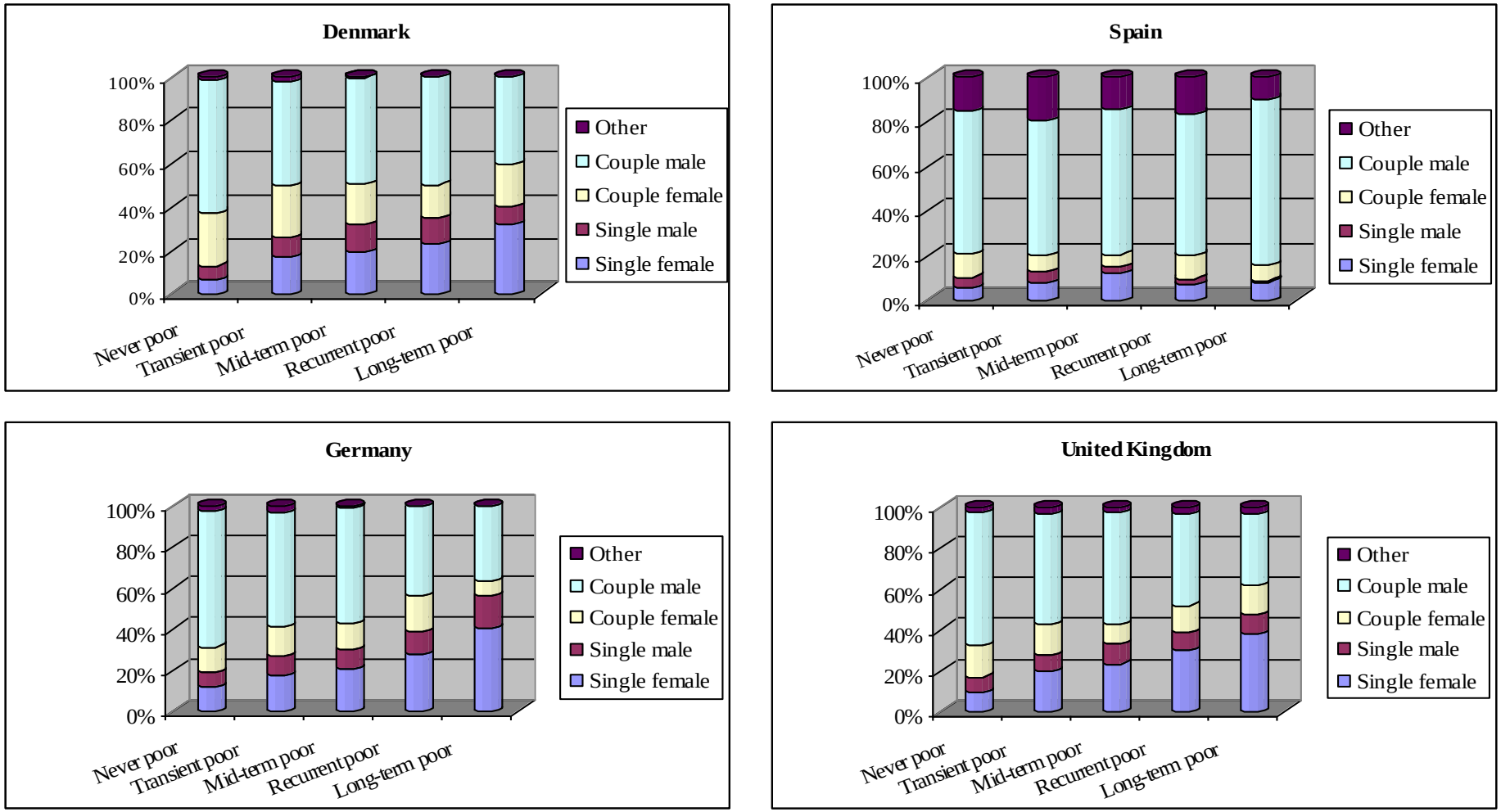
[ ] 95% confidence intervals between brackets

In sum, when using the gender information of the main breadwinner of the household, no clear gender differences appear. Therefore, a gender variable is presented, in which information about the gender of the household head is combined with information on the household structure. As we have seen in Chapter 2, the literature on gender inequality shows that the gendered aspect of poverty is largely linked to the household structure. In the combination variable, the following categories are included:

- Single male: Single male household (with or without children)
- Single female: Single female household (with or without children)
- Couple male: Couple household with male household head
- Couple female: Couple household with female household head
- Other

In Figure 6.2 the longitudinal poverty pattern is linked to this combined gender and household type variable of the first wave. This is done for four countries: Denmark, Spain, Germany and the United Kingdom. Appendix A.6.3 contains the percentage distributions on which the figures are based. The graphs show a similar picture for Denmark, Germany and the United Kingdom. Firstly, the gender and household distribution among the transient poor differs from the distribution among the never poor. Male-headed couple households comprise a smaller share of the transient poor than their share of the never poor. For single female households, the picture is reverse, as they are overrepresented among the transient poor, when compared with the never poor. Overall, the poverty risk is clearly higher for the latter group of single female households. In the four countries under study, the percentage of single females who are ever poor during the seven-year reference period reaches levels between 44% in Germany and 64% in the United Kingdom. Moreover, it appears that the gender and household type stratification becomes more clear-cut when one moves from transient poverty over mid-term and recurrent poverty towards the long-term poor. In Denmark, Germany and the United Kingdom, the percentage of single female households among the long-term poor is considerably higher than their percentage among the never poor.

Figure 6.2 - Distributions of gender and household type according to poverty pattern (ECHP, 1994-2001, weighted)



The gender-household distribution of the poverty pattern in Spain deviates from the other three countries. In contrast to the other countries, Spain is characterised by a relatively small percentage of single female households among all poverty patterns. Also the share of single male households is small. On the other hand, the category 'other household' is surprisingly large in Spain. Closer investigation showed that households in the category 'other' all have a substantial number of household members. None of these households is smaller than three persons, and the households with five or more household members are especially overrepresented within this group. Furthermore, the 'other' households are more likely to have children. Members of these households have a wide range of activity statuses; yet the retired, inactive and people working in the household are slightly overrepresented. Moreover, they belong to different age groups, but the age group above 75 years old is clearly overrepresented within these households. Finally, both gender groups are more or less equally represented within the 'other' households. It appears that the 'other' households are larger household units with several generations living under one roof. This multi-generational household is a typical feature of the Southern European family model (Jurado Guerrero & Naldini, 1996).

From the data it appears that extended family households host population groups, which in other countries would form single households, e.g. people in older age, or young and unmarried individuals. In this way, the poverty risk for these groups can be absorbed by living together in larger households. Indeed, it is well-established that welfare support in Southern European countries is to a considerable extent based on the family (Ferrera, 1996). Remarkably, the poverty pattern variable is not stratified according to gender and household type in Spain. The gender-household type distribution among the never poor is almost identical to the distribution among the transient, mid-term, recurrent and long-term poor. Thus, the family-focused poverty reduction strategy in Spain seems to be effective in reducing gender inequalities in the poverty risk.

In summary, it can be stated that a combination of gender and household type gives the best insight into poverty inequality. For three out of the four countries under study, the gender-household type variable is found to be a stratifying dimension of the longitudinal poverty pattern. In Denmark, Germany and the United Kingdom, especially households with a single female household head run a high risk of experiencing poverty. The

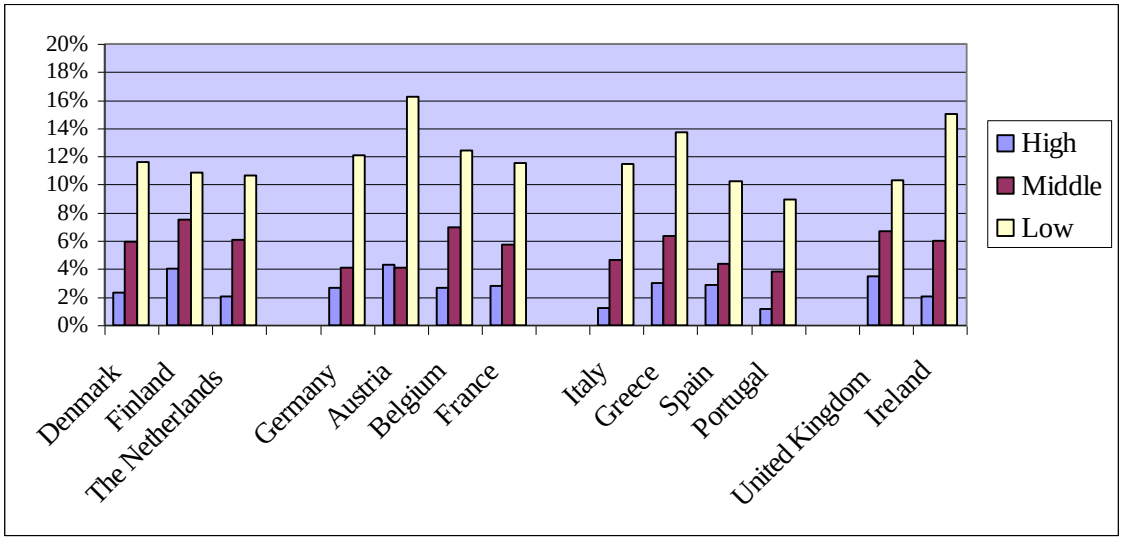
overrepresentation of single female households becomes larger when poverty is recurrent or more persistent. However, in Spain, the longitudinal poverty pattern is not stratified according to the gender-household type combination variable. Instead, a considerable category of large and multi-generation households is found. It appears that in Spain poverty risks are largely absorbed within larger family units; and the share of single female households remains moderate among the different poverty groups.

6.4 LEVEL OF EDUCATION AND POVERTY DYNAMICS

This section provides an exploration of the stratification of poverty dynamics according to level of education.

From Figure 6.3 and Table 6.4 it appears that the probability of poverty entry is stratified according to education level of the household head.

Figure 6.3 - Odds ratio of poverty entry for individuals with a low educated versus high educated household head (ECHP, 1994-1995 , longitudinally weighted)



NB: The estimate for high education level in Portugal is based on less than 10 observations per category of the outcome variable

The probability of poverty entry of individuals with a highly educated household head varies between countries but the figure is at its maximum level 4.33% (Austria). For

people with a middle educated household head, the probability of poverty entry varies between 3.82% (Portugal) and 7.53% (Finland). When the household head is low educated the range is between 8.96% (Portugal) and 16.26% (Austria)[31].

Table 6.4 - Probabilities of poverty entry according to education level of the household head (ECHP, 1994-1995, longitudinally weighted)

	High	Middle	Low	Total N H:High M:Middle L:Low
Denmark	2.29% [1.7% - 3.09%]	5.92% [4.83% - 7.23%]	11.58% [9.75% - 13.69%]	H: 1632 M: 1692 L: 1150
Finland	4.03% [3.13% - 5.19%]	7.53% [6.24% - 9.06%]	10.86% [9.14% - 12.87%]	H: 2183 M: 2384 L: 1992
The Netherlands	2.02% [1.4% - 2.9%]	6.05% [5.19% - 7.04%]	10.64% [8.9% - 12.68%]	H: 1591 M: 4135 L: 1238
Germany	2.69% [1.67% - 4.31%]	4.11% [3.42% - 4.92%]	12.11% [9.53% - 15.25%]	H: 2486 M: 4994 L: 1634
Austria	4.33% [2.51% - 7.37%]	4.10% [3.41% - 4.93%]	16.26% [13.52% - 19.42%]	H: 422 M: 3861 L: 1103
Belgium	2.69% [2.01% - 3.61%]	6.99% [5.7% - 8.55%]	12.43% [10.7% - 14.4%]	H: 1752 M: 1486 L: 1405
France	2.81% [2.18% - 3.61%]	5.70% [5.01% - 6.47%]	11.53% [10.53% - 12.62%]	H: 2294 M: 4003 L: 3669
Italy	1.25% [0.76% - 2.08%]	4.65% [3.97% - 5.44%]	11.44% [10.58% - 12.37%]	H: 1225 M: 4403 L: 6806
Greece	3.03% [2.35% - 3.9%]	6.32% [5.36% - 7.43%]	13.69% [12.63% - 14.81%]	H: 1843 M: 2252 L: 4234
Spain	2.87% [2.21% - 3.73%]	4.36% [3.4% - 5.58%]	10.22% [9.46% - 11.02%]	H: 2473 M: 1558 L: 7744
Portugal	1.17% [0.46% - 2.98%]	3.82% [2.23% - 6.46%]	8.96% [8.01% - 10%]	H: 484 M: 739 L: 5858
United Kingdom	3.48% [2.76% - 4.37%]	6.68% [4.89% - 9.06%]	10.32% [9.16% - 11.61%]	H: 2150 M: 705 L: 2696
Ireland	2.02% [1.32% - 3.09%]	6.02% [4.92% - 7.34%]	15.04% [13.38% - 16.86%]	H: 1138 M: 2120 L: 3110

[ ] 95% confidence intervals between brackets

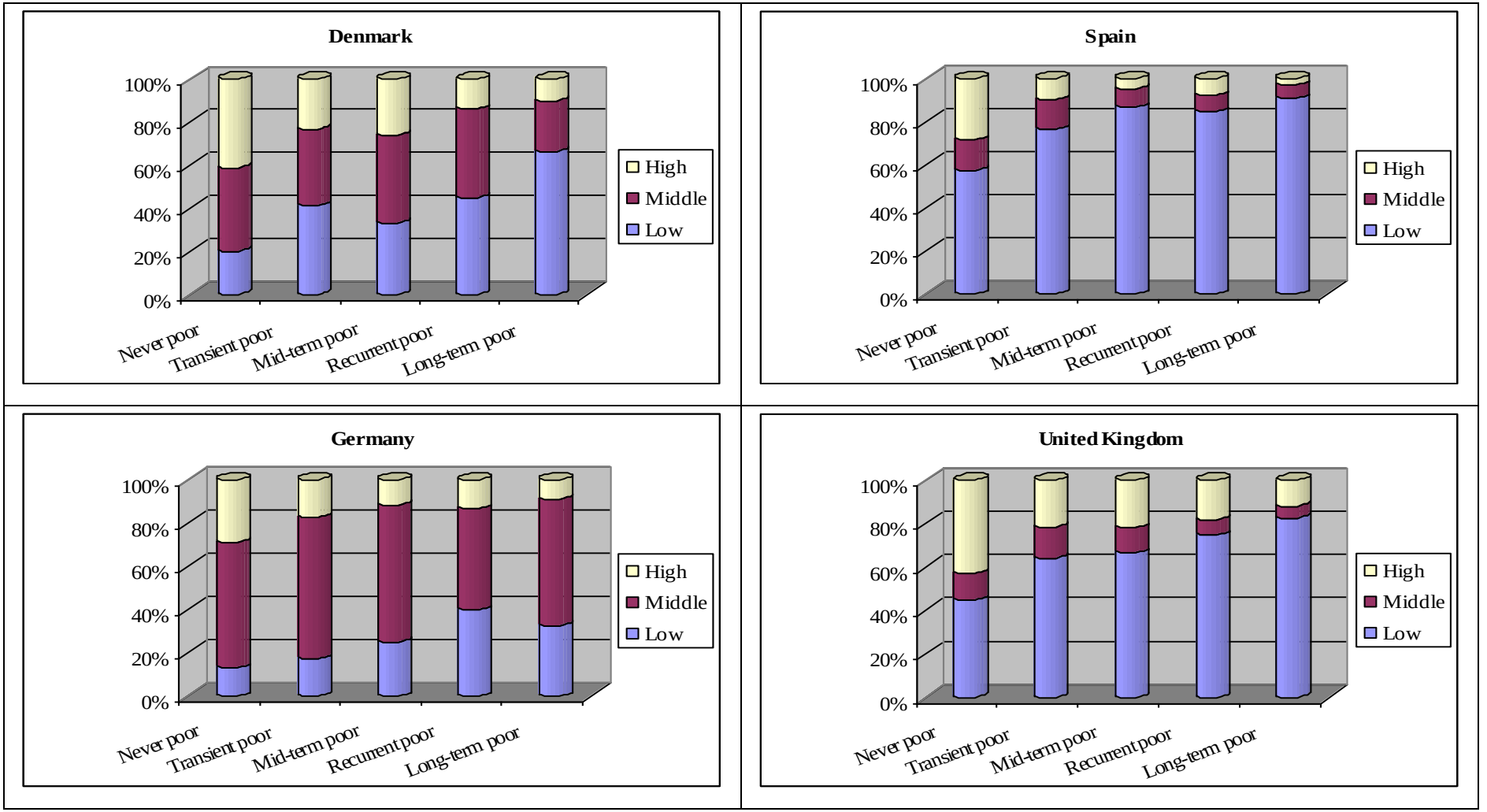
[31] When indicating a person's level of education, I will use the short expressions 'high educated', 'middle educated' and 'low educated' instead of the grammatically more correct versions 'highly educated', 'educated to a medium level' and 'educated to a low level'. These expressions are used for the sake of being clear and concise.

It is interesting to note that education level differences in probability of poverty entry are quite similar over the different European countries under study. Firstly, the confidence intervals in Table 6.4 show that in all countries, the probability of poverty entry of people with a high educated household head differs significantly from the probability when the household head is low educated. Furthermore, in most countries, the probability of poverty entry of people with a middle educated household head lies between the probabilities for high educated and low educated. Yet, in Germany, Austria, Spain and Portugal, the high and middle educated group do not differ significantly for their poverty entry probabilities, while persons with a low educated household head have clearly the highest risk of poverty entry. Additionally, the actual poverty entry percentages for each education level are also quite similar between the European countries. Table 6.4 shows that the country-specific confidence intervals for high education level almost all overlap. This is also the case when the household head is low or middle educated, albeit for the latter to a lesser extent. Examples of countries that stick out are Austria and Ireland with a relatively high risk of poverty entry for low educated and Portugal with a low risk of poverty entry among the low educated. These differences seem to be unrelated to the welfare regimes the countries belong too. In conclusion, the probability of poverty entry is clearly stratified according to education level of the household head. The higher the education level, the lower the poverty entry probabilities. In this respect, similarities between countries prevail and slight variations cannot be attributed to welfare regime differences.

Apparently, the level of education is linked to the longitudinal poverty pattern. This is evident in Figure 6.4 which shows the distribution of education level of the household head (wave 1) for the different poverty profiles[32]. The four graphs show a consistent picture over the countries that are being studied. The poverty pattern is clearly stratified according to education level, as persons with a low educated household head are most at risk of poverty, whereas individuals with a high educated household head; face a smaller risk.

[32] Appendix A.6.3 contains the percentages on which the figures are based.

Figure 6.4 - Distributions of education level of the household head according to poverty pattern (ECHP, 1994-2001, weighted)



Persons with a low educated household head are overrepresented among all poverty profiles. Yet, their share is consistently larger among the long-term poor than among the transient poverty group. This means that transient poverty is more equally spread over the different education levels than long-term poverty, which is concentrated among the lower-educated group. In conclusion, all poverty profiles show a larger share of people with a low educated household head. Thus, the social stratification according to level of education is most solid for long-term poverty.

6.5 SOCIAL CLASS AND POVERTY DYNAMICS

This section deals with the social class stratification of poverty dynamics. Firstly, the social class distribution of poverty entrants will be compared with that of all sample persons. Consequently, the social class stratification of the longitudinal poverty pattern will be assessed.

In Table 6.5 the social class distributions of poverty entrants are compared with the distribution among all initial sample persons. It concerns a pooled-country analysis[33], including the initial sample persons of all European countries under study. The time-frame is set to 1996-1997 because 1996 is the first wave in which all the countries were present in the ECHP dataset. The distributions are weighted with the longitudinal weight, which has been rescaled in order to adjust for the country population sizes. The Table features the social class distributions of all the people entering poverty in 1997. Both the social class distribution of the year before poverty entry (1996) and the year after poverty entry (1997) is given. This is because someone's social class is not stable over time and can change when someone enters poverty. Both social class distributions will be assessed.

When investigating the social class distribution before poverty entry (first column), we see that the poverty entrants are mainly composed of the long-term unemployed/inactive

[33] A description of the pooled data is chosen because a comparison of the country specific social class distributions would lead to an information overkill at this point. In the next step the longitudinal poverty pattern is compared between four countries from different European welfare regimes.

class. The higher professional-managerial class forms the smallest share of poverty entrants. According to the 95% confidence interval, the share of higher and lower professional class before poverty entry (column 1) is significantly lower than the share among all sample persons (column 3). This means that the higher and lower professional-managerial classes are underrepresented amongst the poverty entrants. These two classes have thus a relatively low risk of poverty entry. In contrast the skilled and unskilled manual classes and the self-employed are overrepresented amongst the poverty entrants compared with all sample persons. People from these classes thus have a relatively high risk of poverty entry.

Table 6.5 - Distribution of social class of household head (ECHP, pooled country analysis, 1996-1997, longitudinally weighted)

	Poverty entrants		**All sample persons** (1996)
	Before poverty entry (1996)	**After poverty entry** (1997)	
Higher professional-managerial class	0.11% [3.59% - 5.02%]	0.10% [1.85% - 2.88%]	0.09% [12.27% - 12.87%]
Lower professional-managerial class	6.32% [5.44% - 7.34%]	5.09% [4.27% - 6.07%]	12.87% [12.58% - 13.17%]
Routine non-manual class	0.18% [11.12% - 13.83%]	0.14% [10.46% - 13.22%]	0.09% [12.49% - 13.05%]
Skilled manual class	13.72% [12.49% - 15.06%]	10.43% [9.44% - 11.52%]	11.43% [11.15% - 11.7%]
Semi-unskilled manual class	0.34% [10.21% - 12.51%]	0.46% [8.67% - 10.9%]	0.33% [8.54% - 9.02%]
Self-employed	17.67% [16.16% - 19.29%]	14.48% [13.15% - 15.92%]	8.90% [8.67% - 9.14%]
Long-term unemployed/inactive	34.31% [32.46% - 36.21%]	46.19% [44.25 - 48.14%]	32.70% [32.27% - 33.12%]
Total (N)	100% (5793)	100% (5885)	100% (125358)

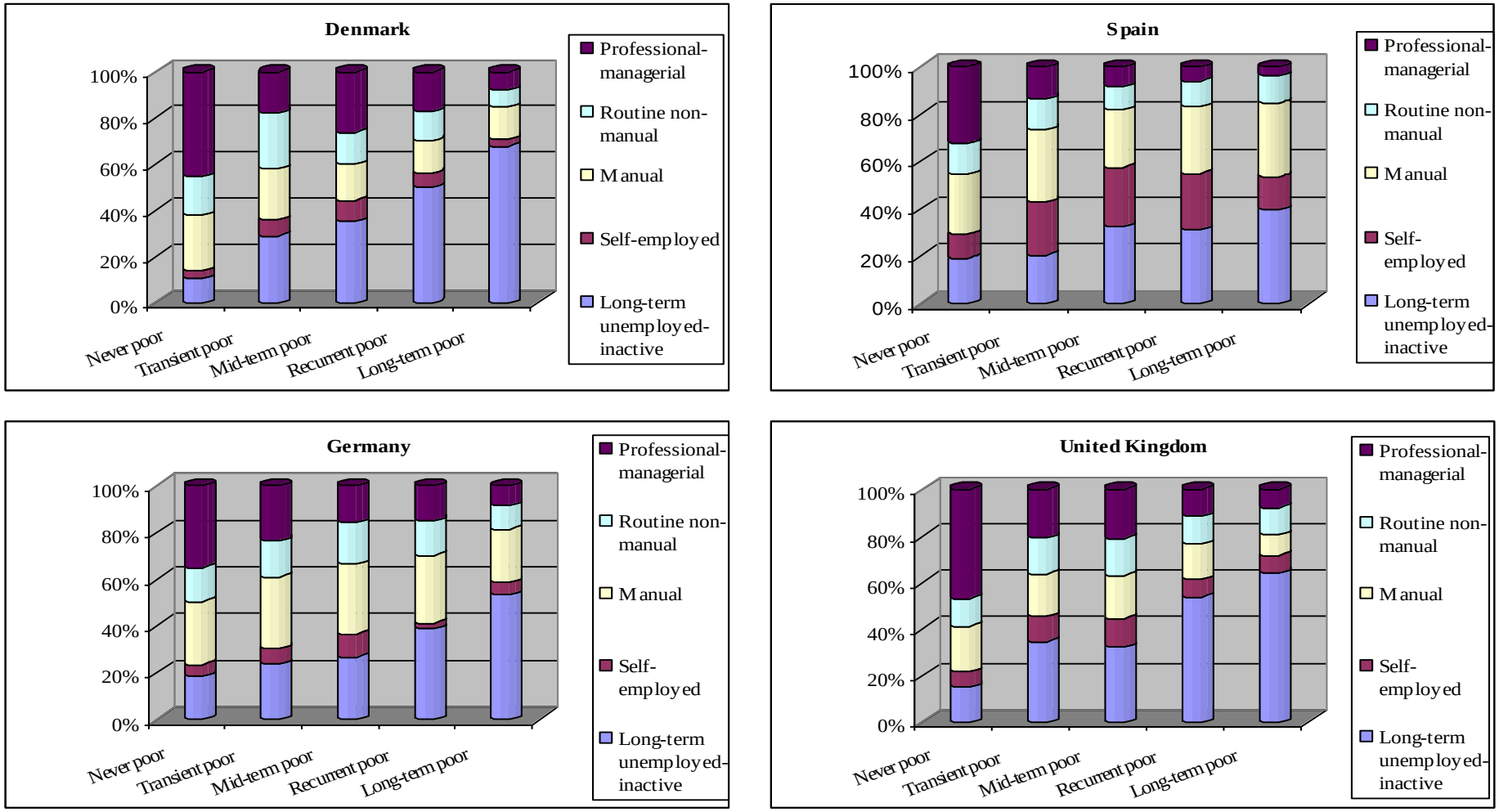
[ ] 95% confidence intervals between brackets

In the second column the social class distribution after poverty entry is given. It is remarkable that the share of the higher professional-managerial class after poverty entry (2.31%) is almost half of the share of that class before poverty entry (4.25%). Also the percentages of the skilled and the self-employed are significantly lower in the year after poverty entry compared with the year before. The share of long-term

unemployed/inactive is significantly larger after poverty entry than the year before poverty entry. These aggregate figures suggest that social mobility is often convergent to poverty entry. In Chapter 7, the poverty dynamic consequences of specific micro-level social mobility patterns will be studied in more detail.

Figure 6.5 shows the social class distributions according to the longitudinal poverty pattern. The figure reveals that the findings are similar in the four countries being investigated. In all countries, the long-term unemployed are clearly over-represented within all poverty patterns. The reverse is true for the professional-managerial class, which is overrepresented among the 'never poor'. The social class inequalities are most stringent for the long-term poverty pattern. People with a long-term unemployed-inactive household head occupy a larger share of the long-term poverty pattern and this is apparent in all countries. The share of the long-term unemployed within the long-term poverty group reaches levels between 39.54% (Spain) and 67.41% (Denmark). In contrast, the risk of transient and mid-term poverty is more widespread over different social classes. Overall, the self-employed are overrepresented among the transient and mid-term poor. Furthermore, the manual class comprises of a large share of the transient poor in Germany and Spain. On the other hand, the transient poverty patterns in Denmark and the United Kingdom are characterised by a relatively large proportion of the routine non-manual class. In summary, the long-term poverty pattern is strongly stratified according to whether or not the household head is in employment. For the transient and mid-term poverty pattern, the social stratification is less stringent. Temporary poverty patterns are not restricted to the long-term unemployed but also the self-employed, the manual class and even the lower levels of the non-manual occupations face an increased risk of transient and mid-term poverty.

Figure 6.5 - Social class distributions according to poverty pattern (ECHP, 1994-2001, weighted)



6.6 A MULTIVARIATE MODEL FOR THE LONGITUDINAL POVERTY PATTERN

In the last section of this chapter, the main determinants of social stratification will be linked to the longitudinal poverty pattern in a multinomial regression model. On several points, the multivariate model provides a complement to the descriptive statistics presented earlier in this chapter:

1. Firstly, the model provides the significance level for the effects of gender, education level and social class on the longitudinal poverty pattern
2. The multivariate model makes it possible to investigate whether the effects of gender, education level and social class on the longitudinal poverty pattern are also present when the other social stratification determinants are controlled for.
3. Additionally, also other influential variables, such as age, number of children and economic activity in the household can be controlled for.
4. The model provides a sound basis to assess whether the estimated effects of the social stratification determinants are larger for long-term poverty, compared with transient poverty.

The multinomial regression model presented in Table 6.6 concerns a pooled-country analysis. This option is deemed possible because the descriptive statistics have shown that the effect of the social stratification determinants largely points in the same direction for countries from different welfare regimes. A categorical country dummy variable controls for country differences in the longitudinal poverty pattern. The analysis is weighted with the average of the base weights per person[34]; this weight is rescaled to correctly represent population sizes per country.

[34] See appendix A.6.1 for an explanation and justification of this weight.

Table 6.6 - Multinomial logit model for poverty pattern (ECHP, 1994-2001, pooled countries, weighted)

Reference category: Never poor	Transient poor	Mid-term poor	Recurrent poor	Long-term poor
Intercept	-2.191 ***	-2.503 ***	-3.126 ***	-3.339 ***
Gender of household head (Ref: Couple male)				
Single male	0.055	0.006	0.141	0.392 ***
Single female	0.397 ***	0.401 ***	0.689 ***	0.796 ***
Couple female	0.145 **	0.022	0.393 ***	0.381 ***
Other	0.104	-0.314 ***	-0.317 ***	-0.532 ***
Education level household head (Ref: High)				
Average education level	0.475 ***	0.521 ***	0.369 ***	0.606 ***
Low education level	0.835 ***	1.024 ***	1.303 ***	1.677 ***
Social class (Ref: Higher professional-managerial)				
Lower professional-managerial	0.039	0.054	0.374 **	0.411 **
Routine non-manual	0.408 ***	0.532 ***	0.944 ***	1.249 ***
Skilled manual	0.528 ***	0.638 ***	1.262 ***	1.303 ***
Semi-unskilled manual	0.542 ***	0.626 ***	1.250 ***	1.561 ***
Self-employed	1.201 ***	1.485 ***	2.100 ***	2.318 ***
Long-term unemployed-inactive	0.933 ***	1.150 ***	2.158 ***	2.503 ***
Control variables				
Age household head	-0.028 **	-0.055 ***	-0.062 ***	-0.074 ***
Age² household head	0.000 *	0.001 ***	0.000 ***	0.001 ***
No. of ec. active persons in hh (Ref: 0)				
1	0.224 **	0.289 **	0.323 ***	0.068
2	-0.258 ***	-0.314 **	-0.397 ***	-0.746 ***
3 or more	0.037	0.036	0.004	-0.535 ***
No. of children in the household (Ref: 0)				
1	0.328 ***	0.589 ***	0.758 ***	0.931 ***
2	0.419 ***	0.637 ***	1.030 ***	1.309 ***
3 or more	0.736 ***	1.093 ***	1.706 ***	2.142 ***
Country (Ref: United Kingdom)				
Denmark	0.253 **	-0.132	0.129	-0.682 ***
Finland	0.048	-0.603 ***	-0.670 ***	-1.311 ***
The Netherlands	0.158 *	-0.431 ***	0.088	-0.618 ***
Germany	-0.089	-0.459 ***	-0.171	-0.333 **
Austria	-0.397 ***	-0.395 ***	-0.330 **	-0.718 ***
Belgium	0.220 **	-0.434 ***	0.135	-0.426 ***
France	-0.145 *	-0.255 **	0.052	-0.235 **
Italy	0.032	-0.191 **	0.301 ***	0.023
Greece	0.093	0.015	0.486 ***	0.005
Spain	0.021	-0.146 *	0.425 ***	-0.297 ***
Portugal	-0.187 *	-0.151	0.090	0.047
Ireland	-0.063	-0.311 **	-0.429 ***	-0.468 ***
Pseudo R²: 0,1006 Log pseudolikelihood: -88123,35 Number of observations: 92605				

* p = 0,05 ** p = 0,01 *** p = 0,001

In effect Table 6.6 largely confirms what has been found in the descriptive tables earlier in this chapter.

The country effect shows a similar pattern as was found in Section 6.2. Overall, we find that the long-term poverty risk is largest in the United Kingdom and the Southern European countries Italy, Greece and Portugal. The recurrent poverty risk is especially high in some Southern European countries. The Social Democratic countries like Denmark and the Netherlands give a relatively high chance of never being poor in the reference period.

For what concerns the social stratification determinants, there are clear effects of gender, education level and social class on the outcomes of the poverty pattern variable. For gender, especially single female households show high coefficients on the different outcomes of the poverty pattern variable. The coefficients for education level are not surprising, as the lower the education level of someone's household head, the higher the log odds of the different poverty patterns. For social class, the long-term unemployed-inactive have the highest log odds of experiencing recurrent and long-term poverty. For transient and mid-term poverty, the self-employed face the largest risk.

It is important to note in the table that the log odds coefficients of the social stratification determinants generally become larger when one moves from transient poor, over mid-term and recurrent poverty to long-term poor. For instance, the coefficient for the transient poor with a low educated household head is 0.835 but the coefficient for long-term poor of the same category is 1.677. Also, the other coefficients show an increase when one moves from left to right in the Table. This means that the stratification is strongest for long-term poverty and less strong for the transient poverty risk. Hence this provides some evidence for the hypothesis that short-term poverty is less subjected to stratification than long-term poverty.

6.7 CONCLUSION

This first empirical chapter consists of an exploration of the social stratification of poverty. It takes into account the dynamic aspect of poverty in two ways: both unequal poverty entry chances as well as the social stratification of a longitudinal poverty pattern have been investigated.

The results show that the risk of poverty entry is indeed stratified according to gender, education level and social class. In summary, especially single female households, people with a low educated household head, long-term unemployed, self-employed and the manual classes run a relatively high risk of poverty entry. For social class, it appears that the social class distribution for poverty entrants differs depending on whether it is measured in the wave before or the wave after poverty entry. This shows that a considerable share of poverty entrants experiences social mobility just before poverty entry. In the next chapter, the link between social mobility and poverty entry will be investigated.

Furthermore, this chapter shows that long-term poverty is more stratified than shorter term poverty. Transient poverty is a relatively frequent phenomenon and it is more widely spread over the different gender groups, education levels and social classes. This provides some evidence for the individualisation theory where it claims that poverty has become more 'temporalised' and more 'democratised'. Yet the idea of 'democratisation' of poverty appears exaggerated, because we have seen that also transient poverty is clearly stratified already according to the classical stratification determinants.

7 INCOME AND POVERTY DYNAMIC CONSEQUENCES OF SOCIAL MOBILITY

7.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the link is made between social class mobility on the one hand and income and poverty mobility on the other hand. Specifically, I am looking at the structuring effect of social class mobility on income and poverty dynamics. This research topic is particularly interesting because the relationship between social mobility and income/poverty dynamics has not yet been investigated on a micro-level.

A literature review of the mainstream approaches to social mobility provides an insight in why individual income and poverty consequences of social mobility have been overlooked:

1. At the outset, social mobility researchers were mainly interested in the consequences of social mobility for the social class structure and not so much in the effects for the individual or his/her household members.
2. The intra-generational view of social mobility has largely been incorporated in the status attainment framework. This research tradition has treated upward occupational mobility as a goal in itself. In this viewpoint it is more important to explain why people move up or down, than what benefits or disadvantages it entails for them.
3. At the time when the foundations of social mobility research were laid, there was not much scepticism about the validity of social class. In the current context of scepticism towards the class structure, it is necessary to investigate if and in what way social class mobility has a structuring impact on other inequalities.
4. Up until recently, detailed longitudinal socio-economic datasets were not available to study short-term consequences of dynamic processes like social mobility.

Hence, the effects of social mobility on income and poverty mobility have not been studied in the field of social stratification. However, the closely related topic of job and wage mobility draws a lot of research attention in the field of labour sociology and

economics. There is extensive literature on the effect of job mobility on wage and earnings mobility and some of the results are interesting for this research. DiPrete & McManus have found that mobility on the job market increases the chance of earning gain but also leads to a larger risk of ending up with an earning loss (DiPrete & McManus, 1996). In this context, Perticara shows that voluntary job change especially leads to income increase, whereas lay-offs often bring earnings losses (Perticara, 2002). Furthermore, especially in the beginning of the working career job mobility leads to wage increases (Contini & Villosio, 2000; Davia, 2005). Comparative research results show that the effect of job change on earnings mobility is larger in Germany than in the USA. In the USA, earnings loss also often happens to people who stay in the same job, whereas job stayers in Germany have stable or gradually increasing earning patterns (DiPrete & McManus, 1996). Generally, research in the area of career mobility focuses on job switches but does not clarify between which specific occupational groups the mobility takes place. Additionally, most research is restricted to persons in paid employment with an employer and therefore large societal groups, such as the self-employed and inactive individuals are excluded. In this chapter, a broader scope is taken as all adults in the working age are included in the sample.

The investigation of consequences of social mobility is highly necessary in the light of the questionable validity of the social class structure nowadays. For more than a century, research has shown that social class influences an individual's life chances, standard of living and life style. During the last decade, though, the structuring impact of social class has become questionable. The importance of the class structure is believed to be in decline and some even speak of the death of social class. In the area of poverty research, this leads to the expectation that the poverty risk is not confined to the lowest social classes but is more widespread in society. This chapter contributes to the search for the structuring effects of social classes by examining empirically the effect of social mobility as a determinant of income mobility and poverty entry. In the context of scepticism about the relevance of social class, it is important to investigate whether moving up the social structure still has the expected beneficial income consequences.

The empirical analyses of this chapter focus more specifically on the following research aims:

1. Due to the innovative nature of this research field, the first aim has a descriptive nature. The openness of European societies with regard to social class mobility, income mobility and poverty mobility will be explored. Special focus will be on the link between social mobility and income/poverty mobility. Firstly, I will examine aggregate country figures on social class mobility and income and poverty mobility. This will allow me to explore the differences in the level of mobility between European societies. Furthermore, I can examine whether countries with more social class mobility are also characterised by more income mobility. In the second instance, the association between social mobility and income dynamics will be investigated on the micro-level by examining the odds ratio of income mobility and poverty entry for persons with and without social mobility. Additionally, this section also presents the occurrence rate of social mobility among the people entering poverty.

2. Secondly, I am interested in the specific social mobility patterns associated with poverty and income dynamics. After giving an overview of the distribution of social mobility patterns, I investigate in what way upward, downward, inclusionary (into the labour market) or exclusionary (out of the labour market) social mobility is associated with income change or a poverty transition. In this context, two research aims are formulated together with their respective hypotheses.

Research aim 1.

It is a prime aim of this chapter to assess the structuring impact of social mobility on income and poverty dynamics. If income and poverty inequalities are structured alongside the social class scheme, then one can expect that moving from one class to another will yield specific income/poverty dynamic consequences. *I will test the general hypothesis that upward social mobility coincides with upward income mobility and a lower risk of poverty entry. Downward mobility is expected to lead to income decrease and a higher risk of poverty entry (Hypothesis 1).*

Research aim 2.

Furthermore, the focus will be on the specific transition into non-manual occupations. During the last decades, the occupational structure has manifested a decrease in manufacturing employment, coincident with an increase in service sector employment. Mobility into the non-manual sector forms a frequently-

occurring pattern. The literature study shows that there is a debate as to whether this occupational evolution has to be assessed as an improvement or rather a degradation of the occupational structure. Some authors describe a polarisation in the non-manual occupational sector, with high level professional jobs on the one hand and low paid routine non-manual professions on the other hand. To contribute to this issue, I will specifically look at intra-generational social mobility patterns towards non-manual classes, and investigate the income and poverty consequences of mobility patterns towards both the professional-managerial class and the routine non-manual class. *The hypothesis will be tested whether social mobility into a non-manual class always leads to income increase or reduction of the poverty risk (Hypothesis 2).*

The connection between social mobility and personal income mobility will be investigated in different European countries. The comparative approach makes it possible to test whether the effects found are robust across different European countries, and whether eventual differences can be linked to their respective welfare regimes. I will test the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 3.

I expect to find a strong effect of social mobility into and out of unemployed/inactive on income transitions in Liberal and Southern European countries. Both Liberal and Southern European countries are characterised by a residual welfare regime, which provides only limited state-provided income protection in periods of inactivity/unemployment.

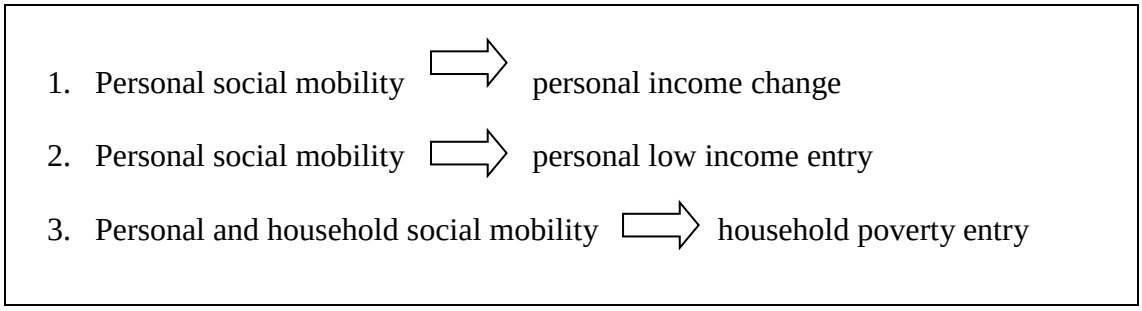
Hypothesis 4.

In Social Democratic countries, the effect of social mobility on income consequences is expected to be relatively weak. The Social Democratic regime is characterised by a more egalitarian income structure. Downward and upward mobility within employment will have less strong negative income consequences. *Additionally, the Social Democratic welfare state is expected to alleviate negative income consequences of movements out of employment. So movements into and out of employment are expected to have relatively small income effects.*

7.2 METHOD

In Chapter 5 we have seen that whereas poverty is measured at the household level, social mobility is measured at the individual level. To take into account the effect of these different levels of measurement, the effect of social mobility on both personal income change as well as the household's risk of poverty entry is assessed. When investigating the effect of social mobility on poverty, the following three-step approach is taken.

Figure 7.1 - Three-step approach to investigate the effect of social mobility on poverty entry



In a first step, the effect of personal social mobility on personal income changes is assessed. For these analyses, the individual is the unit of measurement as well as the unit of analysis. Next, the effect of personal social mobility on personal low income entry is investigated. In the third step, I look at the effect of social mobility on the risk of poverty entry. This is done by investigating the effect of both personal social mobility and the social mobility of the household members.

In the context of this chapter, personal income comprises the yearly total net personal income from work and the yearly total social/social insurance receipts. Personal income measures in the European Community Household Panel User Data Base (ECHP UDB) refer to the previous calendar year. For the analyses in this chapter, the given income measure is transferred to the previous year. In that way a more exact income mobility pattern is provided. Yet, the current year income information is not available for the last wave of the panel and consequently the analyses are based on seven waves. In Germany, the social assistance component of personal income is not provided for the

first two waves of the ECHP UDB (Eurostat, 2003c; Günther, 2003). That is why the mobility unit between the first and second wave in Germany is excluded from the analyses of this chapter.

The empirical part of this chapter consists of descriptive and multiple regression analysis using the ECHP survey. The descriptive part presents percentage distributions and odds ratios. The multiple regression analyses consist of a change-score regression analysis for personal income change on the one hand, and event history regression models for the effect of social mobility on low income and poverty entry hazard on the other hand.

The effect of personal social mobility on personal income change is assessed in a change-score model. To control for the occurrence of regression to the mean due to floor and ceiling effects, personal income in year t-1 is introduced as a control variable (Allison, 1990; Taris, 2000). This makes the model actually equivalent to the regressor variable method (Werts and Lin, 1970, cited in: Allison, 1990).

For modelling the poverty entry and low income entry hazards, a discrete-time proportional odds Cox regression model is used (Allison, 1995; Singer & Willet, 2003). I will model the conditional probability of becoming poor or entering low income during time interval T, given that the person is in a period of non-poverty in T-1. Therefore, the analyses are performed on a sub-sample of persons 'at risk' of poverty or low income (i.e. those who did not enter poverty before year T).

As indicated in Chapter 5, a pooled longitudinal regression analysis is characterised by the clustering of time measurements within individuals. However, an important assumption underlying regression models is that there is no autocorrelation in the error terms. To take this autocorrelation into account, Huber-White standard errors were applied to correct the standard errors for the effect of dependency among the different observations measured with the same individual (Huber, 1981 [2004]; Stata, 2003). The regression models under consideration are also called population-averaged or marginal models (Pickles, 2004). This gives the poverty entry chance of an 'average' individual within a certain category of the explanatory variable, e.g. a social mobility outcome. The method is chosen because of its straightforward implementation, and the clear

interpretation of coefficients. This is especially useful given the innovative topic of this study. The population-averaged model gives a good first insight into the effects of social mobility on income dynamics and poverty entry. An additional advantage of this method is that no assumptions are made regarding the residuals. Moreover, contrary to the fixed effects model, the effect of time-invariant covariates, such as a country variable, can be included in the model (Pickles, 2004; Vermunt, 2005). The disadvantage of the technique is that bias in the coefficient estimates resulting from unobserved heterogeneity is not taken into account (Baltagi, 2003). Stable individual level traits, which are not measured (or not included in the model) could influence the outcome variable and bias the estimates of predictors in the model. In the research context of income and poverty mobility, certain unmeasured and stable individual characteristics such as motivation and effort could affect the outcome variable. However, I believe that the important person-specific control variables in this context will be variable over time. That is why social class, education level, household size and number of hours in employment are included as time-varying covariates. Additionally, a number of essential control variables are measured as changes between the previous and the next wave, i.e. change in the weekly number of hours in employment, change in household size.

The study of social mobility is most relevant for the population in the labour-active age. Therefore, the analyses are restricted to initial sample persons under 65 years old. Additionally, people under 30 who lived with their parents or were still in education in year T-1 are excluded from the analyses. The latter exclusions make sure that genuine *intragenerational* mobility is measured within the respondent's active life of the respondent.

The data is weighted longitudinally with the base weights provided in the ECHP User Data Base. I rescaled the weights in order to represent correctly the population size per country.

7.3 AN ASSESSMENT OF THE OPENNESS IN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

In this section, I will explore aggregate figures of social mobility, income mobility and poverty mobility in different European countries. This will provide a general overview of societal openness and the differences therein between different European countries. Furthermore, I will investigate the association between social mobility and income/poverty mobility on the micro-level. In the last section, the focus is on the occurrence rate of social mobility among poverty entrants.

7.3.1 Social mobility, income mobility and poverty: an overview

In Table 7.1 the percentages of persons who experience social mobility, personal income quintile change and poverty entry are given per country. The figures are calculated for initial sample persons who are under 65 years old. Young people under 30 who lived with their parents or were still in education in year T-1 are excluded from the analysis. In the Table we see that the three countries with most social mobility are Denmark, Finland and the United Kingdom. Although not all countries follow the trend, these figures suggest that both Social Democratic and Liberal welfare regimes generally show societal openness for what concerns year-to-year occupational social mobility. The lowest social mobility figure occurs in Belgium, with 10.23% year-to-year individual social mobility.

In the second column of Table 7.1 the percentages of people with a quintile change in personal income are given. Some evidence can be found for the thesis that the amount of social mobility in a country is related to the amount of personal income mobility. We see that Denmark and the United Kingdom, two of the three countries with most social mobility, also show a relatively large percentage of income mobility. In Finland, which is the country with the highest social mobility rate, the personal income mobility figure is not especially high; yet Finland shows a relatively high poverty entry rate. On the other hand, countries with less social mobility also seem to have lower proportions of personal income mobility. The Netherlands and France, two countries with low individual social mobility, show the smallest percentages of personal income mobility. The general picture shows that openness of a society manifests itself in both social

mobility and income mobility. However, Belgium forms an exception, as it is characterised by the smallest amount of social mobility but still has a relatively high level of income mobility.

Table 7.1 - Aggregate figures of social mobility, income change and poverty entry per country (ECHP, 1994-1995[35])

	Social mobility	Personal income quintile change	Poverty entry	OR of personal income quintile change for social mobile vs immobile
Denmark (N=3639)	15.46%	41.29%	3.15%	1.87
Finland (N=5429)	17.84%	28.81%	5.48%	2.48
The Netherlands (N=6153)	11.66%	23.22%	4.56%	2.63
Germany (N=8392)	13.15%	28.04%	4.01%	2.63
Austria (N=4220)	15.31%	30.96%	4.95%	2.04
Belgium (N=4139)	10.23%	32.93%	5.53%	1.91
France (N=8552)	11.79%	25.06%	5.43%	2.12
United Kingdom (N=5423)	16.17%	30.63%	4.23%	2.44
Ireland (N=4864)	12.25%	26.49%	6.77%	2.44
Italy (N=10125)	12.14%	27.50%	6.24%	2.02
Greece (N=7008)	15.08%	28.81%	7.11%	2.05
Spain (N=8869)	15.36%	27.26%	6.98%	2.92
Portugal (N=6391)	14.88%	27.95%	5.59%	2.08

Note: OR stands for Odds ratios

In comparison with the figures of personal income change, poverty entry figures are less related to the level of social mobility in a country. The highest risks of poverty entry are found in Southern European countries and Ireland but most of the countries from this group score only average on the level of social mobility. Denmark, although showing a high level of openness with respect to both social mobility and personal income mobility, has the lowest poverty entry percentage. This is in line with previous research

[35] Except for Germany, Austria and Finland and Germany, for which these figures refer to 1995-1996 (Germany and Austria) and 1996-1997 (Finland) respectively. Austria and Finland started their participation in the panel study later. For Germany, personal income measurements are incomplete for 1994, as the social assistance component is unavailable.

suggesting that Social Democratic societies are open societies but not with respect to downward mobility ((DiPrete, 2002)

In sum, there is a tendency for Social Democratic and Liberal countries to show societal openness with respect to both social mobility and personal income mobility. Generally, countries with more social mobility also show higher rates of personal income change than countries with low social mobility. On the aggregate level, the poverty entry rate of a country is not linked to the social mobility level in that country.

7.3.2 The micro-level association between social mobility and income/ poverty dynamics

This section examines the association between social mobility and income/poverty mobility. From the previous section, it appears that countries with more social mobility generally have higher levels of income mobility. This section explores whether individuals who experience social mobility have higher odds of experiencing income mobility and/or poverty entry.

In Table 7.2, the odds ratios of experiencing personal income quintile change or poverty entry are given for socially mobile versus immobile persons.

The first column shows that the odds ratios of personal income quintile change are higher than one in all countries, meaning that socially mobile people have higher odds of experiencing income change. The same picture appears from the odds ratios of poverty entry in the second column. In all countries except Belgium, the odds ratio of poverty entry is higher than one. This means that persons with social mobility among one or more household members have higher odds of entering poverty, compared with persons with no social mobility in the household.

Table 7.2 - Odds ratios of income change and poverty entry for persons with and without social mobility

	OR of personal income quintile change for social mobile vs immobile	OR of poverty entry for persons with social mobility vs no social mobility in the household
Denmark (N=3639)	1.87	1.04
Finland (N=5429)	2.48	1.52
The Netherlands (N=6153)	2.63	2.28
Germany (N=8392)	2.63	2.04
Austria (N=4220)	2.04	1.34
Belgium (N=4139)	1.91	0.98
France (N=8552)	2.12	1.26
United Kingdom (N=5423)	2.44	1.10
Ireland (N=4864)	2.44	1.07
Italy (N=10125)	2.02	1.59
Greece (N=7008)	2.05	1.64
Spain (N=8869)	2.92	1.32
Portugal (N=6391)	2.08	1.17

Overall, countries with relatively high odds ratios for income quintile change also have relatively high odds ratios for poverty entry; whereas countries with low odds ratios for income quintile change have relatively low odds ratios for poverty entry. A further observation is that the size of the odds ratio seems not to be related to whether or not there is a lot of social mobility in the country. Low odds ratios occur in Belgium, which is the country with the lowest social mobility rate (see Table: 7.1); but also in Denmark, that has a relatively high social mobility figure. The highest odds ratios for income quintile change occur in Spain, Germany and The Netherlands. An explanation for the finding in Spain and Germany could be that both countries are characterised by a lot of mobility into and out of unemployed/inactive, see Table 7.3. How exactly different patterns of social mobility relate to income change will be discussed in the later sections of this chapter.

7.3.3 Poverty entry and social mobility in the household

In the previous section, we have seen that social mobility is positively associated with income and poverty mobility. In this section, the focus is on the occurrence of social mobility among poverty entrants. It is interesting to investigate whether poverty entry mainly occurs within several stable social classes or, alternatively, if it goes together with social mobility.

In recent poverty research, it has been argued that temporary poverty has become a widespread risk, and that people from a broad range of social classes run the risk of entering poverty. In the previous chapter, we have seen that the long-term unemployed, self-employed and manual classes are relatively largely represented among the poverty entrants. However, the social class distribution of poverty entrants differs depending on whether social class of origin – before poverty entry – or social class of destination – after poverty entry – is reported. This suggests that many poverty entrants experience social mobility before poverty entry; especially from the higher social classes. To clarify this effect, it is necessary to study the occurrence of social mobility concomitant with poverty entry.

Table 7.3 displays the percentage of poverty entrants with social mobility in the household, among all poverty entrants of the respective social class of origin. In this way, we can gain an idea of the share of poverty entrants who experience social mobility before poverty entry.

With the exception of people with an unemployed/inactive household head (T-1), the occurrence of social mobility in the household is higher for poverty entrants compared with non poverty entrants. A relatively large share of poverty entrants coming from the professional class, routine non-manual class and manual class experienced social mobility before they enter poverty. Figures differ between countries, but in most countries, more than 40% of poverty entrants from these classes experienced social mobility in the household. For the professional class the percentages of poverty entrants with social mobility vary between 36.1% (France) and 86.2% (Portugal). For the routine non-manual class, between 34% (Italy) and 66.5% (Ireland) of poverty entrants

experienced social mobility in the household before poverty entry. For the manual class, the percentages vary between 31.1% (France) and 69.9% (Denmark). On the other hand, there is relatively low occurrence of social mobility among poverty entrants with an unemployed/inactive household head (T-1). The occurrence of social mobility in this group is lower than the overall occurrence of social mobility in all countries, with the exception of Italy and Greece. The self-employed class occupies a middle position. In this group there is clearly higher social mobility occurrence before poverty entry than for the unemployed/inactive.

Table 7.3 - Social mobility among poverty entrants from different social classes (ECHP, 1994-2001)

	% with social mobility in the household (between T-1 and T)					
	among poverty entrants					no poverty entry
Social class household head (T-1)	Professional	Routine nonmanual	Manual	Self-employed	Unemployed inactive	
Denmark (N=13572)	42.9%	62.5%	69.6%	59.0%	22.0%	34.0%
Finland (N=17106)	47.1%	51.3%	56.2%	37.3%	22.9%	31.1%
The Netherlands (N=33940)	45.3%	43.9%	43.6%	43.4%	19.8%	28.3%
Germany (N=41930)	41.3%	50.5%	59.0%	71.2%	26.1%	32.2%
Austria (N=18010)	37.9%	47.9%	34.7%	37.2%	29.9%	34.4%
Belgium (N=16147)	46.0%	34.1%	30.9%	31.9%	17.9%	31.9%
France (N=39990)	36.1%	40.3%	31.1%	32.0%	25.9%	25.7%
United Kingdom (N=28450)	55.5%	44.4%	56.6%	34.2%	23.7%	34.7%
Ireland (N=20818)	54.4%	66.5%	52.1%	30.6%	22.5%	37.6%
Italy (N=49686)	40.7%	34.0%	35.6%	37.8%	30.7%	29.3%
Greece (N=31877)	52.0%	44.0%	53.2%	35.2%	34.2%	29.9%
Spain (N=40933)	48.1%	56.9%	48.0%	48.1%	40.0%	41.7%
Portugal (N=33262)	86.2%	47.5%	51.1%	39.6%	37.5%	36.7%

I conclude that poverty does not exclusively occur after social mobility. Especially for people with an unemployed or inactive household head in T-1, poverty entry mainly occurs when there is no social mobility in the household. However, a large number of poverty entrants experienced social mobility themselves or among one of their household members before poverty entry. This is most strongly the case for poverty entrants from the professional, routine non-manual and manual classes. Since frequently more than 40% of poverty entrants from these classes experienced social mobility before poverty entry, it is important to investigate the effect of social mobility further.

In the rest of this chapter, the effect of specific social mobility patterns on income and poverty mobility will be investigated.

7.4 INCOME AND POVERTY DYNAMIC EFFECTS OF SOCIAL MOBILITY PATTERNS

In this section, the micro-level effect of specific social mobility patterns on income dynamics will be investigated. Therefore I will start with an overview of the distribution of intra-generational year-to-year social mobility between different countries. Consequently, multiple regression analyses of the effect of social mobility patterns on personal income change and personal low income are presented.

7.4.1 The distribution of social mobility patterns

In Table 7.4, the focus is on specific social mobility patterns occurring among socially mobile persons. The distribution of personal social mobility patterns is given for each country and for the group of individuals who experience social mobility. An inspection of these social mobility patterns shows some interesting highlights.

Overall, social mobility mostly occurs in the form of movements into and out of unemployed/inactive. Germany stands out in this respect, as 74% of all social mobility consists of mobility into and out of unemployed/inactive. Furthermore, most countries show a substantial amount of upward social mobility into the professional class. However, not only upward social mobility but also downward social mobility from the professional class to the routine non-manual class is considerable. This finding conflicts with previous intra-generational mobility studies, which mainly found patterns of upward social mobility (Dronkers & Ultee, 1995; Halpin, 1999). The difference from previous findings in this respect is perhaps related to the longer time scope which was used in the other studies. The analysis at hand focuses on more recent data and comprises a year-to-year time frame, which allows the most common social mobility

patterns to be revealed[36]. Generally, it appears from this analysis that the occurrence of mobility into the professional and routine non-manual classes is high in Belgium, France, Austria and the United Kingdom. Mobility into the routine non-manual class is especially high in Denmark. In the Southern European countries Greece and Portugal however, this mobility into the non-manual classes is relatively smaller while mobility into the manual class is higher. The Southern European countries show a distinct pattern, also with respect to other social mobility transitions. In most countries, the amount of mobility into unemployed/inactive is similar to the amount of mobility out of unemployed/inactive. However, in Southern European countries the mobility into unemployed/inactive exceeds mobility out of unemployed/inactive. Southern European countries are also characterised by a relatively high mobility into self-employment.

Table 7.4 - Individual social mobility patterns among the socially mobile, per country (ECHP, 1994-1995 , longitudinally weighted)

	From other occupation into professional class	From self-employed/ manual class to routine nonmanual class	From professional class to routine nonmanual class	From other occupation into manual class	From other occupation into self-employ-ment	Mobility into unem-ployed or inactive	Mobility out of unem-ployed/ inactive	Total N
DK	13.94%	3.30%	16.97%	5.99%	1.93%	30.35%	27.52%	539
FIN	15.19%	2.39%	9.21%	4.70%	5.20%	33.15%	30.16%	917
NL	14.79%	1.75%	10.67%	2.74%	4.61%	34.31%	31.13%	683
AT	15.45%	3%	14.47%	5.73%	4.56%	37.90%	18.89%	607
DE	9.21%	4.45%	1.99%	6.48%	3.82%	45.89%	28.16%	1053
BE	16.14%	1.56%	12.97%	5.64%	6.85%	35.56%	21.28%	450
FR	16.49%	0.72%	13.36%	1.46%	0.94%	33.92%	33.11%	973
UK	17.14%	3.25%	11.48%	5.50%	4.15%	29.92%	28.56%	881
IRE	12.49%	2.86%	6.92%	3.87%	3.63%	32.26%	37.97%	568
IT	11.12%	3.83%	12.57%	4.35%	14.79%	37.86%	15.49%	1224
GR	9.52%	1.94%	7.82%	9.18%	12.68%	40.02%	18.84%	1028
ES	10.18%	1.95%	5.96%	3.76%	7.04%	39%	32.11%	1319
PT	9.41%	4.29%	8.75%	8.54%	14.98%	29.48%	24.56%	896

[36] Another difference is that this study comprises both gender groups, while most studies on social mobility focus on male mobility patterns. However a separate analysis for both gender groups did not reveal major differences between men and women with respect to the occurrence of downward social mobility from the professional class to the routine non-manual class.

7.4.2 Personal income dynamic consequences of social mobility

The outcome of a change-score regression model of personal income change is given in Table 7.5. Next to the effect of a person's social mobility pattern, employment-related characteristics such as the weekly number of hours in employment and the change therein are also included[37]. Person-specific variables such as age, gender and education level are also included. These variables are meant to control for factors other than social mobility leading to income change. Furthermore, I control for the baseline effect of personal income in year T-1 and the social class of origin (T-1).

In the column under model 1, the coefficients for social mobility are estimated for the included European countries as a whole. In model 2, interaction effects with country show the differential effects per country.

The findings in model 1 show that the effect of social mobility generally goes in the expected direction. On the whole, upward mobility leads to income increase, while downward mobility leads to income decrease. Upward mobility into the professional-managerial class leads to income increase. Downward mobility within the non-manual class – between the professional class and the routine non-manual class – but also mobility into the manual class leads to income decrease. Mobility into self-employment also leads to personal income decrease. Furthermore, both mobility into and out of unemployed/inactive have a relatively strong effect on personal income change, with mobility into unemployed/inactive leading to personal income decrease and mobility out of unemployed/inactive leading to income increase.

[37] Initially, the number of months in employment in year T was also included as an employment related control variable. However, the large association between this variable and the categories of mobility into and out of unemployed/inactive urged me to omit this control variable.

Table 7.5 - Change-score multiple regression model for the effect of social mobility on log personal income change (ECHP, 1994-2001, pooled countries, longitudinally weighted.)

		Model 1	Model 2
Intercept		2.808 ***	2.817 ***
Log of personal income (T-1)		-0.325 ***	-0.325 ***
Social class (T-1) (Ref: Professional-managerial class)			
Routine nonmanual		-0.082 ***	-0.082 ***
Manual worker		-0.103 ***	-0.104 ***
Self-employed		-0.179 ***	-0.179 ***
Unemployed/inactive		-0.032 *	-0.037 **
Social mobility pattern (Ref: immobile)			
Mobility from other occupation into the professional class		0.059 ***	0.081 ***
Mobility from the professional class to routine nonmanual class		-0.041 ***	-0.047 ***
Mobility from self-employed or manual class to routine nonmanual class		-0.006	-0.014
Mobility from other occupation into manual class		-0.049 ***	-0.020
Mobility from other occupation into self-employment		-0.146 ***	-0.164 ***
Mobility into unemployed/inactive		-0.246 ***	-0.364 ***
Mobility out of unemployed/inactive		0.219 ***	0.228 ***
Social mobility x country interactions			
Mobility from other occupation into the professional class	IRE		0.092 ***
	IT		-0.044 *
	AT		-0.057 *
	DT		-0.049 *
Mobility from the professional class to routine nonmanual class	IRE		0.085 **
	PT		0.127 ***
Mobility from self-employed or manual class to routine nonmanual class	DK		0.166 **
	NL		0.161 *
Mobility from other occupation into manual class	IRE		0.197 ***
Mobility into unemployed/inactive	DK		0.264 ***
	NL		0.131 **
	BE		0.174 ***
	FR		0.183 ***
	IRE		0.109 *
	IT		0.148 ***
	GR		0.148 ***
	ES		0.156 ***
	PT		0.158 ***
	AT		0.171 **
	FIN		0.144 ***
	DT		0.107 **
Mobility out of unemployed/inactive	FR		0.102 ***
	IRE		0.154 ***

Table 7.5 (continued)

	Model 1	Model 2
Weekly number of hours in employment (T-1)	0.011 ***	0.011 ***
Square of weekly number of hours in employment (T-1)	0.000 ***	0.000 ***
Change in the weekly no. of hours in employment (Ref: no change)		
Decrease in the working time with more than 5 hours per week	-0.052 ***	-0.053 ***
Decrease in the working time with up to 5 hours per week	-0.002	-0.002
Increase in the working time with up to 5 hours extra per week	0.016 ***	0.015 ***
Increase in the working time with more than 5 hours extra per week	0.034 ***	0.033 ***
Missing	-0.087 ***	-0.087 ***
Age	0.002 ***	0.002 ***
Gender: female (Ref: Male)	-0.131 ***	-0.132 ***
Education level (Ref: High)		
Average education level	-0.071 ***	-0.071 ***
Low education level	-0.117 ***	-0.117 ***
Country (Ref: United Kingdom)		
Denmark	0.872 ***	0.862 ***
The Netherlands	0.415 ***	0.410 ***
Belgium	1.332 ***	1.328 ***
France	0.769 ***	0.758 ***
Ireland	0.006	-0.013
Italy	0.307 ***	0.304 ***
Greece	1.869 ***	1.866 ***
Spain	1.699 ***	1.696 ***
Portugal	1.616 ***	1.610 ***
Austria	1.001 ***	0.997 ***
Finland	0.828 ***	0.823 ***
Germany	0.363 ***	0.364 ***
R^2	*0.1844*	*0.1859*
75824 individuals - 285266 time points		

When specifically considering mobility into non-manual occupations, a different outcome is predicted for mobility patterns in the routine non-manual *versus* professional-managerial class. Where moving up from any other occupation to the professional-managerial class leads to a significant income increase, mobility from self-employed or manual occupations to the routine non-manual class does not lead to significant income change. This result suggests that there is indeed a polarisation within the non-manual occupational groups. Moving into the routine non-manual class cannot

be seen as an ‘upward’ mobility for the self-employed and manual classes, at least not from the income perspective.

In model 2, the interaction effects between country and social mobility pattern give us an indication of the differential effect of social mobility in different countries. In Table 7.5 only significant interaction effects are given. A first observation is that the proportion of explained variance R^2 is only slightly larger in the model with interaction effects. Including interaction effect apparently does not help much in explaining the variance of the model. Consequently, the coefficient of social mobility indicates the effect of social mobility in the reference country (the United Kingdom) and shows largely similar effects to the coefficients of social mobility in model 1 for Europe as a whole. The largest difference lies in the finding that the negative income effect of mobility into the manual class is not significant in the United Kingdom. Furthermore, the interaction effects show that, in most countries, the effect of social mobility on personal income mobility is similar to the effect in the United Kingdom. Many interaction effects are not significant. Moreover, significant interaction effects often do not change the direction of the effect but slightly fortify or reduce the effect of social mobility as compared with the United Kingdom. These observations lead me to conclude that inclusion of interaction terms does not provide a very different picture of the main effects of social mobility on personal income change. In what follows, I will elaborate on some general tendencies in the interaction effects.

It is striking that most interaction effects reduce the size of the main effects of social mobility. This shows that, overall, the United Kingdom is a country with relatively large income changes when people move between different social classes. The large negative income effect of mobility into unemployed/inactive is mitigated in all other countries compared with the United Kingdom. The largest reduction compared with the United Kingdom occurs in Denmark, where becoming unemployed/inactive clearly entails less personal income loss than in the United Kingdom. Ireland and Germany, on the other hand, are the most similar to the United Kingdom with respect to the negative personal income effect of mobility into unemployed/inactive. These effects partly confirm hypotheses 3 and 4, as mobility into unemployed/inactive has the least severe income consequences in the Social Democratic country Denmark. The most severe income consequences occur in the United Kingdom, which is characterised by a Liberal welfare

state. Countries that do not differ so much from the United Kingdom are Ireland, which also belongs to the Liberal welfare regime; but also Germany and this is not in line with the hypothesis. Also the expectation that the Southern European countries would show large income effects of social mobility is not confirmed by the analysis. All Southern European countries have an average score regarding the negative income consequences of mobility into unemployed/inactive.

Other relatively strong interaction effects occur for Ireland, where mobility into the manual class leads to an income increase[38] rather than the income decrease which is predicted for the reference country United Kingdom and Europe as a whole in model 1. Furthermore, Ireland's score is the most similar to the United Kingdom with respect to the negative income effect of mobility into unemployed/inactive. The positive income effect of mobility out of unemployed/inactive is fortified in Ireland. Also the positive income effect of mobility into the professional class is stronger in Ireland, compared with the United Kingdom. These effects are an indication of relatively large social class inequalities in Ireland.

Overall, I conclude that the interaction effects do not show major deviations from the social mobility effects in the overall European model. What is important is the finding that social mobility triggers the largest income changes in the Liberal welfare states of the United Kingdom and Ireland.

7.4.3 Low income dynamic consequences of social mobility

In the previous section, we have seen that social mobility exerts an effect on personal income mobility. In the rest of this chapter, the scope is narrowed towards low income and poverty mobility. This section investigates the effect of social mobility on the hazard of falling under the personal low income boundary. The effect of social mobility will be estimated in a European model, together with the effect of personal characteristics, employment-related characteristics and social class of origin. The

[38] This effect was also found in a separate regression model with Ireland as the reference category.

control variables are the same as in the model of Table 7.5[39]. Also the effect of country on the low income hazard will be included in the model. Unfortunately, interaction effects between social mobility and country could not be estimated due to small numbers. Yet, this should not be of great concern, because, as we have seen, the effects of social mobility on personal income change are rather similar for the different European countries.

In Table 7.6 the hazard model for the effect of social mobility on personal low income entry is presented. The results are largely in line with the expectations. Mobility into and out of the unemployed/inactive state respectively increases and decreases the hazard of entering low income. Furthermore downward mobility, for instance into the manual class and from the professional-managerial class to the routine non-manual class, increases the risk of low income entry. Upward mobility into the professional-managerial class is associated with a significantly lower risk of entry into low income. These findings are in line with the results for the effect of social mobility on income change in the previous section. Also in line with this is that mobility into self-employment increases the hazard of falling under the low income boundary.

Finally, social mobility from the self-employed or manual worker class to the routine non-manual class increases the risk of entering low income significantly. Just as in the previous section, the conclusion is that moving 'upwards' to the routine non-manual class does not automatically improve one's economic condition. The results here show a clear difference between the professional-managerial class and the routine non-manual class. Social mobility into the latter puts individuals at a higher risk of experiencing a low income spell.

[39] Again, 'number of months in employment in year T' has been omitted because of multicollinearity with the social mobility variable.

Table 7.6 - Multiple hazard model for the effect of social mobility on personal low income entry (ECHP, 1994-2001, pooled countries, longitudinally weighted.)

	Coefficient
Intercept	-1.990 ***
Social class (T-1) (Ref: Professional-managerial class)	
Routine nonmanual	0.602 ***
Manual worker	0.464 ***
Self-employed	2.037 ***
Unemployed/inactive	0.570 ***
Social mobility pattern (Ref: immobile)	
Mobility from other occupation into the professional-managerial class	-0.292 *
Mobility from the professional-managerial class to routine nonmanual class	0.390 **
Mobility from self-employed or manual class to routine nonmanual class	0.527 ***
Mobility from other occupation into manual class	0.403 *
Mobility from other occupation into self-employment	1.960 ***
Mobility into unemployed/inactive	1.643 ***
Mobility out of unemployed/inactive	-0.707 ***
Weekly number of hours in employment (T-1)	-0.078 ***
Square of weekly number of hours in employment (T-1)	0.001 ***
Change in the weekly no. of hours in employment (Ref: no change)	
Decrease in the working time with more than 5 hours per week	0.861 ***
Decrease in the working time with up to 5 hours per week	0.115
Increase in the working time with up to 5 hours extra per week	0.047
Increase in the working time with more than 5 hours extra per week	0.463 ***
Missing	1.156 ***
Age	-0.024 ***
Gender: female (Ref: Male)	0.842 ***
Education level (Ref: High)	
Average education level	0.305 ***
Low education level	0.605 ***
Country (Ref: United Kingdom)	
Denmark	-0.338 ***
The Netherlands	0.030
Belgium	0.050
France	-0.228 ***
Ireland	-0.147 *
Italy	0.155 **
Greece	0.308 ***
Spain	0.499 ***
Portugal	0.052
Austria	0.099
Finland	-0.191 **
Germany	0.119

Pseudo R^2: 0,1753 Log pseudolikelihood: -44372,397
64655 individuals - 229028 time points

7.4.4 Poverty dynamic effects of social mobility in the household

In this last section, the focus is on the effect of social mobility on the poverty mobility outcome. For all individuals who did not yet enter poverty, it will be investigated which social mobility patterns have an impact on someone's risk of poverty entry. Since poverty is measured as a household variable, a combination of both personal social mobility and social mobility among household members are used as explanatory variables. Control variables will be included for the social class of origin (T-1), the number of household members at work in the household (T-1)[40], household characteristics such as household size and change therein and personal characteristics such as age and education level. The analyses will be pursued separately for men and women. Since the male partner is traditionally – and even today – the main breadwinner in most households; the expectation could be that social mobility of men has a larger influence on the poverty entry chance of the household. By pursuing the analyses separately for both gender groups, I will be able to investigate whether social mobility has a differential impact for men and women on the poverty entry chance of the household they live in.

In Table 7.7, we see that the effects of social mobility on the risk of poverty entry are similar to the effects found for personal low income in Table 7.6.

There is a relatively large effect of mobility into and out of unemployed/inactive for both gender groups. Mobility into unemployed/inactive increases the risk of poverty entry, while mobility out of unemployed/inactive leads to a decrease of the risk of poverty entry. The latter effect is significant only among women. Furthermore, mobility into manual occupations and mobility into self-employment increases the risk of poverty entry for both gender groups.

[40] 'Change in the number of household members at work' was initially also included, but later removed because of the strong association between this variable and the social mobility variables. This caused problems of multicollinearity and had an undue influence on the model estimates.

Table 7.7 - Multiple hazard model for the effect of social mobility on poverty entry (ECHP, 1994-2001, pooled countries, longitudinally weighted.)

	MALE	FEMALE
Intercept	-3.143 ***	-3.650 ***
Social mobility pattern (Ref: immobile)		
Mobility from other occupation into the professional-managerial class	-0.110	-0.375 *
Mobility from the professional-managerial class to routine nonmanual class	0.077	0.524 *
Mobility from self-employed or manual class to routine nonmanual class	0.466 **	-0.054
Mobility from other occupation into manual class	0.472 **	0.724 *
Mobility from other occupation into self-employment	1.404 ***	1.472 ***
Mobility into unemployed/inactive	1.760 ***	1.268 ***
Mobility out of unemployed/inactive	-0.195	-0.201 *
Social mobility of partner and/or other hh members (Ref: immobile)		
Mobility from other occupation into the professional-managerial class	-0.671 **	-0.541 **
Mobility from the professional-managerial class to routine nonmanual class	-0.337	-0.607 **
Mobility from self-employed or manual class to routine nonmanual class	0.140	0.618 ***
Mobility from other occupation into manual class	0.342	0.204
Mobility from other occupation into self-employment	1.118 ***	0.977 ***
Mobility into unemployed/inactive	0.798 ***	1.355 ***
Mobility out of unemployed/inactive	-0.373 ***	-0.108
More than 1 other social mobility pattern in the household	0.210	0.477 ***
No other household members in the working age	-0.245 *	0.850 ***
Social class (T-1) (Ref: professional-managerial class)		
Routine nonmanual class	0.568 ***	0.827 ***
Manual worker	0.768 ***	0.959 ***
Self-employed	1.642 ***	1.691 ***
Unemployed/inactive	1.124 ***	1.309 ***
Age (Ref: lower than 30 years old)		
30 - 39 years	-0.373 ***	-0.335 ***
40 - 49 years	-0.385 ***	-0.498 ***
50 - 59 years	-0.425 ***	-0.688 ***
60 - 64 years	-0.828 ***	-1.372 ***
Education level (Ref: High)		
Average education level	0.369 ***	0.258 *
Low education level	0.863 ***	0.789 ***
Number of household members at work (T-1)	-0.832 ***	-0.723 ***
Household size (T-1) (Ref: one-person household)		
Two-person household	-0.592 ***	-0.039
Three-person household	-0.274	0.292 *
Four-person household	0.126	0.549 ***
Household with five or more members	0.613 ***	0.948 ***

Table 7.7 (continued)

	MALE	FEMALE
Change in household size (Ref: no change)		
Decrease of three or more	1.023 **	1.781 ***
Decrease of two	1.080 ***	1.160 ***
Decrease of one	0.664 ***	1.072 ***
Increase of one	0.840 ***	0.700 ***
Increase of two	0.740	1.172 ***
Increase of three or more	0.359	0.386
Country (Ref: United Kingdom)		
Denmark	-0.195	-0.444 **
The Netherlands	0.019	-0.310 ***
Belgium	0.339 **	-0.029
France	0.122	-0.163 *
Ireland	0.371 **	0.096
Italy	0.243 *	-0.016
Greece	0.390 ***	0.191 *
Spain	0.300 **	0.051
Portugal	0.382 ***	0.092
Austria	0.299 *	-0.141
Finland	0.280 *	0.011
Germany	0.218 *	-0.126
Pseudo R^2	*0.1407*	*0.1342*
Log pseudolikelihood	*-18444.6*	*-22206.4*
N individuals	*36941*	*39759*
N time points	*110657*	*119011*

Upward mobility from other occupations into the professional-managerial class decreases the risk of poverty entry. Mobility from self-employed or the manual class to routine non-manual does not lead to a reduction of the poverty risk. For men it even increases the risk of poverty entry. This finding is consistent with the models of personal income mobility and low income entry

The effects of social mobility among household members point in the same direction as the effects of personal social mobility. However they are less often significant, at least for men. For women there are more significant effects of social mobility among household members than for men. In addition, the greater risk of poverty entry from mobility into unemployed/inactive is smaller for women when it occurs as personal mobility than when the partner and/or another household member becomes unemployed/inactive. This means that for men, mainly their own social mobility is an

important determinant of social mobility. For women, both their own social mobility and social mobility of the partner and/or other household members are important as determinants.

7.5 DISCUSSION

The aim of this chapter was to investigate the structuring impact of occupational social mobility on personal income mobility and poverty dynamics.

From the descriptive results of aggregate mobility figures, it appeared that countries with more social mobility generally have higher levels of income mobility but this is not the case for poverty entry rates. However, on the individual level both income mobility and poverty entry are associated with social mobility. People who experience social mobility have higher odds of personal income mobility and poverty entry. The findings have shown that in most countries over 40% of poverty entrants from manual and non-manual social classes experience social mobility before the start of their poverty spell. These findings show the importance of social mobility as an event preceding poverty entry.

In the second part of this chapter, the effect of social mobility patterns on income and poverty dynamics has been studied in more detail. This was done in three subsequent regression models: (1) a change-score model of personal income change, (2) a hazard model of low income entry hazard, and (3) a hazard model of poverty entry. The findings of these regression models show a relatively consistent picture. Three main points can be noted:

1. Generally, there is evidence for the hypothesis that upward social mobility coincides with upward income mobility and a lower risk of poverty entry. Downward social mobility is associated with personal income decrease and a higher poverty entry hazard. Upward mobility into the professional-managerial class leads to personal income increase and a decrease of the low income and poverty entry hazard. Mobility into the manual worker class is often seen as downward mobility. This expectation is confirmed

as mobility into the manual class leads to personal income decrease and it increases an individual's risk of low income and poverty entry. Furthermore, mobility into and out of the unemployed/inactive class also has the expected income and poverty dynamic effects. Mobility into unemployed/inactive increases the poverty risk and reduces the income; whereas mobility out of unemployed/inactive has the reverse effect.

2. For what concerns social mobility into non-manual classes, a dissimilar outcome is found depending on the destination class. Social mobility into the professional-managerial class leads to income increase, and a smaller low income and poverty entry hazard. On the other hand, mobility into the routine non-manual class from the manual or self-employed class is not associated with a significant personal income change. Yet it does increase the risk of low income and poverty entry. These findings suggest that there is a clear polarisation within the non-manual classes, with highly-paid professional-managerial occupations on the one hand, and low paid routine non-manual occupations on the other hand. Moreover, the routine non-manual is not better off than the manual or self-employed class. On the contrary, the risk of both low income and poverty entry increase for individuals moving from the manual or self-employed classes to the routine non-manual class.

3. By and large, the effects of social mobility on personal income mobility are fairly robust within Europe. This emerges from the finding that most interaction effects between social mobility and country are not significant. Moreover, significant interaction effects generally do not change the direction but only slightly fortify or reduce the effect. Additionally, the increase in R^2 is limited for the model with interactions, showing only a slight improvement in the model when separate country effects of social mobility are taken into account. However, there are two interesting findings appearing from the country comparison. Firstly, individuals from the United Kingdom and Ireland both experience comparatively large personal income changes after social mobility. This indicates relatively large inequalities between social classes in these two societies. Secondly, in Denmark the effect of mobility into the unemployed/inactive class on personal income decrease is relatively weak. So, whereas the effects of social mobility are largely similar between different European countries, the Social Democratic country Denmark is most successful in maintaining a person's income level after leaving employment while the Liberal countries (the United

Kingdom and Ireland) are characterised by relatively large income gaps associated with social class mobility.

8 THE STRUCTURING IMPACT OF SOCIAL STRATIFICATION DETERMINANTS AND LIFE COURSE EVENTS ON POVERTY TRANSITIONS IN EUROPE

8.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to investigate the relative importance of both life course events and social stratification determinants as predictors of poverty entry.

From the findings in chapter 6, it has become clear that poverty is often a temporary phenomenon. In this context, studies on poverty dynamics have emphasised the importance of life course events as immediate predictors of poverty entry. Transitions in a person's biography, like leaving the parental home, losing a job, partnership dissolution or the birth of a child, can temporarily increase the chance of becoming poor. As we have seen in chapter 3, authors following the individualisation perspective have put a lot of emphasis on these so-called biographical breaks and they believe that hierarchical social stratification determinants lose their importance in the context of life-course uncertainty (Beck, 1986; Leisering & Leibfried, 1999). On the other hand, research in the social stratification tradition shows that gender, education level and social class are important predictors of income level (Covello & Bollen, 1979; Harmon et al., 2001; McLanahan & Carlson, 2001; Schooler & Schoenbach, 1994).

In this chapter, the importance of the life event approach to poverty is investigated in combination with the traditional social stratification approach. To serve this purpose, random effects models will be run on the basis of the ECHP data. In a first empirical part, I will explore the relative importance of life course events and social stratification determinants as predictors of poverty entry in different European countries. In the second instance, the focus is on social stratification determinants as mediators in the relationship between life course events and poverty entry. Life course events such as household composition changes and household employment situation changes have been found to be predictors of poverty dynamics, but not all persons experiencing the triggering events do afterwards experience a movement into or out of poverty. In the

existing literature, less attention has been focused on the structural context in which these life course events lead to poverty entry. I will investigate whether risky life events have the same poverty-triggering effect for all social groups.

8.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The aim of this chapter is to integrate the life event approach to poverty with the more traditional social stratification perspective. It will examine whether one paradigm of poverty explanations can be seen as dominant; and to what extent both poverty causes complement each other, or alternatively fortify or weaken each other's effect.

In the first place I aim to assess ***the importance of social stratification versus life events in the explanation of poverty entry in different European countries***. Following the individualisation thesis, the poverty risk could be seen as individualised and linked to specific risky events during the life course. Thus one could *expect a strong impact of life events (such as childbirth, partnership dissolution, job loss and leaving the parental home) on poverty entry.* Additionally, it could be hypothesised that traditional social stratification determinants are losing their impact in explaining poverty inequality. This would mean that poverty is more democratised and that the disparities between social groups in their risks of poverty are small. Layte and Whelan (2002) tested this hypothesis on poverty duration outcomes and they found that the impact of employment situation, educational and social class inequalities persist with respect to poverty duration. My research can be seen as a complement to and a further elaboration of their work, since I investigate the effects of social stratification determinants and life events on poverty entry, instead of on poverty duration. I can also make use of a longer time frame of panel data (seven successive years) and a broader range of European countries. Additionally, I am able to use a more elaborate social class scheme which makes distinctions between different groups of non-manual occupations possible. This is especially interesting since the literature review has shown that the major increase in service sector employment has affected social class relationships. Several authors have suggested that this evolution has led to a large diversity in non-manual jobs, with on the one hand a top layer of professional service class positions, and on the other hand an

increasing number of low skilled, low paid routine non-manual jobs. All this leads me to expect that the risks of poverty entry of lower non-manual classes are becoming more equal to those of the manual classes. *With respect to the prediction of an increasing democratisation of the poverty risk a diverse outcome is thus anticipated. Inequalities in the poverty risk are expected to be especially small between manual and lower non-manual classes, as such creating a democratisation of the poverty risk in the lower and lower middle classes. For the other social groups, persisting inequalities according to social class, gender and education level could be expected* (See: Layte & Whelan, 2002).

The second part of this chapter is devoted to ***investigating whether risky life events have the same poverty-triggering effect for all social groups***. Life course events like childbirth, job loss, partnership dissolution and leaving the parental home are found to be predictors of poverty entry. But not all persons experiencing one of the triggering events do consequently experience a movement into poverty. The question is asked whether the poverty risk associated with life events is democratic, meaning that the risky life events entail the same chance of poverty entry for all social groups. Or alternatively, can we find specific social groups for whose members the experience of a critical life event is more likely to lead to a poverty transition? In this chapter, the mediating effects of social class, gender and education level will be investigated by using interaction effects in the random effects model for event history data. Following the individualisation thesis, *the expectation is that the life events of childbirth, job loss, leaving the parental home and partnership dissolution affect all social groups to the same extent, or if not so that they reduce the already existing inequalities between social stratification groups.* Let us consider the example of partnership dissolution in relationship to level of education. Imagine that there is educational inequality in the poverty risk, so that people with a lower education level have a higher risk of becoming poor. If partnership dissolution affects the poverty risk of higher education groups more strongly than that of lower education groups, the initial inequality between higher and lower education group is reduced for people after a divorce. As such, the outcome would be that traditional hierarchical inequalities play less of a role for people experiencing a risky life event, compared with people not experiencing the event. In societies with an increasing number of people affected by breaks in the standard life

course, the importance of traditional hierarchical social stratification inequalities would thus decline.

8.3 METHOD

The research technique chosen in these analyses is the random effects discrete-time hazard model. Logit models are presented for the effect of life events and social stratification determinants on the outcome variable poverty entry. Just as in chapter 7, the riskset for the analysis consists of the persons who are not poor in year T-1.

The random effects model belongs to the family of multilevel models. In the context of longitudinal research, it concerns one of the alternative ways of taking into account the clustering of time-points within individuals (Snijders & Bosker, 1999). The model used in this chapter can be written in the following equation form (Allison, 2004; Steele, Kallis, & Goldstein, 2005):

$$\text{Log}\left(\frac{p_{it}}{1-p_{it}}\right) = \alpha + \beta x_{it} + \mu_i$$

The log odds of poverty entry are estimated, and the regression equation consists of a general intercept α, a number of time dependent covariates x_{it} with coefficient β, and an individual-specific part μ_i. The individual-specific part μ_i represents unobserved (or unobservable) person-specific poverty risk factors that are not included as coefficients in the equation. μ_i is assumed to be normally distributed and to be independent of the x_{it}.

The technique of random effects discrete-time hazard analysis is chosen because it has two main advantages. (1) The technique corrects for bias resulting from unobserved heterogeneity. (2) It can take account of the clustering of events within individuals over time.

In comparison to the coefficients of a population-average model, the random effects estimates have a different interpretation. In a model with a random subject-specific

effect, β is interpreted as the individual-specific effect of x. The coefficient could only be interpreted as log odds under the condition that the random effect is held constant. So the comparison is between different time moments with the same individual, or alternatively between two hypothetical individuals with the same value for the random effect.

A Hausman test is performed to check whether the random part μ_i and the x_{it} variables are independent, as the random effects model assumes (Stata, 2003). If this assumption is violated a fixed effects specification should be preferred. However, the test results show that the coefficients of the random effects model and the fixed effects model are not significantly different from each other and accordingly this model assumption is met.

Just as poverty is measured at the household level, most of the covariates were also measured at the household level. In this paper, the covariates used concern the household itself (childbirth, job loss in the household, partnership dissolution in the household, household type, number of economically active persons in the household, number of children in the household), the individual (young adult starts own household) and the main breadwinner of the household (social class, education level, gender, age). Most variables are time-dependent and measured at year T, i.e. the same year to which the poverty variable refers. The life events happened between year T-1 and year T.

8.4 RESULTS

8.4.1 The occurrence of life course events for different social groups

In this chapter, the relative and combined effect of both life course events and social stratification determinants on the risk of poverty entry is assessed. However, in order to get a complete picture of these effects, it is interesting to first explore how the occurrence of life course events is spread over the different social groups.

It is namely the case that the poverty triggering effect of the life course events under study will depend on:

1. The person's risk of experiencing the life course event.
2. The chance that the life course events leads to poverty entry for that person.

If certain social stratification groups have a higher chance of experiencing the negative life course events, then their poverty risk will be higher.

In the tables 8.1, 8.2 and 8.3 the risk of experiencing the four different life course events is given per social stratification group according to education level, gender and social class of the household head.

Table 8.1 shows that the incidence of life events does not differ largely according to the education level of the household head. Job loss, leaving the parental home and partnership dissolution occur for the different education groups to more or less the same degree. The only clear effect shows that incidence of childbirth goes up with the education level of the household head. Among individuals with a low educated household head, the incidence of childbirth is 1.94%, and this goes up to 3.05% among the highly educated.

Table 8.1 – Incidence of life course event according to educational level of household head (ECHP, 1994-2001, initial sample persons, percentages, pooled-country analysis)

	High	Middle	Low
Jobloss in the household (N=67323)	9.14	10.3	10.14
Leaving parental home (N=9148)	1.76	1.45	1.41
Partnership dissolution (N=12940)	1.7	1.97	1.94
Childbirth in the household (N=16806)	3.05	2.69	1.94

Table 8.2 shows that the incidence of life course events differs according to the household type and gender of the household head. Couple households with a female household head have a higher chance of experiencing partnership dissolution and child birth, compared to male-headed couple households. This could show that female headed household have the financial means to give child birth or decide to divorce. Job loss in

the household occurs more often in couple households – which seems logical as there are more adults in the labour active age in these households. Leaving the parental home is not related to household type and gender.

Table 8.2 – Incidence of life course event according to household type and gender of household head (ECHP, 1994-2001, initial sample persons, percentages, pooled-country analysis)

	Single male	Single female	Couple male	Couple female	Other
Jobloss in the household (N=67925)	6.2	4.83	10.62	11.21	14.6
Leaving parental home (N=9231)	1.41	1.05	1.4	1.45	3.13
Partnership dissolution (N=13052)	-	-	1.74	3.34	3.61
Childbirth in the household (N=17066)	-	0.73	2.78	3.43	3.29

In Table 8.3, the incidence of the four life course events is given according to social class. It appears from the table that the occurrence of leaving the parental home and childbirth is not largely related to social class. On the other hand, job loss in the household is more likely to occur in the manual classes and for the self-employed. Furthermore, partnership dissolution seems to be more likely in the routine nonmanual and long-term unemployed/inactive classes.

Table 8.3 – Incidence of life course event according to social class (ECHP, 1994-2001, initial sample persons, percentages, pooled-country analysis)

	Jobloss in household (N=66104)	Leaving parental home (N=9000)	Partnership dissolution (N=12625)	Childbirth in household (N=16524)
Higher professional	9.73	1.81	1.56	3.37
Lower professional	10.79	1.75	1.87	3.22
Routine nonmanual	12.8	1.83	2.38	2.94
Skilled manual	14.61	1.91	1.68	3.7
Unskilled manual	15.36	1.88	1.63	3.45
Self-employed	14.3	1.51	1.87	2.62
Long-term unemployed/inactive	3.93	0.89	2.03	0.67

In sum, we have seen that some of the life course events are more likely to occur for certain social groups. This is the case for instance for child birth for the higher

education groups, partnership dissolution for female headed households and the routine nonmanual and long-term unemployed/inactive classes. Job loss is more likely to occur for the manual classes and self-employed. On the other hand, the incidence of the life events is surprisingly similar across education level groups and for the event of 'leaving the parental home'. There are no clear indications that the life events under study are only limited to the lower social strata.

8.4.2 The relative importance of life course events and social stratification determinants as predictors of poverty entry in European countries

In the first instance, the effects of life course events and social stratification determinants on poverty entry are studied in different European countries. According to the individualisation literature, poverty is associated with specific events and periods in the life course, and because poverty becomes more common it is less bound to traditional social stratification boundaries. In what follows, the relative importance of both life course events and social stratification determinants on the poverty entry risk is studied.

Table 8.1 presents odds ratios for the different predictors of poverty entry. Generally, it can be stated that both social stratification determinants and life course events are important predictors of poverty entry. This means that the risk of poverty entry is indeed influenced by the experience of risky events during the life course. But this does not mean that the risk of poverty entry is not stratified according to traditional social stratification determinants. In what follows, the main effects will be clarified.

There is a clear effect of household type and gender of the household head. Couple households with a male breadwinner run the smallest risk of becoming poor. In almost all countries under study, single female households, single male households and couple households with a female main breadwinner have higher odds of becoming poor, compared with the reference category of couples with a male main breadwinner. It is striking that especially single female households are vulnerable to the risk of poverty entry. In the pooled European model, the poverty entry odds ratio of persons in a single

female household is higher than the odds ratio of persons in a couple household with female head, and this is also the case in the majority of separate country models. So, especially single women (and their children) have a higher likelihood of being confronted with the risk of poverty. This result confirms findings from previous research (Christopher et al., 2001). In almost half of the countries under study, living in a single household also affects the risk of poverty entry for men (and the children living with them). In the United Kingdom, Ireland, Germany, France, Finland and Denmark persons in a single male household have higher poverty risk, compared with couple households with a male breadwinner. This effect could not be found in any of the Southern European countries under study. On the contrary, in Italy, Spain and Greece the risk of poverty entry for persons in a single male household are smaller than for the reference category of male-headed couple households. The reason for the latter effect is probably related to the smaller share of single households in Southern European countries (see chapter 6). Young people generally live much longer in the parental house and are thus less likely to live in single person households than in other European countries (Aasve, Billari, Mazzuco, & Ongaro, 2002).

The effect of education level of the household head is clear and one-dimensional. People living in a household with a middle educated household head have significantly higher odds of becoming poor compared with the reference category where the household head is high educated. This effect is even stronger for people in a household with a low educated household head. For the pooled European analysis, the poverty entry odds of people with a low educated household head are 4.59 times higher than the poverty entry odds of persons with a high educated household head.

Table 8.4 - Logit results of the country models for the effect of social stratification determinants and life events on poverty entry, selected odds ratios (Random effects models)

	EU	UK	IRE	GER	FR	BE	AU
Gender of household head							
Couple with male household head (Ref)							
Single male household	1.24 ***	1.37 *	1.48 **	2.30 ***	1.38 *	0.74	0.69
Single female household	2.16 ***	2.79 ***	2.17 ***	3.18 ***	2.21 ***	1.30 *	2.31 ***
Couple with female household head	1.65 ***	2.05 ***	1.39 **	1.93 ***	1.02	1.47 **	2.77 ***
Other	0.92 **	1.89 ***	0.95	1.27	1.95 ***	0.93	1.51 **
Education level household head							
High eduction level (Ref.)							
Average education level	2.05 ***	1.35 *	3.10 ***	1.87 ***	2.27 ***	3.32 ***	1.84 **
Low education level	4.59 ***	2.28 ***	5.29 ***	4.56 ***	4.02 ***	5.36 ***	4.99 ***
Social class							
Routine nonmanual (Ref)							
Higher professional-managerial	0.32 ***	0.15 ***	0.35 ***	0.28 ***	0.26 ***	0.37 ***	0.39 ***
Lower professional-managerial	0.44 ***	0.28 ***	0.49 ***	0.42 ***	0.45 ***	0.31 ***	0.53 ***
Skilled manual	0.96	0.27 ***	0.82	0.76 **	1.40 **	0.70	0.83
Unskilled manual	0.93 *	0.50 ***	0.97	0.89	0.99	0.54 **	0.94
Self-employed	2.15 ***	0.76	1.85 ***	1.16	2.59 ***	2.35 ***	2.97 ***
Long-term unemployed-inactive	2.60 ***	1.31	4.41 ***	3.11 ***	3.00 ***	3.04 ***	3.28 ***
Life events							
Job loss in the household	2.11 ***	1.77 ***	1.65 ***	2.95 ***	1.47 ***	1.73 ***	1.49 ***
Leaving parental home	3.50 ***	6.08 ***	1.33	4.45 ***	4.82 ***	1.80	2.06 **
Partnership dissolution	1.91 ***	2.06 ***	3.17 ***	3.06 ***	2.69 ***	2.25 ***	1.27
Childbirth in the household	1.24 ***	1.58 **	1.05	1.54 **	0.98	1.14	1.07
Control variables							
Age household head	0.95 ***	0.93 ***	1.00	1.05 ***	0.95 ***	0.94 ***	0.93 ***
Age² household head	1.00 ***	1.00 ***	1.00	1.00 ***	1.00 *	1.00 *	1.00 ***
Nr of ec. active persons in household							
1 (Ref =0)	1.07 *	0.39 ***	0.51 ***	0.97	0.96	1.34 *	1.03
2	0.63 ***	0.11 ***	0.33 ***	0.59 ***	0.41 ***	0.35 ***	0.51 ***
3 or more	0.59 ***	0.08 ***	0.22 ***	0.36 ***	0.55 ***	0.39 ***	0.20 ***
Number of children in the household							
1 (Ref =0)	1.95 ***	1.78 ***	2.18 ***	1.75 ***	2.32 ***	1.39 *	2.00 ***
2	2.70 ***	3.26 ***	3.30 ***	2.00 ***	4.13 ***	1.51 **	3.62 ***
3 or more	5.27 ***	6.56 ***	6.40 ***	4.44 ***	7.45 ***	3.18 ***	6.65 ***
Variance composition							
Individual level standard deviation	1.430	1.254	1.040	1.220	1.727	1.361	1.509
Intra class correlation	0.383	0.324	0.248	0.311	0.475	0.360	0.409
N individuals	128356	7334	7947	12051	12117	5775	6835
N time points	470413	29980	26231	50318	47277	19038	23376
Log likelihood	-101783,13	- 5008,89	- 5992,25	-7543,33	-9175,77	- 3810,45	-4172,52

* p = 0,05 ** p = 0,01 *** p = 0,001
(*) Controlled for country

Table 8.4 (continued)

	NL	FIN	DK	IT	SP	PT	GR
Gender of household head							
Couple with male household head (Ref)							
Single male household	1.36 *	2.37 ***	2.39 ***	0.72 **	0.66 ***	0.81	0.61 **
Single female household	1.88 ***	3.76 ***	2.68 ***	1.33 **	1.67 ***	2.21 ***	1.39 ***
Couple with female household head	2.85 ***	1.46 ***	2.40 ***	1.73 ***	1.31 **	2.76 ***	1.56 ***
Other	3.49 ***	1.33	2.47 *	0.60 ***	0.40 ***	1.07	1.22 **
Education level household head							
High eduction level (Ref.)							
Average education level	2.76 ***	1.48 ***	1.90 ***	1.76 ***	2.23 ***	1.01 ***	1.71 ***
Low education level	4.35 ***	2.44 ***	3.08 ***	4.97 ***	5.00 ***	2.67 ***	5.93 ***
Social class							
Routine nonmanual (Ref)							
Higher professional-managerial	0.29 ***	0.39 ***	0.29 ***	0.49 ***	0.27 ***	0.46 **	0.33 ***
Lower professional-managerial	0.37 ***	0.55 ***	0.46 ***	0.42 ***	0.52 ***	0.34 ***	0.52 ***
Skilled manual	0.98	1.00	0.42 ***	1.02	0.97	1.55 ***	1.28 *
Unskilled manual	0.96	0.98	0.48 ***	1.05	1.27 **	1.39 **	0.70 **
Self-employed	3.67 ***	1.70 ***	2.59 ***	1.57 ***	2.42 ***	3.11 ***	2.78 ***
Long-term unemployed-inactive	1.44 *	3.61 ***	1.65 **	1.84 ***	3.33 ***	2.40 ***	2.39 ***
Life events							
Job loss in the household	1.90 ***	2.33 ***	1.48 **	2.37 ***	2.02 ***	1.91 ***	2.06 ***
Leaving parental home	6.61 ***	5.86 ***	6.60 ***	2.06 ***	1.93 ***	0.85	1.46
Partnership dissolution	2.47 **	2.71 ***	1.16	1.53 *	1.10	1.86 ***	1.14
Childbirth in the household	0.99	0.78	0.42 **	1.74 ***	1.62 ***	1.21	1.18
Control variables							
Age household head	0.91 ***	0.91 ***	0.84 ***	0.99	0.94 ***	0.88 ***	0.92 ***
Age² household head	1.00 ***	1.00 ***	1.00 ***	1.00	1.00 ***	1.00 ***	1.00 ***
Nr of ec. active persons in household							
1 (Ref =0)	0.59 ***	0.91	0.47 ***	1.69 ***	1.66 ***	1.08	1.14
2	0.23 ***	0.92	0.18 ***	0.97	1.57 ***	0.63 ***	0.92
3 or more	0.84	1.21	0.18 ***	1.40 ***	1.44 ***	0.27 ***	0.93
Number of children in the household							
1 (Ref =0)	3.52 ***	1.76 ***	0.97	2.10 ***	2.58 ***	1.50 ***	1.62 ***
2	4.03 ***	1.84 ***	0.81	3.02 ***	3.32 ***	3.45 ***	1.80 ***
3 or more	7.93 ***	3.49 ***	3.22 ***	6.31 ***	6.83 ***	6.94 ***	3.64 ***
Variance composition							
Individual level standard deviation	1.211	1.136	1.272	1.562	1.358	1.457	1.315
Intra class correlation	0.308	0.282	0.330	0.426	0.359	0.392	0.344
N individuals	9858	7544	5178	16550	15674	10264	11229
N time points	35424	21147	17768	64344	56850	38834	39826
Log likelihood	-5592,50	-4724,90	-3192,86	-15501,37	-14182,22	-9180,66	-11112,57

* p = 0,05 ** p = 0,01 *** p = 0,001
(*) Controlled for country

For what concerns the social class stratification of poverty risks, we see that the higher and lower professional classes in most countries have a lower odds of poverty entry,

compared with the routine non-manual class. The self-employed and long-term unemployed-inactive generally have higher risk of poverty entry, compared with the reference category of routine non-manual. For the poverty entry odds of the manual classes, the effects differ between countries. In Spain, Portugal and Greece, there is a clear difference between manual and non-manual classes in the sense that manual classes have higher poverty entry odds than the non-manual classes. Yet, with the exception of these Southern European countries, the traditional manual/non-manual divide is not found in the majority of countries. In most of the other countries under study, the odds of poverty entry for the skilled and unskilled manual classes do not differ significantly from the routine non-manual class. In Denmark and the United Kingdom, the skilled and/or unskilled manual classes even have significantly lower odds of poverty entry, compared with the routine non-manual class. The results so far indicate that, with the exception of some Southern European countries, the manual/non-manual divide is not very meaningful with respect to poverty risks. It is more opportune to state that, within the non-manual classes, there is a distinction between on the one hand the professional classes for whom the poverty risk is clearly low, and on the other hand the routine non-manual class which shows a relatively higher vulnerability to poverty. Overall, the social class stratification of poverty entry is characterised by the presence of three broad groups: (1) a particularly vulnerable group of self-employed and long-term unemployed-inactive, (2) a middle group of people within the manual and routine non-manual classes, and (3) the professional-managerial class that is at low risk of poverty entry. The finding that the risk of poverty entry of manual and routine-non-manual classes is mostly similar can be seen as a sign of a widening of the risk of poverty entry over a broad middle group with manual and non-manual occupational groups.

Furthermore, the effect of certain life course events on poverty entry is studied. Overall, experiencing the events ‘job loss in the household’, ‘leaving the parental home’ or ‘partnership dissolution’ does lead to an increase in the odds of an individual’s poverty entry in the majority of the countries under study. The effect of leaving the parental home is in most countries relatively great. The odds ratios of the effect of this event are generally higher than for the other life course events. The poverty-triggering effect of childbirth on the other hand, is relatively small and only present in the United Kingdom, Germany, Italy and Spain. In all three of the Social Democratic welfare regimes, the

odds for poverty entry after childbirth are smaller than one – although only significantly so in Denmark. In Denmark the odds of entering poverty after childbirth are in fact even significantly smaller than the odds without childbirth. These findings show that childbirth is definitely not a poverty trigger in the Social Democratic countries under study. It appears that the Social Democratic welfare state is very effective in protecting families with new-born children.

8.4.3 Do risky life events have the same poverty-triggering effect for all social groups?

In this section, the focus is on social stratification determinants as mediators of the effects of life events on poverty entry. In Table 8.1 it is shown that life course events such as partnership dissolution, leaving the parental home, job loss in the family and childbirth are predictors of poverty entry. Here, the issue addressed is whether the poverty risk associated with experiencing these events is the same for all social groups. According to the individualisation perspective, the poverty risk has become more widespread in society as it is less bound to traditional hierarchical social stratification determinants and more related to stages and events in the life course. This of course is only the case if the triggering life events do not fortify already existing inequalities by affecting more strongly the lower social classes, lower education level groups and households with a female household head. In section 8.2, the hypothesis was formulated that if the poverty risk is becoming more democratic, then it is expected that risky life events have the same poverty-triggering effect for all social groups, or if not so that they reduce already existing social class, education level and gender inequalities. In this chapter, the mediating effects of social class, gender and education level is investigated by using interaction terms in the random effects model for event history data.

In Table 8.2 the coefficients of a European model are given. Data from the thirteen countries under study are pooled together for this analysis. Interaction effects have been estimated for gender of the head of a single or couple household, education level of the household head and social class on the one hand; as well as the life course events of job

loss in the household, leaving the parental home, partnership dissolution and childbirth on the other hand.

In the model with interaction effects (model 2), it can be seen that the poverty-triggering effect of risky life events differs between social groups. All interaction terms show significant results, except for the job loss*education level interaction terms. The poverty-triggering effects of risky life events thus differ between social classes and according to education level and gender of the household head. In what follows, the effect of the interaction terms will be discussed and clarified by Figures 8.1, 8.2 and 8.3, which show the predicted chances of poverty entry[41] before and after the occurrence of life course events according to gender, education level and social class of the household's main breadwinner.

There are three main findings from the analysis with interaction terms between gender of the single or couple household's main breadwinner and the different life events. Firstly, it can be seen that single households, both male- and female-headed, are relatively more strongly affected by the poverty-triggering effect of the life course events under study, compared with the reference category of male-headed couple households. The coefficients of the interaction terms with gender of the single or couple household's main breadwinner show that the poverty-triggering effect of job loss, leaving the parental home and partnership dissolution is significantly higher for people in a single male or female household, compared with male-headed couple households. This finding can also be recognised in Figure 8.1. From the charts it appears that the predicted chances of poverty entry after job loss and leaving the parental home increase substantially both for people who live as single male-headed and as single female-headed households after the event. Secondly, for couple households, there is no significant difference in the poverty-triggering effect of job loss, leaving the parental home and partnership dissolution, according to whether the household head is male or female. An exception to this occurs with childbirth, as the poverty-triggering effect of childbirth is slightly smaller for female-headed couple households than for the reference category of couple with a male main breadwinner.

[41] The poverty entry chances are predicted on the basis of the European pooled country model with interaction terms (model 2)

Table 8.5 - European random effects model for poverty entry

		Model 1	Model 2
Constant		-3.500 ***	-3.577 ***
SOCIAL STRATIFICATION VARIABLES			
Gender household head	Single male household	0.213 ***	0.086 *
(Ref: Couple with male household head)	Single female household	0.771 ***	0.637 ***
	Couple with female household head	0.503 ***	0.512 ***
	Other	-0.085 **	-0.088 **
Education level household head	Average education level	0.719 ***	0.706 ***
(Ref: High education level)	Low education level	1.524 ***	1.531 ***
Social class (Ref: Routine nonmanual)	Higher professional-managerial	-1.134 ***	-1.127 ***
	Lower professional-managerial	-0.817 ***	-0.883 ***
	Skilled manual	-0.036	-0.003
	Unskilled manual	-0.070 *	-0.078 *
	Self-employed	0.766 ***	0.873 ***
	Long-term unemployed-inactive	0.957 ***	0.960 ***
LIFE EVENTS			
Jobloss in the household		0.745 ***	0.803 ***
Leaving parental home		1.252 ***	1.012 ***
Partnership dissolution		0.646 ***	0.607 *
Childbirth in the household		0.213 ***	-0.355 *
INTERACTION EFFECTS			
Gender household head * jobloss	Single male household		0.431 ***
(Ref: Couple with male household head)	Single female household		0.436 ***
	Couple, female household head		0.058
	Other		-0.064
Gender household head * leaving parental home	Single male household		1.409 ***
(Ref: Couple with male household head)	Single female household		1.391 ***
	Couple, female household head		0.165
	Other		0.290
Gender household head * partnership dissolution	Single male household		0.558 **
(Ref: Couple with male household head)	Single female household		0.937 ***
	Couple, female household head		-0.039
	Other		0.484 **
Gender household head * childbirth	Single male household		-
(Ref: Couple with male household head)	Single female household		0.558
	Couple with female household head		-0.274 *
	Other		0.034
Education level * leaving parental home	Average education level		-0.242
(Ref: high education level)	Low education level		-0.637 ***
Education level * partnership dissolution	Average education level		-0.029
(Ref: high education level)	Low education level		-0.431 *
Education level * childbirth	Average education level		0.300 *
(Ref: high education level)	Low education level		0.365 *
Social class * jobloss (Ref: routine nonmanual)	Higher professional-managerial		0.108
	Lower professional-managerial		0.297 **
	Skilled manual		-0.002
	Unskilled manual		0.070
	Self-employed		-0.451 ***
	Long-term unemployed-inactive		-0.218 **

* p = 0,05 ** p = 0,01 *** p = 0,001

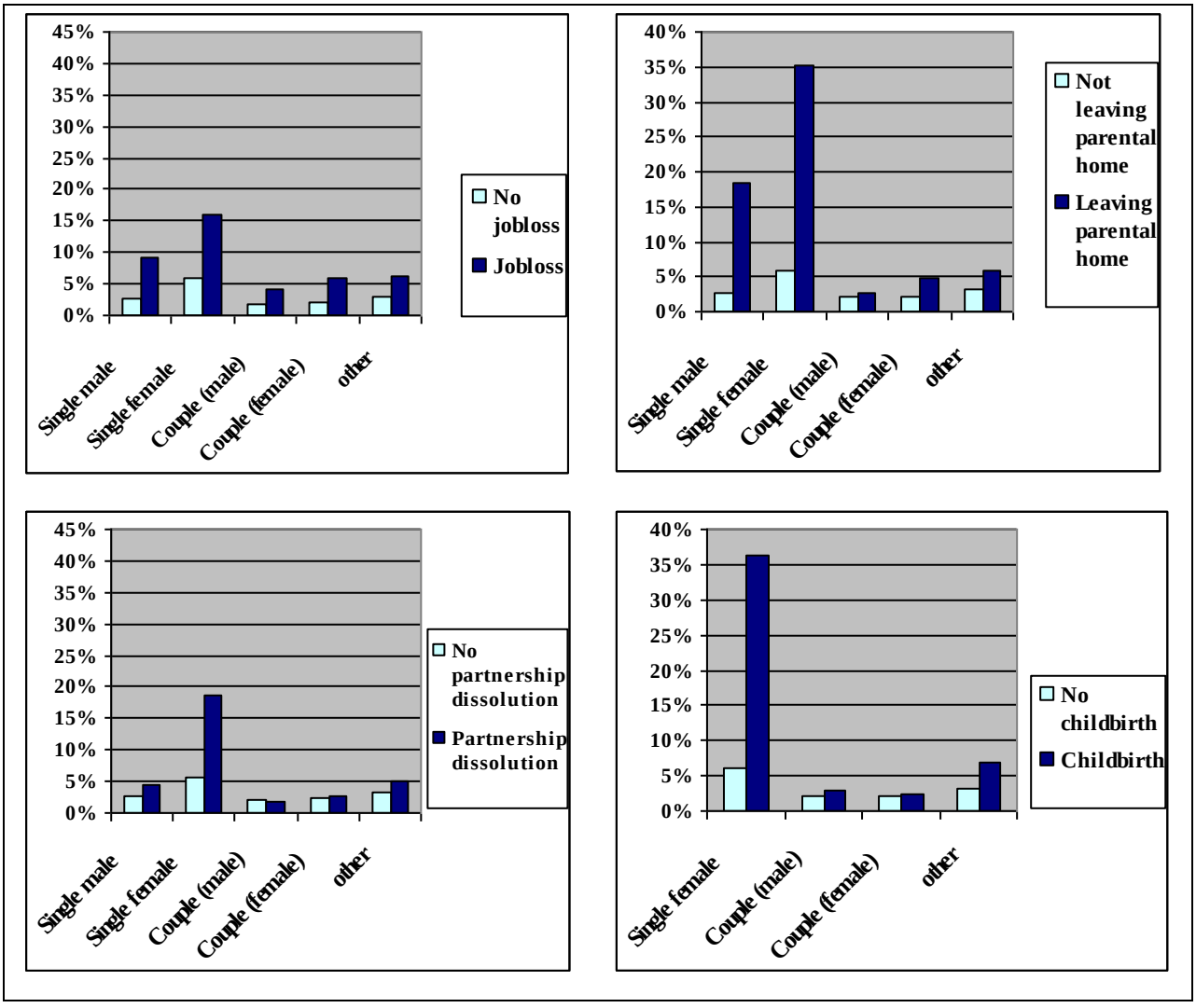
Table 8.5 (continued)

		Model 1	Model 2
Social class * leaving parental home	Higher professional-managerial		-0.237
(Ref: routine nonmanual)	Lower professional-managerial		0.279
	Skilled manual		-0.727 ***
	Unskilled manual		-0.455 *
	Self-employed		-0.804 ***
	Long-term unemployed-inactive		0.660 ***
Social class * partnership dissolution	Higher professional-managerial		-0.157
(Ref: routine nonmanual)	Lower professional-managerial		-0.294
	Skilled manual		-0.980 ***
	Unskilled manual		-0.478 *
	Self-employed		-0.360
	Long-term unemployed-inactive		-0.021
Social class * childbirth	Higher professional-managerial		0.050
(Ref: routine nonmanual)	Lower professional-managerial		0.321
	Skilled manual		0.380 **
	Unskilled manual		0.568 ***
	Self-employed		-0.287 *
	Long-term unemployed-inactive		1.041 ***
CONTROL VARIABLES			
Country	United Kingdom (Ref.)		
	Denmark	0.071	0.076
	the Netherlands	-0.576 ***	-0.561 ***
	Belgium	-0.002	0.015
	France	-0.233 ***	-0.220 ***
	Ireland	0.000	0.006
	Italy	0.106 *	0.116 **
	Greece	0.299 ***	0.312 ***
	Spain	0.059	0.069
	Portugal	-0.015	0.003
	Austria	-0.144 **	-0.118 *
	Finland	0.239 ***	0.214 ***
	Germany	-0.257 ***	-0.252 ***
Age household head		-0.055 ***	-0.054 ***
Age² household head		0.000 ***	0.000 ***
Number of economically active persons in hh	0 (Ref.)		
	1	0.069 *	0.087 **
	2	-0.469 ***	-0.426 ***
	3 or more	-0.528 ***	-0.510 ***
Number of children in the household	0 (Ref.)		
	1	0.667 ***	0.661 ***
	2	0.992 ***	0.977 ***
	3 or more	1.662 ***	1.656 ***
VARIANCE COMPOSITION			
Individual level standard deviation (s.e.)		1.430	1.423
Individual level variance		2.045	2.025
Intra class correlation		0.383	0.381
N individuals		128356	128356
N time points		470413	470413
Log likelihood		-101783,13	-101376,24

* p = 0,05 ** p = 0,01 *** p = 0,001

Thirdly, it is noted that especially persons in a single female household are vulnerable to poverty entry after experiencing one of the risky life events. The predicted chance of poverty entry after experiencing one of the life events is clearly highest for single female households.

Figure 8.1 - Bar charts with predicted probabilities of poverty entry by gender of household head and life course event



For single female households, the risk of poverty entry even amounts to over 35% after leaving the parental home and childbirth[42]. Also the relative poverty-triggering effect of

[42] The category single female*childbirth has a relatively small number of observations, so the power of the coefficient is low in this instance. The interaction coefficient for the childbirth*single female

partnership dissolution, job loss and childbirth is clearly highest for persons in a single female household. This means that the poverty-vulnerable position of persons in a single female household is fortified when they experience job loss. The effect of partnership dissolution and leaving the parental home has to be interpreted as follows. When two single females with the same random effect – and thus largely the same characteristics – are compared, then the one who just experienced partnership dissolution or left the parental home has a significantly larger poverty entry odds.

Next to gender of the household head, education level of the household's main breadwinner also has an impact on poverty chances. In Figure 8.2 it can be seen that the risk of poverty entry is significantly higher for persons with an average or low educated household head, compared with people living in households with a high educated head of household. Both when a person experiences one of the life events and when one does not, predicted poverty entry chances are highest when the household head is low educated and lowest when the household head is high educated. But this does not mean that the life events have the same relative impact on all education level groups.

The interaction terms in Table 8.2 show that the poverty-triggering effect of leaving the parental home and partnership dissolution is significantly less strong when the household head has a low education level. This means that the relative increase in poverty risks after leaving the parental home and partnership dissolution is larger for individuals living in a household headed by a person with a high or intermediate level of education, compared with individuals with a low educated head of household. Let us consider the predicted chances of poverty entry before and after leaving the parental home as an example. For people with a low educated household head, the predicted poverty entry chance for a young adult starting his/her own household doubles, from 5.44% without leaving the parental home to 10.88% chance of poverty entry for young adults after they left the parental home. For people with an average educated household head, this poverty entry chance increases by a factor of 4.38; from 1.87% to 8.2%. This means that the gap in the risk of poverty entry for the low and middle educated is smaller after leaving the parental home. For people with a highly educated household

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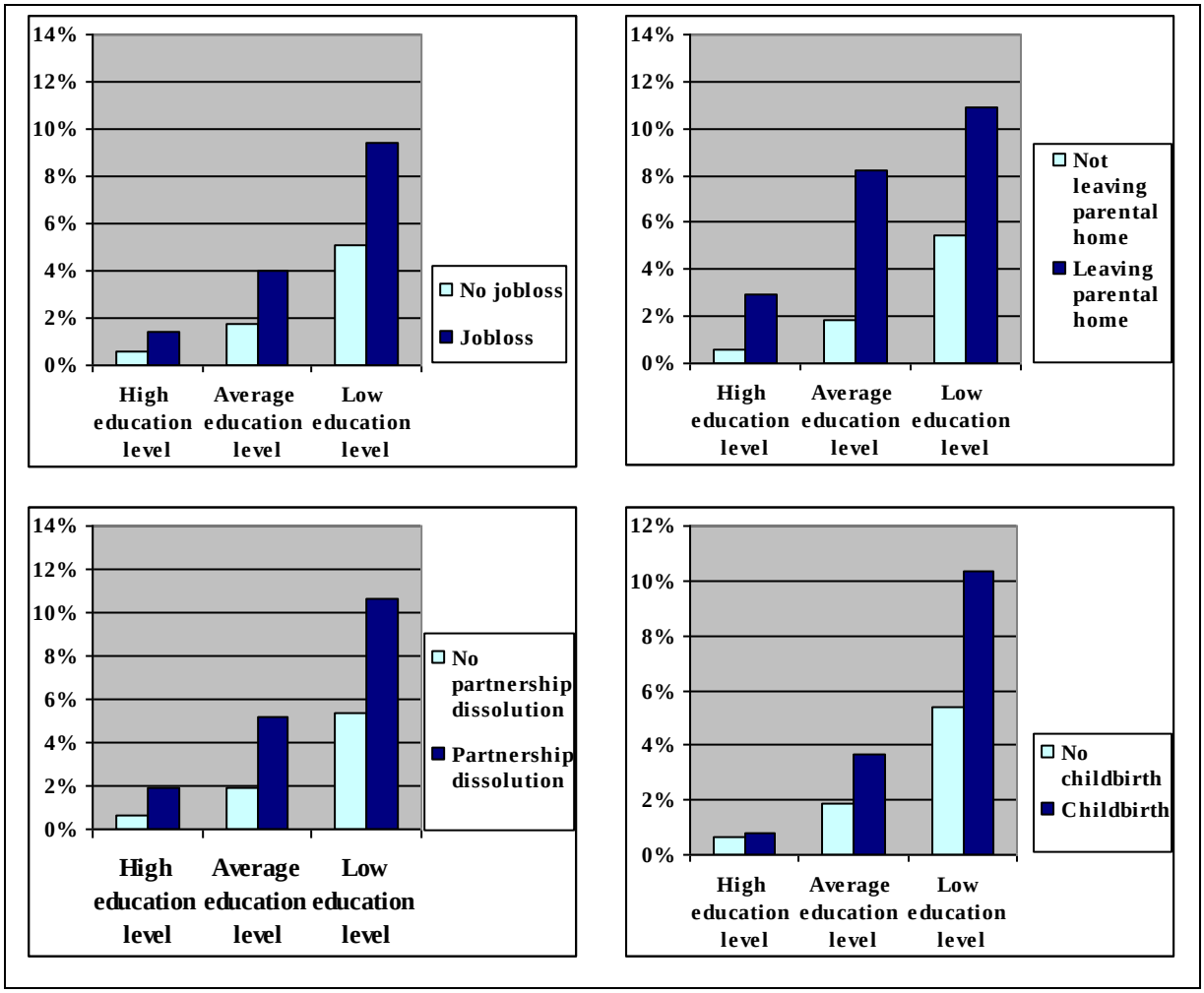
category in the logit model is just about insignificant at the $p \leq 0.05$ significance level, but significant at the $p \leq 0.10$ level.

head, the chance of poverty entry increases substantially in relative terms. Thus, the relative poverty-triggering effect of leaving the parental home is stronger for persons with a high or middle educated household head, since it increases their chances of poverty by a larger factor.

Figure 8.2 - Bar charts with predicted probabilities of poverty entry by education level of household head and life course event



Furthermore, the poverty-triggering effect of childbirth is larger for people with an average or low educated household head, compared with the highly educated. This makes the educational inequalities even larger after childbirth.

In sum, whereas the initial educational inequalities have increased after childbirth, for both events of 'leaving the parental home' and 'partnership dissolution', the relative

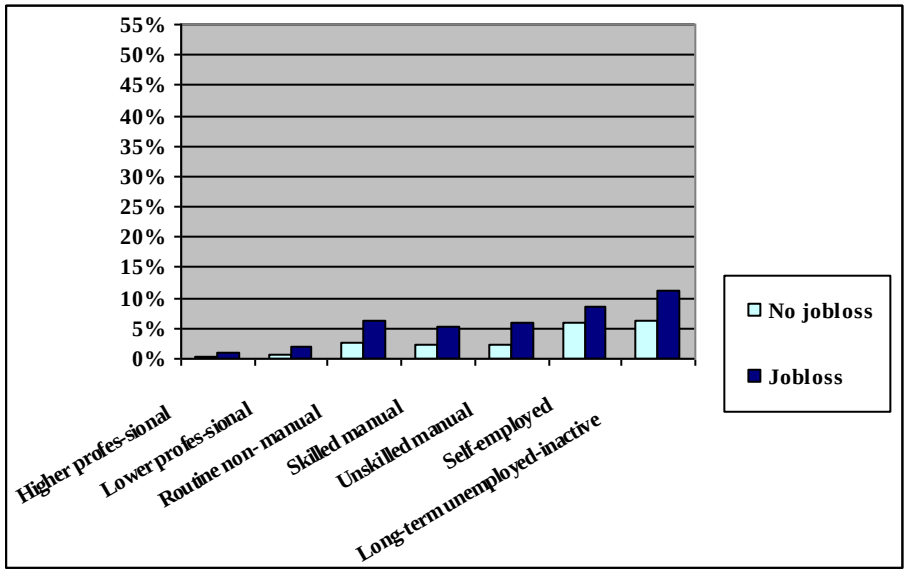
differences in the risk of poverty entry between the various education groups is smaller after experiencing the event.

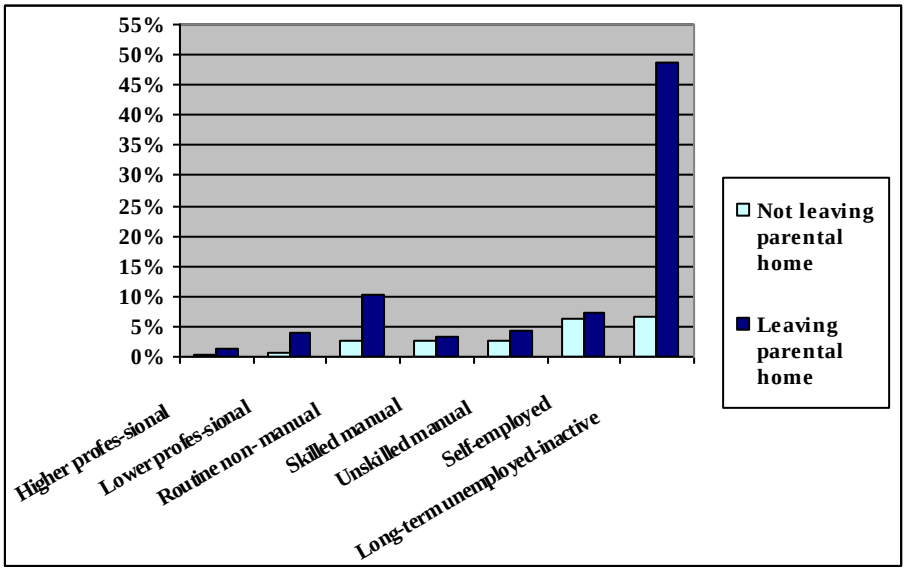
In Table 8.1 we have observed that the risks of poverty entry differ according to social class. The higher professional and lower professional classes have a significantly lower risk of poverty entry, compared with the reference category of routine non-manual employees. The self-employed and long-term unemployed-inactive have significantly higher chances of poverty entry. The middle group with respect to poverty entry chances consists of the skilled and unskilled manual class, together with the routine non-manual class. In Table 8.2 it can be observed that the poverty-triggering effect of the different life course events differs between social classes. The interaction effects found will be clarified with the predicted risk of poverty entry according to social class in Figure 8.3.

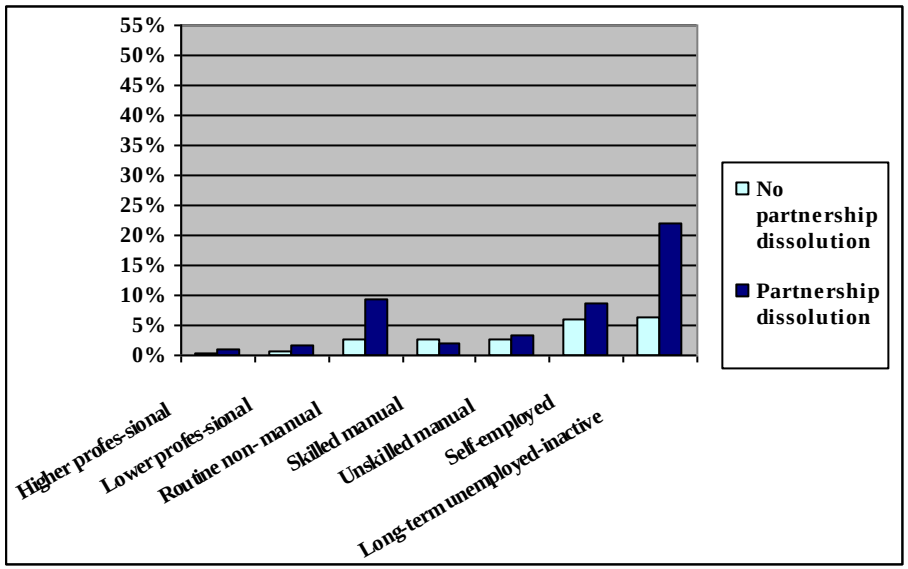
A first interesting thing to note is that whereas the risk of poverty entry without experiencing the life event is similar for the self-employed and the long-term unemployed/inactive, the risk of poverty entry after the life event is higher for the long-term unemployed/inactive. Generally, the self-employed are less affected by the poverty-triggering effect of life events. The long-term unemployed/inactive show particularly high risks of poverty entry after leaving the parental home and after childbirth.

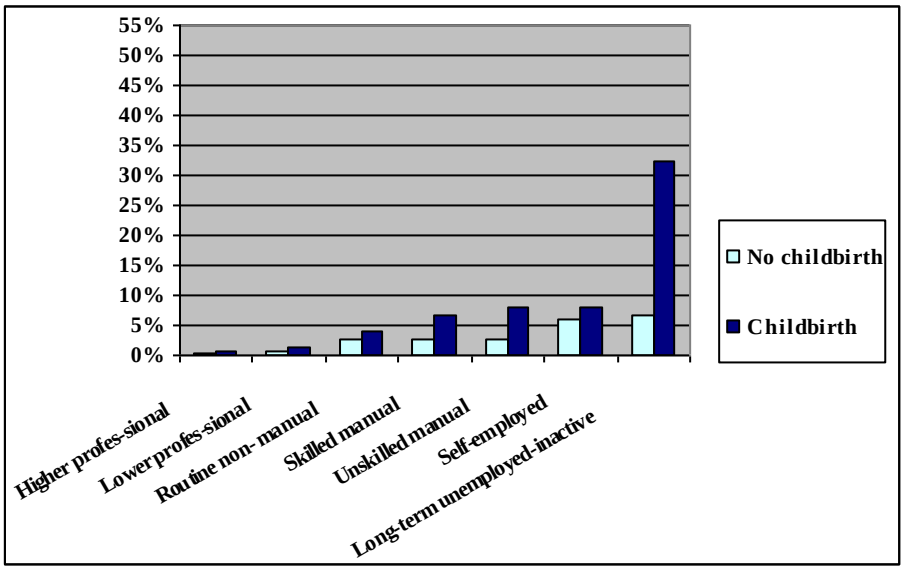
A second finding relates to the dissimilar effects of the life events on the risk of poverty entry across the following social classes: the professional-managerial classes, the routine non-manual class and the manual classes. Generally speaking, the interaction effects show that job loss in the household, leaving the parental home and partnership dissolution affect the manual classes less strongly than the reference category of the routine non-manual class. For childbirth it is the other way around. In Figure 8.3 we find that the predicted risk of poverty after job loss, leaving the parental home and partnership dissolution is indeed relatively large for the routine non-manual class. Whereas the risk of poverty entry for households not experiencing the life event is very similar for the group of routine non-manual, skilled manual and unskilled manual classes (i.e. between 2.34% and 2.77% predicted poverty entry chance), the poverty entry chance after experiencing one of the life events increases much more for the

Figure 8.3 - Bar charts with predicted probabilities of poverty entry by social class and life course event









routine non-manual class (e.g. up to 10.14% after leaving the parental home). Yet, for the professional-managerial classes also, the relative increases in poverty risk due to one of these events are higher than for the manual classes. It appears that the non-manual classes, and especially the routine non-manual class, are more strongly affected by the poverty-triggering effect of events such as job loss, leaving the parental home and partnership dissolution. Yet for childbirth the findings are different as the poverty-triggering effect of childbirth is significantly larger for the skilled and unskilled manual classes, compared with the routine non-manual class. While the predicted chance of poverty entry for the non-manual classes hardly increases after childbirth; for the unskilled manual class, for example, it increases more than three times, from 2.66% to 8.15%. It seems that the traditional social class inequalities between the manual and non-manual classes are increased after childbirth.

8.5 DISCUSSION

The purpose of this chapter was to assess the structuring effect of life course events and traditional social stratification determinants in the prediction of poverty entry chances. Therefore, I first investigated the relative importance of the life event approach to poverty entry versus the social stratification perspective. In a second step, both perspectives were integrated by examining whether risky life events have the same poverty-triggering effect for all social stratification groups.

Random effects models in thirteen different European countries showed that both life course events and social stratification determinants are fruitful predictors of poverty entry risks.

Transitions in a person's life course, like job loss in the household, leaving the parental home and partnership dissolution, do have an important effect on their chance of poverty entry in the majority of countries. The effect of leaving the parental home is especially substantial. Childbirth, on the other hand, only affects the odds of poverty entry in some of the countries under study. The poverty-triggering effect of these life course events is an indication of the biographisation of poverty. According to the

individualisation perspective, contemporary poverty is largely related to risky events and transitions during the life course, and traditional hierarchical social stratification determinants lose their impact.

Yet in this chapter, next to life course events, gender, education and social class were also found to be important predictors for poverty entry. This shows that the risk of poverty entry is not fully democratised, and is related to both life course events and traditional social stratification determinants. Generally speaking, single female households and people living in a household with a lower educated household head have a higher risk of poverty entry. Also people with an unemployed or self-employed household head are especially vulnerable to poverty entry in the majority of countries under study. With respect to the effect of social class on the risk of poverty entry, results differ between countries. France and a number of Southern European countries show the typical manual/non-manual divide, whereby the non-manual classes, including the routine non-manual class, have significantly lower odds of poverty entry than the manual classes. In the majority of other countries, the higher and lower professional classes have a significantly lower risk of poverty entry than the routine non-manual class, though the routine non-manual and manual classes show no differences in the risk of poverty entry. This finding suggests that there is a considerable intermediate group in society who have similar chances of poverty entry and for whom social class divisions are thus less important in predicting poverty entry chances. It could thus be argued that there are signs of a democratisation of the risk of poverty entry in the large group of manual and lower non-manual classes.

In the second instance, this chapter has dealt with the question whether risky life events entail the same chance of poverty entry for all social groups. This seems not to be the case, since most interaction terms between social stratification determinants and life course events show meaningful and significant results.

As a first result, a number of initial inequalities were reduced when interactions between life course events and social stratification determinants were introduced. Generally speaking, the events of job loss, partnership dissolution and leaving the parental home affect the risk of poverty of the non-manual classes and people with a higher educated household head more strongly. For people experiencing one of these events, the

traditional inequalities of education level and social class with respect to poverty have become smaller. This is a sign that the risk of poverty entry becomes more democratic among young adults who leave the parental home and for people experiencing partnership dissolution or job loss in the household. Also striking in this context is the precarious position of the routine non-manual class, who are generally more affected by the poverty-triggering effect of job loss, partnership dissolution and leaving the parental home. It can thus be stated that these life events partly reduce the social class differences between manual and non-manual classes, though the most important finding concerns the precarious position of the routine non-manual class.

Secondly, and contrary to the first point, the poverty-triggering effect of childbirth is generally stronger for the lower education level, the manual classes and the unemployed. So, after childbirth, initial social class inequalities are fortified. Also gender inequalities are mainly increased through the occurrence of these life course events. The poverty risk after job loss, partnership dissolution and leaving the parental home is especially high for single women and their children.

The final conclusion with respect to the individualisation of poverty experiences is mixed. There is some evidence in favour of the individualisation thesis in the sense that poverty spells are clearly affected by risky events during the life course. Additionally, there are signs of reduced inequalities of social class and education level after the occurrence of critical life course events, but the poverty triggering effects of social background characteristics have definitely not disappeared. Evidence abounds that the inequalities of social class and education level become stronger after childbirth. Moreover gender inequalities also seem to increase due to life course events. The conclusion is that both life course events and social stratification determinants are essential predictors of risk of poverty entry.

9 THE SOCIAL STRATIFICATION OF POVERTY TRAJECTORIES AFTER NEGATIVE LIFE COURSE EVENTS

9.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter complements existing research on poverty mobility by looking at the typical income poverty trajectories during the first five years after experiencing a risky life event like partnership dissolution, job loss or leaving the parental home. Most empirical studies of poverty and low income mobility have used regression techniques to predict the determinants of a poverty transition. As a result, a lot is known about the life course events leading to mobility into or out of poverty. However, the regression approach is less suitable to gain a good insight in the medium-term effects of these life events. Consequently, little is known about the different poverty mobility paths people take in the consecutive years after a life event related to employment or household composition.

The purpose of this chapter is to explore, with latent class cluster analysis techniques, whether different patterns of income poverty trajectories can be discerned among the people experiencing partnership dissolution, job loss and leaving the parental home. By broadening the time frame of research into poverty mobility, a more complete picture of the poverty-inducing effects of these life events can be drawn. Consequently, the social stratification determinants of social class, gender and education level will be linked to these different poverty trajectories. In this way, the chapter investigates whether short-term poverty after experiencing one of the risky life events is less structured by social stratification determinants, compared with longer-term poverty. The empirical analysis for this chapter provides a more detailed study of the poverty trajectories in four different countries: Germany, Spain, Denmark and the United Kingdom. Differences and similarities between these countries are linked to their respective welfare regimes.

9.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESES

In the first instance, several expectations will be formulated regarding the typical poverty patterns after experiencing partnership dissolution, job loss and leaving the parental home. The latent class analysis in this chapter has an exploratory purpose. However, the research literature on poverty and welfare state theory leads to the formulation of a number of expectations regarding the likelihood of different poverty patterns in the countries under study. The focus is on two main questions: (1) How long does vulnerability to poverty generally last when it is induced by one of the life events under study? (2) Are there any time-lagged poverty effects of the life events under study?

Poverty researchers have found that poverty spells in Europe are usually short-term and often recurring. Only a minority of people entering poverty stay persistently poor for many years (Fouarge and Layte, 2003). According to Leisering and Leibfried, critical life events will often only lead to a temporary passage into the poverty state. However, they argue that, when several critical biographical episodes are linked, they could also lead to more persistent poverty careers (Leisering & Leibfried, 1999, pp. 240-241). This chapter starts from the general assumption that poverty spells experienced after one of the life events under study will more often be short-term than persistent.

H1. *The poverty spell experienced after one of the life events under study will most often be short-term.*

Differences in poverty trajectories can be expected, however, according to the welfare regime and the life event under consideration. For job loss and leaving the parental home, differences will be investigated between Denmark, Spain, Germany and the United Kingdom[43]. Losing one's job is a major life event, and almost all industrialised countries take measures to ensure a certain degree of income protection for unemployed people. However, the several welfare regimes protect their inhabitants against the

[43] For the poverty trajectories after partnership dissolution, sample sizes in the different countries are not sufficient in order to investigate the effects per country. Therefore a pooled European analysis was performed for poverty trajectories after partnership dissolution.

negative income effect of job loss to differing degrees. The following expectations can be formulated:

H2. S*hort-term and persistent poverty after job loss will largely be avoided in Denmark, where the welfare state is very encompassing, and actively promotes fast re-employment.*

The United Kingdom and Spain belong to the Liberal and Southern European welfare regimes respectively. They are characterised by both more mobility into short-term poverty and a larger share of people in persistent poverty.

H3. *In the United Kingdom and Spain, I expect to find relatively high rates of both short-term and persistent poverty after job loss.*

When people leave the parental home, there is generally no direct interference of the welfare state. However, in this case also, different poverty trajectory outcomes can be expected depending on the country. The financial risk associated with leaving home differs between countries. In Southern European countries, children leave the parental home generally at an older age, when their economic situation can be expected to be more stable. Aasve et al. (2002) find a diverging effect of the impact of economic security on the decision to leave the parental home among European countries. Employment and income security are very important factors in the decision of young adults to leave the parental home in Southern European countries. The importance of these factors is much more modest in the United Kingdom, and it appears to be negligible in the Scandinavian countries. This leads to the following hypothesis:

H4. *In Spain, the poverty risk after leaving the parental home is expected to be relatively small.*

In Scandinavian countries on the other hand, young adulthood appears to be a life stage of increased economic vulnerability. Young people in general seem to be vulnerable to longer-term economic insecurity (Mayer, 2001). The poverty rate among young people living alone is higher in the Scandinavian countries than in any other country (Wildeboer Schut, Vrooman, & de Beer, 2001).

H5. *It could be expected that the short-term and long-term poverty risk is higher in Denmark, compared with the other countries under study.*

Interventions of the welfare state may prevent poverty from happening in the first year after a certain life event. Especially after job loss, the welfare state intervenes and a certain degree of income protection is provided. The more generous the welfare state, the better the immediate poverty risk after job loss will be alleviated. However, after some time, the high replacement income drops gradually. For people in long-term unemployment, and/or people not actively seeking work after losing their job, often only minimum income protection is provided. Thus individuals who were initially well protected against the negative income effects of losing their job can still become vulnerable to poverty. These postponed effects are expected to occur especially after job loss, because of the immediate income protection provided after this life event in most countries. Furthermore, the occurrence of postponed poverty effects is expected to be higher in countries where the welfare state is more generous, providing high income replacement immediately after losing one's job, such as Conservative and Social Democratic welfare regimes.

H6. *In Denmark and Germany, where the welfare state is more protective, more lagged poverty effects of job loss are expected.*

The expected risk of experiencing short-term poverty, persistent poverty and lagged poverty after experiencing one of the life events is summarised in Table 9.1 at the end of this section.

In the second part of the chapter, social stratification determinants of the different poverty trajectories will be investigated. According to the individualisation perspective, the contemporary poverty risk transcends social boundaries. However, this phenomenon is believed to be mainly valid for temporary poverty (Leisering and Leibfried, 1999). Social classes are generally also believed to be predictors of longer-term wealth and income (Hauser and Warren, 1997; Sorensen, 2000).

H7. *Short-term poverty after experiencing one of the risky life events is expected to be less structured by social stratification determinants, compared with longer-term poverty.*

Table 9.1 - Expected risks of three different poverty trajectories after job loss, leaving the parental home and partnership dissolution

		Partnership dissolution	Jobloss	Leaving parental home
Short-term poverty	**Europe**	++		
	Denmark			+
	Spain		++	
	Germany		+	+
	UK		++	++
Persistent poverty	**Europe**	+	+	+
	Denmark			++
	Spain		++	
	Germany		+	+
	UK		++	++
Postponed poverty effects	**Europe**			
	Denmark		++	
	Spain			
	Germany		++	
	UK			

9.3 METHOD

For this chapter, the population under observation comprises all individuals between 16 and 65 years old who experience partnership dissolution, job loss and/or leave the parental home and who were not income poor in the year before the event happened. For people experiencing partnership dissolution, a European-wide analysis is performed on the pooled dataset of thirteen countries: Germany, Denmark, the Netherlands, Belgium, France, United Kingdom, Ireland, Italy, Greece, Spain, Portugal, Austria and Finland. For the poverty trajectories after job loss and leaving the parental home, country-specific analyses will be conducted in four countries each belonging to a different welfare regime. The poverty trajectories in Germany, Spain, Denmark and the

United Kingdom will be compared with each other. For Germany and the United Kingdom, respectively the SOEP dataset and the BHPS data were used in the format in which they are integrated into the European Community Household Panel.

In Chapter 8, we have seen that job loss, leaving the parental home and partnership dissolution clearly entail a poverty risk in most of the European countries under study. The effect of childbirth on the risk of poverty entry, however, was much smaller and was not significant in all countries. In this chapter, the focus is on the three life course events with the largest associated risk of poverty entry: job loss, partnership dissolution and leaving the parental home. This means that the chapter deals with an employment-related life course event, i.e. job loss, as well as two household-formation related life course events, i.e. partnership dissolution and leaving the parental home.

Latent class cluster analysis will be applied to find out which are the typical poverty trajectories in the first five years after job loss, leaving the parental home and partnership dissolution. The technique of latent class analysis is chosen for its innovative character in the context of poverty dynamics. It will allow for a more complete picture of the poverty effects after employment-related and household formation-related life events. Next to investigating the likelihood of poverty entry after experiencing one of the life events, also the length of these poverty spells and potential lags in the poverty occurrence can be explored. The latent class models are estimated with the Latent Gold software package.

All individuals experiencing one of the selected life events during the panel study are included in the analysis. One issue associated with this approach is that not all these individuals stay for five more years in the panel survey. Some of them experienced the life event towards the end of the study and no complete five-year poverty trajectory could be recorded. These observations are called right-censored. Although right-censoring is very common, it is not very problematic in my analysis because it can be assumed that this type of attrition is non-selective. Next to attrition due to the ending of the panel study, some people dropped out of the panel prematurely. The latter type of attrition is potentially more problematic because the reason why an individual does not participate further in the panel study could be related to the poverty outcome experienced. However, the data provide information on at least a part of the poverty

trajectory experienced by people for whom there is some missing information. Individuals with an incomplete poverty trajectory are included in the likelihood estimation of the latent class model. A person is assigned to a latent class on the basis of the available information on his/her poverty trajectory. Within the group of people experiencing the same recorded poverty trajectory, observations are assumed to be missing at random (MAR) (Vermunt & Magidson, 2005). The option of including missings in the latent class estimation is an attractive way of dealing with attrition patterns in the ECHP. Additionally, the data are weighted to correct for initial panel non-response and sample design issues.

One drawback of including missing values in the analysis is that the significance of the likelihood based L^2 model fit statistic can no longer be trusted under the MAR assumption. The p-value associated with the L^2 fit statistic still tests the model fit but additionally it also tests the assumption that non-response is missing completely at random and thus is unrelated to both the observed poverty pattern as well as the missing poverty status (Vermunt, 1996). As the significance of the L^2 statistic cannot be used to assess mere model fit, I will rely on other model fit statistics. A combination of methods is used to judge the best fitting model. Different Bayesian and Akaike's Information Criteria are compared. Next to that, also the bivariate residuals, the percentage reduction in L^2 compared with the one-cluster model and the percentage of misclassifications are investigated.

9.4 POVERTY PATTERNS AFTER PARTNERSHIP DISSOLUTION, JOB LOSS AND LEAVING THE PARENTAL HOME

In this section, different latent class solutions are presented concerning the poverty trajectories people take after partnership dissolution, job loss and leaving the parental home. For these analyses, I selected all individuals who experienced the event and were not income poor in the year before the event happened.

9.4.1 Poverty patterns after partnership dissolution

For the poverty trajectories after partnership dissolution, a pooled European-wide latent class solution is conducted. Unfortunately, not enough cases were available to carry out an analysis with country comparisons.

In Table 9.2 the fit statistics for a number of models are presented. A four-cluster model shows the best fit, with 81% reduction in L^2 compared with the 1-cluster model and relatively low Akaike's Information Criterion values (AIC and AIC3). The four cluster model is chosen and the social stratification determinants are associated to the latent class model as covariates. This does not change the interpretation of the different classes.

Table 9.2 - Latent class fit statistics for the different poverty trajectory solutions after partnership dissolution (Europe, 1994-2000, ECHP pooled dataset, weighted)

	df	**L^2**	**BIC (LL)**	**AIC (LL)**	**AIC3 (LL)**	**Classifi-cation error**	**% reduction in L^2** compared to 1 cluster-model
1 cluster solution	203	1715.03	8388.35	8357.28	8362.28	0.00%	
2 cluster-solution	197	420.47	7143.07	7074.72	7085.72	7.82%	75.48%
3 cluster-solution	191	357.49	7129.38	7023.74	7040.74	9.59%	79.16%
4 cluster-solution	185	326.96	7148.13	7005.21	7028.21	14.79%	80.94%
5 cluster-solution	179	320.08	7190.53	7010.33	7039.33	15.96%	81.34%
4 cluster-solution with covariates	3618	2219.13	6167.83	5897.16	5941.16	13.70%	

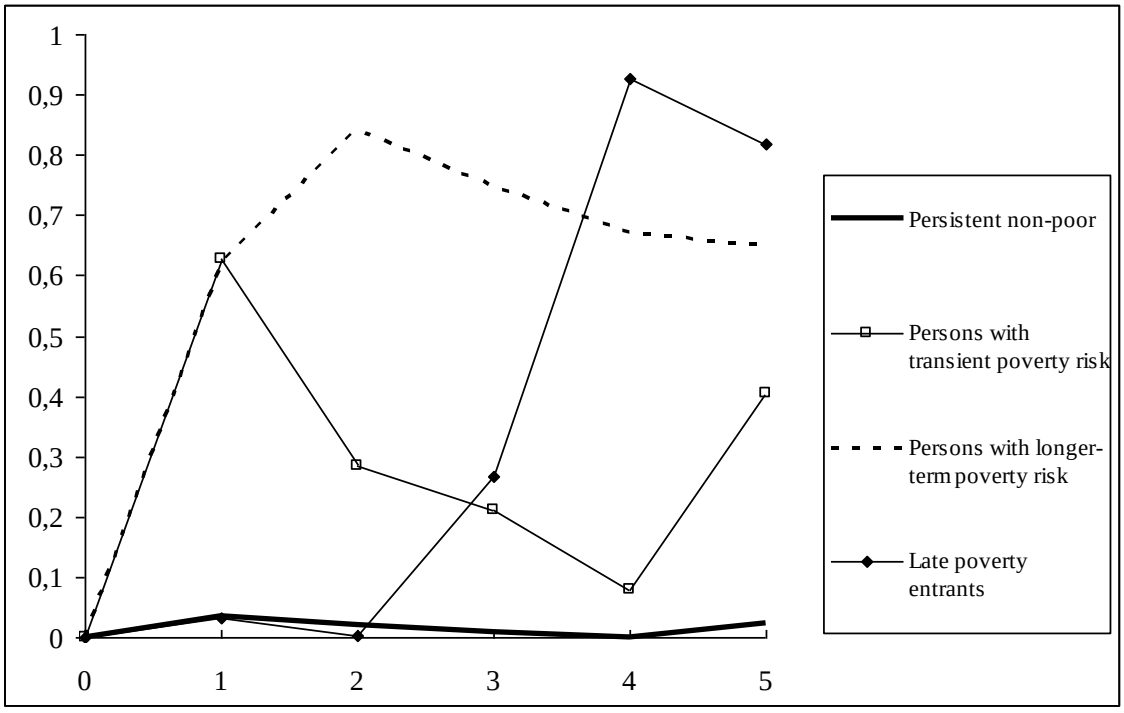
In Table 9.3 and Figure 9.1, the chosen four-cluster latent class solution is presented in more detail. The four latent classes could be labelled as persistent non-poor, persons with transient poverty risk, persons with longer-term poverty risk and late poverty entrants.

The first latent class has very low poverty probabilities in all five years after partnership dissolution. The poverty entry chance in this latent class can be considered negligible as it never exceeds 3% and therefore the latent class is labelled the persistent non-poor. The persistent non-poor are the biggest group, with an overall share of 72% of the Europeans experiencing partnership dissolution.

Table 9.3 - Latent class sizes and conditional probabilities of the four-cluster model showing poverty patterns after partnership dissolution (Europe, 1994-2000, ECHP pooled dataset, weighted)

	Persistent non-poor	Persons with transient poverty risk	Persons with longer-term poverty risk	Late poverty entrants
Latent class sizes				
Overall (N=3493)	0.73	0.09	0.11	0.06
Conditional probabilities				
Poor first year after partnership dissolution	0.04	0.63	0.62	0.03
Poor second year after partnership dissolution	0.02	0.28	0.84	0.00
Poor third year after partnership dissolution	0.01	0.21	0.75	0.27
Poor fourth year after partnership dissolution	0.00	0.08	0.67	0.93
Poor fifth year after partnership dissolution	0.02	0.40	0.65	0.82

Figure 9.1 - Latent class solution of the four-cluster model showing poverty trajectories after partnership dissolution (Europe, 1994-2000, ECHP pooled dataset, weighted)



The cluster labelled as the latent class with transient poverty risk has a relatively high chance of poverty entry of 54% in the first year after partnership dissolution. The poverty chance in this group shows a gradual drop in the subsequent years, with a 16%

poverty chance in the fourth year after partnership dissolution. It then increases again to 39% in the fifth year. The latent class with transient poverty risk is the second largest class and consists of 15% of the population under examination. This finding follows the expectation that the poverty risk triggered by a risky life event has a mainly transient character.

The next latent class shows overall very high poverty probabilities, and could be described as consisting of people for whom the poverty risk after partnership dissolution remains high for several years. The poverty probability of this group exceeds 80% in the first four years after partnership dissolution, and also stays high afterwards. Despite the high poverty probabilities, this latent class does not consist only of people who are persistently poor after partnership dissolution. The poverty chance in this group varies between 76% and 93%, meaning that in each year between 7% and 24% of persons belonging to this latent class are not income poor in one of the years studied. The analysis of Fouarge and Layte (2003) found that the poverty risk in Europe is more persistent than can be concluded on the basis of analysing the duration of poverty spells. Although most European poverty spells are short, a considerable number of people emerging from short-term poverty spells return to poverty in the immediate years thereafter. Yet the people experiencing these recurrent poverty spells are exposed to the poverty risk for a longer time. This group of persistent income poor, as well as people with a recurrent poverty pattern, belong to the latent class with longer-term poverty risk. The cluster is sociologically very meaningful and could be distinguished from the other clusters because these people stay in a precarious situation with increased poverty vulnerability for several years. Six percent of the sample belongs to the latent class with longer-term poverty risk. Finally, the fourth latent class consists of 7% of the population under examination and consists of people with a postponed poverty entry risk after partnership dissolution. This class is labelled as ‘late poverty entrants’.

9.4.2 Poverty patterns after job loss

For the poverty trajectory after job loss, latent class solutions in Denmark, Germany, Spain and the United Kingdom are compared with each other. Latent class cluster

analyses in the separate countries again show four distinct clusters: persistent non-poor, persons with transient poverty risk, persons with longer-term poverty risk and late poverty entrants. However, not all four clusters are present in the four countries under study. The separate country analysis shows that a four-cluster solution provides the best fit in both Germany and the United Kingdom. In Denmark and Spain, a three-cluster solution has a better fit. In Denmark, there is no latent class with longer-term poverty risk, and in Spain the latent class with transient poverty risk cannot be distinguished. Because the latent classes in the different countries seem to have a similar meaning, it is checked whether the poverty trajectory latent classes discerned in the separate countries are statistically equivalent to each other. Only when there is measurement invariance can clear comparisons between the countries be made. In Table 9.4 the results of this multi-group latent class analysis are presented.

The fit statistics in the Table 9.4 show that the completely unrestricted model without measurement invariance shows a worse model fit than the model with partial measurement invariance[44]. The Bayesian Information Criterion value (BIC) and Akaike's Information Criterion 3 value (AIC3) are both lower in the model with partial measurement invariance. Only the AIC value is slightly lower in the model without measurement invariance. It can be concluded that the latent classes have equal response probabilities on the poverty indicators in the four countries under study. Yet, the latent class sizes can differ between the countries.

Table 9.4 - Multi-group latent class fit statistics for the different poverty trajectory solutions after job loss (Denmark, Germany, Spain, United Kingdom, 1994-2000, ECHP, weighted)

	df	L^2	BIC (LL)	AIC (LL)	AIC3 (LL)	Classification error
No measurement invariance	694	646.40	13156.36	12624.41	12704.41	11.29%
Partial measurement invariance	748	795.23	12836.88	12663.99	12689.99	11.47%

[44] The term partial measurement invariance was coined by Eid and Diener (2001) to indicate that not all latent classes can be distinguished in the four countries. In Denmark and Spain, the membership probability of the latent class with longer-term poverty risk and the latent class with transient poverty risk, respectively, was set to zero.

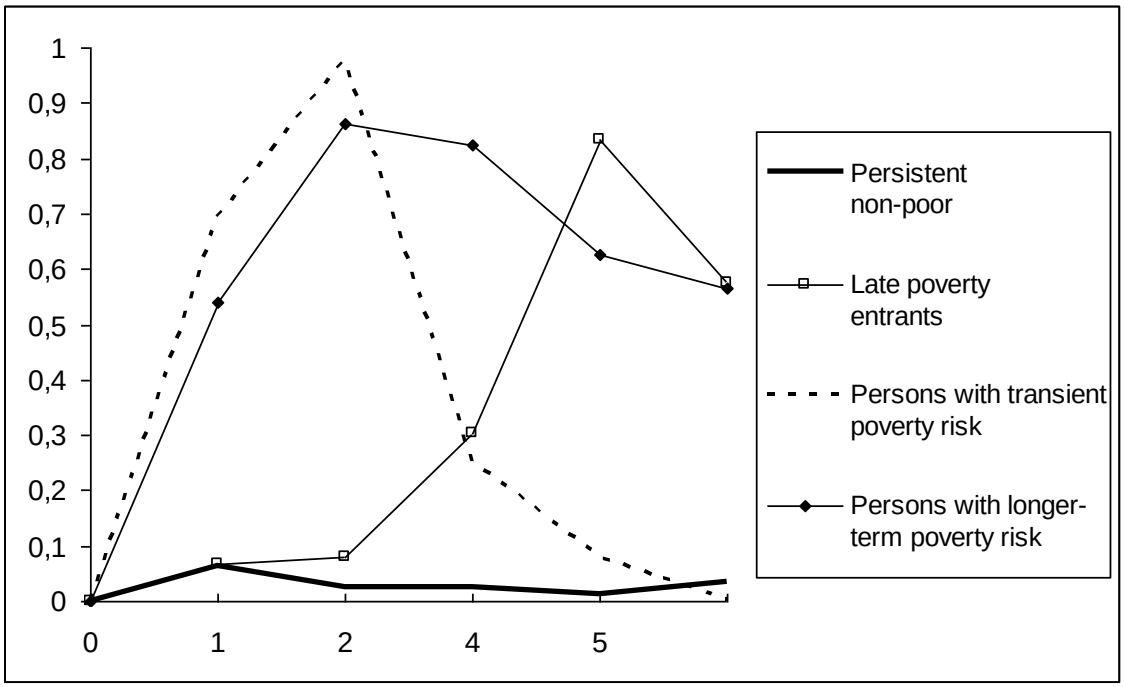
In Table 9.5, the latent class sizes per country and conditional probabilities of the poverty indicators are presented. The four latent classes have a similar meaning as was the case for the poverty trajectories after partnership dissolution. There is a distinction between persistent non-poor, persons with transient poverty risk, persons with longer-term poverty risk and late poverty entrants. The lowest probability of poverty entry after job loss occurs in Germany, where 83% of the people losing their job belong to the persistent non-poor cluster. The probability of poverty entry is highest in both the United Kingdom and Denmark, where 30% of people experiencing job loss belong to one of the classes with increased poverty risk. At first sight, the similar percentage in these two countries is surprising given their different welfare regime. One would expect that the percentage of people unaffected by poverty would be much higher in Denmark with its Social Democratic welfare regime. However, the similar percentage of persistent non-poor in both countries conceals large differences with respect to the distribution over the other poverty trajectory groups. While the percentage of people with longer-term poverty risk amounts to 17% in the United Kingdom, Denmark is characterised by the absence of this cluster and a large share of late poverty entrants.

Table 9.5 - Latent class sizes and conditional probabilities of poverty patterns after job loss (Denmark, Germany, Spain, United Kingdom, 1994-2000, ECHP, weighted)

	Persistent non-poor	Persons with transient poverty risk	Persons with longer-term poverty risk	Late poverty entrants
Latent class sizes by country				
Denmark (N=694)	0.70	0.11	/	0.19
Spain (N=2146)	0.75	/	0.14	0.11
Germany (N=1926)	0.83	0.04	0.07	0.06
United Kingdom (N=941)	0.70	0.06	0.17	0.07
Conditional probabilities				
Poor first year after job loss	0.06	0.69	0.54	0.07
Poor second year after job loss	0.02	0.98	0.86	0.08
Poor third year after job loss	0.03	0.25	0.83	0.30
Poor fourth year after job loss	0.01	0.08	0.63	0.83
Poor fifth year after job loss	0.04	0.00	0.57	0.58

The findings do largely confirm the hypotheses. In Section 9.2 the expectation was formulated that short-term and persistent poverty after job loss would be largely avoided in Denmark (H2). While the longer-term poverty risk is indeed not present in Denmark, people experiencing job loss are not protected from transient poverty. Compared with the other countries, the share of people at risk of transient poverty is the largest in Denmark, with 11%. The next expectation was that in both the United Kingdom and Spain, relatively high rates of short-term and persistent poverty would be found after job loss (H3). This hypothesis also can be partly confirmed. Both Spain and the United Kingdom are characterised by relatively high rates of persons with longer-term poverty risk, 14% and 17% respectively. However, the share of persons with transient poverty risk is not particularly high in the United Kingdom (6%), and in Spain this cluster is even non-existent. This means that people in these two countries are mainly affected by a longer-term poverty risk, be it persistent or recurrent.

Figure 9.2 - Predicted probability of being poor in the years after job loss by latent class membership (Denmark, Germany, Spain, United Kingdom, 1994-2000, ECHP, weighted)



The last hypothesis concerns the postponed poverty effects; these were expected to be more pronounced in both Denmark and Germany (H6). In Denmark, where the welfare

state is very protective, the percentage of late poverty entrants amounts to 19% for people experiencing job loss. This means that the poverty-triggering effect of job loss is initially largely buffered in the Danish welfare state, but a postponed risk of poverty entry occurs after some years. The hypothesis does not hold for Germany. There is also a latent class of late poverty entrants in Germany, but this group is not particularly large, compared with the other countries.

9.4.3 Poverty patterns after leaving the parental home

For the analysis of poverty trajectories after leaving the parental home, latent class analyses are performed for Denmark, Spain, Germany and the United Kingdom. The latent class solutions on poverty trajectories after leaving the parental home for the separate countries show three latent classes in Denmark and the United Kingdom; persistent non-poor, persons with transient poverty risk, and persons with longer-term poverty risk. In Spain, the latter group is not found, but in that country a cluster of late poverty entrants appears instead. In Germany only two latent classes can be distinguished; persistent non-poor and persons with transient poverty risk. The number of latent classes is not equal between the four countries under study, however, the potential latent classes seem to have a similar meaning. Therefore a model of partial measurement invariance of the poverty trajectories is tested. Table 9.6 presents the multi-group latent class analysis.

Table 9.6 - Multi-group latent class fit statistics for the different poverty trajectory solutions after leaving the parental home (Denmark, Germany, Spain, United Kingdom, 1994-2000, ECHP, weighted)

	df	L^2	BIC (LL)	AIC (LL)	AIC3 (LL)	Classification error
No measurement invariance	678	672	5632.85	5269.16	5331.16	0.07
Partial measurement invariance	715	720	5389.26	5242.61	5267.61	0.07

The model with partial measurement invariance shows overall a better model fit compared with the model with no measurement invariance. This means that the latent

classes have equal conditional probabilities on the poverty indicators in the four countries.

In Table 9.7 the latent class sizes of the different poverty trajectories can be compared between countries. The probability of being in the persistent non-poor cluster varies between 51% in Denmark and 88% in Spain.

Table 9.7 - Latent class sizes and response probabilities of poverty patterns after leaving the parental home (Denmark, Germany, Spain, United Kingdom, 1994-2000, ECHP, weighted)

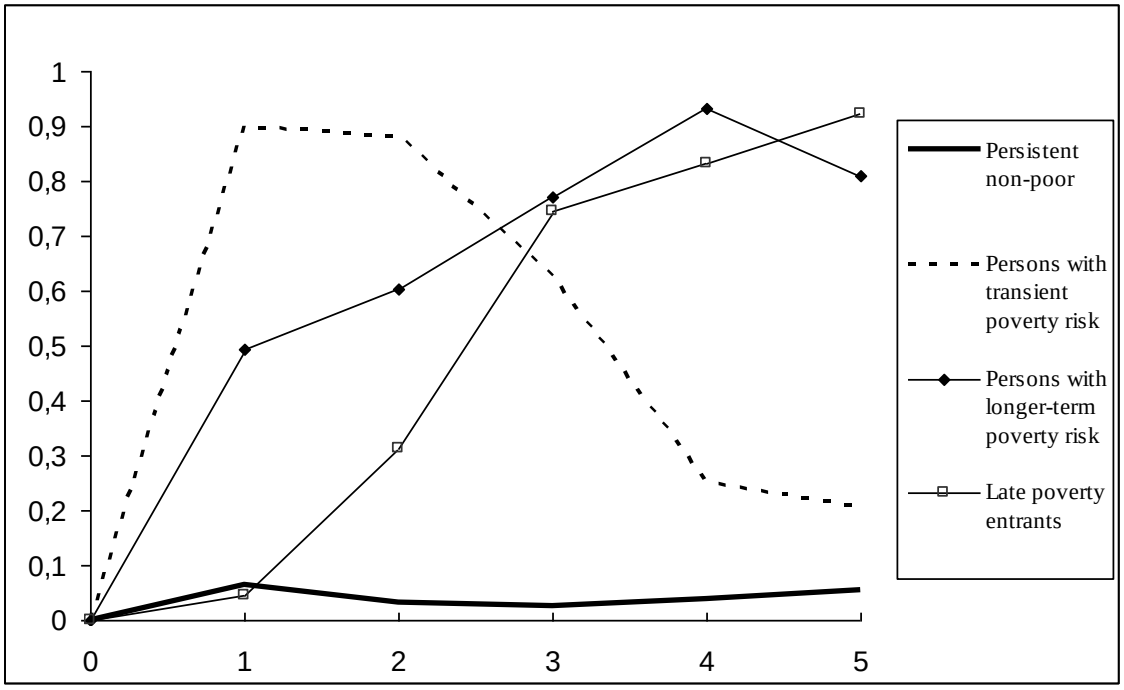
	Persistent non-poor	Persons with transient poverty risk	Persons with longer-term poverty risk	Late poverty entrants
Latent class sizes by country				
Denmark	0.51	0.32	0.18	/
Spain	0.88	0.06	/	0.06
Germany	0.85	0.15	/	/
United Kingdom	0.73	0.20	0.07	/
Conditional probabilities				
Poor first year after leaving parental home	0.06	0.90	0.49	0.04
Poor second year after leaving parental home	0.03	0.88	0.60	0.31
Poor third year after leaving parental home	0.03	0.63	0.77	0.74
Poor fourth year after leaving parental home	0.04	0.25	0.93	0.83
Poor fifth year after leaving parental home	0.06	0.21	0.81	0.92

The chance of being affected by poverty entry after leaving the parental home is especially low in Spain. Only 6% of people are affected by the transient poverty risk and another 6% belong to the group of late poverty entrants. The longer-term poverty risk does not exist in Spain. These findings confirm the hypothesis that moving out of the parental home is not associated with a high poverty risk in this country (H4).

The relatively high chance of poverty entry in Denmark also confirms the hypothesis (H5). Leaving the parental home in Denmark can be seen as an insecure event in the life course. However, social research has shown that the occurrence of income poverty among young adults leaving the parental home does not necessarily entail a general low

welfare level (See, for instance: Schwenk, 1999b). It is assumed that parents still share a lot of resources with their children after they moved out of their house.

Figure 9.3 - Predicted probability of being poor in the years after leaving the parental home by latent class membership (Denmark, Germany, Spain, United Kingdom, 1994-2000, ECHP, weighted)



In sum, the findings show that when young people are affected by a poverty risk after leaving the parental home, this is mainly a transient risk. In Denmark and the United Kingdom, the group with the transient poverty risk after leaving the parental home is larger than the group of people affected by a longer-term poverty risk. In Spain and Germany, the latent class with longer-term poverty risk cannot even be distinguished.

9.5 SOCIAL STRATIFICATION DETERMINANTS OF THE DIFFERENT POVERTY TRAJECTORIES

In this section, the poverty trajectories found through latent class analysis are linked to the following social stratification determinants: gender, education level and social class of the household head. The effect of these determinants on the different poverty

trajectories will be assessed. According to the individualisation theory, the poverty risk is not restricted to marginal groups in society, and transient poverty has become a more widespread phenomenon. The last part of this chapter looks into this phenomenon by investigating how the different poverty trajectories are distributed among the determinants of gender, education level and social class. In section 9.3., the expectation was formulated that short-term poverty after experiencing one of the risky life events would be less structured by social stratification determinants, compared with longer-term poverty. This section aims to assess the proposed hypothesis.

9.5.1 The social stratification of poverty trajectories after partnership dissolution

Table 9.8 presents the effects of covariates predicting different poverty trajectories after partnership dissolution. The effect of gender and education level of the household head as well as social class is estimated.

The gender effect shows that people with a female household head in the year after partnership dissolution have a higher chance of being at risk of both transient poverty and longer term poverty. The effect is somewhat larger for the transient poverty group, suggesting that the gender inequality for this poverty trajectory group is larger than for the group with longer-term poverty risk. These findings do not support the expectation that transient poverty is stratified less with respect to gender.

The effect of education level confirms the hypothesis that short-term poverty is less structured by social stratification determinants compared with the longer term poverty risk. There is no significant effect of education level on the risk of belonging to the transient poverty latent class. On the other hand, persons in households with a lower educated household head do have a significantly higher chance of belonging to the latent class with longer-term poverty risk, compared with persons in households where the head is highly educated.

Table 9.8 - Parameter estimates from social stratification covariates predicting different poverty trajectories after partnership dissolution (Europe, 1994-2000, ECHP pooled dataset, weighted)

Ref. Persistent non-poor	Persons with transient poverty risk	Persons with longer-term poverty risk	Late poverty entrants
Intercept	-4.72 ***	-9.28 ***	-3.56 **
Gender household head (Ref. Male)			
Female	2.57 ***	1.87 ***	0.69 ns
Education level household head (Ref. High)			
Middle	0.23 ns	1.43 ns	-0,00 ns
Low	0.48 ns	2.04 *	0.65 ns
Social class (Ref. Higher & lower professional)			
Routine nonmanual	1.62 ***	4.37 ns	-0,04 ns
Manual	0.94 ns	4.17 ns	1.10 ns
Self-employed	1.73 **	4.66 ns	1.23 *
Long-term unemployed/inactive	2.83 ***	6.37 *	1.80 **
Entropy R-squared: 0,2217			
Standard R-squared: 0,2073			

* p < 0,05 ** p < 0,01 *** p < 0,001

The effect of social class shows that the transient poverty risk differs for the various social classes. The chance of belonging to the cluster with transient poverty risk, rather than the persistent non-poor is larger for the routine non-manual, self-employed and long-term unemployed/inactive classes. Thus, the risk of transient poverty after partnership dissolution differs significantly between social classes. Consequently, the chance of experiencing a longer-term poverty risk after partnership dissolution is especially high for the long-term unemployed/inactive. The log odds of belonging to the longer-term poverty risk group rather than the persistent non-poor is 6.37 times larger for the long-term unemployed/inactive compared with the professional class. For the transient poverty risk, this figure is only 2.83. For the other social classes, no significant effect is found. The figures thus show that for the longer-term poverty risk, there is a clear demarcation between being at work in a particular occupation on the one hand, and the longer-term unemployed/inactive on the other hand. Longer-term poverty seems

to be largely stratified according to employment status rather than social class. Consequently, the hypothesis that transient poverty after partnership dissolution is less structured by social class than the longer-term poverty risk cannot be confirmed on the basis of these findings.

9.5.2 The social stratification of poverty trajectories after job loss

For the poverty trajectories associated with job loss and leaving the parental home, a slightly different approach is chosen. Including active covariates in the multi-group latent class model – just as with partnership dissolution – is not possible because the latent class solutions are not completely similar in the four countries under study. Therefore, relative risk ratios are calculated on the basis of the probabilities of latent class membership over the different categories of the social stratification determinants. The covariates used are treated as inactive, so that they do not influence the latent class solution. Thus, for the group with transient poverty risk, the group with longer-term poverty risk and the late poverty entrants, the odds of belonging to the respective group compared with belonging to the persistent non-poor is calculated. Consequently, the relative risk ratio gives the odds ratio of two social stratification groups. To assess the significance of the odds ratios, 90% confidence intervals have been calculated around the estimated ratios.

In Table 9.9, selected relative risk ratios are given for the poverty trajectories after job loss according to the social stratification determinants. A general finding is that especially the transient poverty risk and the longer-term poverty risk after job loss are affected by social stratification determinants. The confidence intervals calculated around the relative risk ratios related to the late poverty entry group almost always include the value 1, indicating that they are not significant at the 90% confidence interval level.

Table 9.9 - Relative risk ratios of belonging to the different poverty trajectory groups after job loss according to social stratification determinants (Denmark, Germany, Spain, United Kingdom, 1994-2000, ECHP, weighted)

Ref. Persistent non-poor		Persons with transient poverty risk		Persons with longer-term poverty risk		Late poverty entrants	
Gender household head							
Female/ Male	DK	1.38	[0,91 - 2,09]	/		1.13	[0,81 - 1,58]
	SP	/		1.02	[0,79 - 1,30]	0.84	[0,63 - 1,12]
	GE	2.07	[1,38 - 3,08]	2.06	[1,52 - 2,79]	0.91	[0,62 - 1,33]
	UK	2.00	[1,27 - 3,14]	2.14	[1,59 - 2,88]	1.27	[0,80 - 2,01]
Education level household head							
Low educated/ High educated	DK	2.71	[1,50 - 4,90]	/		0.85	[0,55 - 1,32]
	SP	/		2.95	[2,06 - 4,23]	1.59	[1,14 - 2,21]
	GE	6.44	[2,98 - 13,93]	4.70	[2,80 - 7,88]	1.53	[0,99 - 2,36]
	UK	2.35	[1,43 - 3,86]	2.18	[1,57 - 3,02]	1.28	[0,81 - 2,03]
Social class							
Routine nonmanual/ Professional	DK	3.30	[1,78 - 6,10]	/		0.99	[0,61 - 1,63]
	SP	/		1.53	[0,99 - 2,37]	1.09	[0,72 - 1,65]
	GE	3.40	[1,61 - 7,17]	3.77	[2,24 - 6,33]	0.92	[0,54 - 1,57]
	UK	5.22	[2,49 - 10,93]	3.94	[2,51 - 6,18]	1.07	[0,53 - 2,20]
Manual/ Professional	DK	1.49	[0,77 - 2,85]	/		0.94	[0,61 - 1,47]
	SP	/		2.55	[1,78 - 3,65]	1.34	[0,96 - 1,88]
	GE	2.38	[1,23 - 4,60]	2.36	[1,48 - 3,76]	0.93	[0,63 - 1,37]
	UK	2.11	[0,94 - 4,73]	1.58	[0,97 - 2,57]	0.95	[0,51 - 1,79]
Long-term unemployed-inactive/ Professional	DK	4.05	[2,12 - 7,74]	/		1.56	[0,95 - 2,58]
	SP	/		3.70	[2,6 - 5,37]	1.32	[0,90 - 1,94]
	GE	5.21	[2,67 - 10,18]	3.30	[1,99 - 5,49]	0.94	[0,57 - 1,53]
	UK	7.67	[3,93 - 14,95]	4.90	[3,25 - 7,41]	1.34	[0,73 - 2,49]

Note: 90% confidence intervals are given between square brackets

The relative risk ratios associated with gender show that in Germany and the United Kingdom, persons with a female household head have higher odds of experiencing a transient or longer-term poverty risk after job loss, compared with persons belonging to a male headed household. The estimated effects in Denmark and Spain are not significant. Overall, the relative risk ratios associated with transient poverty are not smaller than the ratios for the longer-term poverty group. This indicates that, against the expectation, gender inequality is not smaller for the group with a transient poverty risk.

Similar results can be found for the relative risk ratios according to education level. The odds of belonging to the group with a transient or longer-term poverty risk are clearly larger for people with a lower educated household head as compared with highly educated. This finding can be found in all countries and shows educational inequality in the occurrence of poverty after job loss. However, the degree of educational inequality does not differ between the group with a transient poverty risk and the group with a longer-term poverty risk. This is against the expectation that longer-term poverty is more stratified.

Finally, the relative risk ratios in the lower part of the table show the effects of social class on the different poverty trajectories. The ratios associated with social class mainly show that the long-term unemployed/inactive have higher transient and longer-term poverty risk, compared with the reference category of professional-managerial occupations. Also the routine non-manual class has higher transient and longer-term poverty risk, except in Spain where the effect is insignificant. The relative risk ratios for the manual class are only significant in the Spanish and German case.

In conclusion, the chances of being affected by a short-term, longer-term or late poverty risk after job loss do seem to vary according to social class, education level and gender of the household head. But against the expectation educational, gender and social class inequalities are not smaller for the group with transient poverty risk, compared with the group with longer-term poverty risk.

9.5.3 The social stratification of poverty trajectories after leaving the parental home

In Table 9.10, selected relative risk ratios are given for the membership of the different poverty trajectory groups after leaving the parental home. The relative risk ratios indicate that people with a female household head have higher odds of being at risk of transient or longer-term poverty. Exceptions occur for the transient poverty risk in Spain and the longer-term poverty risk in Denmark, where these effects are not significant.

Table 9.10 - Relative risk ratios of belonging to the different poverty trajectory groups after leaving the parental home according to social stratification determinants (Denmark, Germany, Spain, United Kingdom, 1994-2000, ECHP, weighted)

Ref. Persistent non-poor		Persons with transient poverty risk		Persons with longer-term poverty risk		Late poverty entrants	
Gender household head							
Female/ Male	DK	2.02	[1,30 - 3,14]	1.51	[0,88 - 2,58]	/	
	SP	1.34	[0,82 - 2,19]	/		0.65	[0,37 - 1,14]
	GE	1.42	[1,01 - 1,99]	/		/	
	UK	1.75	1,25 - 2,47]	1.78	[1,05 - 3,02]	/	
Education level household head							
Low educated/ High educated	DK	10.69	[1,70 - 67,42]	3.02	[0,55 - 16,50]	/	
	SP	3.73	[1,89 - 7,39]	/		2.63	[1,48 - 4,66]
	GE	4.78	[2,27 - 10,06]	/		/	
	UK	1.75	[1,18 - 2,59]	1.38	[0,77 - 2,49]	/	
Social class							
Routine nonmanual/ Professional	DK	8.06	[2,81 - 23,08]	5.05	[1,62 - 15,79]	/	
	SP	0.96	[0,30 - 3,13]	/		1.78	[0,83 - 3,81]
	GE	1.45	[0,86 - 2,45]	/		/	
	UK	4.84	[2,69 - 8,70]	2.04	[0,96 - 4,34]	/	
Manual/ Professional	DK	1.79	[0,59 - 5,44]	1.49	[0,45 - 5,02]	/	
	SP	3.34	[1,44 - 7,72]	/		2.14	[1,10 - 4,20]
	GE	1.42	[0,89 - 2,26]	/		/	
	UK	1.19	[0,57 - 2,50]	0.71	[0,27 - 1,86]	/	
Long-term unemployed-inactive/ Professional	DK	22.04	[6,82 - 73,46]	23.84	[6,84 - 83,12]	/	
	SP	7.73	[3,31 - 18,06]	/		2.44	[1,12 - 5,31]
	GE	4.031	[2,31 - 7,02]	/		/	
	UK	19.11	[10,74 - 34]	6.317	[3,08 - 12,90]	/	

Note: 90% confidence intervals are given between square brackets

The ratios also indicate that people with a lower educated household head have higher odds of being at risk of transient poverty in all countries under consideration. The relative risk ratios for social class show that especially the long-term unemployed/inactive have significantly higher odds of transient and longer term poverty in all countries under study. The routine non-manual class have higher odds of transient poverty risk in Denmark and the United Kingdom; and higher odds of belonging to the group with longer-term poverty risk in Denmark. The manual class has higher odds of

belonging to the transient poverty group after leaving the parental home in Spain. The odds ratios for late poverty entry in Spain show that the odds of becoming a late poverty entrant after leaving the parental home are larger for people in households with a lower educated household head, and also for the manual class and the long-term unemployed/inactive.

The hypothesis that social short-term poverty is less stratified than the longer-term poverty risk can only be examined for Denmark and the United Kingdom, since the latent class with longer-term poverty risk does not exist for the other two countries. Both in Denmark and the United Kingdom, there are no indications that short-term poverty after leaving the parental home is less structured by social stratification determinants, compared with longer-term poverty.

9.6 DISCUSSION

This chapter dealt with the exploration of poverty patterns in the first five years after experiencing a risky life event. Latent class analysis was used to determine the typical poverty trajectories after experiencing partnership dissolution, job loss and leaving the parental home.

Generally, four different latent classes could be distinguished after experiencing one of the life events under study: persistent non-poor, people with a transient poverty risk, people with a longer-term poverty risk and late poverty entrants. Unsurprisingly, the majority of people affected by one of the life events under study remain persistent non-poor. This is true in all countries under study. However, a substantial share of the population is affected by the poverty risk associated with experiencing a life event, and experiences a transient, longer-term or postponed risk of poverty entry. Results appear to differ between countries and according to life event. In what follows, the main findings are summarised.

In the first instance, this chapter focused on an exploration of the duration of the poverty risk associated with experiencing a critical event in the life course. The question put

forward was whether the poverty risk encountered during critical phases in the life course can be seen as a transient phenomenon. The results in this chapter showed that the poverty risk after partnership dissolution and leaving the parental home has mainly a transient character. For job loss however, a longer-term poverty risk seems to be the most common poverty trajectory in Spain, Germany and the United Kingdom.

Furthermore, some country differences were found in the poverty trajectories people experience after a risky life event. In Denmark, with its protective welfare state, a longer-term poverty risk after job loss is largely avoided. On the other hand, the United Kingdom and Spain are characterised by especially high rates of people with a longer-term poverty risk after job loss. Surprisingly however, the chance of poverty entry after job loss is relatively large in Denmark, with a similar rate to the United Kingdom. Closer scrutiny shows that the Danish population suffers mainly from a transient poverty risk and an especially pronounced late risk of poverty entry after job loss. The results suggest that persons who experienced job loss are still affected by an increased risk of poverty entry, as soon as the generous Social Democratic income protection falls away after a few years. Also the latent class solution for the poverty trajectory after leaving the parental home shows country differences. It is found that especially Danish young people are vulnerable to experiencing a short-term or longer-term poverty risk after leaving home. In Spain, as expected, the poverty risk after leaving the parental home is negligible. This finding is in line with previous research indicating that young people in Southern European countries wait for economic security before starting their own household.

In the last part of the chapter, social stratification determinants were linked to the poverty trajectories as covariates. The hypothesis was formulated that short-term poverty after experiencing one of the risky life events would be less structured by social stratification determinants, compared with longer-term poverty. Only very limited evidence for this hypothesis can be found in the research results. The transient poverty risk after partnership dissolution is found to be less structured by educational inequality, compared with the longer-term poverty risk after this life event. For the other social stratification determinants and life events, no significantly higher odds ratios were found for the longer term poverty risk, compared with the transient poverty risk after a life event. This would mean that even if risky life events have become more common

for the European population, different social stratification groups appear to have unequal resources for dealing with the associated poverty risk. The results have shown that even the transient poverty risk affects mainly people with lower education levels, the female gender and the lowest social classes. Individuals in the highest social strata of the different European countries under study avoid both transient and longer-term poverty risks in their life course.

CONCLUSION

Having come to the end of the empirical part of this thesis, it is time for a reflection on the main results and the implications they have for the field of social stratification and poverty research.

The main objective of this PhD thesis was to re-investigate the effect of social stratification determinants on income poverty. During the last few decades, there has been a shift from a static to a dynamic perspective on social inequality. Social changes during the second half of the twentieth century have created more flexibility in the labour market and more plurality and instability in the family sphere. Also the poverty risk has been shown to be a dynamic phenomenon. Especially through the availability of large-scale and mature socio-economic panels, researchers have been able to understand the temporal character of poverty in Europe. In this thesis I have used panel data to assess the implications of the shift from 'static' to 'dynamic' for the social stratification of income poverty.

A re-assessment of the structuring effect of social stratification determinants was necessary because it is often claimed that they have lost their relevance. In the wider sociological literature, a certain scepticism with respect to the structuring impact of social stratification has grown and especially the social class structure has come under criticism (See: Beck, 1992; Clark & Lipset, 1991; Pakulski & Waters, 1996). But also in the specific context of poverty research, the traditional social stratification determinants have been questioned. The work of German sociologists such as Berger (1994) and Leisering and Leibfried (1999) has questioned the impact of social stratification determinants on poverty dynamics. According to this view, the poverty risk transcends social boundaries, so that now more people than in the past run the risk of becoming poor, even if only in the short-term. In this context the effect of biographical life events has also been stressed. Some authors argue that horizontal life trajectories and lifestyle have become more important than hierarchical determinants of inequality (Beck, 1986; Mayer, 1991).

The question concerning the relevance of social stratification determinants runs as a thread through the empirical chapters of the thesis, each of which has looked at the topic from a different angle. Chapter 6 should be seen as an introductory empirical chapter and one that focuses on an exploration of the relationship between crucial social stratification determinants and the poverty entry risk on the one hand, and a longitudinal poverty pattern on the other hand. In chapter 7, the effect of social class mobility on poverty mobility has been assessed. The last two chapters have assessed the relative importance of social stratification determinants and life course events as predictors of a poverty dynamic outcome.

What are the results of this endeavour? It is time to weigh up the pieces of evidence both for and against the claim that social stratification determinants are not relevant anymore as explanatory factors for the poverty incidence. What is the effect of social stratification determinants on income poverty?

Several findings in the thesis show the enduring effect of gender, social class and level of education on poverty. It is established that *overall, social class, gender and level of education have a significant effect on the individual poverty entry risk, as well as on the short-term and long-term poverty chance*. It has been shown that the effect of these social stratification determinants on both the short-term and long-term poverty risk is significant, but the effect on short-term poverty is smaller (see below). The effect of social class clearly shows that *the professional class is largely protected against any poverty risk; whereas the poverty risk is largest for the self-employed and unemployed/inactive.* Also from the mobility patterns it is clear that the hypothesis mainly holds that upward social mobility coincides with a lower risk of poverty entry and that downward social mobility is associated with a higher risk of poverty entry. Especially mobility into the professional classes prevents people from entering poverty. Finally, the analyses with life course events have shown that the poverty entry chance is related to both life course events and social stratification determinants. Furthermore, I have found that the poverty-triggering effect of life course events such as job loss, partnership dissolution and leaving the parental home is not the same for all sectors of society. There is evidence that sometimes existing social inequalities are worsened through the differential impact of poverty-triggering life events. This is the case with gender inequality, for instance. The poverty-triggering effect of partnership dissolution,

leaving the parental home and childbirth is relatively stronger for single female households. Additionally, childbirth is more likely to lead to poverty entry for the poorly educated, the manual classes and the unemployed. Hence, childbirth too worsens initial inequalities. Overall, *it is thus not the case that 'horizontal' life events have replaced 'vertical' social stratification hierarchies.* The conclusion is rather that both frames of explanation have relevance, and the pressing question is how they mediate each others' effects.

Yet this is not the whole picture. There is also evidence that the social stratification of income poverty has become less relevant when a dynamic perspective is taken. I have shown that most poverty spells are short and around 40% of the population in most countries experienced a poverty spell between 1994 and 2000. The *poverty phenomenon is thus relatively widespread*, and this also shows in the finding that short-term poverty is somewhat less strongly linked to the traditional social stratification determinants, compared with longer-term poverty[45]. Indeed, there are indications that these *life events affect the non-manual classes and households with a higher educated household head relatively more strongly*. The routine non-manual class especially seems to be affected more strongly by these events, and this correlates with a third observation related to the social class divisions between manual and the routine non-manual classes. I have found evidence that *social class boundaries between the manual classes and routine non-manual class have become weaker*. In the majority of countries there is no difference in the risk of poverty entry between the routine non-manual and manual classes. Additionally, social mobility from the manual or self-employed class to the routine nonmanual class does not lead to significant personal income change. However, it does lead to a somewhat higher chance of mobility into a situation of personal low income or poverty. These findings indicate that the traditional manual/non-manual divide within the social class structure has lost part of its relevance. Overall, there is now a broad middle group of manual and routine non-manual classes with relatively similar poverty entry chances. For people belonging to this middle group, social class is not a major determining factor for the risk of poverty entry. Wherever the poverty entry chances differ between manual and non-manual classes, they are mostly higher for the routine

[45] However, the effect of the social stratification determinants on both the short-term and long-term poverty risk is significant (see above).

non-manual class. These effects further diminish the relevance of the manual/non-manual distinction within the social class structure. All this shows that there is indeed 'polarisation' within the non-manual classes (Burgers, 2003; Esping-Andersen, 1993b). Where the higher and lower professional classes are largely protected from the poverty risk, the routine non-manual class belongs to a middle group with a larger poverty risk.

The final result is thus mixed: there are some signs that social stratification determinants have become less relevant for structuring poverty, but they are definitely not rendered irrelevant altogether. It is clear that social stratification determinants stay important as predictors of income poverty, even when investigated in a dynamic perspective. Accordingly, the claim that social stratification determinants had lost their structuring impact at the end of the twentieth century seems be overrated. On the other hand, there are some indications that the investigated social stratification determinants have less relevance when examining short-term poverty. Furthermore, it has repeatedly been shown throughout the thesis that the social class structure only adequately differentiates between the top layers and the bottom of the social class structure; in the middle groups the poverty risk is very similar. According to these observations, the social class structure emerges as a three-tier structure, in which the manual/routine non-manual differences in the middle group have been levelled out.

It is noteworthy that the main conclusions of the research are largely similar across different European countries. The research results show European differences in the observed poverty incidence and poverty patterns. However, the results with respect to the effect of social stratification determinants are largely robust within Europe. An exception is the manual/non-manual divide in the social class structure. Whereas the manual/non-manual divide has weakened in most European countries, the countries of Southern Europe are still clearly characterised by a manual/non-manual divide, in which the manual class has a higher poverty risk than the routine non-manual class. Furthermore, slight differences also are found in the size of certain effects; the poverty-triggering effect of social mobility is relatively large in the United Kingdom and Ireland, and the effect of mobility into unemployed/inactive is relatively weak in Denmark.

This research is significant for the research community for several reasons. A first contribution lies in the combination of sociological theory with advanced empirical poverty research. Studies in the field of poverty dynamics are often very empirical and policy-oriented. Additionally, the topic of poverty dynamics is more often studied by economists than by sociologists. All this causes the research body of poverty dynamics to lack a thorough sociological framework. On the other hand, theoretical contributions in the field of social stratification and social change are often not backed up with empirical research results. This study is an opportunity whereby crucial sociological questions have been linked to the empirical field of poverty dynamics.

Reviewing and combining the most important literature in the field of social stratification has allowed me to look at the research topic from multiple perspectives. Accordingly, the relevance of social stratification determinants for income poverty has been assessed in different ways and with different research techniques. This has allowed me to gain a more complete picture of the effects of social stratification on poverty. The chapter on social mobility, for example, has shown that a substantial share of poverty entrants were socially mobile before poverty entry. In this light, it is relevant to devote a chapter to the study of the structuring effect of social mobility on the poverty entry risk. Furthermore, the different chapters apply different research techniques, and the thesis is based on a combination of descriptive statistics, logistic regression models, hazard models and latent class analysis. The fact that a consistent result is found throughout the chapters makes the main findings of the investigations more robust.

An important merit of the thesis lies in bridging the gap between two seemingly opposed explanations of poverty entry inequality; namely ‘hierarchical’ or ‘vertical’ social stratification determinants on the one hand and ‘horizontal’ life course events on the other hand. I conclude that both life course events and social stratification determinants are essential predictors of poverty entry. However, it is also clear that the main question should not concern whether ‘either’ hierarchical social stratification ‘or’ horizontal life course inequality matters. I have shown that life course events and social stratification determinants play in complex interactions to increase or reduce initial inequalities. In this respect, the research findings of this thesis show the need to investigate the structural context in which a life course event triggers poverty entry.

Next to its merits, this research obviously has its limitations, too. A first drawback is that the research framework does not offer the opportunity to investigate changes over different decades. The research question of this thesis should be interpreted in a context of social change whereby poverty has become a more dynamic phenomenon, while the relevance of social stratification determinants is believed to have diminished in the second half of the twentieth century. Unfortunately, the research at hand has not allowed me to test these hypotheses. The ECHP covers a period of eight years between 1994 and 2001; yet this is still only a snapshot in time in the context of a process of social change that extends over half a century. The main problem is that there are no comparable panel data available for a time frame of a few decades earlier.

A second limitation concerns the extent to which the ECHP survey correctly represents the population in temporary and long-term poverty. This is a crucial issue and especially for the coverage of the long-term poor some questions could be raised. There are several reasons why survey data do not cover the whole population. Some groups are excluded from the study; this is for instance the case for homeless people and institutionalised persons. Accordingly, one could assume that a part of the long-term poor are never included in the survey. A second issue concerns missing information. For many respondents the complete poverty duration is not observed due to wave non-response, so the precise length of the poverty spell is unknown. Furthermore, also for respondents who are poor in the beginning or the end of the panel study, the exact length of the poverty spell is not known[46]. One could thus assume that the share of long-term poor is underestimated in the thesis. In the latent class models of chapter 9, missing values were integrated in the model in an attempt to address this problem.

This piece of research can be brought to an end with an outlook for further research. One of the main findings of the thesis is that a combination of life course events and social stratification determinants are important in the explanation of poverty inequality. Structural social stratification determinants diminish or worsen the poverty-triggering effect of life events such as childbirth, partnership dissolution, leaving the parental home or job loss. This research has provided only a first exploration of this combined explanatory framework. There is ample room for future research to investigate which structural factors mediate the process of a life event triggering a poverty outcome. I also

[46] This phenomenon is also known as censoring (Allison, 2003).

believe that this topic could be fruitfully complemented by a more qualitatively oriented study of why exactly some people become poor after experiencing a certain life event, and others do not.

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APPENDIX - CHAPTER 5

Table A.5. 1 - Number of waves missing for initial sample persons

		Nr of waves with item non-response on poverty variable							
		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Belgium	%	**39,8**	12,0	8,5	8,4	9,5	9,9	10,9	1,1
(N= 7592)	Cumulative %	39,8	51,7	60,2	**68,6**	78,1	88,0	98,9	100,0
Denmark	%	**33,5**	12,8	8,6	10,2	10,8	11,3	11,9	0,9
(N= 6475)	Cumulative %	33,5	46,3	54,8	**65,0**	75,9	87,1	99,1	100,0
Germany	%	**46,0**	15,4	7,5	7,3	7,2	7,2	8,1	1,3
(N= 14404)	Cumulative %	46,0	61,5	68,9	**76,2**	83,3	90,6	98,7	100,0
Greece	%	**36,3**	17,6	9,3	8,5	7,5	9,3	10,5	1,0
(N= 14435)	Cumulative %	36,3	54,0	63,2	**71,7**	79,3	88,5	99,0	100,0
Spain	%	**34,0**	16,1	9,0	8,3	9,6	9,3	12,8	0,9
(N= 20308)	Cumulative %	34,0	50,1	59,1	**67,4**	77,0	86,3	99,1	100,0
France	%	**40,5**	14,8	7,9	7,5	8,7	7,1	11,7	1,8
(N= 15866)	Cumulative %	40,5	55,3	63,2	**70,8**	79,5	86,6	98,2	100,0
Ireland	%	**21,9**	13,9	9,0	8,5	10,3	15,5	20,0	1,0
(N= 11311)	Cumulative %	21,9	35,8	44,7	**53,2**	63,5	79,0	99,0	100,0
Italy	%	**47,2**	16,2	8,1	7,6	8,4	5,8	6,0	0,8
(N= 20001)	Cumulative %	47,2	63,4	71,5	**79,1**	87,5	93,2	99,2	100,0
The Netherlands	%	**28,0**	12,5	8,0	8,4	8,9	11,8	15,3	7,1
(N= 14357)	Cumulative %	28,0	40,6	48,5	**56,9**	65,8	77,6	92,9	100,0
Austria	%	**41,0**	18,1	10,4	8,9	9,4	10,9	1,3	
(N= 8677)	Cumulative %	41,0	59,1	69,5	**78,4**	87,8	98,7	100,0	
Portugal	%	**45,3**	19,1	8,3	6,8	6,2	6,8	6,1	1,4
(N= 13557)	Cumulative %	45,3	64,4	72,8	**79,5**	85,7	92,5	98,7	100,0
Finland	%	**39,8**	24,1	11,8	11,5	11,6	1,3		
(N= 9277)	Cumulative %	39,8	63,9	75,6	**87,1**	98,7	100,0		
United Kingdom	%	**47,1**	12,8	8,0	6,6	6,0	7,4	10,0	2,2
(N= 9725)	Cumulative %	47,1	59,8	67,9	**74,4**	80,4	87,8	97,8	100,0

APPENDIX – CHAPTER 6

A.6.1 THE WEIGHT USED IN ANALYSES WITH THE LONGITUDINAL POVERTY PATTERN

The weight used for analyses with the longitudinal poverty pattern consists of the average of the base weights for initial sample persons with a non-missing poverty value in at least four waves of the panel. This practice is considered, since the two weights provided by Eurostat, the base weight and the cross-sectional weight are not satisfactory for the purpose at hand. The cross-sectional weight makes sure that all respondents in wave x represent the population in wave x. Base weights correct for attrition patterns between waves and by using the base weight, respondents in wave x represent the initial sample correctly. For longitudinal use of the ECHP dataset, Eurostat recommends the use of the base weight of the last wave in the analysis (EPUNet, 2004).

However, in the case of analyses with the longitudinal poverty pattern variable, unit non-response in the last wave not necessarily coincides with a missing value on the poverty pattern. In Table A.6.1 the cross-tabulation between wave 7 response and response on the longitudinal poverty pattern is given.

Table A.6. 1 - Cross-tabulation of response on wave 7 and response on poverty pattern (ECHP, initial sample persons, all countries, 1994-2000)

		Longitudinal poverty pattern		
		missing	response	Total
Wave 7	wave non-response	24,4%	14,0%	38,4%
	response	5,9%	55,7%	61,6%
	Total	30,4%	69,7%	100% (N= 165985)

5.9% of respondents is present in wave 7, while having a missing value on the longitudinal poverty pattern. More problematic however, is the share of initial sample

persons who are missing in wave 7 but do have a value on the longitudinal poverty pattern. From Table A.6.1 it appears that if the base weight of wave 7 is used, overall approximately 20% of cases would be lost.

In Table A.6.2 we find that for between 15.4% (Austria) and 29.6% (the Netherlands) of the initial sample persons, wave 7 non-response does not go together with a missing value on the longitudinal poverty pattern. Consequently, using the base weight of the 7th wave would entail a loss of a substantial share of the sample in all countries. Moreover, for the purpose in this thesis, the interest lies not in a correct representation of the sample of the last wave.

Table A.6. 2 - Percentage of initial sample persons for which wave 7 non-response does not go together with missing on the longitudinal poverty pattern (ECHP, 1994-2000)

	Percentage
Belgium (N= 7592)	20,9%
Denmark (N= 6475)	18,8%
Germany (N= 14404)	17,5%
Greece (N= 14435)	18,2%
Spain (N= 20308)	18,7%
France (N= 15866)	18,8%
Ireland (N= 11311)	24,8%
Italy (N= 20001)	19,4%
The Netherlands (N= 14357)	29,6%
Austria (N= 8677)	15,4%
Portugal (N= 13557)	16,3%
Finland (N= 9277)	21,3%
United Kingdom (N= 9725)	18,8%

The analyses with the longitudinal poverty pattern will be weighted with a weighting factor consisting of the average of the base weights over the 7 waves for persons with a poverty value in at least four waves of the panel study. The weighting variable is rescaled, so that the average is equal to 1. This procedure has the advantage to being able to use all sample persons with less than 4 missing waves. As the base weights of sample persons are correlated (Rho between 0.65 and 0.97), the obtained weighting factor will not differ very much from base weights of the different waves.

A.6.2 DISTRIBUTIONS OF THE SOCIAL STRATIFICATION DETERMINANTS ACCORDING TO POVERTY PATTERN

Table A.6. 3 - Distribution of the longitudinal poverty pattern for not-censored cases (ECHP, 1994-2000, weighted)

	Not poor	**Transient poor**	**Mid-term poor**	**Recurrent poor**	**Long-term poor**	**Total** (N)
Denmark	90,02	6,57	2,48	0,81	0,12	100% (5692)
Finland	96,51	2,68	0,75	0,07	0	100% (7597)
The Netherlands	91,2	6,27	1,24	0,93	0,36	100% (11774)
Germany	91,88	5,53	1,5	0,7	0,38	100% (12417)
Austria	92,82	4,47	1,9	0,59	0,22	100% (7280)
Belgium	89,59	7,78	1,59	0,82	0,23	100% (6261)
France	90,69	5,68	2,24	1,06	0,33	100% (12967)
Italy	86,32	9,11	2,84	1,28	0,45	100% (15340)
Greece	85,47	9,09	3,54	1,48	0,41	100% (10283)
Spain	85,71	8,94	2,9	2,01	0,44	100% (16191)
Portugal	88,88	7,4	2,76	0,58	0,38	100% (9545)
United Kingdom	89,12	6,2	3,34	0,74	0,59	100% (9210)
Ireland	89,87	6,37	2,34	1,01	0,4	100% (8916)

A.6.3 DISTRIBUTIONS OF THE SOCIAL STRATIFICATION DETERMINANTS ACCORDING TO POVERTY PATTERN

Table A.6. 4 - Distributions of gender and household type according to poverty pattern (ECHP, 1994-2001, Denmark weighted)

	Never poor	Transient poor	Mid-term poor	Recurrent poor	Long-term poor
Single female	6,59%	17,22%	19,72%	23,23%	32,16%
Single male	6,52%	9,08%	12,68%	12,15%	8,48%
Couple female	24,56%	23,59%	18,70%	15,17%	19,43%
Couple male	61,01%	48,29%	48,65%	49,45%	39,93%
Other	1,32%	1,82%	0,24%	0,00%	0,00%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
N	2809	493	211	269	196

Table A.6. 5 - Distributions of gender and household type according to poverty pattern (ECHP, 1994-2001, Spain, weighted)

	Never poor	Transient poor	Mid-term poor	Recurrent poor	Long-term poor
Single female	5,90%	7,88%	12,45%	7,12%	8,42%
Single male	4,71%	4,94%	3,02%	2,64%	0,66%
Couple female	10,24%	7,50%	5,28%	10,84%	6,94%
Couple male	63,93%	60,18%	65,03%	63,00%	74,20%
Other	15,23%	19,50%	14,21%	16,40%	9,78%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
N	7065	1562	842	1565	997

Table A.6. 6 - Distributions of gender and household type according to poverty pattern (ECHP, 1994-2001, Germany, weighted)

	Never poor	Transient poor	Mid-term poor	Recurrent poor	Long-term poor
Single female	11,53%	17,29%	20,46%	27,97%	40,58%
Single male	7,45%	9,62%	9,81%	10,88%	15,90%
Couple female	12,37%	14,55%	12,74%	17,61%	7,31%
Couple male	66,52%	55,65%	56,18%	43,41%	36,21%
Other	2,12%	2,89%	0,81%	0,14%	0,00%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
N	6984	1042	438	497	466

Table A.6. 7 - Distributions of gender and household type according to poverty pattern (ECHP, 1994-2001, United Kingdom, weighted)

	Never poor	Transient poor	Mid-term poor	Recurrent poor	Long-term poor
Single female	9,35%	19,50%	23,35%	30,04%	38,14%
Single male	7,68%	8,46%	9,73%	8,51%	9,62%
Couple female	15,27%	14,82%	9,51%	13,45%	14,18%
Couple male	65,60%	53,97%	54,85%	45,04%	35,40%
Other	2,10%	3,25%	2,55%	2,96%	2,67%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
N	4134	723	466	492	703

Table A.6. 8 - Distributions of education level of the household head according to poverty pattern (ECHP, 1994-2001, Denmark, weighted)

	Never poor	Transient poor	Mid-term poor	Recurrent poor	Long-term poor
High	41,21%	23,11%	25,86%	13,93%	9,91%
Middle	38,84%	35,58%	41,08%	41,00%	23,61%
Low	19,96%	41,30%	33,06%	45,07%	66,48%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
N	2845	501	218	269	194

Table A.6. 9 - Distributions of education level of the household head according to poverty pattern (ECHP, 1994-2001, Spain, weighted)

	Never poor	Transient poor	Mid-term poor	Recurrent poor	Long-term poor
High	28,46%	10,08%	4,83%	7,91%	3,17%
Middle	14,12%	13,56%	8,56%	7,49%	6,24%
Low	57,42%	76,36%	86,60%	84,60%	90,59%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
N	7426	1617	867	1618	1046

Table A.6. 10 - Distributions of education level of the household head according to poverty pattern (ECHP, 1994-2001, Germany, weighted)

	Never poor	Transient poor	Mid-term poor	Recurrent poor	Long-term poor
High	28,95%	17,39%	11,82%	13,29%	9,07%
Middle	58,16%	65,48%	63,17%	46,80%	58,30%
Low	12,89%	17,13%	25,01%	39,91%	32,63%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
N	7336	1104	471	534	477

Table A.6. 11 - Distributions of education level of the household head according to poverty pattern (ECHP, 1994-2001, United Kingdom, weighted)

	Never poor	Transient poor	Mid-term poor	Recurrent poor	Long-term poor
High	43,13%	21,63%	21,82%	17,97%	11,96%
Middle	12,27%	14,14%	11,51%	7,38%	5,55%
Low	44,60%	64,23%	66,66%	74,65%	82,49%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
N	4240	746	475	500	701

Table A.6. 12 - Distributions of social class of the household head according to poverty pattern (ECHP, 1994-2001, Denmark, weighted)

	Never poor	Transient poor	Mid-term poor	Recurrent poor	Long-term poor
Professional-managerial	45,32%	17,69%	26,02%	17,25%	7,86%
Routine non-manual	16,41%	24,26%	13,82%	12,52%	7,19%
Manual	24,40%	22,20%	15,83%	13,93%	13,92%
Self-employed	3,43%	6,79%	9,07%	6,27%	3,12%
Long-term unemployed-inactive	10,44%	29,07%	35,26%	50,04%	67,91%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
N	2749	463	193	234	139

Table A.6. 13 - Distributions of social class of the household head according to poverty pattern (ECHP, 1994-2001, Spain, weighted)

	Never poor	Transient poor	Mid-term poor	Recurrent poor	Long-term poor
Professional-managerial	32,31%	13,48%	8,47%	6,03%	3,84%
Routine non-manual	13,16%	12,89%	9,79%	10,90%	11,42%
Manual	25,11%	30,55%	24,14%	28,06%	31,14%
Self-employed	10,17%	22,55%	25,02%	23,78%	14,07%
Long-term unemployed-inactive	19,25%	20,53%	32,58%	31,23%	39,54%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
N	6946	1463	774	1471	920

Table A.6. 14 - Distributions of social class of the household head according to poverty pattern (ECHP, 1994-2001, Germany, weighted)

	Never poor	Transient poor	Mid-term poor	Recurrent poor	Long-term poor
Professional-managerial	35,17%	23,49%	15,84%	14,86%	8,29%
Routine non-manual	14,39%	15,58%	17,78%	15,06%	10,40%
Manual	27,06%	30,40%	29,84%	28,79%	22,44%
Self-employed	4,70%	6,94%	9,79%	2,56%	5,30%
Long-term unemployed-inactive	18,68%	23,60%	26,74%	38,73%	53,56%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
N	2492	1333	2982	431	1506

Table A.6. 15 - Distributions of social class of the household head according to poverty pattern (ECHP, 1994-2001, United Kingdom, weighted)

	Never poor	Transient poor	Mid-term poor	Recurrent poor	Long-term poor
Professional-managerial	46,96%	20,56%	21,13%	11,37%	7,86%
Routine non-manual	11,91%	15,67%	15,79%	12,12%	11,70%
Manual	19,58%	18,25%	18,64%	14,99%	8,83%
Self-employed	6,30%	10,92%	12,31%	7,87%	7,38%
Long-term unemployed-inactive	15,25%	34,61%	32,13%	53,65%	64,22%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
N	4155	705	429	454	600

APPENDIX – ABSTRACTS

English abstract

In recent years, the perception of poverty has seen a shift from a static to a dynamic perspective. Research has shown that, in industrialised countries, poverty is a temporary experience for most people affected by it. For these people, poverty should be seen as a life phase rather than a persistent state. Additionally, it appears that when the poverty incidence is studied over a longer time-frame, many more people are confronted with poverty than can be seen on the basis of an investigation at a single moment in time.

In view of this dynamic perspective on poverty, this thesis aims to reconsider the effect of social stratification on income poverty. This is necessary because the dynamic view of poverty seems to contradict the traditionally static social stratification structure. When poverty is mostly short-term and large numbers of people are confronted with it, then the question arises whether poverty is still concentrated among certain social groups or is rather more widespread in society. In the latter viewpoint, the poverty experience would be structured by life course phases rather than by traditional social stratification determinants. Apart from this argument, it is often claimed in the wider sociological literature that social stratification has lost its relevance. A certain scepticism with respect to the structuring impact of social stratification has gained ground, and the concept of social class structure especially has received criticism.

The empirical part of the thesis consists of a statistical analysis of the European Community Household Panel survey. The research topic is looked at from different angles, and a variety of research techniques are conducted to answer the research questions. Firstly, the thesis explores how gender, education level and social class are related to different forms of short-term and longer-term poverty. Consequently, the effect of social class mobility on income and poverty mobility is assessed. Furthermore, the relative effect of both life course events and social stratification determinants on poverty entry is investigated.

The results show that the risk of temporary poverty is indeed much more widespread in society than the risk of the more persistent forms of poverty. But this does not mean that social stratification has become irrelevant. The findings show clearly that social stratification determinants generally stay important as predictors of income poverty, even when investigated in a dynamic perspective. Yet, there are some indications that the social stratification determinants under investigation are less important as predictors of short-term poverty compared with longer-term poverty. Furthermore, it is repeatedly shown throughout this thesis that the social class structure only adequately differentiates between the top layers and the bottom of the social class structure; the risk of poverty for the various middle groups is relatively similar.

An important merit of the thesis lies in bridging the gap between two seemingly opposed explanations of poverty inequality; namely 'hierarchical' or 'vertical' social stratification determinants on the one hand and 'horizontal' life course events on the other. Life course events as well as social stratification determinants are found to be important predictors of poverty entry. Moreover, life course events and social stratification determinants play in complex interactions to increase or reduce initial inequalities. An important outlook for further research concerns the investigation of the structural context in which a life course event triggers poverty entry.

Résumé en français :

Au cours des deux dernières décennies, on a observé un glissement dans la perception de la pauvreté : autrefois statique, cette perception est devenue dynamique. Pour beaucoup de gens, la pauvreté est de nature temporaire et la mobilité dans la pauvreté va souvent de pair avec des événements critiques survenant au cours de la vie, comme un divorce, la perte d'un emploi, un décès dans la famille ou la naissance d'un enfant. Il apparaît en outre que lorsque la pauvreté est étudiée sur une plus longue période, le nombre de personnes confrontées à la pauvreté est plus important que ne le révèle une étude réalisée à un moment précis dans le temps.

La présente thèse s'intéresse, dans le contexte de cette perception dynamique de la pauvreté, à la relation entre stratification sociale et pauvreté de revenus. Cette recherche se justifie par le fait que la perspective dynamique de la pauvreté semble être en contradiction avec la structure plus traditionnelle de la stratification sociale. Si la pauvreté est avant tout un phénomène temporaire et si un plus grand nombre de personnes y sont confrontées, la question se pose de savoir si la pauvreté est toujours concentrée dans certains groupes sociaux, ou si le phénomène touche des strates plus larges de la population. Selon cette dernière perspective, la pauvreté serait avant tout structurée par les événements de l'existence et les phases de vie, plutôt que par les structures traditionnelles de stratification sociale. Par ailleurs, dans la littérature sociologique récente, certains laissent entendre que la stratification sociale a perdu de sa pertinence. Un certain scepticisme s'est fait jour quant à l'effet structurant des déterminants de la stratification sociale en général, et de la structure de classes sociales en particulier.

La partie empirique de la thèse consiste en une analyse statistique de l'enquête European Community Household Panel. Le sujet de la recherche est abordé sous différents angles et il est fait appel à diverses techniques d'étude pour répondre aux questions de recherche. Dans un premier temps, on examine dans quelle mesure le sexe, le niveau de formation et la classe sociale sont corrélés aux différentes formes de pauvreté de courte et de longue durée. Ensuite, l'effet de la mobilité en termes de classe sociale sur la mobilité en termes de revenus et de pauvreté est étudié. Enfin, l'effet relatif et combiné à la fois des événements de l'existence et des déterminants de stratification sociale sur l'entrée dans la pauvreté est mis en lumière.

Les résultats montrent que la pauvreté temporaire est en effet plus largement répandue que les formes de pauvreté plus persistantes. Mais cela ne signifie pas que la stratification sociale a perdu toute pertinence. Les résultats montrent clairement que les variables de stratification sociale restent des déterminants importants de la pauvreté de revenus, même lorsqu'elles sont étudiées dans une perspective dynamique. Néanmoins, certains éléments semblent aussi indiquer que les variables de stratification sociale sont moins importantes en tant que prédicteurs de la pauvreté de courte durée que pour la pauvreté de longue durée. Par ailleurs, il est démontré à plusieurs reprises dans la thèse que la structure de classes sociales n'opère une différenciation adéquate qu'entre les

couches supérieures et les couches inférieures de la société ; pour les différents groupes intermédiaires, le risque de pauvreté est plus ou moins équivalent.

L'un des mérites de cette thèse de doctorat est qu'elle concilie deux manières apparemment contradictoires d'expliquer la pauvreté. Il s'agit d'une part, de la structure de stratification sociale 'hiérarchique' ou 'verticale', et d'autre part, des événements 'horizontaux' de l'existence. Les résultats de cette recherche montrent que les événements de l'existence, tout autant que les déterminants de stratification sociale, sont des déterminants majeurs de l'entrée en pauvreté. Il apparaît en outre que les événements de l'existence et les déterminants de stratification sociale interagissent de manière complexe et influent ainsi sur le risque qu'une personne tombe dans la pauvreté. Une piste importante pour de futures recherches est l'étude du rôle que joue le contexte structurel dans le processus par lequel un événement de l'existence conduit à la pauvreté.

Nederlandstalige samenvatting

Gedurende de laatste twee decennia is er sprake van een overgang van een statische naar een dynamische kijk op armoede. Armoede is voor veel mensen tijdelijk van aard en de mobiliteit in armoede gaat vaak gepaard met kritische levensloopgebeurtenissen zoals ondermeer echtscheiding, jobverlies, een sterfgeval in de familie of de geboorte van een kind. Daarenboven blijkt dat, wanneer de armoede-incidentie over een langere tijdsperiode bestudeerd wordt, er meer mensen met armoede geconfronteerd worden dan duidelijk wordt uit een studie op een gegeven moment in de tijd.

In de context van deze dynamische kijk op armoede, gaat de thesis in op de relatie tussen sociale stratificatie en inkomensarmoede. Het dynamisch perspectief op armoede lijkt immers in tegenspraak te zijn met de meer traditionele sociale stratificatiestructuur. Als armoede vooral een tijdelijk fenomeen is en als meer mensen ermee geconfronteerd worden, dan rijst de vraag of het armoederisico nog geconcentreerd is bij specifieke sociale groepen. Of is het eerder zo dat het fenomeen van tijdelijke armoede doorgedrongen is tot alle sociale strata? Volgens dit laatste perspectief zou armoede

eerder gestructureerd worden door levensgebeurtenissen en levensfases dan door de traditionele sociale stratificatiestructuren. Daarenboven wordt in de recente sociologische literatuur vaak geopperd dat sociale stratificatie aan relevantie ingeboet heeft. Een zeker scepticisme is ontstaan over het structurerende effect van sociale stratificatiedeterminanten in het algemeen, en de sociale klassenstructuur in het bijzonder.

Het empirische deel van deze thesis bestaat uit een statistische analyse van de European Community Household Panel survey. Het onderzoeksonderwerp wordt benaderd vanuit verschillende perspectieven, en diverse onderzoekstechnieken worden gebruikt om de onderzoeksvragen te beantwoorden. In eerste instantie wordt verkend hoe gender, opleidingsniveau en sociale klasse gerelateerd zijn aan verschillende vormen van korte en langer-durende armoede. Daarna wordt het effect van sociale klassenmobiliteit op inkomens- en armoedemobiliteit bestudeerd. Vervolgens wordt het relatieve en gecombineerde effect van zowel levensgebeurtenissen als sociale stratificatiedeterminanten op armoede-intrede in kaart gebracht.

De resultaten tonen aan dat tijdelijke armoede inderdaad wijder verspreid is dan de meer persistente vormen van armoede, maar dit betekent niet dat sociale stratificatie irrelevant geworden is. De bevindingen tonen duidelijk aan dat sociale stratificatievariabelen belangrijke determinanten van inkomensarmoede blijven, zelfs als ze in een dynamisch perspectief bestudeerd worden. Er zijn echter ook indicaties dat sociale stratificatievariabelen minder belangrijk zijn als predictoren voor kortdurende armoede dan voor langdurende armoede. Verder wordt in de thesis ook herhaaldelijk aangetoond dat de sociale klassenstructuur enkel adequaat differentieert tussen de toplagen en de onderste lagen van de samenleving; het armoederisico voor de verschillende middengroepen is min of meer gelijk.

Een belangrijke verdienste van dit doctoraat betreft het verzoenen van twee schijnbaar tegengestelde verklaringsgronden voor armoede. Dit is langs de ene kant de ‘hiërarchische’ of ‘verticale’ sociale stratificatiestructuur en langs de andere kant de ‘horizontale’ levensloop. De resultaten van dit onderzoek tonen aan dat zowel levensloopgebeurtenissen als sociale stratificatiedeterminanten belangrijke determinanten van armoede-intrede zijn. Daarenboven blijkt dat

levensloopgebeurtenissen en sociale stratificatiedeterminanten in een complexe interactie inspelen op iemands armoedekans. Een belangrijke piste voor verder onderzoek betreft het verder bestuderen van de rol van de structurele context in het proces waarbij een levensloopgebeurtenis tot armoede leidt.

APPENDIX – DOCTORATEN IN DE SOCIALE WETENSCHAPPEN

I. REEKS VAN DOCTORATEN IN DE SOCIALE WETENSCHAPPEN[1]

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[1] EEN EERSTE SERIE DOCTORATEN VORMT DE REEKS VAN DE SCHOOL VOOR POLITIEKE EN SOCIALE WETENSCHAPPEN (NRS. 1 TOT EN MET 185). DE INTEGRALE LIJST KAN WORDEN GEVONDEN IN NADIEN GEPUBLICEERDE DOCTORATEN, ZOALS G. DOOGHE, "DE STRUCTUUR VAN HET GEZIN EN DE SOCIALE RELATIES VAN DE BEJAARDEN". ANTWERPEN, DE NEDERLANDSE BOEKHANDEL, 1970, 290 BLZ.
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