The path to a family-oriented university Lessons learned from the Corona pandemic

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In short

The family-friendly design of working and study conditions at universities is not new. The structural discrimination of people with family responsibilities - especially women - in everyday university life and measures to compensate for this were already a topic in the university community before the outbreak of the Corona pandemic. In the course of the first "lockdown" in spring 2020
on the one hand, existing problems in this context became clear. In particular, the elimination of childcare and outpatient care have led to an exacerbation of existing inequalities. On the other hand, the situation also helped to raise awareness among university staff: Existing measures for people with family responsibilities at universities were expanded ad hoc and/or new approaches were developed. Against this background, the working paper elaborates the lessons learned of family orientation for the "normal operation" of universities after the Corona pandemic, based on seven interviews with experts. The central result of the study is the need for strategic overall concepts for the promotion of family justice, which must be supported equally by university management, personnel managers and family offices. The study identifies concrete starting points for implementation in the areas of university management, culture, making work and study more flexible, career promotion and personnel development, and health promotion.

Acknowledg ements

Content

Method profile

Population

Guided interviews with eight family managers at seven universities (two universities of applied sciences and four universities from Germany as well as one university from Austria)

Survey method

The guided interviews were conducted via video telephony. The audio recordings of the interviews were transcribed verbatim. On the basis of five guiding questions, the central statements of the individual interview transcripts were excerpted as text passages.
In a second step, the text passages excerpted for the respective guiding question were thematically clustered. Subsequently, the text passages of each topic cluster were summarized in terms of content.

Survey period

June - September 2020

Family Orientation at Universities and the Corona Pandemic - An Introduction

The Corona pandemic poses major challenges to work-life balance. Already at the beginning of the pandemic, it was predicted that women worldwide would have stronger
(economic) disadvantages during the pandemic, as they are the main actors of care work within families (Wenham, Smith & Morgan, 2020). And indeed, in Germany it was shown that in about half of the households with children, women absorbed the temporary loss of childcare services without their partner (Möhring et al., 2020). Thus, a "retraditionalisation" (Allmendinger, 2020, p. 45) has already been identified. At the same time, in the context of science, numerous studies document a decline in publications by female researchers during the pandemic (e.g. Gabster et al., 2020; Vincent-Lamarre, Sugimoto & Larivière, 2020; Andersen, Nielsen, Simone, Lewiss & Jagsi, 2020). A position paper published by the German Research Foundation (DFG) in early 2020 states that despite funding measures for equality in science, the situation for women at universities was far from equal even before the pandemic. The paper states: "Nevertheless, persistent tendencies, traditional ways of thinking and unconscious prejudices, stereotypes and role models ("implicit biases") continue to exist in the science system" (DFG, 2020, p. 12). And this is precisely where we need to start in order to adapt the structural framework and promote cultural change. After all, family orientation in higher education institutions concerns everyone involved: University administrations as well as teachers and university managers, students as well as employees, people of all genders.
The association *Familie in der Hochschule e.V. (Family in* Higher Education) and the non-profit Centre for Higher Education Development (CHE)[1] have taken this situation as an opportunity to focus on family orientation at universities.

[1] CHE and the association *Familie in der Hochschule e. V.* have been working together for a long time. The CHE was involved in the founding of the association and
regularly supports the annual conferences. In addition, CHE is also a member of the association *Familie in der Hochschule e. V. (Family in Higher Education).*

and to identify suggestions for improvement. In a joint project, an early start was made to identify the lessons learned for the "normal operation2 " of the universities after the Corona pandemic with regard to family orientation.

To compile. For this purpose, guided interviews were conducted with the family officers of several universities in the period from June to September 2020, in which the problems encountered, challenges as well as solutions for questions of family justice at the universities in the course of the Corona pandemic were in focus. In addition, interviewees presented initial ideas for transferring approaches or taking further action in the aftermath of the pandemic. One focus of the interviews was on the framework conditions for employees, including young academics/scholarship holders, who have family responsibilities3 at the same time as working. The situation of students with children or with care responsibilities was also considered.

This working paper aims to transfer approaches to solutions as well as to introduce necessary medium-term course settings for family-friendly study and work after the Corona pandemic. The paper is structured as follows: First, the methodological approach of this study is explained. It then describes the challenges that higher education institutions faced at the beginning of the Corona pandemic, followed by a presentation of proven conditions for family-oriented work as well as new approaches to solutions and good practices of higher education institutions. Finally, lessons learned are derived and concrete recommendations for action for universities and politics are outlined.

2 In this publication, the term normal operations refers to the period after the management of the Corona pandemic.
3 The term family responsibility or familial responsibility includes the care of children as well as the care of relatives.

Methodology

In the context of the present study, guided expert interviews were conducted with family officers4 from various universities. The interviews took place after the end of the first "Lockdowns" [5 will] take place in the spring of 2020 during the period of late June to early September 2020.

As a starting point for the definition of a family-oriented university, this paper refers to the understanding given in the charter of the association *Familie in der Hochschule e.V. (Family in Higher Education).* (Familie in der Hochschule, 2016) as a starting point for the definition of a family-oriented university. A family-oriented university focuses on the needs of its members with family responsibilities in terms of leadership and support, research, study and working conditions, as well as infrastructure and health promotion. Since the adoption of the Charter in 2014, 122 higher education institutions have signed up to this statement of intent for a family-friendly higher education institution. The charter defines standards that aim to facilitate a stronger family orientation and appreciation of diversity within the universities.

The respondents

Family officers at six German universities (four universities and two universities of applied sciences) and one Austrian university were surveyed. The German universities were distributed across the following federal states: Baden-Württemberg (1), Brandenburg (1), Lower Saxony (1), North Rhine-Westphalia (2) and Saxony-Anhalt (1). The interviewees were suggested as interview partners by the association *Familie in der Hochschule e.V..* They had previously taken part in a survey conducted by the association on the situation at its member universities during the Corona pandemic and, following the evaluation of this survey, their universities are regarded by the association as examples of good practice. The total of eight interviewees were female. Due to differences

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4   In the following, family officers are understood to be persons who are responsible for the topic of family justice at the universities. Depending on the structural anchoring of the topic, family officers can have different functions or areas of activity (see next section).

5   The term "lockdown" here refers to the closure of daycare centers and schools from the end of March until around May 2020 in Germany and Austria. An exact end date cannot be determined, as the reopening of schools and daycare centers varied across the federal states.

in the structural anchoring of the topic of family orientation at the respective universities, the functions of the participants (e.g. equal opportunities officers, full-time family officers) or their organisational anchoring (e.g.
Family Office, Quality Management Department). Six interviews took place as individual interviews. Only one interview with the Austrian university was attended by two female interviewees.

Content of the interviews

The interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner using an interview guide. The interview guide, which is documented in the appendix, consisted of two thematic blocks:

- **The first thematic block addressed how the "old" (i.e. previous rules, structures, processes, instruments or procedures) had proven themselves during the crisis and where current challenges lie.** Family leaders were asked, among other things, to identify the top three challenges related to staff and students with family responsibilities during the crisis. The thematic block also included questions about the role of legal requirements, lack of decision-making space and action, and the use of communication channels during the pandemic. Collaboration between family leaders and university leadership was also highlighted. Family leaders were also asked what had worked well in supporting staff and students with family responsibilities during the current crisis and what was important to maintain after the crisis.

- **The second block of topics looked at the new ideas and approaches that emerged during the Corona pandemic and what can be learned from them for normal operations after the crisis.** The family managers were asked, among other things, to indicate the three best solutions that were created at their university during this time for employees or students with family responsibilities. They were also asked about new ideas and approaches from which university employees and students with family responsibilities could benefit beyond the crisis. They also discussed how innovations could be meaningfully combined with old regulations and structures. The thematic block included questions on the topics of cooperation with regional actors, flexibilisation, performance appraisal, career and health promotion as well as leadership responsibility of the university management with regard to

Family orientation. Finally, the respondents were asked to outline a working model that is specifically tailored to the needs of university employees with family responsibilities.

The charter of the association *Familie in der Hochschule e.V. (Family in Higher Education).* (Familie in der Hochschule, 2016) were not specified during the interviews. The focus was largely left to the interviewees. The topics of acute and future crisis management as well as digitalisation of teaching were not the subject of the present study and were accordingly not addressed in the interview guide.

Procedure of the interviews

The interview guide presented above served as the basis for the interview. The guiding questions were only made available to the interviewees in advance on request, in order to enable the interview to be conducted as openly as possible. Before the start of the interview the respondents were informed about the basic idea and objectives of the study. They were also given an overview of the contents of the question blocks as well as relevant instructions. Among other things, the respondents were informed that,

- that within the framework of the study, the situation of both university employees (including young academics and scholarship holders) and students with family responsibilities is to be illuminated and, depending on their own area of work, corresponding focal points can be set in the interview6,
- that family responsibility in a comprehensive understanding e.g. childcare but also the care of relatives includes and
- that the focus of the interview should be on the working and development conditions of university staff or on organisational conditions and support structures for students, and that the major topic of digitisation and teaching should be excluded.

[6] All interviewees chose the situation of university staff as the focus of their interviews, while the situation of students with family responsibilities was discussed in less detail. Therefore, the presentation of the results focuses on the pandemic-related challenges and new solutions for university staff.

The interviews were conducted using Internet video telephony (Zoom). Audio recordings were made, which were subsequently transcribed verbatim and evaluated. One interview transcription was revised and authorized at the request of one interviewee.

Evaluation

As a first step, the interview transcripts were analyzed using the following guiding questions:

- What problems have become apparent in the crisis?
- What are proven conditions for family-friendly work?
- What new solutions have been developed?
- What ideas for future solutions are mentioned?
- What complementary approaches and possibilities are there for bringing together the old and the new?

For each guiding question, the central statements from the individual interview transcripts were excerpted as text passages. In a second step, the excerpted passages for the respective guiding question were thematically clustered. Subsequently, the text passages of each topic cluster were summarised in terms of content. The structure of the following chapters thus corresponds to the mentioned guiding questions.

Corona as a burning glass: challenges in family orientation

This chapter is dedicated to the issues facing higher education institutions in relation to staff7 and students with family responsibilities. The first "lockdown" due to the Corona pandemic in spring 2020 has the
This posed new challenges for staff, students and the universities as a whole. Employees with family responsibilities were faced with the major hurdle of being able to pursue their professional tasks while caring for children, as schools and daycare centres8 were closed ad hoc. Employees with care responsibilities were faced with the challenge that outpatient care services were sometimes no longer able to take over the care of their family members. Students with family responsibilities were confronted with the difficulty of combining the care of relatives or the care of their children and the attendance of (digital) courses including the provision of services.

This chapter highlights the family-related challenges at institutions of higher education that have become evident as a result of Corona. From the interviews, it appears that the Corona pandemic has not created a plethora of new problems in relation to family justice issues; rather, it has brought the pre-existing challenges into sharper focus. The problems existed before, but in the "lockdown" they have abruptly become much more serious and thus visible. The lessons learned from this extraordinary situation are described in the interviews, with one interviewee in particular putting it in a nutshell:

> *"That's why I have a hard time saying we've only learned that now because of Corona. We already knew before that it makes sense. But Corona has just made it even clearer, it's perhaps a bit like a magnifying glass, that just as much*

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7 The term "employees" covers all university staff, i.e. both academic staff (including professors and scholarship holders) and all persons in university management.
8 The term day care centre is used here synonymously for all forms of Childcare for children not of school age, such as day care, also used.

Certain flashpoints that were there before have simply become more apparent now because of Corona."

In the following, the experiences of the university members in this regard are described in more detail and classified thematically.

Initial problem in the family context: childcare and care of relatives during the "lockdown" in spring 2020

After all schools and day-care centers were closed, employees and students were faced with
the same challenge: they had to organise the care of their children on their own. The following is a summary of how the interviewees from the family offices describe this situation of the different target groups.

Employees with child(ren): In almost all cases, the childcare provided by daycare centres and schools was initially interrupted. Employees had difficulties balancing their work and the care of their child/children. unite. This resulted in a lack of opportunities for concentrated work over a longer period of time, a
lower productivity as well as an increased stress level due to the
not completely or under more difficult conditions. At the same time, academic staff in particular had to learn new programmes (tools) and methods for conducting digital courses. In general, university employees were not seen as part of the critical infrastructure, so that these persons with children - depending on the requirements of the respective federal state - were usually not entitled to emergency care at the daycare centre/school. If they met the requirements (e.g., by providing proof of the employee's and each other's mandatory presence
parent), however, applying for emergency childcare was a particularly time-consuming process. In this context, one interviewee problematised the fact that she was unable to provide employees with family responsibilities at her university with any financial support for additional costs incurred through private childcare, if this was an option.

Employees with caring responsibilities: With regard to caring for relatives, it is clear that during the
of the "lockdown" in particular ambulant care services in their work

were restricted. This also applied to care workers from abroad, who were temporarily not allowed to enter Germany. For employees with care responsibilities, the reconciliation of care and work was therefore just as difficult. In general, the topic of employees/students with care responsibilities is hardly ever addressed by the interviewees. Some Interviewees stress that this was also due to the fact that both before and during the Corona pandemic, these
target group is less central to their work. Overall, the demand for support services here is, according to the
interviewees, also lower. One interviewee notes in this regard that so far no employees have taken care leave or
family caregiver leave9 . The assumption is made that
this is out of the question for most of them for financial reasons, as the financial compensation is too low.

Students with family responsibilities: For the students with family responsibilities, the onset of the
"lockdowns" in the spring of 2020, similar problems as for the employees of the universities: They, too, were affected by the school and
Daycare closures affected. Students with child(ren) now had to interrupt their studies and the care of their child(ren).
with each other. For many students were
Preparations for exams were hardly possible due to the lack of childcare. Benefits could not be provided, which in turn resulted in financial worries, provided BAföG was received.
was10. The fact that many mini-jobs disappeared during the lockdown also made the financial situation more difficult for students with family responsibilities. Furthermore, group work and physical meetings with other students could not take place, which meant that joint learning did not take place at all or only digitally.

During this first phase of the Corona pandemic in the spring of 2020, it became clear how heavily universities, staff and students relied on childcare and caring for dependents in order to be able to work. It is clear from the interviews that the temporary absence of the

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9   Caregiver leave and family caregiver leave differ in the length of the leave (up to six vs. 24 months) and the accompanying payment of an interest-free loan (Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth [BMFSFJ], 2020).

10 The summer semester of 2020 was initially considered a regular semester. Provided
    BAföG recipients were not able to complete relevant studies due to the Corona pandemic, this endangered studies within the standard period of study (RSZ). In these cases, BAföG payments are stopped before the completion of studies. Many federal states have extended the duration of the standard period of study due to the Corona pandemic, such as North Rhine-Westphalia (Corona Epidemic Higher Education Ordinance NRW) or Bavaria (Bavarian Higher Education Act in the version of 23 May 2006).

childcare and outpatient care became an initial problem
for families, from which many downstream challenges
arose.

Career promotion and personnel development

In the fields of action of career promotion and personnel development,
two areas in particular are perceived as problematic by the interviewees:
Firstly, the topic of performance appraisal and secondly, the anchoring
of the topic of family in the university.

Performance appraisal: The topic of performance appraisal,
primarily related to academic staff, is a frequently mentioned point
in the interviews. These performance appraisals can, for example, be
carried out in the course of the evaluation of
junior or tenure tracks. Employees with family responsibilities often had
to accept a loss of performance due to the lack of childcare, such as
being able to publish fewer publications. This often results in a
disadvantage for women, who in many cases have the main
responsibility for caring for children or other dependents.
family members, according to the interviewees. During the
"lockdown", this pattern of women taking on the majority of care work
was confirmed. Many interviewed university family officers criticise
the fact that so far only the pure research performance (e.g. number of
of publications) is taken into account in performance appraisals, but the
conditions under which the performance is rendered are no
(e.g. childcare/care of family members). Care work by employees is
regarded as "non-work".
relevant time". In the interviews, the participation in
Committees of the universities mentioned, which usually
receives just as little attention in the performance
assessment. The criteria
of performance appraisal are not anchored in law. One interviewee
reported that women have to take on a lot of committee work when
the proportions of women are low and these
bodies are to be staffed on a parity basis. This is particularly noticeable
at universities with a low proportion of
The increase in the number of female academic staff and professors is
reflected in an increased workload for them in committee work.

Structural anchoring of family: In general, it is stated that
especially the pursuit of an academic career ("making a career") in
combination with family responsibility is difficult to reconcile. The
structural

The interviewees reported that the general support for women in science and university management is still far too limited. As a result, the reconciliation of family and career during the "lockdown" at the universities was
in some cases only taken into consideration at a very late stage. One interviewee notes that there are often no committees at the universities that deal with the topic of family support.
or family justice.

Communication and commitment of the university management

The interviewees also refer to the essential aspects of "commitment11 " and "communication" when describing problems. The focus here is on communication and the
Commitment of the university management towards its employees, as well as towards the respective family office of the universities.

Commitment of university leadership: In the interviews, some family leaders address the topic of
"Commitment", which is supposed to express, among other things, the trust and support of the university management towards its employees. While many positive examples were given during the interviews, one interviewee described that the university management had little trust in the employees. This lack of trust is expressed, for example, in the following ways
by inflexible working hours as well as inflexible working models, especially related to science management. From
of respondents from another university criticised the fact that the university management did not offer its employees - especially those with family responsibilities - the opportunity to work during the corona period.
Pandemic no appreciation for their performance in
to the difficult situation.

Communication between family office and university management: In most of the interviews, the cooperation between university management and family officers is rated as positive. This also became clear in the interview with a family officer: An
this university existed before the outbreak of the Corona pandemic.

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11 The term commitment in this context expresses that the university management
is committed to the topic of family at the university. This implies that the
strategic university policy as well as communication also
is geared towards employees/students with family responsibilities and thus
the appreciation and trust - as dimensions of commitment - towards this
group is expressed by the university management.

Functioning communication between university management and family officers. The good communication is also due to the fact that the family officers are located at the rectorate. However, the variety of challenges that the crisis brought to the university management meant that communication between family officers and the rectorate suffered during this time. As a result, finding solutions to problems relating to staff and students with family responsibilities was severely delayed:

> *"So they were very burdened with things that they had to regulate, [...] pandemic concept, hygiene concepts, teaching concepts, the whole area of digitalisation up and down, so that there, I had the impression, some intermediate stage of 'there are now commissioners here for special target groups, who can perhaps also contribute something to finding solutions, or at least*
> *The concept of 'raising awareness' was completely lacking".*

Flexibilisation

Many of the problems described for higher education institutions with regard to staff and students with family responsibilities relate to flexibility, which is lacking or poses risks in some areas of higher education.

Working in a home office: After the start of the "lockdown", most employees worked in a home office[12] .
Previously, working in a home office was possible within a limited framework at some of the universities surveyed. However, this framework is characterised by little flexibility. Often, certain days and working hours had to be fixed in advance and could not be changed. The application process has also been cumbersome at many universities. Due to the Corona pandemic, the restrictions regarding working from home were simply no longer tenable and more

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[12] Equivalent to the interviews, the term "home office" is used throughout this paper. In some cases, the term "home office" was also used in the interviews. "telecommuting" used. Telework and home office are distinguished from "mobile work" must be distinguished. Whereas in telework the employer "provides permanently set up VDU workstations in the private area of the employees [for which] the employer has specified a weekly working time agreed with the employees and the duration of the set up" (Arbeitsstättenverordnung §2 paragraph 3 sentence 1), mobile work is characterised by the fact "that it is tied neither to the office nor to the domestic workplace" (Deutscher Bundestag, 2017). Thus, in the phase of the Corona pandemic analysed here, a de facto mixture of work in the home office and mobile work frequently took place.

Flexibility needed for staff of all employment types. In general, before the outbreak of the Corona pandemic, working conditions and locations for academic staff were significantly more flexible than for university management staff13. Strict conditions and lengthy application processes for working in the
Home offices have become obsolete, according to many family leaders at the colleges surveyed.
Finally, it is also noted that the framework conditions for working in a home office were not available to all employees from the beginning, as not all of them had the necessary technical equipment to be able to work spontaneously exclusively from home. In university management, the equipment has only been available to a few employees.

Dissolution of boundaries: Even if the widespread switch to working from a home office has become the
Although the timing of the "lockdown" was appropriate in order to maintain the employees' ability to work and at the same time to be able to ensure the care of children/family members as well as possible, this also results in risks for the employees. Many interviewees emphasised that the flexibilisation also
could lead to a strong dissociation of work and leisure time, since these areas in the home office are often no longer spatially or
be separated from each other in terms of time. Particularly employees with children frequently postponed their working hours to the evening/night hours.
shifted. In addition, for many employees with teaching responsibilities Overtime to acquire new digital tools for teaching
delivery.

Service agreements for working from home: At some universities, the crisis has revealed that there is no official service agreement for teleworking/working from home.
home office, but in some cases only amendments to the employment contract, which in the event of unexpected events - such as the outbreak of the Corona pandemic in spring 2020 - do not provide a legal framework for university employees with regard to flexibility of working location and working hours. Accordingly, it is criticised that the statements in the aforementioned amendments to the employment contract do not contain any detailed regulations or do not provide for the possibility of working in a home office for certain employment groups.

Leadership at a distance: Another negative consequence of permanent work in the home office is carried out by a family manager who at the same time also works as a

13 In this working paper, the term personnel in higher education management refers to all employees in the areas of administration, technology and management of higher education institutions.

manager of her department as well as the in-house daycare center: she describes that the leadership from the home office for
problematic because the lack of personal contact made it difficult to assess the workload and the
The company's employees' well-being is more difficult to achieve.

Courses for students: The opportunities and problems around flexibilisation can also be applied to the study conditions of students with children. The main issues here are participation in courses, examinations and making up for both formats if it is not possible to participate in a course.
to participate in these. At one of the
The universities surveyed already have a number of classroom-based courses.
This resulted in little flexibility for students with family responsibilities, even before the outbreak of the Corona pandemic. After the start of the digital semester (summer semester 2020), attendance was also compulsory for online courses at the university in question, which led to the same inflexibility for these students. Both before and after the start of the Corona pandemic, there were hardly any opportunities to catch up on missed lectures/seminars. As a result, study content is rarely, if ever, made available asynchronously, even though advances in digitization would provide the opportunity to do so in the Corona semester.

Internal university and legal regulations

During the interviews, in relation to problems that have become apparent as a result of the Corona pandemic, the following are often mentioned
also mentioned internal university regulations as well as legal regulations that are missing or incomplete.

Regulation in the absence of childcare: At one university, it has become clear as a result of the "lockdown" that there is no regulation under employment law in the event that parents have to work at home and look after their children at the same time.

Sick days for sick children: One interviewee criticises that the annual leave and the associated continued payment in the event of a child's illness is too tight. This amounts to ten days per parent per child[14].

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[14] After the interviews were completed, the German Bundestag decided on 18.09.2020 that the children's sickness benefit for the calendar year 2020 will be increased by 5 days per parent (Grüneberg, 2020). For the year 2021

BAföG entitlement for part-time students: With regard to the situation of students with family responsibilities, one central point is mentioned by several universities: Part-time students are not entitled to receive benefits according to
the Federal Training Assistance Act (BAföG). Thus, students must take up full-time studies in order to be entitled to BAföG. For students with family responsibilities, this means that they cannot officially study part-time if they are dependent on BAföG. As a result, many students are officially enrolled in full-time studies, but de facto study part-time. This can quickly lead to the standard period of study being exceeded, which in turn leads to BAföG payments no longer being made once the maximum funding period has been exceeded15. BAföG payments within part-time studies, on the other hand, would make it easier to reconcile studies and family life and take away the pressure of having to complete full-time studies within the standard period of study. The universities have already made several attempts to obtain amendments that would allow part-time students to receive BAföG payments within the standard period of study.
of BAföG, according to the interviewees. However, these attempts have not yet been successful. During the Corona pandemic, it once again became clear how difficult the balancing act between family responsibility and full-time study and how essential childcare is. The payment of BAföG to part-time students would above all relieve students with family responsibilities even beyond the Corona pandemic.

Compensation for disadvantages for **students with children:** One person responsible for a family states that there is generally no compensation for disadvantages for students with a family.
responsibility. This could, for example, be designed analogously to the disadvantage compensation for students with chronic illnesses or disabilities. Currently, there is only compensation for students with children on maternity leave and during parental leave, and there, too, only the possibility of postponing exams or handing in work later. One interviewee reported that there were many late applications for leave of absence in the summer semester 2020, as students with child(ren) realised that they would not be able to complete their required work. These requests were valid

was granted an increase of ten days per parent per child on 05.01.2021, which can be taken not only if the child is ill, but also to cover pandemic-related closures of
day-care centres and schools (Bundeszentrale für gesundheitliche Aufklärung [BZgA], 2021).

15 At this point, it should be noted that it is generally possible to extend the funding period of BAföG payments beyond the standard period of study if the student to be funded has children under the age of 5. However, this possibility was not discussed during the interviews.

all as individual hardship applications, as the systematic basis of the disadvantage compensation was missing. This generated a lot of effort and the need for students to justify themselves in individual cases.

Proven conditions for family-oriented work

For a consideration of the "old", previous structures and procedures, not only the problems, but also the previous successful conditions of family-oriented work and study organisation are relevant. The following results from the interviews
In addition to the aspects mentioned above, existing structures, measures, instruments, etc. for family support proved to be favourable, as it was relatively easy to extend measures to other family-relevant areas or to adapt instruments at the beginning of the pandemic. A good structural anchoring of the topic helped in rapid decision-making on family issues.

Structural anchoring of the cross-cutting issue of the family

The interviews reveal the importance of structurally anchoring family orientation as a cross-cutting issue, which can have several facets:

Anchoring in personnel: At all the universities surveyed, family orientation is anchored in at least one organisational unit responsible for this topic (examples are the family office or a department for quality management, where the topic of family is located). From the point of view of several persons responsible for families, it has proven successful if, in addition, the university management is directly involved in the topic of family justice and explicitly assumes responsibility. In one interview, for example, a prorectorate was mentioned that is responsible for family orientation within the framework of the department.

Systematic connection of the family officers to the university management: From the interviews, it emerged as a further proven condition that the family officers report directly to the university management or are closely interlinked with it (e.g. through regular routine meetings). In this way, the topic can be brought up directly and regularly and it remains on the radar of the university management. One family officer, for example, reports a close connection to the vice rector with meetings that were already held twice before the start of the Corona pandemic.

took place on a weekly basis. Such routines then usually also took effect in the pandemic situation.

Interlocking of family officers within the university: The interlocking of family officers with other departments (e.g. personnel department), bodies (e.g. senate) and committees is mentioned as an additional proven factor. This can be installed, for example, through regular routine meetings (Jour Fixe). For example, a family officer reports a jour fixe with the personnel department, the family office and the equal opportunities officer, which takes place twice a year. Another interviewee mentions the university's public offer of a quality circle, in which the deans, among others, can participate and in which the topic of family can be well introduced. Such structures also led to the topic remaining high on the agenda in the pandemic emergency situation.

Anchoring family justice in the mission statement or in the university strategy: In the interview, one respondent explicitly refers to the fact that family orientation is also part of the mission statement of her university. However, this alone is not sufficient. It emerges from several interviews that family orientation must become visible in communication and culture. What is meant is that family justice should not be a special topic that is only addressed when problems arise. Rather, it must also be permanently "lived" (e.g. through the fundamental support of employees with family concerns).

Existing structures for flexible working arrangements

In the interviews, flexible childcare services offered by the university were mentioned on the one hand, which, in the view of the interviewees, have proven their worth in terms of family-oriented work, irrespective of the pandemic. In one interview, for example, flexible day care was mentioned, which can also be used by students as a free service (e.g. during lectures). On the other hand, flexibility with regard to scheduling is cited as a proven condition of family-oriented working. This could be the consideration of family obligations of lecturers when planning lecture times or family-oriented meeting times (e.g. senate, committees). From the interviews it emerges that, in particular at the beginning of the
Corona pandemic, it was helpful if structures for flexible working already existed (e.g. up-to-date service agreement on working from home), which could be built upon.

(Regional) cooperation

From the interviews it can be seen that some universities cooperate strongly with external providers in family-related areas, while other universities cover corresponding offers internally.

Flexible childcare provision: One area where cooperation with external providers has proven successful is the provision of flexible childcare in case of spontaneous need. Such offers contribute to the aforementioned flexibilisation and proved particularly effective at the beginning of the Corona pandemic.
For example, one family manager reported on regular emergency care, which provides for one-to-one care by a caregiver in the family's household and is available to all employees, scholarship holders and students. From the point of view of the interviewees, the long-standing cooperation during the pandemic proved to be an advantage, as the large pool of caregivers made it possible to offer emergency care (by one permanent caregiver per household) at an early stage16. However, the costs of cooperation with external providers should also be mentioned here. Other interviewees pointed out that such services could not be financed at their university.

Counselling and further education offers: In many interviews, cooperation with external speakers in the field of counselling and further education was mentioned. At one university interviewed, for example, there is a special counselling service for family carers provided by an external coach, which already existed before the start of the pandemic. This service includes telephone counselling every two months and a hotline for spontaneous counselling needs.

16 In the interview, reference is made to the fact that the offer was restricted due to limited resources. However, it is not explained in detail which groups of people were able to make use of the offer during the "lockdown".

Corona as a starting point for new solutions and good practices

The interviews also shed light on the new solutions found during the pandemic to combine family responsibilities and work/study at the university during the Corona pandemic. This
is based on the thesis that the higher explosiveness and visibility of existing problems in the crisis release innovations that could be used permanently to solve them. The interviews highlight approaches to solutions that were developed in response to or triggered by the pandemic. The approaches mentioned below have the potential - at least in part - to be transferred to future "normal operations".

Flexibilisation

Flexibility is one of the key solutions that was implemented right at the start of the Corona pandemic. Flexibility has two facets: Work location and working hours.

Flexibility with regard to the place of work: At all the universities surveyed, the home office was newly opened up or extended as a place of work for all staff - apart from a few areas that require face-to-face work. While academic staff were generally already familiar with working in a home office, this often represented a completely new working situation for staff in university management. As mentioned earlier, the lack of childcare was raised as a major challenge in the early days of the Corona pandemic. The relocation of work to the home office was primarily intended as an infection control measure. However, this also resulted in opportunities to maintain work despite the lack of childcare or caregivers. For the universities surveyed, the switch to working from a home office meant, in particular, a change to digital exchange formats. All meetings (e.g. of the senate or committees) and team meetings were converted to online formats, which meant that many universities had to have the corresponding technical equipment.

The use of digital communication formats was often necessary in the areas of counselling (e.g. video counselling by the family service) and personnel development (e.g. online further training offers). A change to digital exchange formats also frequently took place in the areas of counselling (e.g. video counselling by the family service) and personnel development (e.g. online further training courses). One interviewee refers to a better compatibility of digital further training offers with family responsibilities, as these usually take place in several smaller time units compared to the often all-day attendance events.

Flexibility with regard to working hours: Flexible working locations can also result in greater scope for flexible working hours. On the one hand, additional time is gained through the elimination of travel times. On the other hand, working in a home office enables people with family responsibilities to work at different times (e.g. dividing working time into several small time units spread over the day). Respondents report an expansion of flextime arrangements at their universities. At the beginning of the Corona pandemic, time recording was also suspended in many cases, i.e. the standard working time was automatically recognised, in some cases irrespective of whether the agreed working time was performed. In the interviews conducted, the keyword trust-based working time was frequently mentioned; it was considered a new (temporary) working time model at many universities.
In addition, some family managers mentioned the flexible organization of work assignments and working hours in individual
Consultation with the manager mentioned. One interviewee refers to the possibility at her university, in consultation with the
supervisor to work a reduced number of hours[17] if
can no longer be performed due to family commitments. In the interviews, it crystallises that changes with regard to working time models affect university management in particular, as academic staff generally already worked without time recording and often outside core working hours before the pandemic. Time flexibility is also a key issue for students with family responsibilities. For example, from the perspective of those with family responsibilities, the switch to digital teaching represents a major advantage for students with children or dependents in need of care. In particular, the recording of classroom lectures, learning videos or other offers of asynchronous learning accommodate students with family responsibilities, as they can participate in teaching at times that suit them individually. Furthermore

[17] The working time not worked could be made up if necessary.

individual regulations regarding compulsory attendance18 in digital courses or the more flexible handling of submission and examination deadlines are rated as helpful conditions for students with family responsibilities.

Measures to compensate for the lack of childcare or nursing staff

In the interviews it becomes clear that the aforementioned measures of flexibilisation alone are not sufficient for the reconciliation of work and family obligations, especially when a homeschooling for school children is to be afforded or young children have to be cared for at home. In the interviews, a number of solutions are mentioned that have been implemented at the universities in order to be able to compensate - at least partially - for the lack of childcare facilities.

Support for researchers through student assistants: A family manager reports on the possibility for researchers with care obligations to apply for support through a student assistant. The student assistant could be involved in particular in the creation of digital teaching material in order to absorb the additional work associated with digital teaching (see comments on challenges).

Flexible childcare services provided by the university: In several interviews, alternative childcare services organised by the university were mentioned, which can be used in the absence of childcare facilities. For example, a pilot project for flexible childcare was launched at one university, which was already conceived before the start of the Corona pandemic. For this purpose, ten working hours of a university employee are kept available in order to be able to offer flexible childcare for staff and students in case of spontaneous need (e.g. for events outside the childcare hours) or also regular need on a small scale (e.g. for weekend events for part-time students). At another university, a contract was concluded with an external provider in order to be able to offer emergency childcare, among other things. Another example is the establishment of holiday childcare by an external provider with whom a cooperation already existed before the start of the Corona pandemic.

[18] This refers to attendance arrangements that are made on a case-by-case basis based on a personal agreement with the teacher.

Subsidies for privately organised flexible childcare: Some interviews show that the universities have sought solutions for subsidising privately organised childcare. At one university, for example, a childcare fund was set up which is available to staff and students to finance additional childcare. At another university, female academics with family responsibilities were provided with funds from the female professors' programme to finance additional childcare, so that they could once again devote themselves fully to their research.

Time off options in case of childcare obligations: In some interviews, reference is made to the possibility of applying for time off with continued pay in the absence of childcare[19]. One family manager, for example, reports that the leave of absence provided for in the collective agreement for the public service of the Länder has been communicated more strongly as an option.
In addition, this university explored the conditions under which an extension could be made to the field of nursing, for which no clear regulation existed until then.

Leave of absence options for students: In individual interviews, leave of absence options[20] were also discussed specifically for students. At one university interviewed, for example, there was the possibility of a retroactive leave of absence (through an individual hardship application) if the leave entitlement had already been exhausted through maternity and parental leave or if the children were already older.

Availability of undisturbed learning spaces for students: One interviewee also stressed the importance of undisturbed learning spaces, which are by no means available to all students in their living situation. At her university, early on in the pandemic, learning spaces such as the libraries or the learning and

19 According to the Collective Agreement for the Public Service of the Federal States (TV-L) and the Collective Agreement for the Public Service of the State of Hesse (TV-H), a leave of absence of
four days per calendar year if the caregiver is ill and employees are therefore unable to care for their child who has reached the age of 8.
The insured person must assume responsibility for the care of persons who have not yet reached the age of 18 or are permanently in need of care due to physical, mental or emotional disability.

20 In the case of a leave of absence, a semester is not counted as a semester and does not count towards the RSZ. However, there are differences in the respective regulations of the universities as to whether and to what extent achievements from this period can be credited.

Study building. In particular, students with child(ren) could apply for a hardship case for a study room.

Student Financial Aid: The discontinuation of regular childcare during the "lockdown" in spring 2020 also meant that many students were no longer able to pursue their part-time jobs (apart from the fact that many part-time jobs were not allowed to be pursued during this period anyway), so that students had to rely on additional financial support. The family officer at one university, for example, reported that it was easy to apply for the hardship fund or children's fund during the Corona pandemic. In addition, this university was able to provide donor-funded support of 1,500 euros each for 240 students, although this was not specifically intended for students with family responsibilities.

Career promotion and personnel development

The interviews show that, in terms of career promotion and personnel development, fewer solutions emerged during the Corona pandemic, but rather existing grievances and
development needs have become apparent or have been brought more into focus: The disadvantage of female professors and young female scientists due to the double burden is highlighted as a central issue. During the pandemic, care work was increasingly taken on by women, which meant that research often fell by the wayside.

> *"We have lost all time and then one or the other man is done with the next Habil faster after all and then the appointments come...".*

Consideration of family responsibilities in performance appraisals: The topic of performance appraisals in the case of family responsibilities was already mentioned as an important challenge of the Corona pandemic, especially for (female) scientific staff. Due to school and day-care closures, this issue, which of course already existed before the pandemic, became particularly explosive. In several interviews, reference was made to the importance of always taking into account in appointment and recruitment procedures, as well as evaluations and performance appraisals, the family conditions under which services were rendered. At the time of the interviews, none of the universities surveyed had a final guideline on how to deal with lower (scientific) academic achievement.

productivity due to a lack of childcare or nursing staff. However, a push in this direction has been made at individual universities. In one interview, for example, there is mention of a paper on the topic of "Consideration of
School and daycare closures during evaluation of junior or tenure-track professorships" reported, which was drafted jointly with the family officers, human resources development and the legal department and is to be submitted to the rectorate. In some interviews it is also reported that the timing of evaluations and performance assessments has been postponed.

Management development: The flexibilisation of working hours and work location also results in new challenges, especially for managers. When managing at a distance, it can be more difficult to assess the workload of employees due to the lack of informal discussions. In addition, trust in the work performance of employees is gaining in importance (keyword trust working time). Especially at the beginning of the Corona pandemic, individual life situations had to be taken into account to a greater extent than before, and in some cases new individual agreements had to be made regarding work performance and working hours. Several interviews report tutorials or coaching sessions for managers on how to deal with the new management situation. Other examples from individual universities include a special newsletter published by the HR department on the topic of leading at a distance or an appeal from the rectorate to sensitise managers to the different life situations of their employees.

Consulting and networking

Counselling and networking of people with family responsibilities are of course not new developments. However, it emerges from the interviews that corresponding offers have been made in the course of the pandemic were extended to new topics or groups of people and often offered in digital format for the first time. Therefore, these measures will be briefly outlined here.

Counselling and further training on reconciliation: The interviews mention various counselling and further training measures for dealing with the pandemic-related situation in general or for reconciling family and work (e.g. online seminars on stress management or home office with children). One family manager reports an online coaching offer specifically for women on how to cope with work with family responsibilities during the Corona pandemic, which included five 90-minute sessions. This program was rated as very helpful by the female employees who participated.

Networking: Informal exchange with other people with family responsibilities can also be very helpful. One example is a virtual info café for parents organised in cooperation with the family office, which also provides input on legal issues, for example. An example from another university is an unofficial mothers' network that was founded as an online exchange.

Communication and commitment of the university management

Communication is cited by all interviewees as an important component in dealing with the Corona pandemic. All universities interviewed provide information on the current situation on the websites of the university or the family offices. At many universities there was or is a (regular) letter from the university management or newsletter on the topic. These measures can also be subsumed under the heading of acute crisis management, which is not considered in detail in this publication.

Commitment: However, the repeatedly mentioned aspect of "commitment" should be emphasised. Several family officers stress the importance of the importance of the family issue being communicated by the university management (in the sense of "we are thinking of you"). From the point of view of one family officer, "everything else that comes after that as a measure [...] depends on how much people feel supported". As an example, she cites a university online letter in which the rector and chancellor made a statement about family. In this way, the university management can signal to people with family responsibilities that they are not lone warriors and encourage them to use family responsibilities as a reason for lower performance.

Cultur
e
A family-friendly culture is not only established through the communication of the university management. Rather, the attitude of all those involved in the university system is important for a "lived" family orientation. From the interviews it emerges, that awareness of family-related issues has grown during the pandemic and that the new work arrangements have also led to changes in attitudes. The aspects mentioned below are not so much concrete solutions developed during the pandemic, but rather side effects,

which resulted from the aforementioned approaches. Nevertheless, this opens up an important field of action that can be explicitly addressed in the future, for example through appropriate management behaviour and communication measures.

Higher acceptance of family commitments: An increased acceptance of family commitments can be gleaned from the interviews. One interviewee outlines this very clearly:

> *"So this whole issue of 'the children jumping in between' is not as bad as it was before. So now you don't get half a heart attack when the child comes in and wants something from you, but [...] [everyone knows about it] and I could imagine that you can communicate about it in such a way that it also works in the future. That in the future it will be easier to bring in people who may not be able to be present, but who can then be brought in via Zoom.*

Overall, there is talk of an increase in openness with regard to the communication of family issues, which leads to a lower inhibition threshold for bringing up family issues in the work context (e.g. in the case of reduced performance capacity or higher flexibility requirements). This can certainly be specifically promoted through appropriate management behaviour and targeted communication measures.

Trust: From the perspective of the interviewees, trust in employees has also increased on the part of managers when working from home. One family manager describes it like this:

> *"... There has also been a change in the thinking of managers. So there were still managers, not so much in the scientific area, more in the administration, where people said 'well you only really do work when you're sitting in the office'. That has also really reversed itself. So many have had to learn quickly that you can and must and should do leadership work when people are sitting in different places."*

Perception of increased self-determination: As described above, working in a home office at the beginning of the pandemic often represented a completely new work situation, especially for university management staff. From the perspective of one interviewee, a change in attitude has taken place, especially in the area of university management. Due to the flexible

Work design is perceived to have more self-determination. She describes it as follows:

"I [...] am also employed in the administrative area and I see much more self-determination now to say 'today I also stay spontaneously, gladly at home and do my work at home, because it is feasible'. You don't have to discuss it so much anymore, [...] you have the feeling that you have more of a right to it now".

Shaping the Family-Oriented University - Lessons Learnt

The topic of family justice was already structurally anchored to varying degrees in most universities before the start of the Corona pandemic, for example through family offices and responsible prorectorates. The interviews show that those higher education institutions were at an advantage during the Corona pandemic which have a good structural anchoring of this cross-cutting issue. For these universities, it was easier to create new instruments ad hoc or to build on existing measures.

During the current pandemic, new approaches were created in all the universities surveyed. This took place due to the crisis situation, however, is not very systematic. After the pandemic, it is necessary to integrate proven, corona-related individual measures into a holistic concept and to anchor it structurally. One interviewee described it like this:

> *"The crisis has somehow produced many cases, but a structural solution is now needed".*

In addition to legal requirements that provide a framework, this structural solution can look different at every university. On the one hand, this has to do with the framework conditions of the higher education institutions, such as size, financial resources, student body, etc. In addition, it also depends on the question mentioned at the beginning, whether a university pursues family justice in the sense of a contemporary university management or in the sense of profiling. There is no doubt that family orientation is one of the most important factors, not least because of the increasing, or at least aspired to, diversity of the employees and the student body as a cross-cutting issue on the agenda of all higher education institutions, minimum standards should be set for all Universities meet. Is family orientation a core feature of the profiling, the university must take on a pioneering role and comprehensively take up lessons learned from the crisis. In the following, the previous findings and good practices gathered by the universities during the pandemic are classified with a view to their usability for normal operations, and complementary approaches and possibilities for merging the old and the new are identified. The ideas to be taken further originate from the interviews and will be further considered and concluded here.

classified. Overall, the thematically sorted sub-items each cover the following questions:

- *What did the pandemic reveal about family justice?*
- *Which concrete measures/approaches are relevant for normal operation?*
- *What complementary approaches and possibilities are there for bringing together the old and the new?*
- *How should the pandemic-related solutions and further ideas be classified?*

This is not a complete enumeration of previous instruments, but rather a summary of the central lines for the individual topic areas with a view to the post-pandemic period. Two levels can be distinguished: First, differentiation in terms of content according to the fields of action identified as central: University leadership, culture, flexibilisation of work and study, career promotion and personnel development, and health promotion. Second, there is a level that revolves around the question, "Who regulates family orientation measures?" Here, a differentiation can be made between internal university regulations and statutory regulations. In general, framework regulations should be anchored in law, while the specific design of the regulations should be the responsibility of the universities in the sense of university autonomy, in order to enable context-specific and process-oriented action. The internal regulations of the higher education institutions should in turn be seen as a

The "basic framework" for the members of the university, which gives concrete form to family orientation in the thematic fields of action. The findings presented here are preliminary, as the Corona pandemic continues to accompany us at present. It can therefore not be ruled out that further approaches may be added in the medium term or that certain ideas may be refined. However, we do not consider this limitation to be problematic insofar as a constant evaluation and conceptual further development of the approaches in the area of family justice should take place anyway.

Family justice and university leadership

The relevance of anchoring the cross-cutting topic of family justice at the management level of higher education institutions (Familie in der Hochschule, 2016), which was already a frequent topic of discussion before the Corona pandemic, has continued to be a topic of discussion at the interviewed higher education institutions even after the start of the Corona pandemic.

pandemic is confirmed and is still not a matter of course, as can be seen from the interviews. Approaches highlighted by the interviewees that retain their central importance even after the pandemic are:

Anchoring family justice at management level: A manager at management level should explicitly assume responsibility for this topic area. This task can be assumed by the chancellor, a vice rector or a vice president. With such formal responsibility, the topic is automatically present in management decisions of all kinds. This is particularly important if the university wants to distinguish itself with family orientation.

Systematic connection of those responsible for families to the university management: Organisational proximity and clear contact persons at management level make it easier for those responsible in the family offices to connect their activities to the university management. However, the personnel anchoring at the management level does not go hand in hand with a good connection of the family offices as a matter of course. It is also crucial that the family officers at the universities have a formal relationship with concrete decision-making bodies and processes, e.g. through involvement in routine meetings. This ensures that the concerns of employees with family responsibilities remain on the radar of university leaders. In some cases, this can also shorten internal university decision-making processes on family orientation. Similarly, university leaders should recognize that family-focused organizational units can be the voice to the target group when implementing decisions. The units are an interface to the university members with family responsibilities, which can be used as a multiplier for leadership communication.

Commitment and university-wide communication on family justice: In addition to clear measures, university administrations should credibly communicate their commitment to the topic of family justice throughout the university and unequivocally demand the commitment of other bodies and managers. A lack of appreciation and support for employees with care work by the university management is a point of criticism mentioned several times. On the other hand, the consequences of clear advances for the concerns of employees with family responsibilities by the university management are highlighted positively. University-wide agenda setting in this area is key to further action. It is also a key to ensuring that university employees with family responsibilities dare to articulate their family-related needs in concrete situations.

The anchoring of personnel at management level, the systematic linking of family officers to the university management and a clear commitment on the part of the latter are not new solutions that were introduced during the Corona pandemic. Rather, they are measures whose importance has been emphatically confirmed, but which are not currently being pursued at all of the universities considered. The clear recommendation here is to use and optimise these approaches.

Based on the three points mentioned above, the interviews identified the following approaches for the period after the Corona pandemic which should be taken into account in the leadership context in the future:

Constantly thinking about the **cross-cutting issue:** Starting from the anchoring of family orientation at management level, the issue should be "in the sights" of the entire management team in the future. It is about a gender- and compatibility-sensitive "lens". It would be ideal if decisions made at the university management level always took into account the various target groups, including staff and students with family responsibilities.

Participation processes: While during the pandemic, due to the crisis, top-down management by university administrations often dominated, also with regard to family orientation, since quick decisions were and are in demand, after the pandemic at the latest, bottom-up processes with family offices, parents and caring relatives must again be promoted more strongly where they are useful, without losing too much agility. University leadership needs a balance between the ability and willingness to make decisions, on the one hand, and participatory processes that harness the creativity and knowledge of everyone involved, on the other.

Cultur e

In the pandemic, it has been confirmed: The "soft" factors of Family justice is highly relevant. It is important to live family justice in everyday university life. The following approaches have proven to be viable during the pandemic or have been increasingly used:

University leadership-related factors: A family-oriented culture can be strengthened via the "hard" instruments of the university's mission statement and/or university strategy. However, the mission statement or the university strategy are of little help if they are not implemented in everyday life. Thus, in addition, the above-mentioned communication of the university management is of high relevance in order to achieve a

Promote openness in universities to family-related issues. This was true before the pandemic, during the pandemic, and will not become less important after the pandemic. The interviews show: Anchoring the topic in the mission statement of universities or in the university strategy and a clear stance is far from being a matter of course in all universities.

University-wide communication and awareness-raising: During the pandemic, awareness of family-related issues grew, as the lack of childcare and, in some cases, the loss of nursing staff were key challenges. More than ever before, it became transparent throughout the university that reconciling work or study and family is challenging but, on the other hand, doable with appropriate flexibility and pragmatism. Children running through the picture during online meetings became a new normal in many universities. This self-image must also be specifically promoted after the pandemic. Here we still need
"insane amount of communication, awareness raising", according to one interviewee. The aim should be to raise awareness of the issue to the extent that the
University members that it gets into the heads of each and every individual. One interviewee put it this way:

> *"And that, overall, everyone is actually aware, in the teams, but also in management, that it is a big part of life to have family obligations and that you can and must negotiate again and again in the team, how you [...] have a certain open culture. That you also dare to say that you are a bit at the limit right now [...] and see where you can get support".*

The experience of the pandemic may offer a unique opportunity to build on the change in awareness that is beginning to take place. However, this will only work if universities are intentional about shaping cultural change at this point. [21]

Another approach mentioned in the interviews for the post-Corona pandemic should be taken up:

[21] In order to find a systematic approach to the shaping of university culture, the operationalisation (symbols, routines and rituals, power structures, stories, control systems and organisational structures) according to Johnson, Scholes and Whittington (2005) can be used. For example, in relation to 'stories', the authors argue that the culture of an organisation is shaped by what 'hero stories' exist. Thus, via internal university communication, such heroic stories about coping with family and job during the pandemic could be specifically told. The "cultural web" of the authors mentioned above offers a multitude of such cultural levers.

Family responsibility also a task for men: This demand is not explicitly mentioned in the interviews; rather, reference is made several times to the strong discrimination of women due to the increased assumption of care work during the pandemic. As an example, attention is drawn to female professors, among others, who no longer have time for research because they are taking care of their children (on the decline in research publications by women during the Corona pandemic, see e.g. Andersen, Nielsen, Simone, Lewiss & Jagsi, 2020; Gabster et al., 2020; Muric, Lerman & Ferrara, 2020; Vincent-Lamarre, Sugimoto & Larivière, 2020). In order to counteract this problem on a cultural level, the work of family offices should not be limited to the target group of women, but should work with role models and offer and expand special programmes for fathers and caring men.

Making work and study more flexible

A central adaptation measure during the Corona pandemic is the flexibilisation of the working day, in particular the flexibilisation of time for employees in university management (for professors this was already largely the case before the pandemic) and the
Changeover to working from a home office. The central finding of these conversions is that flexibilisation, also in university management, is possible to a much greater extent than previously assumed and that this requires a culture of trust. Flexibilisation holds great potential for freeing up time resources that can make everyday family life easier. At the same time, the interviewees decidedly draw attention to the danger of dissolution of boundaries when, for example, working in a home office leads to constant availability or employees have difficulties finding mental distance from work after work because private and professional spaces are not separated.

Approaches highlighted by interviewees that retain their central importance even after the pandemic are:

Equal treatment of academic staff and staff in university management: As is implicit in the approaches presented above, the hypothesis that "administrative work requires presence and academic work does not" is outdated. In both fields there may be specific activities that work better in presence, but in both fields of activity home office is quite possible. Of course, there are tasks at universities (e.g. in the context of laboratories) that cannot be done in a home office. The question of when and whether to work in a home office should therefore be made dependent on the specific activity being carried out, not

from the formal type of employment. This also makes a general contribution to making careers between science and science management more permeable and bringing the actors closer together.

Trust-based working time and more flexible workplaces: The time clock should not be reintroduced in the area of university management, even after the pandemic. Instead, trust-based working time and independent time recording by employees can be relied upon. On a cultural level, this requires trust in work performance on the part of superiors and recognition that home office can also be career-enhancing or efficiency-enhancing in many places. Conversely, the culture on the part of employees should create an awareness that the leap of faith must be honored. For both sides, a more results-oriented understanding of leadership is required. In other words, the common culture must evaluate and measure work success in terms of work results, not in terms of "time served". On the technical side, the equipment created for regular operations must also be maintained or optimized. For example, the technical requirements include the equipment with laptops and docking stations instead of stand-alone computers.

Adaptation of service agreements for working from home: The long-term retention of the possibility of working from home (or teleworking or mobile working, see footnote 12) for university management staff requires a permanent adaptation of the service agreements. These should provide for a streamlining of the approval processes for working from home. This has not yet been done at many universities. When adapting these agreements, it is important to take into account the needs of people with family responsibilities and to create a lean, unbureaucratic framework that also minimises the risks of flexibilisation without creating overregulation. For example, fixed core hours could be created for home office accessibility. Working hours, if compatible with the task, could be individually set within limits to fit in with family commitments. There may also be rules of communication or expectation regarding accessibility. The set of rules should be designed to build trust rather than control. It should always keep in mind the double-edged character of flexibility versus the removal of boundaries, e.g. through explicit statements about periods of non-availability.

Continuation of flexible childcare options: The childcare options introduced at the universities during the "lockdown" or already previously

established various flexible childcare services22 should be made permanent or scaled up in the higher education landscape if they are not yet regular services. In one interview, for example, flexible day care is mentioned. This
Offers enable employees and students with children to continue to meet their professional obligations even in times of childcare bottlenecks and thus to refrain from taking time off work. Students do not have to prolong their studies unnecessarily. This subsidiarity works better in normal times, because during the "lockdown" in spring 2020 all parents were affected, which created a capacity problem.

(Regional) cooperation of family services: (Regional) cooperations of family services with external childcare or advisors for counselling and coaching services are of varying relevance for the universities interviewed with regard to flexibilisation. For example, some universities cooperate strongly with external providers, while others cover all offers internally and, for example, also have their own day care centre. For HEIs that work with external providers, it is essential to maintain dedicated contact with professional cooperation partners. During the crisis, for example, they showed increased flexibility in adapting their services.

Complementary approaches and ways of bringing together the old and the new can be summarised as follows:

Flexibilization of family service offerings: Making work more flexible should go hand in hand with making family-related service offerings at universities more flexible. This includes more than flexible childcare services. Parallel use of analogue, digital and hybrid formats, for example in counselling, can ensure access for as many target groups as possible, even after the pandemic. It can be assumed that digital communication offers a good means of access to people with family responsibilities, which should be included in service structures. The family offices should systematically consider which offers work better in personal exchange on site and which work better digitally. In this context, not only counselling is of great importance, but also further training opportunities for staff. The scope and capacities of the respective types of services can be further developed based on experience and evaluation.

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[22] Flexible childcare services are ad hoc childcare facilities that can be used on a regular or irregular basis.

Flexible committee meetings and exchange formats: After the pandemic, it is important to maintain digital committee meetings where they have proven successful, but also to enable informal exchange.

This often falls away digitally. What is needed here is a suitable mix of digital and analogue formats. It should be reflected which discussions should rather be conducted in presence or digitally.

For example, it might be a good idea to make routine arrangements digitally.

but to sit down together on site for creative exchanges. At the same time, flexibility should be maintained by allowing staff to join physical meetings. Such hybrid approaches can enable parents or carers to attend appointments where they would otherwise be unable to attend. At the same time, care must be taken to ensure that these formats do not lead to an increased lack of boundaries; specifically, the working hours of employees in part-time positions must be taken into account when scheduling appointments. All in all, it is advantageous for families that digital communication is very goal-oriented, fast and has shorter schedules.

Thinking flexibilisation beyond the home office: Flexibilisation does not end with work in the home office. Different life circumstances require different working models and continuous adaptation. Interviewees therefore suggest, among other things, the introduction of lifetime working time accounts, which make it possible to reduce and increase working time over time as needed. The consideration of family obligations in the scheduling of professors is also mentioned. Overall, it is important to enable diverse working models through a life-phase-oriented personnel policy.

Making studies more flexible: Consideration of the needs of students with family responsibilities should also be taken into account in the digitalisation or hybridisation of teaching. Teaching and learning independent of time and place and without compulsory attendance are important basic requirements in this context, as the interviews show. In the crisis situation, many universities have held lectures digitally, i.e. using methods that bring teachers and learners together synchronously without any changes. However, the synchronous elements should be combined with asynchronous, temporally flexible teaching formats. This means that the systematic support of the self-learning phases by the lecturers plays a much greater role. In addition, the offers of part-time study should be expanded and optimised. This would make many hardship regulations superfluous. Students would then be able to decide flexibly how many modules they want to take and, if possible, how many they want to take each semester. To this end, the flexibility should also be formally recognised (see comments on BAföG on page 47).

Career promotion and personnel development

As already explained, in terms of career promotion and personnel development, fewer solutions emerged during the Corona pandemic, but in particular existing grievances and
development needs have become apparent or have been brought into sharper focus. For example, the interviewees highlighted the disadvantage of female professors and young female scientists due to the double burden as a central issue. During the pandemic, care work was increasingly taken on by women.
This dynamic should be specifically addressed after the pandemic. It should be noted that the double burden on many women is not limited to the time of the pandemic, but was much more pronounced there.

In the interviews, two approaches were mentioned that had already been initiated or used at some universities during the pandemic:

Align evaluation and performance assessment: Evaluations and performance assessments were deferred at some colleges to the extent legally possible. At one university, a guideline was developed for taking school closures into account in evaluations of junior and tenure-track professorships. These initial approaches can be followed up after the pandemic. In the interviews, it was pointed out that publications as a whole should not be weighted too highly in evaluations and that supervision times and committee work23 should be taken into account positively. The latter also applies to the performance evaluation of female staff in university management. In a position paper on the impact of the pandemic on research at universities, the German Rectors' Conference (HRK) also states that "the assumption of additional care tasks during the pandemic [...] must be included in a fair performance evaluation" (Hochschulrektorenkonferenz, 2021, p. 4).

Adapt criteria for the distribution of funds from pools for student assistants: This point was not specifically mentioned in the interviews. However, the support of academics with family responsibilities by student assistants in the transition to digital media was mentioned.

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23 Since women are underrepresented in science and academia and committees usually have to have equal representation, women are often particularly involved in committee work (see also previous comments on challenges).

teaching (see new approaches and good practices). Following on from this, internal university allocations of funds from such pools could be adjusted. At present, this is often purely performance-oriented. In the future, a needs orientation should be introduced in addition to the performance orientation in order to be able to specifically promote employees with care work.

In addition, the interviews outlined further approaches to family-friendly career support and staff development in the aftermath of the pandemic:

Positive weighting of care work in appointment /Employment Procedure: The positive weighting of periods of Care work and committee work, as is currently already being discussed in performance assessment at some universities, should also be practised in appointment and other recruitment procedures. The time window of the Corona pandemic should be given particularly strong consideration with regard to care times. In this context, one interviewee stressed that discontinuous life histories are a normality and should not be considered special.

Job sharing/tandem professorships: Job sharing models such as tandem professorships should be expanded more strongly after the pandemic, as they meet the realities of life for many (young) academics and promote the increased assumption of leadership positions by women. Overall, job sharing is currently realistic, especially for people with advanced careers. This is the case, for example, with professorships or leadership positions in science management.
The attitude of the university management and the appointment committee plays a decisive role in the introduction and implementation of job sharing. In addition, the university regulations and statutes must lay the foundations for such a model (Christen, 2020).

University or science management as a career path: One interviewee points out that the career path of university or science management should be strengthened as an alternative career path to the scientific career.

> *"For a lot of women, that's the side path that might lead back. The definition is that this is an administration job and this is a science job. You feel degraded right away if you've slipped into administration."*

Therefore, it is important that a job in university or science management "not always be seen as a side route or as a stopgap solution". Many women would take this path after having children, either temporarily or permanently. Here, universities are called upon to promote the professionalisation of university and science management.

The aim is to push ahead with the development of a new academic management system and to create internal qualification paths for academic staff who want to make the switch, or to make use of existing external offers. In addition, bringing working conditions closer to those of academic staff could lead to an increase in the attractiveness of working in university management.

Personnel development: The topic of family justice should be anchored as a cross-cutting issue in personnel development. This can be promoted through regular meetings with the family offices or through a permanent structural link between the family office and the personnel department. A helpful measure in this context can be, for example, regular coaching sessions for all employees with family responsibilities. Adapting the way in which personnel development offers are prepared can also promote compatibility and thus increase the participation of people with family responsibilities. For example, shorter, flexible, digital formats are easier to use for this target group than seminars lasting several days.

Leadership development: Another personnel development topic related to family justice is leadership development. The topic of family justice is a leadership task, not only at the level of university management. One of the points made in the interviews is that university leaders should introduce this topic to every newly hired executive during onboarding. Managers need a clear framework with regard to employees with caring responsibilities within which they can operate. Tangible guidelines are needed here. In addition, an executive mission statement developed together with the executives is a helpful approach in this context.

> *"In this management mission statement, it must then be very clear what the managers are responsible for and the topic of compatibility is also part of it."*

Important aspects in this context are appreciation and interest in the life circumstances of the employees. The aim should be to enable a holistic view of the person with their professional and private facets. The pandemic has now abruptly changed the leadership relationship, especially through leadership at a distance. At the same time, the crisis can be the lever that creates the willingness to reflect on one's own leadership behavior. Employees in leadership positions should now use the "window" to generally work on their understanding and skills of leadership. This is a general prerequisite for making any progress at all with the topic of "family" in the leadership context.

Health Promotion

Health promotion is also an issue whose importance is clearly underlined by the Corona pandemic, but the development of specific measures beyond Corona prevention was not a priority during the pandemic. Therefore, mainly prospective solutions are presented below. Health promotion is a cross-cutting issue that arises from flexibilisation and the family context. It is also true for this topic that universities can establish it as a modernisation or profile topic. More and more universities also see the topic of health as a cross-cutting topic in teaching and research - it seems only logical to see internal health management as a complementary profile element to this. In the interviews, only the modernisation aspect for employees was addressed. It was emphasised that the work-life balance of all employees, not only those with children or relatives in need of care, should be promoted more strongly.
Specifically, one interviewee emphasized:

> *"After all, there are many who also say 'Well, I don't want children and yet I want to arrange something' and they always feel they are not considered at all in many discussions."*

The following concrete measures are proposed for normal operation:

Evaluation of health in the home office: Not least because of the topic of dissolution of boundaries, a subsequent evaluation (at the latest in the post-Corona period) of work in the home office with regard to health and family responsibility would be appropriate. It should also be investigated why there are significantly fewer sickness notifications when working in a home office. In addition, ergonomic questions regarding workplace equipment should be addressed.
In general, attention is drawn to the fact that all post-Corona evaluations should consider health and family as a cross-cutting theme.

Psychological counselling: The pandemic has shown that - even beyond times of crisis - psychological counselling services or psychosocial contact persons are needed at universities for university staff. While such services are established for students at universities, they are lacking for university employees at many universities.

Networking: Informal exchange with other people who bear family responsibility can also contribute to health promotion. Thus, parent networks can be a perspective measure to strengthen the health of parents at universities.

Networks for and persons with care responsibilities could also be established. These networks can firstly serve to facilitate peer-to-peer counselling. Secondly, they can also be the place to arrange synergies in care (e.g. taking care of each other's children).

Continuing education: Further training courses relating to health topics must be established throughout the company. These include, for example, courses on self-organisation, time management or advice from the occupational health service.

Internal university regulations

Many internal university regulations were temporarily adapted during the pandemic or special regulations were introduced. In the future, it will be necessary to look at which regulations have been adjustments should be maintained and where further development is necessary. For the home office, the adaptation of the service agreements in the context of flexibilisation has already been addressed. In addition, the following newly introduced regulations and procedures can be taken into account:

Compensation for disadvantages: Structural **compensation** for disadvantages for students, doctoral candidates and employees with family commitments should be established in order to avoid individual solutions. This includes, for example, compensation for phases of care work, "for example in the form [...] [of] contract extensions or personnel support". In this context, it is also suggested that flexibilisation entitlements should be laid down. One interviewee is in favour of stipulating the entitlement to reduce and increase working hours as needed, as well as the flexible arrangement of the place of work. Here it is necessary to bring employer and employee interests into a practicable balance and, if necessary, to make additional legal adjustments.

Regulation on non-cash benefits/care funds: Another suggestion is the establishment of "pragmatically manageable" regulations for non-cash benefits such as the assumption of costs for babysitters for students and employees. This could help with care bottlenecks. It is to be discussed for which target groups such a care fund could be considered. Among other things, it is discussed that there are status groups in university management for whom such measures are simply not possible without subsidies, while they can be financed in other ways for professors. Another limiting factor is the financial situation of the universities. Not all universities are in a position to finance non-cash benefits.

Catalogue of measures: The introduction of a criteria-based catalogue that systematically lists possible support measures for employees and students with family responsibilities is also recommended. Such a Catalogue of measures would be available to the employees of the family services as an orientation work and create basic structures that apply to all. A catalogue of measures should leave room for individual solutions. This instrument, which is being planned at a university, enables those responsible for counselling to find out quickly and in a binding manner which measures are possible in which cases. This firstly increases the fairness/comparability of the selection of measures and secondly facilitates the identification and approval of measures for employees of the family offices. Approval of the measures listed in the catalogue for indicated cases, for example on the part of the university management, is thus no longer necessary. The decision as to whether a measure can be implemented is transferred to the staff of the family offices on the basis of criteria.

Laws and collective agreements

The interviewees complain that they were also unable to implement some measures during the pandemic because they were not enshrined in law. One interviewee described this as follows:

> *"We just don't have much of a legal basis to refer to if we want to somehow implement something."*

This leads to university administrations rejecting measures. For example, one interviewee called for the topic of reconciling work and family life as a cross-cutting issue to be given greater consideration in university-related legislation in general. In the following, attention is drawn in particular to concrete legal provisions to be created. Where possible, points of connection to existing legal regulations are pointed out.

Anchoring disadvantage compensation for students in law: While disadvantage compensation for students with disabilities and chronic illnesses is anchored in the Basic Law, the Framework Law for Higher Education and the laws of the Länder, disadvantage compensation for students with family responsibilities has not yet been anchored in law. Here, an adjustment of the regulations is proposed, equivalent to the provisions for students with chronic illnesses or disabilities:

> *"They are allowed to hand in their work a little later, perhaps, or they can postpone the examination time once again. And what we would find good would be [...] a possibility like equivalent*

to students with chronic illnesses or disabilities, that they can also take other forms of examination".

One interviewee suggests integrating this compensation into the State Higher Education Act in order to increase implementation in higher education institutions in practice. Currently, only very few universities would implement disadvantage compensation as standard.

create exceptions for the timing of performance evaluations of junior professorships: In some Länder, the timing of the legally required performance evaluations for junior professorships24 is also set by law, for example in Rhineland-Palatinate. Here, it is also important to create flexibility with regard to the evaluation date for justified family-related postponements beyond corona-related adjustments.

Extend leave from work in the TV-L: According to §29 TV-L, relatives living in the same household may be released from work for one working day per calendar year with continued payment if the partner is seriously ill. It is suggested that this entitlement be extended to additional days to ensure childcare is available when needed. Measures such as flexible childcare or a childcare fund may reduce the use and also the need for the extent of the extension of these days.

Adapt teaching obligation regulations: The Teaching Obligations Ordinances (LVVO) of the Länder do not allow for teaching reductions due to childcare or caring responsibilities. One interviewee put it this way in the context of childcare:

"A reduction in teaching due to childcare is simply not allowed by the Teaching Obligations Regulations and that would be very desirable, so that there are simply exceptions again."

In particular, the lack of flexibility with regard to the period of the teaching commitment has been problematic during the Corona pandemic and may also make it difficult in the future to compensate for disadvantages for employees with special family responsibilities.

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24 For tenure-track professorships, the timing of the performance review is not specified by law in any state.

However, individual LVVOs already provide for a limited adjustment of teaching duties, for example §8 of the Hamburg LVVO:

> *"The university may determine a faculty member's teaching load in such a way that, if there is a deviation from the teaching load in individual semesters, it will be met on average over three consecutive academic years."*

Similar regulations apply in Berlin (LVVO Berlin). It needs to be clarified here whether these regulations can serve as a model for other federal states or whether exceptional regulations should be created specifically for people with family responsibilities. A reduction in teaching without later compensation is not considered realistic, as this would be equivalent to a reduction in working hours with the same salary.

Structural BAföG reform: Another important issue raised by an interviewee is BAföG entitlement for part-time students. Currently, BAföG entitlement is only available to full-time students (Müller, 2018). This creates problems for students with family responsibilities, which are exacerbated by the economic downturn. With a share of about 17 percent BAföG recipients* in 2019 (Statistisches Bundesamt, 2020a, 2020b), there is de facto a cyclical dependency of student financing, as students increasingly finance themselves through part-time jobs (61%) or parents (86%) (Müller & Thiemann, 2020). An amendment to the Federal Training Assistance Act (Bundesausbildungsförderungsgesetz), which would extend the
BAföG entitlement to part-time students is indispensable. However, it cannot stop there. There is a need for a comprehensive, structural reform of BAföG that is geared to the realities of life for students with families and makes funding attractive for those who need it. In addition, application processes should also be streamlined and possibilities for extending the maximum funding period for students with child(ren) should be communicated transparently, because: "BAföG funding can be extended beyond the standard period of study upon application due to child rearing, but maximum periods of study, such as for state examinations in teaching and law, restrict this possibility" (Familie in der Hochschule, 2018). New regulations for restrictions due to maximum periods of study may be necessary.

Recommendations for action

The results of the interviews show: Universities are at very different stages on the way to becoming a family-friendly university. What is a matter of course for one university is only just being introduced at another. Nevertheless, a similar idea emerges from all the interviews as to how the

family-oriented university should look like in the future. Career and family are not two pairs of shoes, but are also structurally established, among other things through an interlocking of the family office and university management. The tandem professorship and dual career options have been successfully established and professors with children on campus are just as common a sight as student families. Family equity is not only promoted at the university with counseling services for fathers and family members with caregiving responsibilities, the family-friendly university is also successful because the university administration has taken up the cause. How the path to a family-friendly university can succeed is shown below on the basis of recommendations for action. The recommendations are the result of the synopsis of the interviews with family members of seven selected universities on the lessons learned for family justice from the Corona pandemic. The recommendations are addressed to higher education institutions and policy makers, with a focus on recommendations for higher education institutions.

1.Universities must decide whether they want to pursue family justice in the sense of contemporary university management or whether they want to establish family justice as a profile issue. This decision determines how ambitious the family orientation measures should be: Implement good standards across the board or take a pioneering role with very far-reaching measures. If profiling is the goal, then it also makes sense to anchor the topic in research, teaching and transfer. The topic of health or work-life balance is closely linked to the family topic and in this context also offers itself as a relevant management and profiling topic.

2.In the crisis of the Corona pandemic, many things were suddenly possible that had previously been impossible to implement. Home office and trust-based working time, digital working - the experiences in the crisis have shown on the one hand that it works, but on the other hand also revealed limits and risks. These experiences should now be used for further steps towards family justice. What was carried out as an experiment during the crisis and proved its worth can be transferred to normal operations.

3.Universities should take direct advantage of the transition to normal operations for these changes and not fall back into old patterns. There is openness to this now, because in the period of the
closure of schools and day-care centres, a broad public has become aware of the challenges of family responsibility. The problems have become visible, the often cited "sensitization" is now there and can now be implemented in structures and processes. The "sense of urgency" generates a willingness to change.

4.The systematic design of family orientation at universities should be based on the central topics of university management, culture, making work and studies more flexible, career promotion and personnel development, and health promotion. These fields of action should also be flanked by internal university regulations and legal requirements.

5.The topic of family justice should be pursued at management level through various measures, which should be understood as parallel approaches. These include the clear responsibility of a manager, e.g. a chancellor or vice-president, regular routine meetings between the management level and the management of the family service, credible communication and clear commitment to family issues by the university president, constant consideration of family-relevant aspects and sufficient participation of relevant status groups or representatives in decision-making processes. Overall, the topic of "family" should be continuously placed on the agenda through structures and processes, and at the same time the management level should also take up the topic.

6.Family justice should be filled with life in everyday university life. In order to actively promote a family-oriented culture at universities, the mission statement and the university strategy can be adapted. Culture is shaped by many things: the stories that are told at universities, the routines and rituals, the existing control structures, and much more. Such aspects of culture should be specifically shaped in terms of family orientation. But the "soft" topic of culture cannot stop there. University administrations, as well as all other university employees, must be sensitised to the topic and themselves be sensitised through workshops and further training; care work can be decidedly occupied as a men's topic through role models. [25]

7.The pandemic-related expansion of the temporal and local flexibility of work at universities should be maintained, but "captured" by some rules based on experience, in order to further cultivate mutual trust that has been formed during the crisis. In addition, the current practice for normal operations should be flanked by suitable instruments (e.g. hybrid committee meetings). In doing so, opportunities and risks must be balanced. In concrete terms, it is necessary to counteract the dissolution of boundaries through regulations on core working hours and occupational health and safety without creating overregulation.

8.Equal treatment of academic staff and university management staff in terms of flexibility of time and place should be established in normal operations, because in both areas there are activities that work better in presence and others that work better in a home office. In any case, people with family responsibilities can benefit from flexible working conditions regardless of the formal type of employment. Incidentally, this change also offers the opportunity for a new interaction between science management and science on an equal footing.

9.Universities can contribute to family-friendly flexibility through a life-phase-oriented personnel policy that allows for a variety of working models. In the short term, it is initially necessary to turn the smaller, currently possible adjusting screws, such as job sharing. In the medium term, models such as lifetime working time accounts and the flexibilisation of teaching obligations should also be considered. This requires legal adjustments at the political level.

10.When making studies more flexible, the needs of students with family responsibilities should also be taken into account. Likewise, students should not be required to be present during their studies. Learning content should be available to students with children asynchronously. In addition, the offers of part-time studies should be expanded and optimised. This would allow students to decide flexibly how many modules they want to take and, if possible, to decide anew each semester. To this end, the flexibility should also be formally recognised. Such legal recognition would make (legal) anchoring of disadvantage compensation for students with family responsibilities to the same extent as for students with disabilities obsolete (see points 15 and 17).

11.A flexibilisation of work and study should be accompanied by a flexibilisation of family-related service provision at the

25 In order to find a systematic approach to university culture, the operationalisation (symbols, routines and rituals, power structures, histories, control systems and organisational structures) according to Johnson, Scholes and Whittington (2005) can be used.

universities go hand in hand. These include, for example, in addition to analogue offerings, the continuation of digital and hybrid formats for local flexibilisation with regard to teaching, meetings, counselling and further education. The continuation of flexible childcare should also not be disregarded.

12. Women are at a particular disadvantage in their academic careers due to care work. Universities can counteract this with measures of so-called positive discrimination/compensation for disadvantages (e.g. justified postponement of performance evaluations or positive weighting of care activities and committee work in appointment procedures). In addition, it is important to promote career models such as tandem professorships that accommodate the realities of life for academics with families. Furthermore, the professional field of university and science management plays a role as an alternative career path for people with family responsibilities. Here, both internal and external qualification paths for academic staff who want to make the switch should be promoted. The further professionalisation of university and science management can also strengthen the attractiveness of this field of work for this target group.

13. The topic of family justice should be anchored as a cross-cutting issue in personnel development. On the one hand, this includes flexible further training offers and coaching for employees with family responsibilities and can be promoted structurally through close cooperation between the personnel department and the family office. On the other hand, the topic of family justice must be anchored in management development. For example, every newly hired manager should be directly sensitized during onboarding and informed with tangible guidelines with regard to employees with family responsibilities, for example with regard to compensation for disadvantages.

14. In the context of family justice, universities should focus on the topic of health promotion and work-life balance. Concrete measures to be considered for normal operations with regard to this topic are psychosocial counselling services for university employees, the establishment of networks for parents and people with care responsibilities in the sense of peer-to-peer counselling, further training courses on health topics and regular evaluations of working conditions (in the home office) from a health perspective.

15. Provisional adjustments to internal university regulations must be systematically evaluated and updated with regard to normal operations. In addition, any regulatory needs that have become apparent should be addressed in a timely manner. For example, regulations on

benefits for care bottlenecks and service agreements regarding work in the home office. In addition, structural disadvantage compensation for students, doctoral candidates and employees with family responsibilities could be introduced.

obligations should be laid down in different places within the university. Another helpful instrument would be the introduction of a criteria-based catalogue of measures for family services.

Many of the approaches mentioned here are not new, but still not implemented. The pandemic has shown that some things work ad hoc and that change is possible where it was difficult to imagine. This now creates a window of opportunity, which should definitely be seized. University administrations, personnel and family representatives should seize the opportunity and initiate a counter-current process at their universities.

For family representatives, there are a number of starting points, not only within their own portfolio, in order to - if necessary/possible –Become change agents in their university. Family representatives should...

- ...consider the transition phase between crisis mode and new normal operation to be particularly important for family orientation at universities. They should engage in this phase so that universities learn from the experience gained during the pandemic and develop accordingly.
- ...approach the university managements - provided that there is an appropriate basis and the university managements do not get ahead of them - in order to clarify together which significance the topics of family orientation and health should take in the university in the future. The role of family offices may also need to be redefined in this context.
- ...combine the promotion of compatibility with other strategic goals of the university in order to make use of synergies, for example in the areas of internationalisation (e.g. plan mobility abroad accompanied by children) or the promotion of young researchers (add family topics to funding instruments, e.g. in research training groups, include compatibility as a topic in the supervision agreement for doctoral students).
- ...also seek contact with the personnel departments in order to jointly initiate the processes outlined above in the personnel area, if necessary.
- ...go into the internal networking and so the entanglement make the topic visible: Membership in committees (in addition to staff council also senate and commissions) and in direct exchange ("round tables") with the Welcome-

     Service/Department of International Affairs, AStA, Student
     Services, Complaint Management, Research Funding.

- ...initiate and accompany internal university evaluation
  projects, e.g. on flexible working, and participate in the
  development of regulations.
- ...lead the development of a catalogue of measures for the
  family office at their university and test it in everyday life after
  it has been developed. The compilation of the measures of the
  catalogue could, if necessary, also take place via
  benchmarking in a network with other universities or a
  university could make its catalogue available to the other
  universities for internal further development in order to
  create synergies.
- ...carry out an evaluation of their own work during the Corona
  pandemic in order to determine, for example, which counselling
  services should take place on site, virtually or hybrid, and to
  what extent. Strategically, the role and the self-image of the
  family offices at the universities should be further developed on
  the basis of the experiences of the Corona pandemic.
- ...generally engage in an exchange with family leaders at other
  colleges and universities to learn about the results of
  Post-Corona evaluations as well as the conceptual
  development of the work of family offices
  exchange.

17. The topic of family justice also belongs on the political agenda. In
concrete terms, legal requirements need to be adapted, firstly because
those responsible for families at universities sometimes lack a legal
framework for certain measures, and secondly because there are no
legal requirements that would allow internal university regulations to
be adapted. The following possible amendments need to be examined
and implemented:

- The disadvantage compensation for students with family
  responsibilities could be anchored in law, equivalent to that
  for students with disabilities and chronic illnesses.
- For performance appraisals of junior professorships, the time
  span for the evaluation period in some
  federal states to be made more flexible in order to allow
  family-related alternative assessment dates in justified
  cases.
  enable
- According to §29 TV-L (Tarifgemeinschaft deutscher Länder,
  2019), relatives living in the same household may be released
  from work for one working day per calendar year with
  continued payment if the partner is seriously ill. It is suggested,

extend this entitlement to additional days to ensure childcare is available when needed.

- The teaching obligation regulations (LVVO) of the Länder do not allow for a reduction in teaching due to childcare or care responsibilities. However, LVVO already provide for a flexible adjustment of teaching duties (e.g. §8 Hamburg LVVO: "The higher education institution may determine the teaching duties of a teacher in such a way that, in the event of a deviation from the teaching duties in the individual semesters, these are fulfilled on average over three consecutive academic years"). It must be clarified here whether these regulations can serve as a model for other federal states or whether exemption regulations should be enshrined in law specifically for people with family responsibilities.

- Currently, only full-time students are entitled to BAföG; at the same time, the number of BAföG recipients is declined sharply in recent years. There is a need for a structural amendment of the Federal Training Assistance Act, which is based on the The Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) is working on the development of a system that is geared to the realities of students' lives and that, for example, extends BAföG entitlement to part-time students and simplifies the application process so that all those who need BAföG receive it.
Possibilities for extending the maximum funding period for students with children should be communicated transparently.
because: "BAföG funding can be extended beyond the standard period of study upon application due to child rearing.
however, restrict maximum study times such as for state examinations in teaching and law this possibility" (Familie in der Hochschule, 2018). If necessary, new regulations for restrictions through maximum periods of study are necessary.

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Append ix

1.Block of questions: How has the "old" proven itself in the crisis? What are the current challenges?

- What were the three biggest challenges at your university in relation to staff or students with family responsibilities during the crisis?

- What has proven to be outdated in the crisis with regard to the situation of university staff and students with family responsibilities and should be changed/abolished, as it is unlikely to bear fruit even in "regular operation" after the crisis (rules, structures, processes, instruments, procedures, practices...)?

- What measure or instrument to promote family orientation is missing at your university during the crisis?

- Conversely, what has worked well in supporting staff and students with family responsibilities during the current crisis, has been helpful, and is therefore absolutely worth maintaining after the crisis?

- What legal leeway to promote family orientation have you used so far during the crisis that was previously ignored?

- Which laws/governmental framework conditions hinder the design of family-friendly structures at your university during the crisis? How would the laws have to be adapted?

- Which communication channels were eliminated during the crisis and which new ones were added during this time?

- What decision-making latitude is missing at your university for shaping family orientation in the Corona crisis?

- How is the cooperation between family officers and university management structured at your university and is it appropriate in its current form?

2.Block of questions: What new ideas and approaches emerged during the crisis? What can be learned from this for normal operations after the crisis?

- What are the top three solutions created at your university for employees or students with family responsibilities during Corona time?

- What good ideas and new approaches have emerged during the crisis that could benefit university staff and students with family responsibilities beyond the crisis? What problem do they solve?

- Has the crisis given you new room for manoeuvre that you would not want to miss in the long term?

- What innovations (e.g. rules, processes, instruments, practices) have you tried out during the crisis that also promise lasting improvements? What improvements have resulted?

- How can the new (what you have now described) be meaningfully combined with the old structures, processes, regulations, etc.?

- Have cooperations with regional actors (e.g. in childcare) gained in importance in the current crisis?

  How should cooperation with other, e.g. regional, actors look after the crisis?

- Results of a survey of FidH members indicate that flexibilization is the big buzzword for work-life balance in the Corona crisis. Do you agree with this?

- What forms of flexibilisation do you see and how must these be designed? Are there limits to flexibilisation that must be set in favour of family orientation?

- Family orientation is not only the task of the family offices. How can the leadership responsibility of the university management with regard to family orientation ideally be shaped after the crisis?

- Assuming you had complete freedom of choice and could develop a working model for the post-Corona period based on your experiences as a result of the crisis, specifically tailored to the needs of university staff with family responsibilities, what would it look like?

- What can be learned from the current developments for the time after the Corona crisis with regard to performance appraisal, career and health promotion?

- We have now reached the end of our conversation. Is there anything else you would like to say about the situation of employees and/or students with family responsibilities? Have we forgotten an aspect that is particularly important to you?

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