

INTERGENERATIONAL SOCIAL INEQUALITY



- Contributors

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- In international comparison, Finland is doing well when it comes to the intergenerational social inequality: It is, in principle, possible to acquire an education and achieve a good social status and economic well-being irrespective of one's family background.
- However, deprivation is passed on from one generation to the next in Finland, too.
- In the past decades, upward social mobility has slowed down, which is partly caused by the increase in the education level of older age groups compared to previous generations.

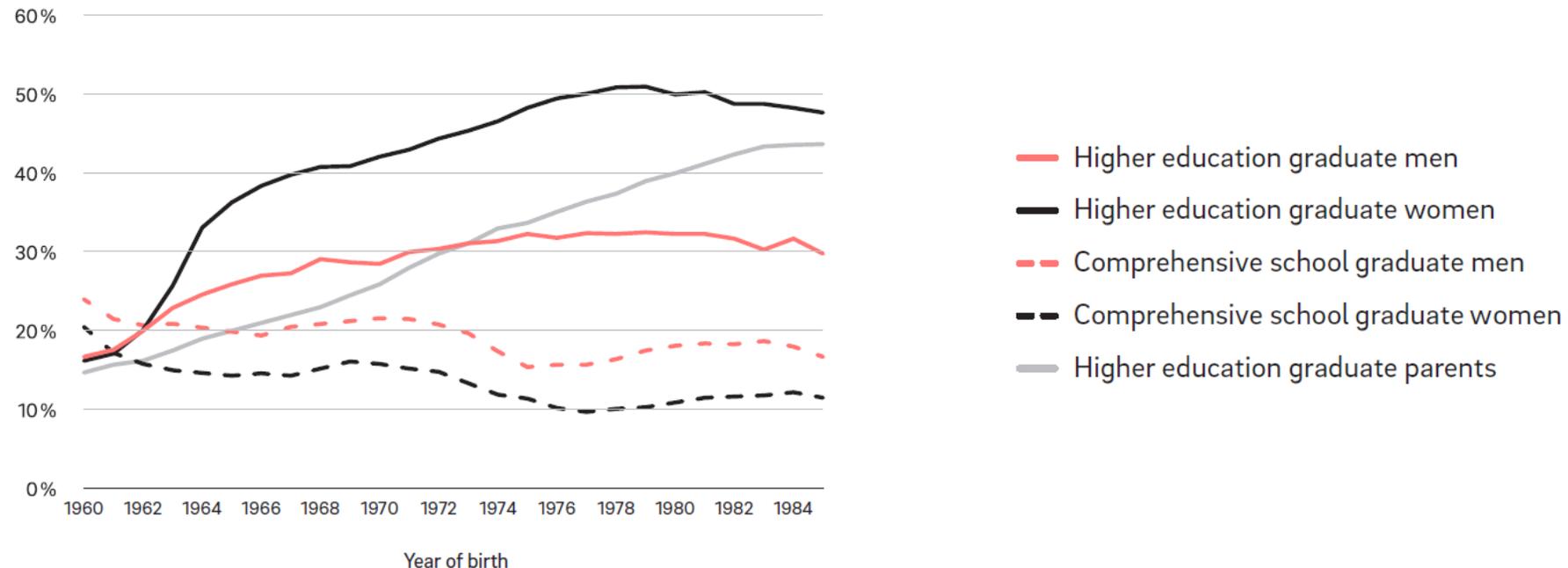
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Figure 4.1 The shares of higher education (university or university of applied science) graduates and those without a qualification after comprehensive school born in Finland at age 30 by year of birth and gender, and the share of those aged 30 (by year of birth) of whose parents at least one has a higher than upper secondary education.

Source: Own calculations, Statistics Finland register data



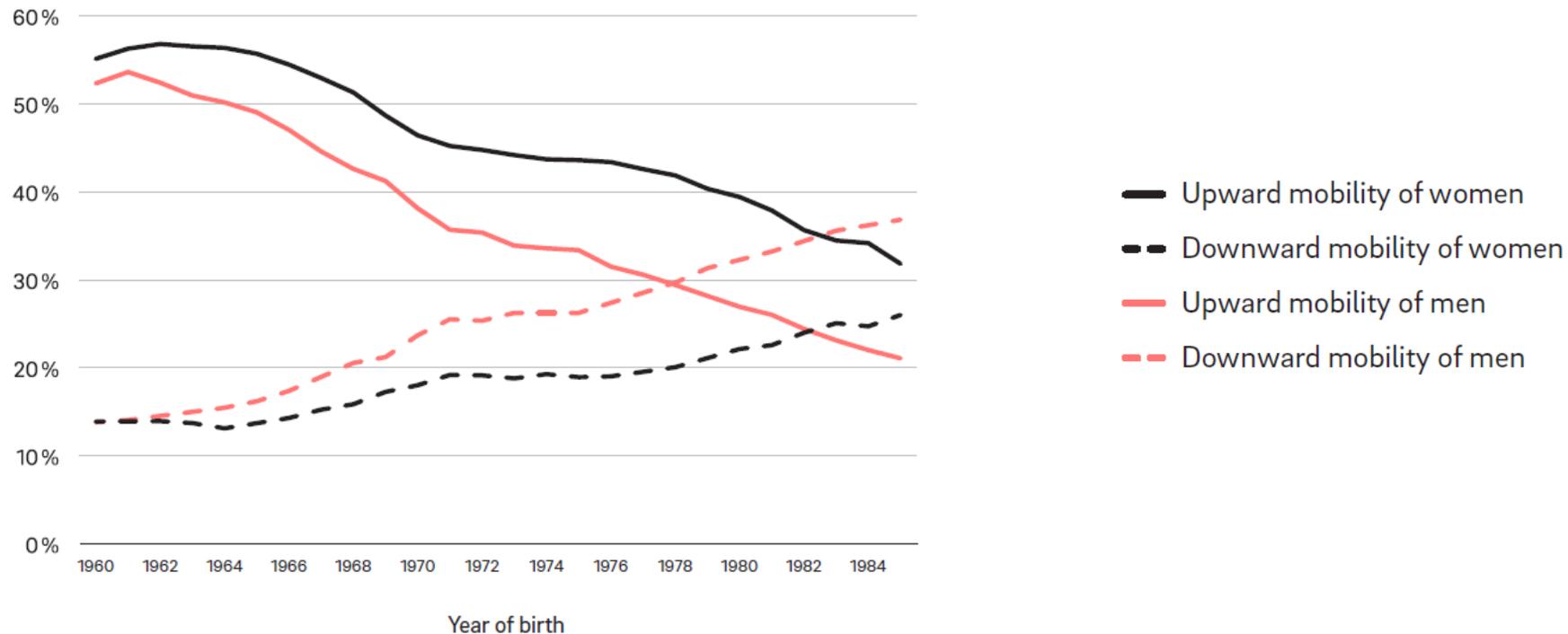
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Figure 4.2 The share by year of birth of those born in Finland who by age 30 have completed a higher (upward mobility) and a lower (downward mobility) level of education than their parents.

Source: Own calculations, Statistics Finland register data



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- In recent decades, the share of professional, clerical and service occupations has slowly but surely increased among the class positions of Finns. At the same time, the shares of working class occupations and farmers have slowly decreased.
- It is not directly seen in the class structure that women's level of education has for long been higher than men's, as the share of men in the higher professional class is still nearly double compared to women (21% vs. 11%). Among men this class position has increased even more rapidly than among women, which is surprising in relation to changes observed in education.
- Polarization can be seen in the class positions of men.

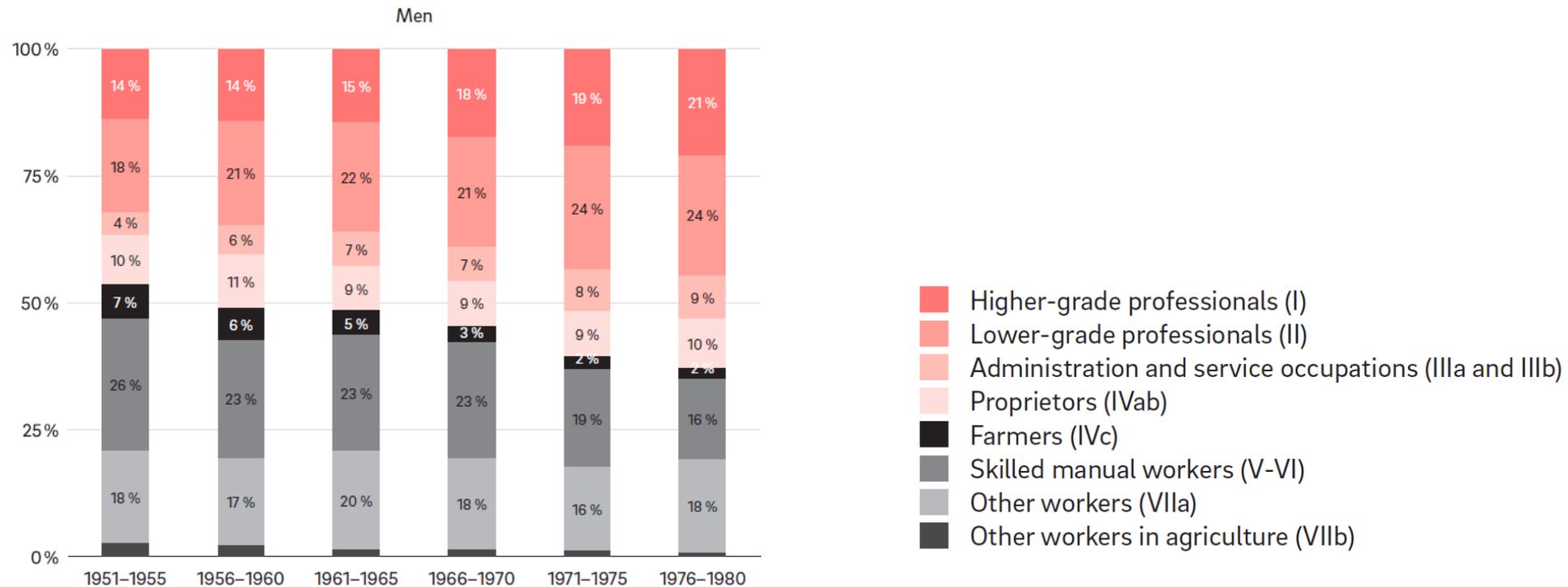
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Figure 4.3 Social class structure of Finnish men at age 35–39 by year of birth. Erikson–Goldthorpe class scheme.

Source: Own calculations, Statistics Finland register data



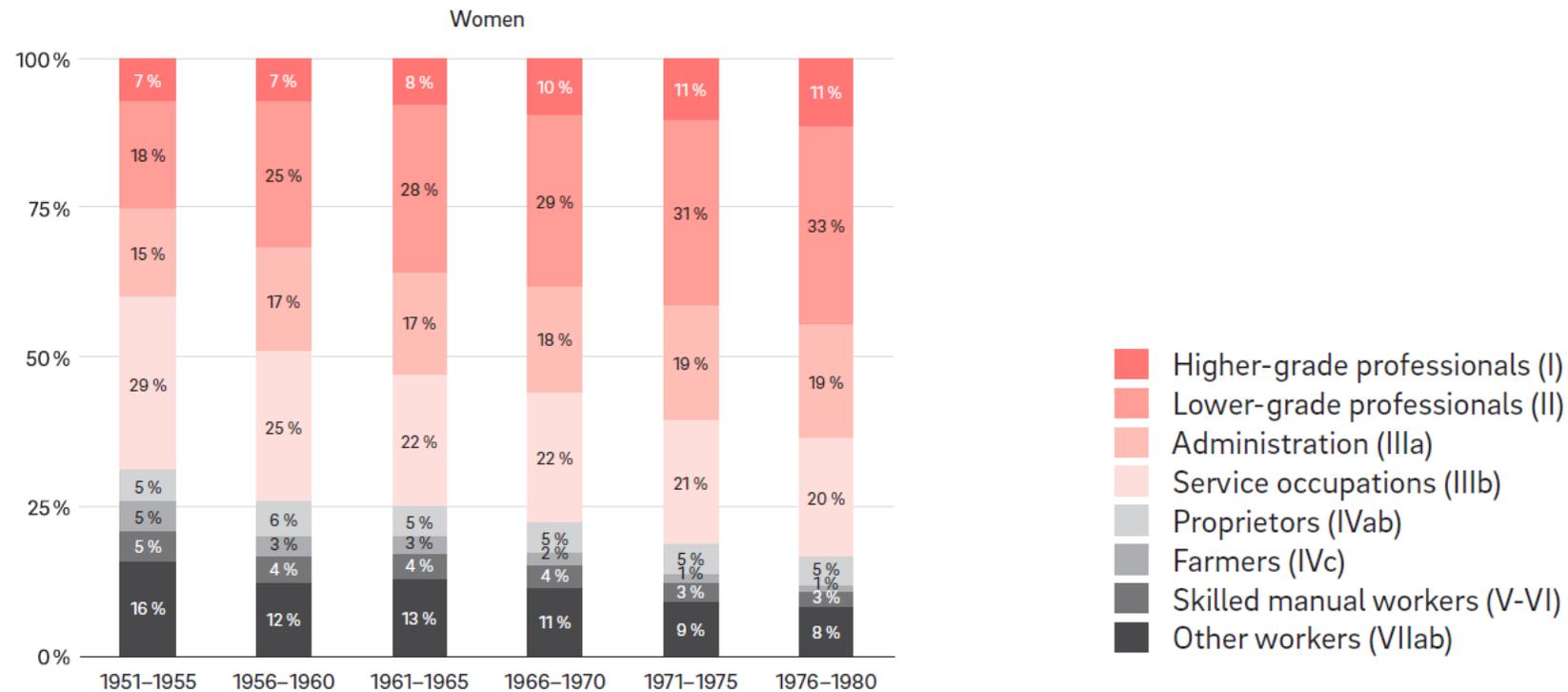
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Figure 4.4 Social class structure of Finnish women at age 35–39 by year of birth. Erikson–Goldthorpe class scheme.

Source: Own calculations, Statistics Finland register data



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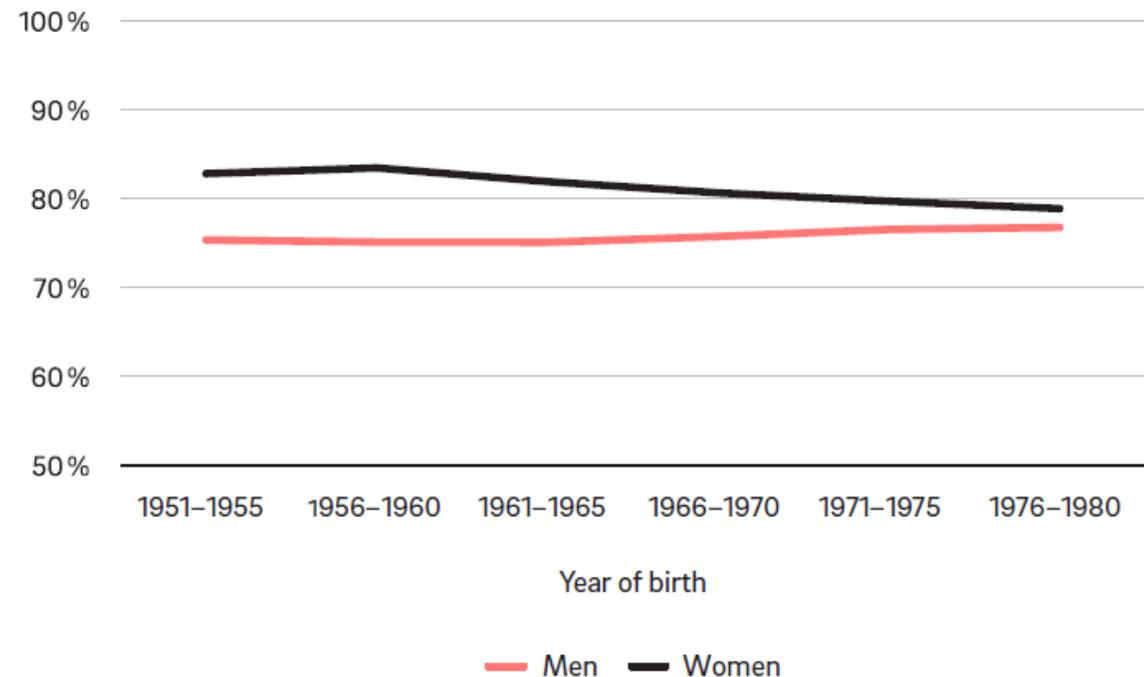
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- Social mobility has traditionally been at a high level in Finland, and there do not seem to be great changes in this.

Figure 4.6 Class mobility between any classes (i.e. absolute mobility) in men and women at age 35–39 by year of birth.mukaan.

Source: Own calculations, Statistics Finland register data



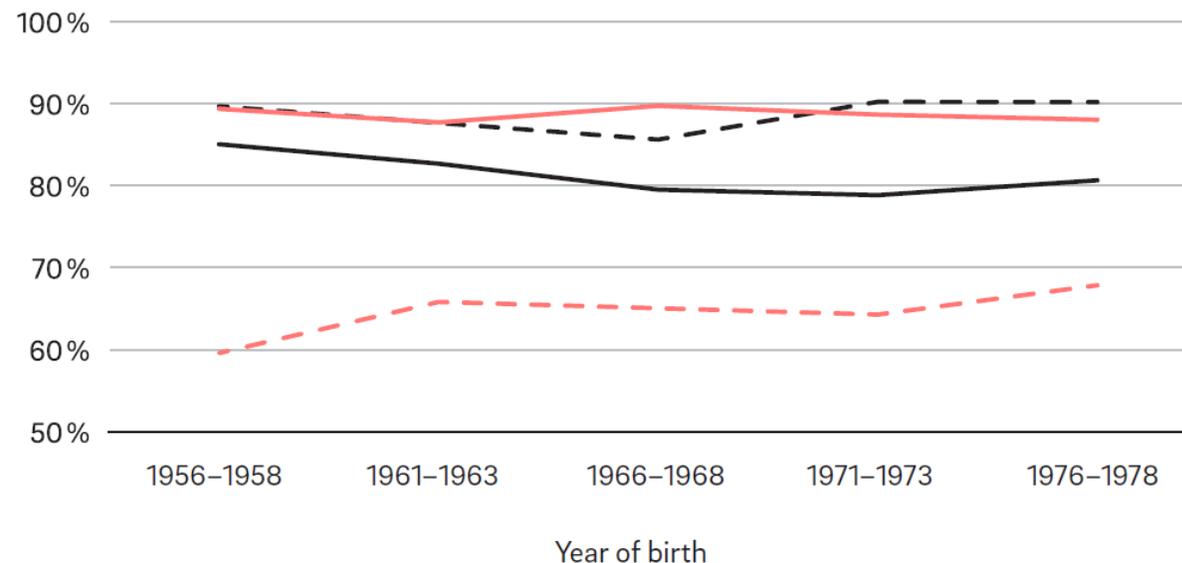
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Figure 4.9 Mobility from the bottom income decile upward and from the top income decile downward. Childhood family income level (household income at age 12–14) has been compared to reached income level as adult (at age 32–36). The income is adjusted for inflation.

Source: Own calculations, Statistics Finland register data



- The inheritance of income level is weaker and changes that have taken place in it have been smaller than changes in education and class mobility.

- Men's mobility upward from the bottom income decile
- - Men's mobility downward from the top income decile
- Women's mobility upward from the bottom income decile
- - Women's mobility downward from the top income decile

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• Conclusions and recommendations

- Securing equality in the availability of and participation in early childhood education, preventing content and spatial segregation in comprehensive school as well as securing the quality of vocational training prevent the intergenerational social inequality.
- Encouraging talented students to complete general upper secondary school and enter higher education is important. This is done by investing in the quality and timing of guidance counselling in comprehensive school and informing young people of the benefits of education. Resources for guidance counselling must be guaranteed.
- Increasing higher education and, in particular, university education by considering the intake decreases the intergenerational social inequality.
- Toward the end of and at the end of studies, it is important to support labour market attachment through financial support for practical training as well as employment and business services.
- Promoting equal recruitment practices, such as anonymous job applications, prevent discrimination.
- Multi-sectoral support that promotes young people's life management and strengthens their ability to function is needed for young people with a disadvantaged family background.
- Services for disadvantaged families should be strengthened, which would make it easier to support parents and families in coping with everyday life and strengthen their resources.
- All of the above-mentioned measures must be systematically evaluated in order to target them in the best possible way.