

# **WORK PACKAGE 4**

## **ORIENTATIONS TO WORK AND CARE**

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>WORK PACKAGE 4</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>ORIENTATIONS TO WORK AND CARE</b> .....	<b>1</b>
1. Introduction.....	3
<b>Part 1</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>CONCEPTUAL ISSUES AND ATTITUDE-BEHAVIOUR RELATIONS</b> .	<b>4</b>
2. <i>VALUES, VALUE ORIENTATIONS, ATTITUDES AND PREFERENCES – CONCEPTUAL CONFUSIONS</i>	
.....	5
Abstract.....	5
2.1. Introduction.....	5
2.2. Definition of Concepts.....	6
2.3. Illustrative Examples .....	12
2.4 Discussion.....	14
2.5. Conclusion .....	17
3. <i>STATE OF THE ART: RESEARCH ON WOMEN’S EMPLOYMENT</i> .....	21
3.1. Introduction.....	21
3.2. Micro-economic Approach .....	21
3.3. Agency Approach .....	23
3.4. Cross-Country Comparative Research.....	26
3.5. Regional Studies .....	32
4. <i>ATTITUDE-BEHAVIOUR RELATIONS IN MOTHER’S EMPLOYMENT</i> .....	39
Abstract.....	39
4.1. Introduction.....	39
4.2. Model Specification .....	41
4.3. Results.....	45
4.4. Discussion.....	50
4.5. Conclusions.....	53
<b>Part 2</b> .....	<b>56</b>
<b>MAPPING ORIENTATIONS TO WORK AND CARE IN EUROPE</b> .....	<b>56</b>
5.1. Introduction.....	57
5.2. Theoretical background and hypotheses .....	58
5.3. Methodology and data.....	63
5.4. Orientations to work and care and gender roles .....	64
5.5. Orientations to work and care and differences among European women .....	84
5.6. Orientations when job seeking.....	95
5.6. Conclusions.....	100
<i>APPENDIX</i> .....	<i>106</i>

## 1. Introduction

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This report represents part of the work carried out for the “WORKCARE” Project as work package 4. First, it reviews the literature concerned with the theoretical and empirical analysis of social values, individual value orientations, attitudes and preferences. Second, it explores the within and across country differences in people’s orientations to work and care and in their attitudes. Third, it investigates the relation between ideational factors (e.g. gender role attitudes, care ideals) and women’s work-care decisions. Overall, the report provides a multifaceted picture about how research in cultural aspects of work and care is able to enrich our understanding of societal, political and economic processes.

The report is divided into two different parts. Part 1 deals with a theoretical and methodological discussion about values and other concepts which are then empirically tested. Part 2 is concerned with describing and explaining differences in orientations and attitudes across Europe.

In more details: The following Part 1 consists of three chapters. First, it gives a theoretical introduction. It reviews diverse definitions of social values and norms, individual value orientations, attitudes and preferences – theoretical concepts that are often used interchangeably in applied research. The following chapter reviews the different approaches to understand female employment patterns and the vast differences in the employment and care behaviour of mothers that exist within and across countries. Chapter 3 of Part 1 uses data from the International Social Survey Programme 2002 to explore the relationship between women’s attitudes toward gender roles and childcare and their employment behaviour when they have pre-school aged children. It shows large cross-national differences in mothers’ employment

patterns across 26 countries. Findings from multilevel analyses suggest that maternal employment behaviours do indeed frequently align with their stated attitudes toward non-maternal childcare. Interestingly, however, such attitude-behaviour relations appear to be stronger in some countries than in others.

The final Part 2 maps cross-country differences in orientations and attitudes to work and care. Drawing on comparative data from the European Social Survey and the Eurobarometer Survey, it highlights the substantial differences with regard to work and gender culture across different welfare states. Moreover, it explores within-country variations in orientations, attitudes and preferences (e.g. along the lines of sex, education, and household types).

The theoretical and empirical results in orientations and attitudes yield new perspectives in how to understand the importance and social meanings of paid work and care. The processes in the formation of orientations and attitudes as well as their possible impact are seen as strongly embedded in the wider social, political and economic conditions. Since structural and institutional circumstances vary largely across the countries, the orientations and attitudes do likewise. Hitherto, research on the impacts of socio-political and economic structural factors upon gender relations has pre-dominated the debate. The following insights in cultural aspects increase our understanding of singularities and regularities in the organisation of paid work and care across Europe. The insights gained in how the Europeans perceive daily life aspects (paid work, care and family issues), provide challenging research topics for future studies.

*Part 1*

*CONCEPTUAL ISSUES AND ATTITUDE-BEHAVIOUR  
RELATIONS*

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## **2. VALUES, VALUE ORIENTATIONS, ATTITUDES AND PREFERENCES – CONCEPTUAL CONFUSIONS**

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### **Abstract**

Despite the strong interest in cultural aspects of societies and the huge amount of survey research dealing with values, norms, value orientations, attitudes and preferences, there is little coherence in the underlying theoretical assumptions. Therefore the concepts and measures differ widely. The aims of this paper are twofold. First, we aim to define the concepts more clearly and to specify at which level of abstraction they are explored. While values and norms remain mainly abstract, stable at the societal level, value orientations, by contrast are conceptualised as being relevant at the individual level, similar to attitudes. Second, it is argued that attitudes differ from preferences. While preferences are intentional with regard to behaviour, attitudes more strongly reflect ideal value orientations and they could also be adaptive to the conditions. Therefore, attitudes and preferences may contradict each other and they may not align with behaviour. Drawing on the capabilities approach helps us to understand possible incongruencies between attitudes and preferences as a lack in capabilities.

### **2.1. Introduction**

Studies on values and norms, value orientations, attitudes and preferences have a long tradition. The roots go back at least to the work of Thomas and Znaniecki (1963) about Polish immigrants. Based on field research, this study provides an elaboration on how to conceptualise actions and underlying values. Another example is the well-known study of the “Protestant Ethic

and the Spirit of Capitalism” (Weber, 1958) in which Max Weber demonstrates the inner structure of ideas, religious Protestant beliefs and their influence upon social behaviour. However, the impact of Weber’s theories on the development of value orientations research is ambiguous. It has been argued that (Klages, 1992: 6) on the one hand Weber has founded cultural sociology stressing the importance of ideas and values for social institutions. On the other hand, the well-known and highly debated pledge for a value free research also hindered researchers in dealing with values. Indeed, studying structures and institutions as research topics enables us more easily to provide value free results. Accordingly, many sociological approaches focus on structural factors and socio-economic conditions to explain social development. Cultural aspects are mainly seen as having an influence in theory and the concepts thus remain highly abstract and are hardly applicable for empirical studies. In the field of social psychology, by contrast, attitudes are key to understand human behaviour. But, they were usually found to be rather poor predictors of behaviour. Economists who often interpret behaviour as an expression of underlying preferences (for a critique see Sen, 1973) are thus not the only ones who have little confidence in the concept of cultural aspects.

Although, there is a strong focus on institutional and structural factors to understand societal, political and economic processes, theories on values gained importance in nearly all social science disciplines by the 1960s (Hitlin and Piliavin, 2004). Empirical studies, however, lagged behind. Mainly in the last decades of the twentieth century quantitative research on

values has expanded rapidly (Klages, 1992: 6f). The sociological debates were strongly influenced by Inglehart's (post)-materialism scale which has been developed at the beginning of the 1970ies. These studies focus on changes between post-materialist versus materialist values across countries at the aggregate societal level. Beside sociological and social psychological studies, economists have also dealt with attitudinal issues to explain economic behaviour (e.g. Fortin, 2005; Himmelweit and Sigala, 2004). Since we witness a conceptual confusion in how values, norms, orientations, attitudes and preferences are used in quantitative research, we focus on this topic. Moreover, we argue that cultural aspects entail difficult theoretical dimensions so that we draw attention to the "conceptual analysis" which "must precede explanation and measurement" (Locke, 1969: 313).

Empirical results in cultural aspects can be compared to each other and criticised only when the concepts we use mean the same thing and when they are measured at the same level of abstraction. To draw a line between values, value orientations, attitudes, and preferences, we begin with a definition of concepts. The capabilities approach helps us to understand possible in-congruencies between attitudes, preferences and behaviour. Although the role of preferences is key to understanding capabilities (Robeyns, 2006), the preference concept is far from being evident. The core questions we raise are as follows: What are attitudes? What makes them different from values, norms and value orientations? What are preferences and capabilities? How are attitudes, preferences and capabilities linked to the achieved functionings (=behaviour)?

Drawing on our theoretical framework, we aim to give some illustrative examples for each conceptual level: First, although there is a great variety on studies about societal values and norms, we here focus on the most widespread and well-known approach of Inglehart. Second, to gain insights in the concept of value orientations, we focus on

the study of the Schwartz Personality indicators (Schwartz, 2007) and the values research of Klages and Gensicke (2006).

To exemplify how attitudes can be measured, we present a study in which attitudinal statements have been related to behaviour (Jansen and Liefbroer, 2006). As an example for how to explore preferences we refer to a recent investigation of preferences on working hours (Lewis, 2006). In the concluding part, our main focus lies on the triangle between attitudes, preferences and behaviour against the background of (perceived) capabilities.

## 2.2. Definition of Concepts

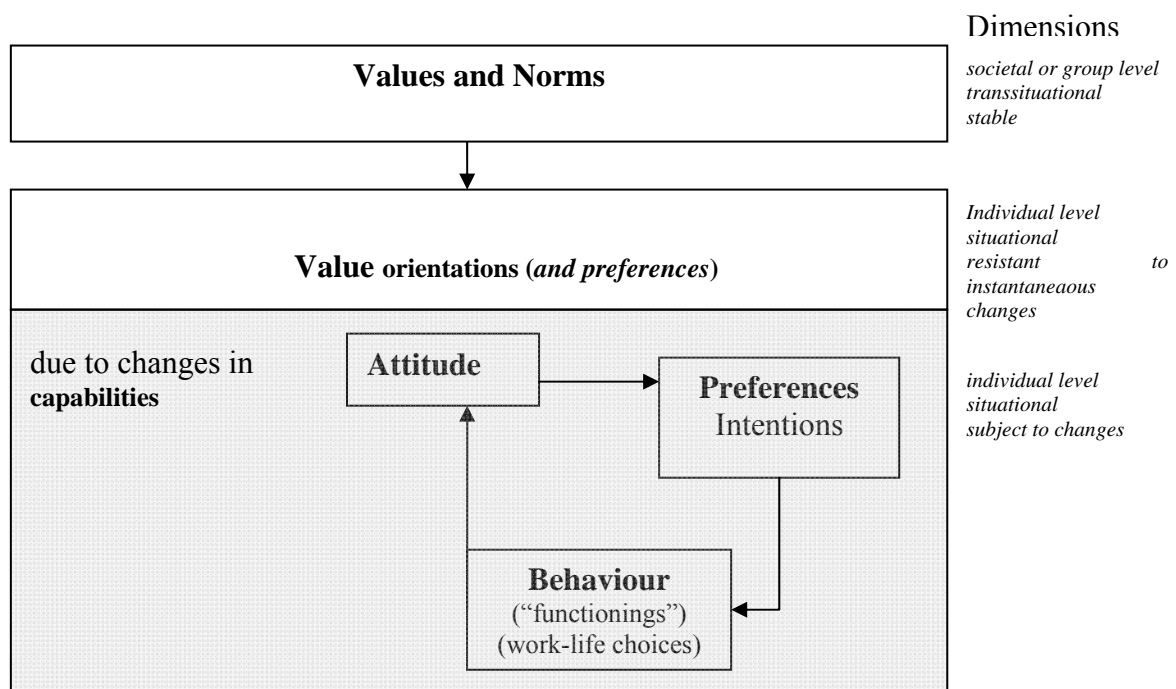
Hitherto, the terms values, norms, orientations, attitudes and preferences are often used interchangeably in the literature and they have been investigated at different levels of abstraction. In the notion we propose, cultural terms are socially constructed and embedded in historical, political and economic circumstances. These assumptions are usually conceptualised as strong interdependencies between the micro- and macro-level of societies, the structure-agency dichotomy or the systems of the society versus the personality system. Based on these premises, we concentrate upon the attitude-preference-behaviour relationship.

To enrich our understanding of the broad framework in which the triangle between attitudes, preferences and behaviour is situated, we draw a line between the following concepts: societal values and norms, individual value orientations, attitudes, preferences and behaviour. To specify these terms in more detail, we present a schematic representation of their interrelationship. In line with the specifications which Schwartz has made for "basic values" (Schwartz, 2007), we distinguish between different dimensions to understand how concepts are related to each other in theory: the first dimension is the level of investigation either at the societal/group level or at the individual level.

Second we ask whether these cultural aspects are applicable in different situations (trans-situational) or in specific life course situations. And finally, we assume that these aspects differ with regard to their stability over time, being either stable or more fluid. The first dimension comprises the level of abstraction. Values and norms are situated at the societal and group level and are gained empirically through the aggregation of individual data. Other concepts, such as value orientations, attitudes and preferences may be studied at the individual level. Regarding the second dimension, social values and norms are basic and trans-situational and can mainly be described empirically, but the explanations refer to broad and general theories about different societal, economic and historical aspects. Although value orientations, are related to specific topics and life course situations, they are still relatively abstract and hard to capture. Attitudes and preferences are seen as being more concrete and specifically related to behaviour. Furthermore, it is an empirical question to show whether attitudes align with preferences or not.

Thirdly, these terms are distinguished by their degree of resistance to changes. Values and norms are relatively stable over time since they are abstract societal characteristics with a long socio-historic tradition. Value orientations are individual characteristics, by contrast, but they are still conceptualised as being relatively resistant to instantaneous change. Attitudes and preferences are more strongly related to behaviour. Consequently, these latter concepts are more volatile and subject to changes along life course situations and specific events. Hence, especially attitudes and preferences are conceptualised as more directly connected to empirical outcomes - behaviour, whereas values and norms as well as value orientations remain latent and exert only an indirect 'pressure' to behave in a certain way. As compared to attitudes and preferences, value orientations as well as societal values and norms are hard to measure since they entail complex latent dimensions.

**Graph 1: The Relationship between Concepts**



Source: Own Conceptualisation

### *Societal Values and Norms*

Values and norms are two different concepts operating at the societal or group level. Norms are societal or group-level expectations that exert pressure to behave in a certain way and they are internalised by individuals: “*Norms represent a more decentralized form of social authority, based on common agreements or understandings that are not necessarily unanimous, but nonetheless tend to restrain dissent (...). Cultural norms influence, but do not determine individual preferences; otherwise, nonconformists would be inconceivable. Individuals do not choose the norms to which they are initially subject, but they may seek to modify and redefine them. Though continually tested and contested, norms are social ‘habits’ that resist change.*” (Folbre, 1994: 41). Norms can be differentiated from values in that they capture an “ought” sense; while social values capture a culturally shared ideal (Hitlin and Piliavin, 2004) which is more positively connotated. “*A value is a conception, explicit or implicit, distinctive of an individual or characteristic of a group, of the desirable, which influences the selection from available modes, means, and ends of action.*” (Kluckhohn, 1951: 395). This definition points to the potential for values to guide the evaluation and selection of behaviours.

### *Individual Value Orientations*

When dealing with value orientations, we have to mention the debate about Hakim’s (1991-2000) preference theory. Obviously the goal of this paper is not to test any aspect of the preference theory (Hakim, 2000) or to add another critique on the results and interpretations<sup>1</sup>. Instead, having

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<sup>1</sup> Given that her theses sit rather uneasy with the (feminist) pledge for more gender equality, this approach has been extensively criticised (Crompton and Lyonette, 2005) and tested in the Western European context. A range of scholars have shown

a special interest in conceptual issues, we do agree with Hakim’s critique (Hakim, 2003; 2004; 2007) that the results of different empirical studies on attitudes and preferences are often not comparable, since they deal with completely different indicators. Furthermore, we agree with the assumption that individuals may form their personal “preferences” (in the sense of Hakim), defined as “consistent commitment to their chosen life goals” (Hakim, 2000: 275) as a result of early life experiences. A decision for or against a certain profession or labour market career may, in fact, be shaped by orientations and experiences made in the early socialisation process.

However, what Hakim terms “preferences, values or orientations” is in line with our conception of “value orientations”. For instance, early socialisation, social life and social class experiences are likely to contribute to gender differences in role salience. When young men are raised to adopt the provider role more than young women, it is likely that more men than women assign high levels of importance to the work role. Value orientations, are not subject to changes, but they are relatively stable components over time. In other words, we locate value orientations in close proximity to the internalised value and norm system and define them as the relative importance people attach to different spheres of social life (e.g. paid work, family life, leisure, friends, religion, etc). Which aspects of life are most important to guarantee personal self-fulfilment? We assume that people form their value orientations during early socialisation. In addition, value orientations are strongly connected to the overall societal cultural background (values and norms). Given their origin, such orientations are

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that the contextual structure of opportunities and barriers shapes, but does not determine lifestyles and preferences (McRae, 2003, Crompton and Harris, 1998). Apart from the shortcomings, Hakim’s preference-theory-studies enable us to reintroduce women’s agency and preferences into the study of women’s commitment to work (Walters, 2005).



considered to be relatively stable attributes of people. They are more abstract and resistant to instantaneous change, so that they hold a higher place in one's internal evaluative hierarchy than attitudes (Hitlin and Piliavin, 2004)

### *Attitudes*

In the literature, we find a variety of concepts for different sorts of attitudes<sup>2</sup>. Most commonly, "personal" attitudes may differ from "general" attitudes (Marks and Houston, 2002). General attitudes in our notion refer to general expressions about what is actually desirable or not in the society. Personal attitudes, by contrast, are more explicitly connected to the own specific life-course situation. Although these personal, specific attitudes are of interest (especially when we link attitudes to behaviour), international surveys mainly provide general attitudinal statements<sup>3</sup>. Hence, with the lack of alternative questions, general attitudes are often used as proxies for personal "attitudes" (Knudsen 2001). To give an example we refer to the following indicators for "general attitudes" (Crompton, 2005): "A man's job is to earn money; a woman's job is to look after the home and family." "A job is all right, but what most women really want is a home and children." "Being a housewife is just as

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<sup>2</sup> For instance, 'value-expressive attitudes' are closely related to the self-image (Katz, 1960) and they are held to lead to stronger relations between values and attitudes than do other types of attitudes. In addition, there is the concept of 'strong attitudes' (Ajzen and Fishbein, 2005) that are thought to be resistant to adaptation.

<sup>3</sup> Hakim (2007) takes into question whether these general attitudinal questions are suitable to prove her preference theory. She concludes that "(...) only lifestyle preferences are causal, and these must be measured directly. There are no proxies." (Hakim, 2007: 128). In our point of view there is a discrepancy between what Hakim defines as "preferences" as being abstract and stable and what she is testing empirically (Hakim, 2000). As indicators she often uses personal attitudes to find evidence for her "preference concept". But, in our notion, attitudes are not stable and they are also subject to changes over the life course.

fulfilling as working for pay." "A working mother can establish just as warm and secure a relationship with her children as a mother who does not work." (ISSP 2002). These questions do not precisely refer to the own specific case, as opposed to the following personal statement: "Are you able to establish a warm and secure relationship with your own children." We, in fact, need to study personal indicators in order to explore whether these personal evaluations are in line with or differ from behaviour.

The planned action theory<sup>4</sup> (e.g. Ajzen, 2005; Doll, Ajzen, and Madden, 1991). helps us to conceptualise the relationship between attitudes and behaviour. In this notion, attitudes are defined as predispositions to behave in a certain way (Fishbein and Ajzen 1975). An individual's attitude toward a certain kind of behaviour is determined through an assessment of one's beliefs regarding the consequences arising from this behaviour and an evaluation of the desirability of these consequences. The concept of attitudes is linked to preferences, but cannot be equalised with preferences. The behavioural intentions and the interpretations of the perceived consequences of different behavioural decisions are called preferences. Preferences are thus formed in a context of constraints. The same is true for attitudes. Moreover, especially attitudes are exposed to the so-called recursive process of selection and adaptation (Surkyn and Lestaeghe, 2004). On the one hand, people either adapt attitudes to the behaviour as well as to the overall social and living circumstances. There are feedback loops from the performance of the behaviour upon the attitudes insofar as new information and

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<sup>4</sup> The ancient theory of reasoned action has been elaborated to the theory of planned behaviour (Ajzen, 1991; 2005) which includes now background factors linked to the personality (age, gender, socioeconomic status). Furthermore, the perceived behavioural control which means to feel in complete control over performing the behaviour has been added (Ajzen and Fishbein, 2005: 199).

experiences may change the evaluation of situations and thus attitudes. On the other hand, individuals behave according to their attitudes when there is a limited set of constraints. In the latter process attitudes are defined as being selective.

Following the planned action theory, attitudes are influenced by background factors (gender, education, age, socio-economic status). However, from a sociological perspective, background factors include not only individual socio-economic factors, but, in our notion attitudes are influenced by more stable value orientations as well as by societal values and norms. Additionally, we have to consider the wider political, societal and economic aspects (institutions, laws, labour market situation...). Hence, in order to broaden the social psychological approach of Ajzen and colleagues, we link these insights with the capabilities approach. Hereby, the principal aim is to understand how to interpret possible in-consistencies between attitudes, preferences and behaviour.

#### *Preferences, Capabilities and Behaviour*

Since attitudes, preferences and behaviour are distinct analytical tools for us, we assume that the possibilities to find empirical incongruities might be seen as a lack in capabilities. Generally speaking, the capabilities approach helps us to take account of the extent to which people feel able to make the necessary choices to secure their well-being. Sen defines agency freedom as “what a person is free to do and achieve in pursuit of whatever goals or values he or she regards as important” (Sen, 1985: 203). Furthermore, this approach acknowledges the fact that preferences, for example over the extent of labour market involvement, are formed in a specific societal context and are thus not representations of ideal choices. What people prefer in everyday lives is adapted in the light of structural constraints and hence a limited set of viable options (Knudsen and

Waerness, 2001; Peter, 2003; Robeyns, 2006). For a general overview on the capabilities approach, please have a look at work package 1 literature review for this WORKCARE project (chapter 2, O’Reilly et al. 2007).

Although values and preferences do play an important role in the conception of capabilities and functionings (e.g. to allow people the freedom to lead lives that they have reason to value, Sen 1999), especially preferences are among those issues which plague the capability approach. The indicators for preferences as well as capabilities still have to be specified for empirical research (Robeyns, 2006).

The main proponents of the capability approach Sen and Nussbaum, indeed, do have different understandings about the importance of people’s preferences. These basic differences are reflected in the debate about whether there should be a list of central human capabilities which Nussbaum proposes in order to give a threshold that determines a basic social minimum (Nussbaum, 2001). The main argument she puts forward is that people do not really know what they actually desire, because their desires are “entrenched and adaptive”. People adjust their desires to the way of life they know. Preferences are adapted to what one can actually achieve. When we experience failure, we shift our preferences “judging that such lives are not for us.” (Nussbaum, 2001: 79). Human beings are interested in avoiding cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1957). Likewise preferences are adaptive and shaped by capabilities in Sen’s conceptualisation. However, Sen’s and Nussbaum’s theoretical conclusions differ. According to Nussbaum’s normative theory preferences should not be a habituation to conditions and traditions, but they should be altered to reach greater justice. Thus, we have to make people conscious about what could be desirable and worth living, included in a list of basic capabilities. This kind of “platonian utopian desires (Platonism)” stems from Nussbaum’s

concern for a theory of justice, whereas the opposed “subjective welfarism” of Sen is more concerned with agency and underlying capabilities (Nussbaum, 2001: 68f). Arguing against the necessity for a list of capabilities (Sen, 2004), Sen places greater emphasis on the ability of peoples’ good reason to know what they want (=preferences in the notion of the capabilities). It is more a matter of information about opportunities. In this respect, we should mention that Sen’s subjective welfarism approach is based on the critical analysis of the earlier economic conceptions when behaviour is seen as being in line with preferences (Sen, 1973). Of course, he is interested in social choice which should be based on some sort of aggregation of all the existing preferences. With this in mind, the most important question to him is not whether people want to choose something, but whether they are able to choose a certain behaviour. What are their capabilities?

Both, the approach of Nussbaum as well as the one proposed by Sen are non-paternalistic insofar as they insist on the “central importance of choice as a good” (Nussbaum, 2001: 68). The convergence of the normative approach (Platonist list of Nussbaum) and the sensitivism to people’s actual “beliefs and values” (Sen) is that both acknowledge the importance of people’s desires under suitably informed conditions. Nevertheless, they refuse to “take existing preferences as a benchmark of social policy” (Nussbaum, 2001: 87) because “overt preferences and actual choices may simply be a result of one’s circumstances” (Peter, 2003: 19).

In line with these approaches, we summarise that preferences are not the ultimate expression of what a person’s interest would be under ideal circumstances. To understand the interrelationship between capabilities, functionings and preferences, we assume that the formation of preferences is strongly linked to the social context (e.g. social

institutions, social and legal norms, other people’s behaviour and characteristics and environmental factors). These preferences then influence the choice between the capabilities (=opportunity set of achievable functionings) and the choice leads to achieved behavioural outcome (e.g. the organisation of paid work and care).

### *Summary of concepts*

In Kluckhohn’s (1951) widespread definition values are a group level as well as an individual level phenomenon. In our notion, we distinguish between values as a societal group characteristic and value orientations as term for individual characteristics. This is to be more precise about what we investigate and how to operationalise and measure these cultural aspects. As argued, a group level issue necessitates the aggregation of data (to measure means at the cross-societal level), whereas the measurement of value orientations enables us to show differences between individuals, for instance according to socio-demographic characteristics. Value orientations are here defined as the importance we attach to different social spheres based on early life experiences and the process of socialisation. However, as opposed to Hakim who calls these stable aspects “preferences”, we argue to use the term “value orientations” because we propose a different meaning for “preferences”. The crucial point, we emphasise, is that preferences do not reflect “free choices”. They should neither be mixed up with more latent and stable value orientations nor with attitudes. Drawing on the social psychological theory of Ajzen (e.g. 2005), attitudes do have an intentional aspect and these intentions to behaviour are conceptualised as preferences in our notion. Since there may be a lack in opportunities to “live the lives one has reason to value” (Sen, 1999), preferences may differ from attitudes and from behaviour.

### 2.3. Illustrative Examples

There are distinct empirical quantitative approaches to study cultural aspects. The strands differ not only in topics they concentrate on, but moreover in the level of abstraction from the concrete behaviour. Since our focus is on the conceptualisation of attitudes and preferences, we do not present an exhaustive survey of value studies, but we aim to give first insights into how individual level value orientations, attitudes and preferences are linked to abstract societal values. Drawing on applied studies, we argue that the empirical findings often differ and contradict each other since they refer to different indicators and measures dealing at different levels of investigation. Furthermore, we emphasise that these inconsistencies in results cannot be taken as the end point, but as the starting point of scientific research to question the indicators and measures and the underlying theories used in quantitative survey research.

#### *Values*

Studying social values is strongly associated with the work of Inglehart. Drawing on abstract cross-national comparisons, Inglehart and Baker (2000) have found evidence for two contradicting assumptions. First, economic development is associated with shifts away from absolute norms and values toward more “modern” values (rational, tolerant, trusting and participatory). Structural constraints thus determine not only behaviour but also bring about cultural change. Second, cultural values show an enduring and autonomous influence on society, for instance broad cultural heritages, like religion, leave an imprint on values and social development being path dependent. The data the authors use is the World Values Surveys. The two dimensions of interest are “traditional versus secular-rational orientations toward authority and survival versus self-expression values”. Based on these two dimensions – for which the

different concepts orientations and values are used interchangeably – each society can be located on the global map. Notwithstanding the ongoing debate about the importance and usefulness of Inglehart’s theories and studies (Klages and Gensicke, 2006; Klein and Pötschke, 2004; Schwartz, 2007), this approach illustrates that the investigation of values at the societal level necessitates cross-national comparison between a large number of countries. Hereby, a variety of different questions are reduced to a few dimensions of interest (according to statistical factors), namely secularisation versus tradition and survival versus self-expression. Using aggregate data enables us to investigate abstract societal trends in values and the persistence of cultural differences across the world as well as the dynamics over time. This shows how the global map of different values is related to the socio-economic and historic developments.

#### *Value Orientations*

As compared to Inglehart’s value studies dealing with societal ideological values at an abstract level, Klages and Gensicke (2006) emphasise the importance of studying values more at the individual level. These orientations are seen as being embedded in a societal context, exemplified by the analysis of Germany. Similar to the analysis of societal values, the investigation of individual value orientations leads to different underlying value dimensions, such as responsibility and security, as compared to self-expression and self-fulfilment. However, in contrast to the cross-cultural studies of values and norms, value orientations research aims to show how individuals can be classified to different empirical value types (clusters) changing over time (see Klages and Gensicke, 2006: 339). Overall, this approach is based on the critique that it does not make sense to classify persons and the structure of their personality by their overall societal ideologies, as Inglehart does. It is argued that the differences in value orientations can be ascribed on the one hand to the special

characteristics of socio-demographic groups but on the other hand value orientations types differ according to the various role expectations connected to individual and social contexts.

Another approach is connected to the theories of Schwartz (Schwartz, 2007). Stressing the importance of distinguishing between values and attitudes, he argues for a more comprehensive theory of “basic motivations” (Schwartz, 2007: 170). Since multiple basic values impinge on any given attitude, it is more fruitful to measure basic values. While attitudes are strongly linked to a specific context and domain, values are defined as latent, desirable, trans-situational goals. These values, defined a priori before measurement, are linked to affect and serve as guiding principles in people’s lives. Using the World Values Survey covering 67 countries he and his colleagues find evidence for basically 10 different values (from power and hedonism to tradition and security, see (Schwartz, 2007: 174ff). The four main dimensions are self-enhancement, open to change, self-transcendence and conservation. In Schwartz’ conception, these core values are able to explain attitudes and behaviour, but they are also adaptive to the influences individuals and groups are exposed to.

To sum up, Inglehart explores societal values gained through the aggregation of individual survey data used for comparison across different cultural zones all over the world and changing over time. The studies of Schwartz (2007) and Klages and Gensicke (2006), by contrast, are dealing with differences at the individual level. In order to show the importance of value orientations patterns and trends over time, they focus on differences between socio-demographic groups and personality types. Both approaches, the research in societal values and norms and individual value orientations focus on how to map global societal trends at a comparably abstract level of investigation, irrespective of individual life course situation and irrespective of their relationship with behaviour.

## *Attitudes*

There are distinct approaches to the study of attitudes. Some scholars explore attitudes in cross-national comparisons to understand the characteristics of welfare states and their path dependencies (Knudsen and Waerness, 2001; Treas and Widmer, 2000). Other studies place an emphasis on within-country differences according to socio-demographic characteristics (e.g. age, sex, income, education) (Crompton, Brockmann, and Lyonette, 2005; Crompton and Harris, 1998; Crompton and Lyonette, 2005).

To exemplify how to link attitudes with behaviour (e.g. Himmelweit and Sigala, 2004), we refer to a panel study by Jansen and Liefbroer (2006). Drawing on the state-of-the-art knowledge that both processes of “value” selection or of “value” adaptation are operative at the same time, this study aims to show more precisely the causal mechanisms of attitudes upon behaviour. The authors test the empirical effects of attitudes toward employment and toward parenthood upon various sorts of behaviour (family formation and the division between paid and unpaid labour within the couple). Using longitudinal data allows them to show whether people select into certain behaviour according to their attitudes or whether attitudes are adaptive to the conditions in everyday lives. Another innovative aspect is to study the attitudes and behaviours of both partners simultaneously. They use two different sets of indicators. First, they investigate gender role attitudes, drawn from four questions which are formulated very generally, e.g. “a woman is better suited for child rearing than a man” or “it is most natural if the man is the breadwinner and the woman takes care of the home and the children” (the answers vary from 1 totally agree to 5 totally disagree). Second, five items have been taken to construct a scale representing personal attitudes toward parenthood (e.g. “I like to have children around me.” or “I

think it is a civil duty to have children”).) As a result, there is evidence for the causal impact of attitudes on behaviour. But, the so-called process of “value selection” depends on the different kind of attitudes studied: While attitudes toward parenthood influence various sorts of behaviour (childbirth, the division of household labour, the number of hours that wives spend on paid labour), gender role attitudes show no effect. These latter attitudes, by contrast, do shape primarily the division of childcare tasks. The authors are surprised about the fact that different sorts of attitudes show different impacts.<sup>5</sup>

There are several merits of this study. Thanks to longitudinal data, it is possible to explain how attitudes influence behaviour. Furthermore, they show that there may be inconsistencies between different types of attitudes and the respective behaviour. The main critical point we emphasise is that the terms values and attitudes are used interchangeably, for example they study “attitudes”, but speak of “values” and “value” adaptation and selection.

### *Preferences*

Preferences are seen as being “constrained or affected by factors such as education, the options that the labour market offers, level of child-care provision or a culturally determined sense of the ‘ought’.” (Lewis, 2006: 33). Obviously, studies on actual and preferred employment rates and working times (Bielenski and Wagner, 2004; Lewis, 2006, Torres et al., 2007) are able to show that preferences differ in varying degrees from the actual situations. This hints at the presence of various social and economic constraints, such as a lack in job and working hours opportunities. To illustrate

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<sup>5</sup> The authors interpret these findings as follows: The division of childcare tasks asks for completely new negotiations between the parents, and since there is no script of previous arrangements for how to divide care tasks, the individuals refer to the old gender role attitudes as a useful script for the care labour division.

how to measure preferences, we take the following survey question from the European Social Survey: “How many hours a week would you like to work bearing in mind that your earnings would go up or down according to how many hours you work”. Since this question indicates whether respondents want to change their working hours if that means is connected to earning more or losing money, the answers strongly reflect structural constraints or cultural influences (by social values and norms). Furthermore, the question also reflects the actual working situation. Maybe someone prefers to work more hours, but not in the actual job, but under different circumstances (e.g. when there is more flexibility or more help from other people in the unpaid domestic work, more care facilities). In fact, choices are structured by the background of viable options offered to individuals. Hitherto, measures in surveys do not adequately capture such background factors.

## **2.4 Discussion**

Drawing on the conceptualisation, we propose, as well as on the small range of illustrative examples, we point out three critical issues. First, the expansion in applied studies did not result in theoretical advancement in more profound and agreeable concepts about cultural aspects. Second, we stress the importance of studying the relationship between attitudes, preferences and behaviour. And finally, we draw on the capabilities approach in order to understand that these latter concepts may or may not be in line with each other.

### *Conceptual confusion*

The variety of empirical studies and definitions of values, orientations, attitudes and preferences tend to generate significant conceptual confusion. Some research work has a strong focus on empirical results and often lacks reference to the underlying

theoretical premises and more profound operational definitions. Consequently, terms, such as attitudes, values and preferences, are used interchangeably (Corrigal and Konrad, 2006; Fortin, 2005; Marks and Houston, 2002; Treas and Widmer, 2000). Other scholars (Surkyn and Lestaeghe, 2004) attach a similar meaning to value orientations and preferences, for instance Klages and Gensicke (2006) explicitly define value orientations as “preferences” (“Wertpräferenzen” in German). What strikes us most is the question why we need so many confusing terms when they all have the same underlying meaning? We, by contrast, argue that it is useful to draw a line between these different analytical tools to specify their interrelationship and to find empirical indicators. In our theoretical framework, being still a work in progress, we distinguish between the following concepts situated at three different levels of investigation: first values and norms, second value orientations and third the relationship between attitudes, preferences and behaviour.

Values and norms are both situated at the societal level shaped by historical events, social, political and economic development. They are trans-situational, abstract, comparably stable over time and empirically hard to capture phenomena because they entail a range of latent dimensions. Since values and norms remain latent at the societal and group level, they only indirectly exert an influence upon value orientations. These latter indicators then, however can be measured at the individual level, but it is questionable whether they can be linked directly to concrete behaviour. Most importantly, we emphasise that attitudes and preferences can be measured at the individual level and they can be related to the effective behaviour. Another crucial point is that preferences differ from attitudes, but both are seen as being shaped by individual value orientations and the overall societal values and norms in theory.

*Attitudes – Preferences – Behaviour*

While some authors explicitly concentrate upon the linkage of attitudes with behaviour (e.g. Himmelweit and Sigala, 2004; Jansen and Liefbroer, 2006; Surkyn and Lestaeghe, 2004), others (e.g. Inglehart and colleagues, 2000) do not. The latter authors focus on the existence of abstract cross-cultural differences in values and changes over time by using a limited set of value dimensions. Based on the widespread conceptualisation of values guiding the selection of “action” (Kluckhohn, 1951: 395), a range of scholars (e.g. Schwartz, 2007 and Klages and Gensicke, 2006) reflect upon the linkage with behaviour mainly in theory, without testing for it. In our framework, we follow the argument that values and norms as well as value orientations are more basic and latent and thus more detached from behaviour (Schwartz, 2007). Values, norms and value orientations shape the attitude-behaviour relationship mainly in a subtle way. Therefore, it is more consistent and obvious to link specific attitudes and preferences to the effective behaviour. More precisely, we argue that mainly the investigation of attitudes and preferences allows us to empirically test their relationship with behaviour.

#### *Congruencies and incongruencies as a lack in capabilities*

In line with others (e.g. Lewis, 2006) we assume that preferences differ from attitudes. However, the still open question is, what makes them different and why are the “(...) own preferences” regarded as “more robust than attitudinal data measuring people’s notions of the ‘ought’” (Lewis, 2006: 25). In our notions, these “oughts” are expressed in general attitudes and they may be used as proxies for personal attitudes in lack of other indicators (as we do in chapter 4 of this report). Additionally, we argue that adopting the capabilities approach helps us to understand possible (in)congruencies between attitudes, preferences and behaviour.

The lack in capabilities may be one explanation among others for why we find that verbal reactions to symbolic stimuli (attitudes) often do not provide insights into how people behave. It has been and still is of interest to find explanations for the fact that people say one thing and do another (Ajzen and Fishbein, 2005: 174). We have shown that attitudes cannot be equated with preferences. While attitudes are more linked to value orientations and basic societal values and norms, preferences represent the intentional part of behaviour. Preferences are adapted to achieve more pragmatic goals and objectives (e.g. a mother does not prefer to be in paid labour when there is nobody to care for the child in the meantime). When the behaviour is not in line with the attitude, then the person is unable to live the life one has reason to live. This is interpreted as lack in capabilities. These in-congruencies might indicate that different cultural aspects, attitudes and preferences may conflict with each other since they are embedded in structural circumstances.

People, in fact, weigh their personal attitudes against what is possible from a realistic or pragmatic point of view when they make decisions. We would want certain modes of action or end states (=attitudes), but we may not prefer to act accordingly due to structural, institutional or personal constraints. To give some illustrative example we refer to the topic of paid work and care. For instance, a woman may believe that maternal employment negatively affects child well-being (=attitude), but one may still prefer to be in gainful fulltime work as a mother when this is financially necessary (=preferences). The material conditions, namely economic safety overrule other attitudes influenced by societal values and norms and individual value orientations. In contrast, another woman may be strongly interested in performing a (full-time) job in line with one's attitudes, but there are several institutional constraints in doing a job (e.g. lack in child care facilities, lack in adequate jobs in the near region, unequal division of

labour within the household). In this case, although the woman has a positive attitude toward being in a (full-time) employment, she may in fact, prefer to stay at home or to work reduced hours. Behavioural intentions or preferences are influenced, though not determined by attitudes in our conception. Attitudes may differ from preferences due to institutional barriers (economic and social necessities as well as to normative expectations, gender roles, gender division of labour, values, norms and value orientations). These constraints are defined as a lack in capabilities. However, the availability of effective capabilities (e.g. the availability of certain jobs or of care facilities) may differ from the perception of the opportunities available (Crompton and Harris, 1998). These topics point to the importance of studying the strong interrelationship between structures and institutions and the "freedom of agency" seen from an individual perspective more profoundly. Options and opportunities, say capabilities represent the structural, economic and political conditions which are interpreted by the individuals and which do shape behaviour. Being a non-paternalistic approach, the capabilities are only relevant insofar as individuals perceive them as being relevant options or ideals to alternative work-life practices.

While in-congruencies between attitudes and preferences are interpreted as a lack in capabilities, congruencies do not necessarily mean the opposite. In other words, when people prefer what they really want (=attitudes), their preferences may be in line with their attitudes. Nevertheless, when attitudes align with preferences and behavioural decisions, it may also indicate that people adapt their attitudes. The process of ex-post-rationalisation helps us to avoid cognitive dissonance and it is usually termed as "value adaptation". However, according to our theoretical framework it is a process of "attitude adaptation" (Himmelweit and Sigala, 2004) to behaviour and to the effective and perceived capabilities.



## 2.5. Conclusion

It has to be called into question whether individuals are capable of expressing their “real” attitudes or “inner” value orientations or whether the expressions in surveys just reflect the adaptation to the institutional and personal circumstances being constantly under change (adaptive attitudes). Since, the results of attitudinal surveys and the results for well-being cannot be taken as the ultimate expressions of what people value, it is useful to continue the debate about the necessity of a normative list of basic human capabilities (Nussbaum, 2003; Sen, 2004). We argue that it is useful to have both, the empirical results for attitudes, preferences, behaviour and perceived capabilities as well as the external benchmark fixed in a normative list. The latter one provides us with a perspective about how to assess the empirical findings.

It is, indeed, a challenge for empirical studies to show whether preferences, attitudes and behaviour are in line. The problem hitherto is that survey research relies on out-fashioned questionnaires which are repeated in order to show trends over time. These surveys were designed for completely different theories testing different hypotheses. Having a more precise idea about what we “exactly” measure when we use survey indicators, would enable us to better understand the behavioural outcomes with underlying attitudes and preferences. At the very best we should draw on longitudinal data to assess the direction of causality. The core questions arising are: How to find relevant indicators and measures for the capabilities to use time for paid work and time to care? How can we measure congruencies or incongruencies between attitudes, preferences, capabilities and behaviour in survey research?

Hereby, we aim to stress that the capabilities cannot be drawn from questions about the subjective well-being and satisfaction with diverse life situations. The questions on well-being and satisfaction do reflect how the functionings or behaviours are perceived after the decision-making process and not before. A high level of satisfaction<sup>6</sup> and well-being may thus indicate ex-post-rationalisation of the situation, but we have no idea whether the person was able to choose between a range of different options, either to “choose” time to paid work or time to care or both in a mix being in line with one’s attitudes.

To capture the capabilities in more detail, we propose to analyse three different domains: The personal and social, the political and the economic domain. First, the personal and social background situation implies important dimensions, such as the economic and labour market situation (job and career prospects) as well as the household and family situation (the division of unpaid labour and care). Second, it would be worth studying the policy dimensions (e.g. care institutions, school structure, care policies, financial support, tax systems, in principle to study the right to have time to care and the right to go to paid work, options to choose between both and to make a mix). Finally, the labour market dimensions are relevant: for instance the availability of jobs and flexible job conditions to combine paid work and care, the options to care leave in case of sickness.

To our knowledge, we do not yet find survey questions asking for the concrete abilities and constraints individuals face with regard to the ideal organisation of

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<sup>6</sup> Moreover, the validity of subjective well-being and satisfaction variables is questionable since they produce generally a high level of admit. In fact, the great majority of employees are satisfied with their job when asked in quantitative surveys (Kalleberg, 1977; Rose, 2003, 2005).

paid work and care in these three dimensions (personal/social, political and economic capabilities). The policy dimensions for instance are often included as abstract country variable in cross-national comparison. The care dimension is mainly asked for in the sense of how many children are cared for in public institutions and not which care facilities are available in the near distance. Are these institutions affordable? What is the quality of care? Due to this lack of relevant indicators for capabilities, we are not yet able to show which sorts of capabilities to paid work and care are key to understand possible (in-)congruencies between attitudes, preferences and the effective behaviour. Hence, a more detailed elaboration of the dimensions and indicators for capabilities remains a challenge for future studies.

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## **3. STATE OF THE ART: RESEARCH ON WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT**

By Nadia Steiber and Barbara Haas

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### **3.1. Introduction**

There is a large body of literature on women's employment behaviour document-ting the massive influx of women into the labour force since the 1960s; and the substantial differences in female employment trajectories over the life course that still exist within and across nations. Extant research aimed at explaining these phenomena can broadly be divided into four major strands. First, there are micro-economic studies that emphasise economic rationales and constraints in the explanation of women's employment and model women's labour supply decisions primarily as the result of cost-benefit considerations. Second, there is a body of research that has started to include ideational factors such as individuals' gender attitudes as causal factors in the explanation of women's work-care decisions. Third, a relatively recent strand of research is cross-country comparative work on women's employment behaviour, which is aimed at explaining the vast cross-country differences in female employment rates and has a strong focus on social policy as a major explanatory factor. Finally, the most recent developments in research on women's employment are empirical studies that have started to take account of individual and regional differences in structural factors that may facilitate or hamper the reconciliation of motherhood with employment (e.g. regional availability of public childcare, households' access to informal care). These studies recognise that women represent a very heterogeneous group in terms of the structural conditions they face. In what follows, we review these four strands of research in some more detail.

### **3.2. Micro-economic Approach**

A central aim and major empirical difficulty in all micro-economic labour supply modelling is to determine workers' reactions to changes in their wage rate and in the level of their non-labour income. Having an accurate estimate of the elasticity of labour supply in these respects is deemed crucial as it has important implications for assessing the consequences of public policy (e.g. changes in labour-income taxation or modifications of social security and benefit systems that imply changes in people's level of replacement income) for male and female labour supply decisions. Yet, labour supply modelling faces a range of methodological challenges (e.g. wage endogeneity, labour supply constraints imposed by employers, non-linear taxation)<sup>7</sup> that make it very difficult to obtain unbiased estimates of the effects of transitory and permanent changes in the wage on women's and men's labour supply decisions, rendering the micro-econometrics of labour supply an important area of research in its own right

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<sup>7</sup>First, the assumption of exogenous wages (i.e. that changes in the wage rate are externally determined – in reality, net wages and hours of work are jointly determined) induces an upward bias in the estimated wage effect (see Blundell & MaCurdy 1999). Second, it has been shown that using actual hours worked – which do not necessarily correspond to individuals' preferred number of work hours, given their hourly wage – leads to a biased estimate of individuals' labour supply response to a change in the wage rate (Stewart and Swaffield, 1997; Martinez-Granado, 2005). Third, it has been argued that individuals choose from a relatively small number of hours levels (e.g. a finite number of part-time or full-time working options), rather than being able to vary hours worked continuously (van Soest, 1995). Using discrete hours models is especially popular in tax policy micro-simulation because, as compared to continuous hours models, this approach allows for an easier incorporation of non-linear tax and social security schemes into the estimation (ibid.).

(for a review, see Blundell and MaCurdy, 1999). There are a range of reasons for why female labour supply is a particularly interesting field of research in labour economics. Women's employment behaviour is much more varied and temporally variable than men's. There is thus much greater heterogeneity in women's than men's choices. Indeed, their labour supply has been found to be more elastic, not only with regard to family life cycle events, but also with regard to changes in their wage rate and non-labour income than men's (Blundell and MaCurdy, 1999). For this reason, women also tend to be more responsive to changes in tax and benefit systems than men. Female labour supply is thus a particularly interesting phenomenon to study. Yet, modelling female rather than male labour supply as a function of wages poses additional methodological challenges. First, given that working women represent an endogenously selected sample, the problem of sample selection bias arises (Killingsworth and Heckman, 1986; Mroz, 1987)<sup>8</sup>. Second, given that couples treat the choices on their respective paid work involvement and family formation as simultaneous aspects of a joint decision, also fertility has been found to be endogenous to women's labour supply, again leading to potential estimation bias (Xie, 2007)<sup>9</sup>. Placing women's work decisions in the context of couple households and as part of a lifetime decision-making process that also includes decisions about family formation and care arrangements adds to the complexity of

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<sup>8</sup> This bias arises because only working women report wages and can lead to exaggerated wage effects.

<sup>9</sup> This may be due to unobserved heterogeneity among women. When they differ in their (unobserved) preferences for paid work and children, this introduces selection effects that can bias the 'child effect' on female labour supply. For example, it could be that women with a stronger 'taste' for children are those with lower unobserved ability to successfully participate in the labour market. In this case, this selection effect would drive the observed association between fertility and lower labour market participation rather than a genuine causal effect of the presence of children.

labour supply modelling. Interesting developments in this area of research are collective models of household decisions, that take account of the interdependencies of women's and men's labour supply decisions at the household level (for different variants of intra-household decision-making and bargaining models, see Chiappori, 1988; 1992; Lundberg and Pollak, 1993; and recently Vermeulen, 2006).

While the strict focus on economic rationales and constraints is unique to neo-classical theories on female labour supply, its general propositions on the effect of personal and household characteristics on women's paid work behaviour are frequently applied across the disciplines. Indeed, today, most attempts at explaining women's employment behaviour have an explicit or implicit micro-economic foundation. That is to say, most researchers, be it in economics or in other social science disciplines, incorporate some ideas of the micro-economic model of female labour supply into their explanatory framework and conceptualise women's employment behaviour (in part) as a 'utility maximising' response to the costs and benefits of wage labour relative to unpaid care work and other pursuits (Mincer, 1962). The most frequently tested assumptions about the effect of personal and household characteristics on women's work behaviour, deriving from this explanatory logic, can be summarised as follows. First, Becker's (1991) neo-classical model of specialisation predicts that in societies in which men tend to have higher income potentials than women, the arrival of children will typically lead to a reduction in the level of women's paid work, as they take over the bulk of unpaid care work (see Nakamura and Nakamura, 1992 for a review of research on the effect of fertility on female labour supply). Second, human capital theory predicts that women with higher levels of human capital (and hence higher potential wages) will be

more likely to remain in paid work when they become mothers than their equivalents with less marketable skills, because they face higher opportunity costs of leaving the labour force (Becker, 1991). Third, the (arguable) assumption underlying labour supply theory, that women (and men) will only be willing to work when this is necessary for economic reasons – given that work is generally seen as a disutility – implies that women's incentives to join and remain in the labour force will decrease with the income provided by their partners.

The logic of opportunity costs underlying micro-economic theories of time allocation is used to make predictions about the effect of socio-demographics but it is also applied to generate hypotheses about contextual effects of public policies. First, based on the assumption that women's reservation wages increase with the cost of childcare, economic reasoning holds that mothers' probability of employment will decrease with the cost of childcare (Connelly, 1992). Second, economic reasoning suggests that systems of married couples' joint taxation, which reduce the marginal utility of women's paid work via high taxes on second incomes, will negatively affect women's incentives to join the labour force (Dingeldey, 2001). Third, the logic of opportunity costs also holds that a higher rate of wage income replacement associated with parental leave provision should make mothers less likely to work over the period of eligibility to generously paid leave (Gustafsson et al., 1996).

The standard neoclassical model provides a coherent framework of explanation as to why such factors as women's educational attainment and work experience or their spouse's income can affect their employment decisions. It has thus proven to be very useful in understanding women's labour supply decisions. Yet, there are of course a range of social behaviours which pure economic reasoning fails to provide compelling explanations

for (e.g. when highly skilled women decide to become full-time carers despite high levels of forgone income and missed opportunities to further their labour market careers). This is because there are important factors in women's decisions to enter paid work that are omitted from the standard model of female labour supply. Of potentially determining impact on women's work-care decisions are, for instance, cultural factors such as women's ideals of care that may create moral obligations to forsake career opportunities when there are small children to care for. Research that incorporates such 'moral rationalities' (Duncan et al., 2003) in research on women's employment is reviewed in what follows.

### **3.3. Agency Approach**

Empirical research aimed at explaining women's employment behaviour has long concentrated on the study of personal and household level variables that affect women's cost-benefit situation and in turn their work-care decisions. Starting with the 1970s, however, researchers have begun to take account of attitudinal factors as potential determinants of women's employment. At first, this line of investigation was mostly restricted to social psychological research (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975). By the mid-1990s, however, the attitude-behaviour relationship has also attained a prominent place on the sociological research agenda. Especially the thesis that women's work-care decisions are largely the result of their own choices based on their personal preferences, as put forward by Hakim (1991; 1996; 2000), has been intensely debated and tested. Finally, in recent years even some economists started to take account of 'cultural factors', i.e. individual differences in value orientations and beliefs, as factors that may potentially be helpful in explaining economic behaviour (e.g. Dex et al., 1998; Fernández et al., 2004; Himmelweit and Sigala, 2004;

Algan and Cahuc, 2005; Fortin, 2005). Hence, as with micro-economic reasoning, also agency-oriented approaches, that stress individual heterogeneity in dispositions as central determinants of behaviour, have become to be applied across the disciplines.

Available reviews of the early literature (e.g. Molm, 1978) suggest that there are, albeit relatively weak, significant statistical associations between women's attitudes towards gender roles and their employment behaviour. Yet, the attempts to investigate the direction of causality between women's attitudes and their employment status suggested that there is reverse causality; that is, studies that recognised the recursive nature of attitude-behaviour relationships<sup>10</sup> tended to suggest that women's work behaviour shapes their attitudes towards gender roles, while there was little evidence for an effect in the opposite direction (Molm, 1978; Smith-Lovin and Tickamyer, 1978). More recent evidence from British panel data, however, suggests that the relationship between women's attitudes and their labour force participation is reciprocal (Himmelweit, 2002; Himmelweit and Sigala, 2004; Kan, 2005; Berrington et al., 2006): women who engage in paid work tend to become more favourably disposed to female employment and they tend to develop more optimistic views on the effects of their engagement in paid work on the well-being of their children; but there is also evidence for a causal effect of such attitudes on women's employment behaviour, i.e. women with more traditional attitudes are less likely to join the labour force, more likely to leave it

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<sup>10</sup> The studies were based on longitudinal samples of women and used the two-stage-least squares (2SLS) technique to deal with endogeneity problems and to disentangle the reciprocal effects of attitudes. Both Molm (1978) as well as Smith-Lovin and Tickamyer (1978) used a 15-year follow-up survey of high school youth originally surveyed in 1955. The instruments they use for endogenous attitudes include mother's educational attainment, her employment status when the respondent was young and respondents' religious participation.

upon motherhood and to take longer to return to work after child birth (see also Dex et al., 1998 for the UK; and most recently Corrigan and Konrad, 2007 for the United States).

Today, the consensus thus seems to be that the attitude-behaviour relationship is bi-directional (also referred to as reciprocal or recursive). The causal effect of attitudes on behaviour (i.e. selection effect) is predicted by the much applied social psychological theory of 'planned behaviour' (Ajzen, 1991). Reverse causality, i.e. the adjustment of attitudes in response to behavioural change (i.e. adaptation effect) can have a number of explanations. First, new behaviours imply opportunities for novel and potentially more accurate observations on the nature and the effects of these behaviours. This can lead to attitude adaptation through formative experiences (e.g. Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975). Second, new behaviours might imply the establishment of new social networks and a change in social reference groups. This may lead to changes in attitudes via 'persuasive communication' with new significant others (*ibid.*). Third, a recursive effect of behaviour on attitudes may also be explained by cognitive dissonance theory (Festinger, 1957), which holds that people whose behaviour is at odds with their attitudes will experience the unpleasant state of cognitive dissonance; and that they will aim to re-instate attitude-behaviour consistency by changing their attitudes (or their behaviour). A good example for attitude-behaviour inconsistency would be mothers who are in employment but, at the same time, believe that this has negative implications for the well-being of their children. As suggested by longitudinal evidence for Britain (Himmelweit, 2002; Himmelweit and Sigala, 2004), some of these 'cognitive dissonant' mothers do indeed attain a higher level of attitude-behaviour consistency over time by developing more favourable attitudes



toward maternal employment. Other women, however, change their behaviour rather than their attitudes to improve the fit. Yet, if either of these two mechanisms would be at work at all times, there would be little room for persistent attitude-behaviour inconsistency. In reality, however, and as suggested by the rather weak cross-sectional associations between women's gender role attitudes and their employment status established in some recent cross-sectional analyses (e.g. Crompton and Lyonette, 2005), there are many cases in which women continue to act in ways that are at odds with their attitudes (i.e. there are a significant share of women who hold traditional views on gender roles but are nevertheless strongly involved in paid work, and vice versa).

Sociologists such as Crompton and Harris (1998), McRae (2003), and many others tend to argue that persisting attitude-behaviour inconsistencies result from situations in which women are constrained in their work-care options and thus have little room for changing their behaviour in the desired direction (e.g. when mothers face the economic necessity to engage in full-time employment even when their children are very small). Hakim (2000), by contrast, would argue that the reason for why attitudes and behaviour are often found to conflict is not that women are constrained in their choices but that researchers have simply looked at the wrong type of attitudes. She argues that women form their personal preferences for or against a labour market career in their youth and that these fairly stable preferences are central determinants of their later work-care decisions. Moreover, a much debated argument of Hakim is that in modern society (e.g. in Britain and the US), women are largely free to choose their preferred lifestyle as most constraints on their employment options have been removed. Based on this reasoning, she would thus predict convergence between women's preferences and their employment behaviour. She does this despite the substantial evidence

in the literature on the frequent attitude-behaviour inconsistencies and on the frequent changes in people's attitudes and value orientations in response to adolescent and adult experiences (e.g. Kan, 2005; Johnson, 2002; Berrington et al., 2006), stressing that such volatile subjective factors as investigated in this literature are not the kind of 'preferences', her 'Preference Theory' is concerned with (Hakim 2000). To her view, especially generalised attitudes towards gender roles, as typically measured, are very poor measures of people's 'work lifestyle preferences', given that they do not directly refer to respondents own particular cases (Hakim, 2003; 2004; 2007). She thus distinguishes between causal and non-causal attitudes, the former referring to her 'preferences', while the latter – generalised attitudes as measured by most comparative social surveys in Europe and elsewhere – are argued to be rather useless for the purpose of predicting behaviour and should not even be used as proxies for 'work lifestyle preferences' (Hakim 2007: 128)<sup>11</sup>.

In sum, whether and which types of individual dispositions, be it attitudes, value orientations or what Hakim calls 'work lifestyle preferences' have the ability to predict overt behaviour continues to be a major focus of theory and research. Extant studies tend to suggest that women's gender role attitudes and their work values have some impact on their employment behaviour (for a recent cross-sectional study in 25 OECD countries, see Fortin 2005). Moreover, egalitarian gender role attitudes of women and men have been shown to lead to a more equal gender distribution of domestic labour (Coltrane, 2000 for recent review; Fuwa, 2004; Geist, 2005; Prince Cooke, 2006; Cunningham, 2007). Yet, longitudinal research on the issue is scarce and given the methodological difficulties in establishing causality in cross-

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<sup>11</sup> This makes Hakim's theory in fact 'un-testable' given that the kind of measures Hakim proposes as indicators of her 'work lifestyle preferences' are not easily available, especially from panel data.

sectional research, we are to conclude that most of the existing results suggesting ‘causal’ effects of attitudes/values on women’s work-care behaviour remain tentative. A further weakness of many of these studies is that most of them only consider the attitude of one partner, despite the fact that work-care decisions are made at the household level (for a notable exception, see Jansen & Liefbroer 2006). This is of course mainly due to the kind of data available for most attitudinal research (i.e. cross-sectional social surveys in which only one person per household is interviewed). Finally, a major gap in research on the attitude-behaviour relationship is the exploration of country-differences with regard to the predictive power of women’s attitudes on their work-care behaviour. There is some evidence that gender role attitudes have a stronger effect on the gender division of domestic in some than in other countries (Geist, 2005; Fuwa, 2004). It is rather likely that this will also be the case with regard to women’s employment behaviour<sup>12</sup>. Yet, to date, comparative work on this issue is almost completely lacking.

### **3.4. Cross-Country Comparative Research**

There is a lot of research that has established the vast country differences in women’s employment patterns over the life course and attempts have been made to explain these. The dominant framework of explanation among both academics and policy-makers today is the ‘institutionalist’ approach, which links national differences in maternal employment behaviour mainly to differences in institutional arrangements with women living in welfare states that actively support working mothers (e.g. by providing public childcare facilities) being more likely to exhibit continuous

employment patterns. Variants of this approach include the comparative welfare regime approach (Esping-Andersen, 1990; 1999; 2002) and the diverse ‘gender regime’ or ‘care regime’ type arguments, which highlight the ways in which gender role ideologies and care ideals shape policies and in turn the social organisation of reproductive work and care (e.g. Lewis, 1992; Ostner and Lewis, 1995; O’Connor et al., 1999; Sainsbury, 1999; Daly and Lewis, 2000; Korpi, 2000). The explanatory logic of the ‘institutional’ approach is that country differences in women’s paid work involvement emerge due to the different degrees of state support for female and, in particular, of maternal employment. This approach is implicitly based on the assumption that the majority of women want to be in employment at all times (across the life course), and therefore, that we are just to remove the institutional barriers in order for women to be able to realise their preference for paid work.

Arguing that the ‘institutionalist’ approach overestimates the impact of social policy on women’s work-care decisions, other scholars support a ‘cultural approach’, which claims that cross-national differences women’s paid work involvement can better be explained by differences in the prevailing gender culture than by institutional differences. The underlying explanatory logic is that the pattern of women’s paid work behaviour in a country reflects the choices that women make on the basis of prevailing cultural ideals with regard to gender roles and practices of motherhood. Thus, if in a country most of the women are not involved in paid work, this is not because of institutional barriers that prevent them from participating in the labour market – instead, this is argued to be the result of wide-spread preferences among women to act as homemakers and primary carers. A central proponent of the ‘cultural approach’ is Pfau-Effinger (1998; 2004), who stresses the importance of cultural

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<sup>12</sup> A recent longitudinal study by Jansen and Liefbroer (2006) found no effect of couples’ gender attitudes on the wife’s hours of work in the Netherlands (as opposed to some studies based on British data, see above).

values and predominant ideals about the 'correct' division of labour between the sexes ('gender cultural system'), alongside the 'gender system' (i.e. welfare state policies), for understanding the social practice of individuals, their gendered work-care practices or what she calls 'gender arrangements'. In line with other scholars (e.g. Chamberlayne et al., 1999; Gornick and Meyers, 2004), she stresses that institutional structures such as the design of state policy both shape, and are shaped by, dominant ideologies, common values and attitudes shared by the majority of the population. While Pfau-Effinger would thus agree that welfare states reflect and reproduce patterns of social values, she also stresses that the 'gender arrangement' is not necessarily coherent: social or cultural change can lead to the development of cultural values that are not in line with the ideologies underpinning the current institutional setup, either because of a cultural or an institutional lag. The baseline of this argument is that in order to understand gendered practices of work and care we need to look at both, institutional and gender cultural effects, given the potential for asynchronies and discrepancies in institutional and cultural development and therefore for an independent effect of culture. A further implication of this reasoning is the awareness that in order to understand policy effects it is important to investigate the underlying mechanism – which may work via cost-benefit considerations but may also work via institutionalised cultural ideals (e.g. the effect of subsidised childcare may be of economic nature but it may also stem from a wide-spread cultural ideal of professional childcare, see e.g. Kremer 2006).

From an integrative theoretical perspective that predicts institutional effects on women's employment while it also acknowledges that gender culture may have an independent effect from institutions, one would expect women's

behaviour to largely conform to the aims of welfare state policies, unless women's cultural orientations are in contradiction with these aims. In this case, their dominant employment behaviour would be expected to align with prevailing ideals of work and care. It has become clear, however, that there is no straightforward relationship between women's participation in paid work and welfare state arrangements, nor with prevailing gender role values (Daly and Rake, 2003; Crompton and Lyonette, 2006; Haas et al., 2006; Kremer, 2006; O'Reilly, 2006). Neither the comparative welfare regime approach nor the cultural approach can sufficiently explain the diversity in women's employment behaviour across Europe. For instance, the view that varying degrees of institutional and cultural support of the traditional male breadwinner/female homemaker and caretaker model of the family can predict national differences in female employment behaviour fails to explain women's strong involvement with the labour market in countries such as Portugal or the Baltic States, where the childcare infrastructure is poorly developed and where people tend to think that women's employment negatively affects child and family well-being (Steiber, 2006). Another point in case are Italy, Spain and Greece, where most women either work before and after entering motherhood or are non-employed at both times (Anxo et al., 2006; Gutiérrez-Domènech, 2005). The low level of female labour market participation in Southern Europe is thus apparently not strongly linked to motherhood and hence it is doubtful how much the poor provision of childcare can contribute to its explanation. Looking at an enlarged Europe also contests the view that female employment rates tend to be higher where part-time work is more common (as for instance suggested by Daly 2000): There are indeed a number of countries where female employment rates are high despite a low prevalence of part-time work (e.g. Finland,

the Baltic States, Portugal). This is not to say that these factors have no bearing on women's employment decisions. A severe lack of part-time employment opportunities together with the low availability of public childcare may contribute to low maternal employment rates in Italy or Spain (Del Boca et al., 2005), but given that in other countries, where women face similar constraints, female and maternal employment rates are much higher, we are led to conclude that observed patterns of female employment behaviour are likely to be the outcome of different factors in different countries (see also Crompton and Lyonette, 2006). Different levels of affluence and hence of economic necessity for two full incomes per household (operating as financial incentives for women to work), on the one hand, and the rather high rates of female unemployment in some of the less prosperous Southern, Eastern and Central European countries (operating in the opposite direction as constraints to women's paid work involvement), on the other hand, are factors that go some way in explaining remaining country differences in the level of women's paid work involvement in and outside the main childrearing phases (e.g. Braun et al., 1994; Haller and Hoellinger, 1994; Uunk et al., 2005; Haas et al., 2006).

In what follows, we review the literature that has emerged from this strand of research. In this, we focus on studies aimed to explain cross-country differences in women's employment behaviour which have attempted to test contextual effects based on quantified data for a larger number of countries (e.g. policy indices). This excludes the large number of comparative studies that focus on a smaller number of countries in the attempt to consider the impact of countries' institutional setup in a more qualitative manner and which follow 'societal effects' like approaches in the attempt at a holistic

view on institutional effects (e.g. Daly and Rake 2003; Kremer 2006).

The first attempts to explain variations in women's employment behaviour across countries have been rather descriptive, showing that women's employment rates tend to be highest in the Nordic countries, moderately high in Anglo-Saxon countries, while they are somewhat lower in Continental Europe and especially in Southern Europe. Central to the common explanation for this pattern is that children exert smaller negative effects on women's employment in the Nordic countries than in English-speaking and Continental European countries (see Gornick et al. 1998). The finding that the 'motherhood effect' tends to be smaller in the Nordic countries is typically assumed to stem from family friendly policy. Yet, the first statistical tests of the impact of institutional factors such as public childcare, parental leave provisions or child benefits using formal modelling techniques only emerged in the mid-1990s. The pioneering studies followed a correlational macro-macro approach, attempting to establish statistical associations based on aggregate data on female employment rates, on the one hand, and on policy configurations, on the other. A variant of such an approach is the frequently cited study by Gornick, Meyers and Ross (1998) on the determinants of country differences in 'child effects', i.e. in the effect of having young children on women's employment probability. Having successfully established a significant statistical association between the magnitude of fourteen countries' child penalty with self-created indices measuring the degree of state policies' 'family friendliness' they conclude that the child penalty tends to be greatest in those countries with the least-developed reconciliation policies (e.g. absence of subsidised care facilities)<sup>13</sup>.

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<sup>13</sup> Although this study makes use of micro-data for the estimation of the fourteen country-specific average

In general, the literature has evolved towards the use of micro-data on women's employment behaviour to establish institutional effects. However, there are a number of recent studies on women's employment based on aggregate data (e.g. Jaumotte, 2004; Algan and Cahuc, 2005). Such studies have a major weakness, namely that based on aggregate data, the researcher has no means to pay attention to individual heterogeneity within countries. However, studies which make use of pooled cross-section time series data ('country panel data') covering a large number of countries over a longer time period also have a major advantage over most comparative studies based on micro data which are usually based on fewer countries in a single point in time: such data include a greater amount of variation in macro level conditions and therefore afford the researcher with greater opportunities to disentangle different institutional effects (more degrees of freedom). Jaumotte (2004), for instance, is able to draw on data on female employment rates and various policy variables for 17 OECD countries over the period 1985-1999, yielding a total sample of 123 observations at country level. She finds a positive impact on female participation of a neutral tax treatment of second earners, a high share of part-time work in employment, childcare subsidies and paid parental leaves and a negative effect on female participation of unemployment and of generous child benefits. Also based on a cross-country time series, Algan and Cahuc (2005) model the relation between female employment rates and national gender role cultures. Their results suggest that gender culture makes a significant contribution to the explanation of (the temporal dynamics of)

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child effects, which are then used as the dependent variable in the main regression analysis of institutional effects, in essence this type of study is based on aggregate(d) data, given that the 'child effect' is country- rather than individual-specific.

varying female employment rates across OECD countries.

While there are innumerable studies that model female labour supply based on micro-data in single countries and a considerable body of work that investigates cross-country differences in women's employment behaviour based on aggregate data, efforts to combine these two approaches in a micro-macro design is fairly recent. Among the first attempts to model individual women's employment behaviour based on pooled micro-data for a large number of countries that assess both the effect of individual characteristics and the effect of macro-conditions by incorporating such information directly into their models are the studies by Stier, Lewin-Epstein and Braun (2001) and by Van der Lippe (2001). Both studies present empirical evidence for an impact of country characteristics and especially of policies supportive of continuous female employment on women's level of paid work involvement (see Overview 1 of select comparative studies). Yet, these results are to be treated with caution given the method of analysis used, i.e. single level regression models, which are unapt to handle data sampled from clustered populations and may thus overstate the true impact of any macro level effects<sup>14</sup>. There are only a handful of recent studies that attempt to take account of the multi-level nature of the research problem (for the fact that women are nested within countries) and should thus arrive at more accurate estimates than those derived from single level regression models (Uunk et al., 2005; Pettit and Hook, 2005; Mandel and

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<sup>14</sup> Multilevel models can handle data sampled from clustered population structures, such as women within households within regions and within countries. Ignoring the multilevel structure of the data can lead to incorrect inferences because the standard errors of regression coefficients are underestimated. Thus, estimates derived from a multilevel model are more accurate, and tend to be more conservative, than those derived from single level models.

Semyonov, 2006)<sup>15</sup>. Uunk, Kalmijn and Muffels (2005) use longitudinal data from the European Community Household Panel for 13 EU member states to re-examine the impact of institutional arrangements on maternal employment behaviour. They test the assumption of causality regarding the impact of state policy on mothers' work behaviour arguing that previous findings (e.g. those from Stier et al. 2001) may be threatened by alternative macro-level explanations and thus suffer from omitted variables bias. First, they consider gender role values that prevail in a society as an alternative explanation for the varying degrees of female employment continuity across countries. In Western Europe the existence of state efforts to facilitate maternal employment tend to co-vary with more modern conceptions of women's role in society. For this reason, the established institutional effects in prior studies may partly be spurious. Second, the study includes some of the less prosperous Southern European countries, which allows for a test of the impact of economic welfare on maternal employment. As argued, in poorer countries most women need to work for economic reasons. Therefore, continuous female employment behaviour over the family life cycle should be more common in poorer countries, where fewer women can afford not to work. However, as economic welfare and the extent of institutional support for working mothers tend to co-vary in a positive manner, the economic explanation rivals the institutional explanation, with the institutional effect potentially being attenuated when taking account of national differences in the level of affluence. In other words, where mothers do large amounts of paid work even in the absence of childcare facilities, the economic necessity for most women to work suppresses potential institutional effects.

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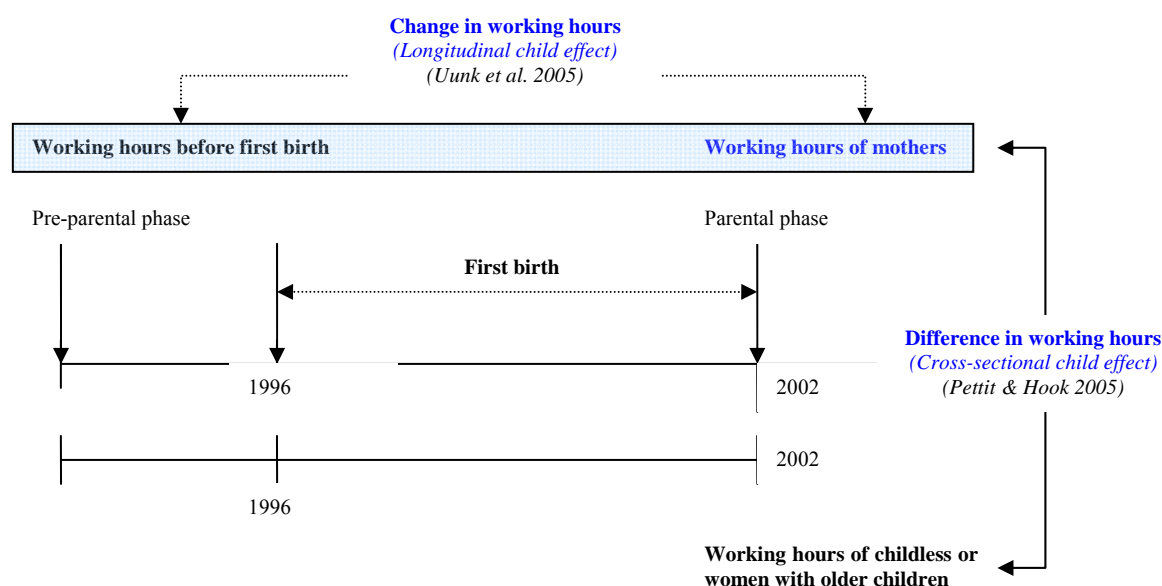
<sup>15</sup> The last of these studies is less relevant for our aims as it focuses on institutional effects on the gender gap in occupational outcomes rather than on the level of women's paid work involvement.

To test these hypotheses, Uunk et al. assess the extent to which cross-national variation in public childcare provision (for children aged below 3), economic affluence (in terms of GDP per capita) and prevailing gender role values (measured at aggregate level) account for cross-country differences in new mothers' employment behaviour. Their findings suggest that among countries at equal levels of economic affluence, a higher level of public childcare provision has a positive effect on mothers' level of paid work involvement. Conversely, in countries at equal levels of public childcare provision, a higher level of affluence increases the odds that women reduce their working hours or leave the labour force upon first birth. Thus, economic affluence appears to reduce the effect of childcare provision, and vice versa: childcare provision acts to reduce the negative effect of affluence. Moreover, the study suggests that prevailing gender role values do not exert an independent effect on maternal employment. The authors hence conclude that institutions are more important than culture in shaping first mothers' labour supply. While Uunk et al. model the effect of macro level factors on the magnitude of (longitudinal) 'child effects' among first mothers<sup>16</sup>, Pettit and Hook (2005) test similar effects on women's employment probability based on a cross-sectional sample of women. While their research design is thus markedly different (see

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<sup>16</sup> They use the longitudinal data from the ECHP to create a measure of the child effect. For this they compared women's employment situation before birth and two years after birth in terms of working hours. The change in working hours between the two time points is their measure of the magnitude of the 'child effect', used as the dependent variable. (see Graph 1 for illustration).

**Graph 1: Creating of difference outcome measures in research on maternal employment**



(Graph 1), the main aim of their study is similar, i.e. to investigate differences in the magnitude of the ‘child effect’ across countries and how these might be explained. They find that the effect of young children on women’s employment is smaller in countries that provide public childcare and that provide longer parental leaves, the latter effect declining at greater leave duration, however.

In sum, extant comparative studies on women’s employment behaviour upon entry into motherhood suggests that the provision of public childcare and of parental leave (up to a certain length) tend to mitigate the effect of the arrival of children, while this effect tends to be larger in richer countries. Another thesis, namely that the child effect will be of greater magnitude (increasing in part-time and non-employment) in countries where part-time employment opportunities are more widely available (see Badarsi and Gornick, 2003)<sup>17</sup> has not been tested based on a larger set of countries, yet.

<sup>17</sup> The authors look at the child effect in five countries and find that it (decreases in full-time work and increase in non-employment) is greater in Germany and the UK than in the US and Canada, while it is

As summarised in Overview 1 (and graphically illustrated in Graph 1), there are a number of different research designs that have been applied to investigate country differences in the magnitude of child effects.

The approach adopted by Uunk et al., i.e. to use a difference measure created from panel data on hours worked before and after first birth, has clear advantages over studies which need to infer child effects from cross-sectional data. Yet, there is also a disadvantage to this approach, namely that by creating this measure information on the level of maternal paid work involvement is lost. While this has indeed been portrayed as an advantage of analysing ‘child effects’, arguing that this type of outcome measure is conveniently capturing national difference in mothers’ employment that are largely independent of inter-country differences in economic and labour market conditions (Gornick et al 1998), it is also clear that this measure is hardly related to the level of maternal

virtually zero in Italy. The authors suggest that this may be due to be limited availability of part-time work in the latter countries.

employment: we observe small ‘child effects’ both in countries where we tend to find continuous female participation over the life course (e.g. in the Nordic countries) as well as in countries where women already tend to be excluded from the labour market prior to first birth (e.g. in Spain). Given the ‘luxury’ of the availability of longitudinal data for this kind of research, the authors would therefore suggest not to discard information of women’s employment behaviour before first birth but to model their employment trajectories over the early childrearing phases, instead (as exemplified by the studies of Stier et al. 2001 and more recently Vlasblom and Schippers 2006). Finally, Pettit and Hook, who look at a general sample of women, are also able to test institutional effects on the general level of female employment, in addition to the effects on the employment outcomes of women that are tied to childrearing responsibilities. Their results suggest that women’s overall level of employment is negatively affected by unemployment as well as by the provision of extended parental leaves (which thus appear to reinforce traditional gender role arrangements)<sup>18</sup>.

Apart from explanations of the cross-country differences in the level of female employment, and some attempts to explain country variations in the strength of child effects, cross-country variations in other individual level effects have not been the object of much research yet. However, this kind of research is warranted given the available evidence on the presence of such differences: For instance, we know that employment levels are generally higher among better educated women and that countries differ in the degree of variation between high and low educated women

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<sup>18</sup> Two other macro level factors hypothesised to positively influence women’s employment probability (net of child effects), namely service sector growth and the share of parliamentary seats occupied by women (taken as an indicator for national gender role ideologies) fail to reach statistical significance.

(Rubery et al., 1999; Vlasblom and Schippers, 2006)<sup>19</sup>. Similarly, the more human capital women have accumulated before entering motherhood, the faster their re-entry into the labour force after the baby pause tends to be (Dex et al., 2005; Jonsson and Mills, 2001). Yet again, this effect appears to vary across countries (Gustafsson et al., 1996; Gutiérrez-Domènech, 2005). Last, but not least, we know that a higher occupational status of the man tends to decrease female activity in some but not all countries (Blossfeld and Drobnic, 2001). In sum, there is ample evidence for cross-country heterogeneity in the nature and strength of individual and household level effects. However, there is little knowledge about the determinants of such variations as only few studies have applied an integrative approach looking at the mediating effect of macro-level factors on individual or household level determinants.

### 3.5. Regional Studies

Institutional effects on women’s employment have been mainly tested in cross-country comparative research, either based on macro data or a combination of micro data with policy indices. Only very recently have some researchers started to

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<sup>19</sup> The latter study analyses women’s employment trajectories around first birth in three countries. It looks at their employment status 6 months before birth and 12 months after first birth, the on the basis of this information created dependent variable being four possible patterns (in paid work at both times, non-employed at both times, in paid work and then not, and vice versa). Their findings suggest that compared to the Netherlands and Germany, educational level has only a little effect on the dynamics around childbirth in the UK.



## Overview 1: Comparative research on maternal employment behaviour, selection of studies

Study	Sample	Countries	Data	Dependent variable	Macro effects tested (a)	Method	Results regarding macro effects (a)	DESIGN
Gornick et al 1998	Married or cohabiting women aged 15-64 with at least one child aged <18 in the household	AU, BE, CN, DK, FI, FR, DE, IT, LU, NL, NO, SE, UK, US (N=14)	LIS micro-data 1984-1987 (cross-sectional)	Regression-adjusted estimates of 'child effect' for each of the 14 countries (effect of having young children on women's employment probability)	Index 1 summarising 8 indicators of policies affecting mothers of children <3 Index 2 summarising 4 indicators of policies affecting mother of children 3-schooling age	1 <sup>st</sup> step: creation of dependent variable via logistic regression; 2 <sup>nd</sup> step: explanatory model estimated by WLS regression, N=14 for estimation of macro effects	Family friendly policy is effective Index 1 explains 36% of variation in child effects Index 2 explains 52% of variation in child effects	Macro-macro
Stier et al. 2001	All women whose children are above compulsory schooling age, also older women whose children already left school	AT, AU, GB, CN, DE, IL, IT, NO, NL, NZ, SE, US (N=12)	ISSP 1994 (Retrospective longitudinal)	Employment behaviour at 2 points in time: when there is child < school age and when all children are in school - results in 5 patterns: 1) continuous FT employ, 2) shift from PT to FT, 3) continuous PT employ, 4) shift from non-employ to PT and 5) continuous non-employ	Welfare regime typology (Esping-Andersen) and Index measuring level of support for mothers' employment (children aged 0-5)	Multinomial logistic regression (controlling for women's age and education; assumption that effects are the same across countries; not taking account of multilevel nature of research problem)	Significant effect of welfare regime and additional independent effect of policy index, BUT policies affect employment patterns differently depending on the welfare regime	Micro-macro Single level
Van der Lippe 2001	Women with or without children, single women included	AU, BE, BG, CN, CZ, DE-East, DE-West, DK, FI, FR, HU, NL, PL, RU, SE, SK, UK, US, YU (multiple waves for each country, N=33)	Multinational Time Budget Archive & 'Social Stratification in Eastern Europe' Survey (repeated cross-sectional)	Number of weekly working hours (continuous)	Welfare regime typology, childcare provision (dummy), GDP	OLS models, first separate for each country and then based on pooled data for all countries and years, test for macro effects and of mediating effects of macro-variables individual effects)	Significant effects of welfare regimes and childcare provision; evidence for variation in child and education effects across countries/regimes	Micro-macro Single level
Uunk et al. 2005	Women aged 20-40 who experienced first birth during the observation window and whose child is now at least two years of age, sample limited to women in married or unmarried cohabitation	AT, BE, DK, FI, FR, DE, EL, IE, IT, NL, PT, ES, UK (N=13)	ECHP (Longitudinal)	Changes in paid work hours around first childbirth constructed from longitudinal data (difference between hours worked before birth and the hours worked when the child is between two and 3 years of age) = measure of 'child effect'	% of children aged <3 in public childcare, GDP per capita, mean support for egalitarian gender roles in the population (gender culture)	Multi-level regression models (controlling for age, education, partner's working hours and household income, effects of individual level covariates assumed to be constant across countries)	Positive effect of public childcare on employment continuity; GDP has an additional independent negative effect (greater child effect in richer countries, controlling for levels of childcare). Thus countries where child effect are greatest combine low childcare with economic affluence. Gender culture has no independent effect, once controlled for level of childcare (high correlation between the 2 factors)	Micro-macro Multilevel
Pettit & Hook 2005	Women with or without children, single women included	AU, AT, BE, CA, CZ, DK, FI, FR, DE, HU, IT, LU, NL, NO, PL, RU, SE, UK, US (N=19)	LIS 1994-1995 (cross-sectional)	Self-reported employment status (dummy: 1=employed)	Service sector growth, maternity leave (in weeks), parental leave (in weeks), public childcare provision for children aged 0-2, unemployment rate, gender equality (% women in parliament)	Slopes-as-outcomes model, taking account of multilevel nature of research problem. Estimation of macro effects and cross-level interactions	Parental leave: positive effect on employment probability and suppresses child effect (0-3) on employment probability (also evidence for non-linear effect of parental leave). Public childcare: positive effect on employment probability and suppresses child effect (0-3 and 4-6) and marriage effect on employment probability	Micro-macro Multilevel

(a) for information on how these indices were calculated, see Gornick et al. 1998: Table 1. Abbreviations used: LIS: Luxembourg Income Study; WLS: Weighted Least Squares (taking account of differing precision of estimate at country level); ISSP: International Social Survey Programme; ECHP: European Community Household Panel.

explore regional structures and the ways in which these influence mothers' employment<sup>20</sup>. For instance, there are a number of studies which exploit regional variations in the supply of public childcare. Their results tend to suggest that geographical access to childcare facilities plays a central role in women's decisions about work (e.g. Del Boca, 2002b for Italy; Büchel and Spieß, 2002; Van Ham and Büchel, 2006 for Germany; van Ham and Mulder, 2005 for the Netherlands; Simonsen, 2005 for Denmark). The effect of the cost of childcare is still debated. While some studies show strong positive effects of subsidized care facilities on female employment, others find no such effects. A number of studies suggests that the availability of formal childcare is more important than its price, especially when slots are strongly rationed (for an overview, see Del Boca and Vuri, 2007; Wrohlich, 2006). Others emphasise that maternal employment behaviour is likely to be affected both by formal childcare availability and by the availability of informal care, and argue that the extended family can be an important substitute for formal childcare services, especially in contexts where the childcare system is characterized by low availability, high cost and rigid opening hours (Deven et al., 1998; Del Boca, 2002a). Studies that focus on the effect of locally available employment opportunities suggest that high regional (female) unemployment discourages women from entering the labour market (Van Ham and Büchel, 2006 for Germany). Finally, it is frequently argued that a lack of part-time opportunities or other flexible forms of employment may constrain women's employment, i.e. that more mothers would join the labour market in the event that such opportunities were more readily

available (e.g. Del Boca, 2002b; Gutiérrez-Domènech, 2005). A recent study by Del Boca and her colleagues on this topic suggests that the regional availability of part-time jobs has a positive effect on women's employment in Italy but not in France or the UK, where this time of employment is of comparatively lower quality (Del Boca et al., 2005).

In conclusion, studies that are able to test the impact of regional variations in institutional conditions on women's employment behaviour highlight the fact that not only individual level effects but also the effect of contextual factors (e.g. availability of childcare) may vary across countries. First, this may be due to a situation in which seemingly similar institutional conditions, such as a comparable level of childcare availability or part-time employment opportunities, in reality, reflect very different social realities (e.g. when the available childcare services strongly differ in terms of quality). Second, cross-nationally varying effects of certain features of the institutional context also point to the fact that single institutional dimensions can, in reality, not be analysed in isolation from each other, as stressed by complementarities and 'societal effects' (c.f. O'Reilly, 2006). One might argue that certain policy dimensions will interact with other policies and laws, as well as with the broader economic and labour market conditions and with a society's cultural make-up to produce their country-specific effects. The advocates of more holistic approaches to comparative analyses, which view societies as distinctive social units, and take account of institutional complementarities and 'societal effects' (c.f. O'Reilly, 2006). One might argue that certain policy dimensions will interact with other policies and laws, as well as with the broader economic and labour market conditions and with a society's cultural make-up to produce their country-specific effects.

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<sup>20</sup> Some but not all of these studies recognize the multilevel structure of the link between local/regional opportunity structures (e.g. care infrastructure, availability of part-time work, unemployment) and women's employment (and fertility) decisions.

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## **4. ATTITUDE-BEHAVIOUR RELATIONS IN MOTHER'S EMPLOYMENT**

By Nadia Steiber and Barbara Haas

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### **Abstract**

This chapter addresses the substantial differences in women's employment and care behaviour that exist within and across countries, with a specific focus on mothers of pre-school aged children. Using cross-country comparative survey data for 26 countries, it investigates the determinants of maternal employment behaviour with women's care attitudes as important predictors, alongside cost-benefit considerations and the influence of national policy, labour market and cultural contexts. Results show that mothers' personal care attitudes are significantly related to their level of paid work involvement; and multilevel analyses reveal significant cross-country differences in the degree of attitude-behaviour congruence. Stressing that neither women's choices nor their attitudes can in fact be taken as expressions of what their personal ideals are, observed attitude-behaviour relations are interpreted as the result of a combination of two underlying processes – the selection of behaviours based on attitudes and the adaptation of attitudes to match the chosen behaviour.

### **4.1. Introduction**

This study seeks explanations for why mothers' work behaviour differs between women and shows marked variations across countries. Using comparative survey data for 26 industrialised countries, the aim is to investigate the individual and country-level determinants of women's employment behaviour in the period when their children are below school-age. The reason for the specific focus on the labour market behaviour of mothers of children

below school-going age is that the most substantial cross-national differences in women's labour market behaviour are observed during the early childrearing phases (Gornick et al., 1998). The focus on mothers is also most relevant from a social policy perspective, given that fertility behaviour strongly depends on women's possibilities to combine employment and motherhood.

In contrast to most previous research, the study considers women's gender and care attitudes as potential predictors of their employment behaviour, alongside the more commonly tested individual and household level factors that affect women's time budget and cost-benefit situation (women's education, number of children, partner's earnings). Moreover, it considers the institutional and cultural context within which couples' work-care decisions are mediated (e.g. state provision for care facilities and leave, labour market conditions, societal care ideals).

The causal effect of attitudes on behaviour is predicted by the much applied social psychological theory of planned behaviour (Ajzen, 1991), which posits that individual behaviour is driven by behavioural intentions – which are in turn conceptualised as a function of a person's attitude toward the behaviour, this person's perception of how one should behave in order to conform to societal expectations (social norms), and this person's perception of the ease with which the behaviour can be realised (feasibility). The theory thus recognises the possibility that a person's behaviour may be at odds with his/her attitude toward the behaviour, when there are factual or normative constraints that limit individuals' 'agency freedom' (Sen 1985). While we would thus not necessarily expect mothers' employment behaviour to reflect their attitudes, it can

be expected that women differ in the degree to which this is the case. In situations in which individuals act in accordance with their attitudes, they may be argued to enjoy agency freedom (Comim, 2001). At the same time, however, we need to be aware of the fact that people's attitudes are shaped by the context in which they are formed – they may be adaptive. In other words, people may become accustomed to the situation they find themselves in, and set their aspirations and form their attitudes relative to that situation (Sen, 1985; Peter, 2003). Against this backdrop, this study aims to account for the fact that neither women's choices nor their attitudes can in fact be taken as expressions of what their personal ideals are.

While the goal of this study is not to test any aspect of Hakim's Preference Theory and her claim that in modern society women are free to choose their preferred lifestyles (Hakim 2000) – as we recognise that attitudes may be adaptive – we do agree with her claims that people's generalised attitudes towards something that does not directly concern their own lives may be poor predictors of their behaviour (Hakim, 2004). This is among the reasons for why this study focuses upon mothers of small children and their views on non-maternal care. They are likely to think about their own particular cases and express personal rather than general attitudes when indicating whether or not they believe that: 'A pre-school child is likely to suffer if his or her mother works'. When women who are themselves mothers of small children express their view on this issue, they are very likely to express what they consider desirable for their own life (and their own children) rather than their view on what they would consider desirable for society in general.

Our methodological approach makes several advances over previous research. First, rather than making use of welfare regime typologies as explanatory factors,

we aim to disentangle the effects of different institutional dimensions (e.g. childcare provision, parental leave schemes). Second, we investigate the interdependent effect of a wider range of macro-level factors that have been included in previous studies (including policies, cultural factors, economic and labour market conditions). Third, apart from the usual individual-level factors included in female labour supply studies (women's age and education, number and age of children, presence of a partner and his earnings), we also look at attitudinal factors as potential predictors of women's work-care behaviour. In contrast to previous studies, we include such variables both at the individual and the aggregate level to account for individual heterogeneity whilst also testing for potential cultural effects at societal level. Fourth, the study has a greater coverage of countries than most of the previous studies. Especially the inclusion of a range of Eastern European countries is an important source of variation in macro-level conditions. Fifth, the research design differs from most previous work. The restriction of our sample to mothers of children below school-age allows us to focus more directly on women's employment outcomes that are tied to childrearing responsibilities. Finally, we apply multilevel modelling techniques, which have some advantages over the methods used in much of the previous research (with the notable exceptions mentioned above). Multi-level models allow for more accurate estimates of macro-level effects. Moreover, this technique allows us to test whether individual effects vary across countries and affords us with flexible means to identify explanations for such country-variations that are supported by the data.

Notwithstanding the great value of comparative survey data for large numbers of countries, such data also have some limitations. In order to address the



numerous econometric problems that emerge in studies of female labour supply and of attitude-behaviour relations<sup>21</sup>, we would need richer and preferably longitudinal data. However, in the absence of such data, we believe that it is worthwhile to carry out cross-sectional studies on the matter and make use of the attitudinal data for 26 countries, which is mostly missing from panel data. The fact that it is practically impossible to establish causal effects in cross-sectional studies is not of great concern for this study which focuses on the explanation of country-differences in (bi-directional) attitude-behaviour relations, which are themselves of considerable interest in shedding light on the differences in labour market behaviours among women that exist within and across countries.

## 4.2. Model Specification

The data used in the empirical application derive from the International Social Survey Programme ‘Family and Changing Gender Roles III’ module fielded in 2002. Our sample includes 1,309 women aged 20-50 from 26 countries<sup>22</sup>, who live in married or un-married cohabitation with a partner and have children below the national school-starting age<sup>23</sup>. The sample includes

<sup>21</sup> Given that couples treat the choices of their work involvement and family formation as simultaneous aspects of a joint decision, fertility is endogenous to women’s labour supply. When women differ in their (unobserved) preferences, this introduces selection effects that can bias the ‘child effect’ on their labour supply. Also attitudes are in principle endogenous variables. Yet, no suitable instrumental variables that would allow us to disentangle the reciprocal effects of attitudes are available from the data. Nonetheless, also the differences in the estimated attitude-effects between different groups of women and across countries convey interesting information.

<sup>22</sup> We consider the Western and Eastern part of Germany separately and thus have 27 country-level units for analysis. In the case of Belgium, only Flanders is included, as no respondents from Wallonia have been sampled in the ISSP.

<sup>23</sup> The restriction to children below schooling age is based on the variable v67 (presence of children up to

employees, helping family members, unemployed women and housewives but excludes those who are still in the education system or permanently ill/disabled. We focus on partnered women, for whom the dynamics surrounding work-care decision differ in important ways from those of single mothers. We model mothers’ employment behaviour as a discrete choice between three options: non-employment, part-time employment (defined as working less than 30 hours per week) and full-time employment<sup>24</sup>. To account for the two-level hierarchical structure of our data (women nested in countries), we run multilevel multinomial logit models, using the Markov-Chain-Monte-Carlo procedure available in MLwiN. Overview 2 describes our core predictors. First, we model mothers’ employment status as a function of a number of individual-level covariates. Second, we examine the role played by contextual factors at the country-level in

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age 5/6, depending on the start of compulsory schooling) for most countries. For the countries, where this variable is missing (Ireland, New Zealand and Bulgaria), this information was imputed based on the retrospective information contained in variables v57 and v58: When respondents indicate that they were either working full-time or part-time or were full-time carers *at the time when their children were under school age*, while indicating that the question ‘*does not apply*’ to them when asked about their employment status *at the time when their youngest kid started school*, this was taken as evidence for the current presence of children under school-going age. Moreover, for all countries, we exclude those who give valid answers to both questions (v57 and v58) – as this suggests that children up to age 5/6 as identified by v67 already go to school. Finally, we include those women whose pre-school children have not been captured by v67 due to country-specific specifications of this variable (e.g. AT 2-5 years). This is done in a similar fashion as for Ireland, New Zealand and Bulgaria. Sensitivity analyses have been carried out based on a sample that excludes Ireland, New Zealand and Bulgaria, showing that results are robust to the imputation of the child age information in these countries (runs can be obtained from the authors upon request).

<sup>24</sup> 75% of the mothers who are coded as non-employed indicate as their ‘current employment status’ to be housewives, 13% are unemployed, and 11% indicate to be ‘otherwise not in the labour force’.

determining women's employment status. Third, we investigate whether women's education and attitudes have similar or different effects across societal contexts. Information on country characteristics has been compiled from several sources, as described in Overview 3.

#### Micro-Level

The individual-level predictors of mothers' employment considered are the number of children, women's age, their level of education, gender attitudes and views toward the effects of maternal employment on child well-being. Partners' employment status was dropped as a predictor because 97% of the sample had full-time working partners. Our main hypotheses are as follows. First, we expect education to exert a positive effect on mothers' employment probability and on the odds that they work full- rather than part-time. This prediction is based on three hypothesised mechanisms: on the one hand, a positive education effect would be predicted based on the logic of opportunity costs, given that education functions as a proxy for women's potential wages; on the other hand, a positive education effect would also be predicted when taking account of the fact that more highly educated women tend to have more modern views on gender roles (Crompton and Lyonette, 2005) as well as more rewarding jobs in intrinsic terms. Second, we expect mothers' odds to be in paid work and to work full-time to decrease with the number of children in the household. Third, mothers' age is expected to positively affect their level of work involvement, given that women who have postponed childbearing to a later stage in their career are plausibly more career-oriented than their equivalents who have become first mothers at an earlier age. Fourth, women with more modern conceptions of desirable gender roles and women who do not believe that their employment participation negatively affects the well-being of (their) small

child(ren), should be more likely to be in paid work and to work full-time than their equivalents with less favourable views towards maternal employment.

#### Macro-Level

Predictors of mothers' employment at the macro-level include a set of policy indicators, economic and labour market conditions, as well as cultural factors. Yet, as our sample consists of women nested in 27 country-level units, we are limited as regard the number of macro-variables that can be included in one model at once. Therefore, we first test each of the macro-variables separately, and only then move on to somewhat more elaborated models. First, we assess the impact of two policy dimensions pertaining to the level of state support for working mothers: childcare and parental leave provisions. Here, we focus on the effect of childcare coverage for children age below three as an indicator of good childcare provision for children of all ages, given that in all countries that provide for a good childcare infrastructure for children aged 0-2, we also find ample care provision for older children.<sup>25</sup> The predictions are straight-forward, given consistent evidence from prior research for the thesis that more developed childcare policies positively affect mothers' paid work involvement. Regarding the design of parental leave provisions the predictions are less clear. In principle, leave associated with high replacement income should strengthen mothers' attachment to the labour market. However, while this is likely to be the short-term effect, long generously paid leave may entice women to leave the labour market for 'too long',

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<sup>25</sup> But not necessarily vice versa; i.e. countries with high levels of childcare coverage for children aged 3-6 (not taking account of opening hours) regularly provide an inadequate care infrastructure for younger children. The childcare indicator has been recoded to range from 0-5, which is justified by the fact that the available measures of childcare coverage vary quite widely across different sources and are likely to suffer from a great deal of measurement error.

thus reducing their chances for a successful re-entry (Rønsen and Sundström, 2002). Overall, we would expect mothers of small children to be most commonly employed full-time in countries that offer generously paid leave for a medium period of time, while providing a tight net of childcare facilities for children of all ages (Jaumotte, 2004; De Henau et al., 2006). Second, we investigate the effect of cultural factors; i.e. of prevailing gender attitudes in the population and of dominant care ideals. Defining culture as ‘shared values’ (Schwartz, 1994), the macro-level cultural factors are constructed from the micro-data (Overview 3 for details). In previous work, it has proven difficult to disentangle the effect of institutional and cultural factors, because in Western Europe developed reconciliation policies and the prevalence of modern gender values tend co-vary in a positive manner (Uunk et al. 2005). Such problems of multicollinearity are less of an issue for this study, because it covers a more diverse sample of countries (for correlations between country-level factors, see Table 1).

Therefore, in contrast to previous research, the data at hand would allow for the establishment of an independent effect of gender culture. In particular, we would expect mothers’ paid work involvement to be stronger in countries where the majority population supports modern conceptions of gender roles and where public belief does not induce mothers’ guilt among working women. Third, we test the thesis that economic affluence has a depressing effect on maternal employment, given that in

richer countries more women can afford not to work (Uunk et al. 2005). This is especially interesting to test based on a sample that includes both more affluent Northern and Western European countries as well as some of the less prosperous Southern, Eastern and Central European countries, where most families need two full-time salaries to ensure an adequate standard of living. Finally, we investigate the potential impact of the availability of opportunities to work part-time, which have been argued to have a positive effect on mothers’ employment (Daly, 2000).

**Cross-Level Interactions:** We would expect mothers’ attitudes to have greater predictive power in countries, where policy arrangements, economic and labour market conditions are so as to provide women with a great deal of choice between different behaviours. First, this would be the case in countries with developed care policies, combining generous parental leave with an extensive care infrastructure for children of all ages. As argued by Lewis and Giullari (2005), freedom to choose one’s preferred mix of employment and care requires that it is practically (and financially) possible to choose caring (or employment) as one’s primary activity. An ideal policy would provide the right to care-leave and to a sufficiently high income based on caring (i.e. high wage replacement rate of care benefits) in combination with affordable care services.

## Overview 2: Variable description, model set-up

Type of variable	Variable	Number of observations <sup>(a)</sup>	Description
Dependent Variable	<b>Employment status</b>	<b>1,309</b>	categorical variable:
	<i>NE (0 hrs)</i>	467	not employed (NE),
	<i>PT (1-30 hrs)</i>	236	part-time employment (PT, <30 weekly hours) and
	<i>FT (&gt;30 hrs)</i>	606	full-time employment (FT, 30+ hours per week, baseline)
Individual-level covariates	<b>Education</b> (in years; 6-17+)	<b>1,309</b>	Range [-7 to 4], centred around grand mean
	<b>Age</b> (in years, 20-50)	<b>1,309</b>	Range [-11 to 19], centred around grand mean
	<b>Nr. of children</b> (1-3+)	<b>1,309</b>	Range [-.76 to 2.24], centred around grand mean
	<b>Gender attitude</b> (1-5)	<b>1,309</b>	Range [-1.22 to 2.78], centred around grand mean <sup>(b)</sup>
Country characteristics	<b>Care attitude</b> (1-5)	<b>1,309</b>	Range [-1.78 to 2.22], centred around grand mean <sup>(c)</sup>
	<b>Childcare coverage &lt;3 yrs</b>	27	Range [-2 to 3], centred around grand mean (indicator)
	<b>Parental leave</b> (in wks)	27	Range [-1.5 to 2.5], centred around grand mean
	<b>GDP per capita</b> (PPP)	27	Range [-2.4 to 1.6], centred around grand mean
	<b>Gender role ideology</b>	27	Range [-2.3 to 1.7], centred around grand mean <sup>(d)</sup>
	<b>Care ideals</b>	27	Range [-1.9 to 2.1], centred around grand mean <sup>(d)</sup>
	<b>Part-time rate</b>	27	Range [-1.5 to 2.5], centred around grand mean

(a) Sample: Women aged 20-50 from 26 countries (27 country-level units) with at least one child under compulsory schooling age and cohabiting with a partner (the Western and Eastern part of Germany are treated as separate higher-level units in the analysis, because they strongly differ from each other in terms of the extent of female labour market participation as well as regards childcare, labour market and economic conditions).

(b) This variable is based on the statement 'A man's job is to earn money; a woman's job is to look after the home'; higher values refer to attitudes that favour a traditional male breadwinner model; (c) this variable is based on the statement 'A pre-school child is likely to suffer if his or her mother works' and reflects the difference between women's views and the country-mean (care ideal at macro-level); higher values refer to more negative views about maternal employment and non-maternal care; (d) these variables are constructed from the individual level variables gender attitude (v11) and care attitude v5 (weighted country-means). For country-specific values, see Overview 2 in Annex.

**Table 1: Correlations among macro level factors**

	childcare <3	Parental leave	Part-time rate	Gender role	Care Ideal
GDP / capita	.28	-.09	.70	-.84	-.56
childcare <3	1	.05	.17	-.58	-.53
Parental Leave		1	-.35	-.02	.02
Part-time			1	-.66	-.41
Gender role				1	.75
Care Ideal					1

Moreover, the freedom to choose one's preferred work-care mix of market and informal care work also requires the right to re-instatement into a job of similar quality after a 'care break', the right to reduced work time and to resume full-time work when care duties get smaller. Second, mothers' attitudes can be expected to have greater predictive power in countries where employment opportunities and different work time options are readily available to women – in countries where unemployment is low and where part-time employment is common. Third, also in more affluent countries, where more mothers can afford not to be in paid work, women will effectively have a greater amount of choice between different work-care behaviours. Finally, also prevailing gender norms may play a role. Even if women could (theoretically) choose their preferred mix of employment and care, i.e. in the absence of financial or practical barriers, normative pressures may still restrict women's choices. When caregiving is culturally defined as 'the proper thing to do' for women, their freedom to choose paid work is effectively restricted (Olson, 2002). Conversely, in societies that place a greater value on gender equality in the labour market (e.g. Denmark or Sweden), women may also be argued to have limited choice over their personal lifestyles, in the light of societal expectations which may put pressure on women to act as 'adult workers' rather than as full-time carers (Hakim, 2004).

### 4.3. Results

The country-effects that are estimated from a simple multilevel model without any predictors (empty model) are graphically illustrated in caterpillar plots (Graphs 2-3). We can see that there are a number of countries such as Norway, Denmark, Switzerland, Sweden and Cyprus, where mothers are significantly more likely to be in full-time work than in others (i.e. in West

Germany, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Australia). Significant country-level residuals for part-time work are found in the Netherlands, West Germany, Britain and New Zealand. A significantly lower share of mothers works part-time in Denmark and Cyprus.

We first estimate the effect of our individual-level predictors (Models 1-3 shown in Table 2) and then move on to test the effects of country-level characteristics (Models 4-6). The reported estimates represent logit values<sup>26</sup>. In the light of methodological difficulties in establishing causality in cross-sectional research, the empirical results presented in this study need to be interpreted as statistical relations rather than causal effects. In the following interpretation of results, the term 'effect' is therefore used in statistical terms only.

As shown in Model 1, the number of children exerts a negative effect on mothers' odds of being employed and increases their propensity to work part-time. As predicted, women's education has the opposite effect. The positive age effect is likely to reflect postponement, with women who postponed first birth until later in their career tending to be more career-oriented and thus to remain in paid work during the early childrearing period. As can be seen from Model 2, also attitudinal factors show significant effects. If a woman agrees that 'A man's job is to earn money while the woman's job is to look after the home and family' ('gender attitude'), she is more likely to be non-employed.

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<sup>26</sup> The exponential of any coefficient of a variable with a fixed effect can be interpreted as an odds ratio, representing the multiplicative effect of a one unit increase in the variable in question on the odds of the outcome (if it is a continuous variable) or the effect on the odds relative to those for the reference category (if it is a dummy variable).

### Overview 3: Macro-variables used

Country	Sample 1,309 mothers in 26 countries	Child care coverage (a)		Parental leave (in weeks) (b)	GDP per capita (2002) (c)	PT rate (2003) (<30 hours) (d)	Gender culture (e)	
		0<3 years	Indicator				Gender role Male breadwinner	Care ideals Kid suffers
AT	119	9	0	64	118	13.5	156	148
AU	24	15	1	17	110	27.9	139	120
BG	22	7	0	96	28	2.4	183	148
CH	28	5	0	2	128	25.1	139	136
CY	38	12	1	11	80	8.9	150	108
CZ	65	8	0	58	65	3.2	183	128
DE-E	11	16	2	49	72	18.0	117	104
DE-W	59	2	0	49	113	23.0	139	132
DK	72	56	5	47	118	15.7	100	100
ES	21	10	0	50	91	8.0	133	128
FL	39	81	5	18	113	18.0	144	124
FR	97	43	5	50	109	12.8	122	124
GB	77	11	1	25	113	23.7	133	116
HU	36	6	0	114	56	3.2	178	152
IE	39	12	1	11	129	19.3	122	112
LV	39	16	2	50	38	10.0	189	140
NL	38	25	3	11	118	34.6	122	124
NO	82	27	4	68	144	21.0	111	104
NZ	39	40	5	0	86	22.3	133	128
PL	37	2	0	50	44	11.5	178	132
PT	42	22	3	21	74	10.0	150	156
RU	72	20	2	25	32	1.1	206	144
SE	49	41	5	118	111	14.1	106	100
SF	56	29	4	99	109	11.3	122	116
SK	35	19	2	58	49	2.3	189	132
SL	23	27	4	38	73	6.6	150	128
US	50	19	2	0	142	13.2	128	112

(a) Sources: Plantenga and Remery (2005) for most countries; for Australia from OECD (2001), for Britain, Finland, Portugal, Slovakia, the Netherlands and Cyprus from the European Commission (2006), for New Zealand from OECD (2005), for the US from Johnson (2005), for West and East Germany from Engelbrech & Jungkunst (2001), and for Russia from UNICEF (1999). The Swiss sample almost entirely consists of women from the German-speaking regions. Here, childcare coverage tends to be very low, see OECD (2005) and Djurdjevic (2005). The indicator variable groups childcare coverage into: 0 (<10%), 1 (11%-15%), 2 (16%-20%), 3 (21%-25%), 4 (26%-30%), 5 (>30%).

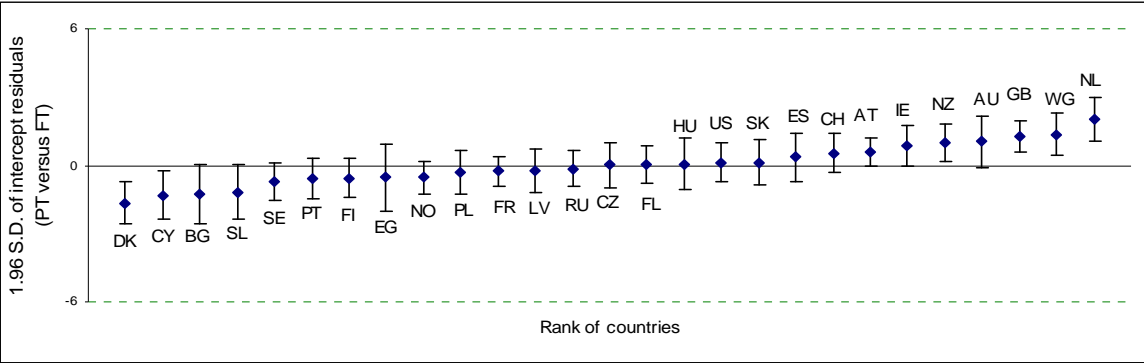
(b) Source: Plantenga and Remery (2005). Figures refer to effective parental leave, weighted by level of payment (in weeks); for the non-European countries from OECD Family Database, PF7 ([www.oecd.org/dataoecd/45/26/37864482.pdf](http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/45/26/37864482.pdf)).

(c) Source: OECD, available from [www.oecd.org/dataoecd/32/62/34256773.pdf](http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/32/62/34256773.pdf) and Eurostat, available from <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu>. Figures refer to GDP per capita in Purchasing Power Parities (PPS), OECD 30 average=100, EU-25 average=96). The figures for East and West Germany as well as for Flanders were estimated based on regional data and the regional distribution of respondents in the sample (authors' own calculation).

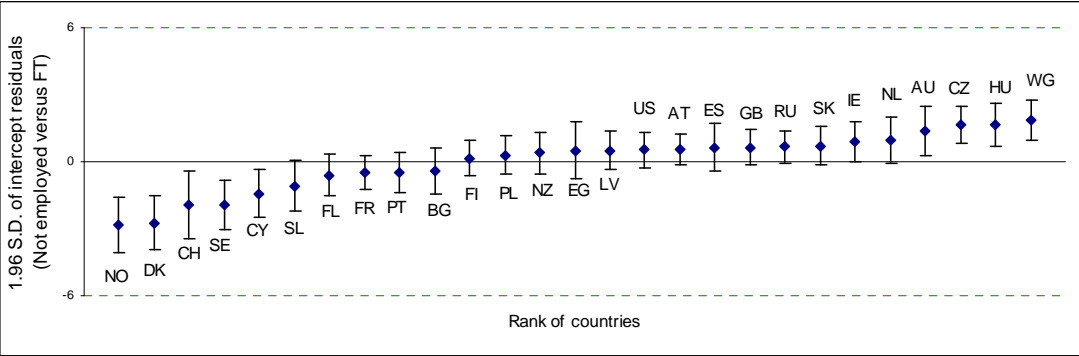
(d) Part-time employment as proportion of total employment; here, part-time employment refers to persons who usually work less than 30 hours per week in their main job. For most countries from OECD Employment Outlook 2005; for Bulgaria, Cyprus, Latvia and Slovenia from Eurostat New Cronos (15 years and older for the year 2003); for Russia from: [www.unec.org/stats/documents/ece/ces/ge.12/2007/13.e.pdf](http://www.unec.org/stats/documents/ece/ces/ge.12/2007/13.e.pdf). Regional estimates for Germany based on <http://doku.iab.de/kurzber/2004/kb1804.pdf>.

(e) The values represent weighted means (using the design weight provided in the data) of the individual level variables 'gender attitude' and 'care attitude' (see Overview 1). The country-means are based on the general population sample, including men and women aged 20-65. Higher values indicate more traditional gender role ideology and more wide-spread concern within the population that maternal employment may be to the detriment of child well-being (DK=100).

**Graph 3: Country-level residuals of intercept for part-time work (95% confidence intervals)**



**Graph 4: Country-level residuals of intercept for non-employment (95% confidence intervals)**



The displayed country-level residuals are estimated from a simple variance components model. They are precision-weighted estimates, i.e. countries with unreliably estimated averages (due to low sample size) are 'shrunk' towards the overall mean estimate across countries (represented by the zero-line).

**Table 2: Multilevel multinomial regression analysis of mothers' employment status**

	MODEL 1		MODEL 2		MODEL 3		MODEL 4		MODEL 5		MODEL 6		MODEL 7	
	PT	NE	PT	NE	PT	NE	PT	NE	PT	NE	PT	NE	PT	NE
<b>Fixed Effects</b>														
<i>L1 - Individuals</i>														
Intercept	<b>-0.96***</b>	-.37	<b>-0.92***</b>	-.36	<b>-0.94***</b>	-.41	<b>-0.82***</b>	-.31	<b>-0.84***</b>	-.34	<b>-0.88***</b>	-.41	.45	1.03
Age (in yrs)	.00	<b>-0.05**</b>	.00	<b>-0.06**</b>	.00	<b>-0.06**</b>	-.01	<b>-0.06**</b>	-.01	<b>-0.06**</b>	-.01	<b>-0.06**</b>	-.01	<b>-0.06**</b>
Nr. of children	<b>.27*</b>	<b>.76***</b>	<b>.26*</b>	<b>.68***</b>	<b>.27*</b>	<b>.70***</b>	<b>.26*</b>	<b>.71***</b>	<b>.27*</b>	<b>.71***</b>	<b>.25*</b>	<b>.71***</b>	<b>.26*</b>	<b>.72***</b>
Education (in yrs)	<b>-0.07*</b>	<b>-0.17***</b>	<b>-0.07*</b>	<b>-0.13***</b>	-.06	<b>-0.14***</b>	-.06	<b>-0.13***</b>	-.06	<b>-0.13***</b>	-.06	<b>-0.13***</b>	-.06	<b>-0.13***</b>
Gender attitude			-.07	<b>.22**</b>	-.07	<b>.22**</b>	-.02	<b>.21**</b>	-.02	<b>.21**</b>	-.01	<b>.22**</b>	-.01	<b>.22**</b>
Care attitude			.17	<b>.52***</b>	.14	<b>.51***</b>	.12	<b>.52***</b>	.12	<b>.51***</b>	.12	<b>.51***</b>	<b>.64*</b>	<b>1.32***</b>
Education*care attitude					<b>.10**</b>	<b>.08**</b>	<b>.10**</b>	<b>.08**</b>	<b>.10**</b>	<b>.08**</b>	<b>.10**</b>	<b>.08**</b>	<b>.08**</b>	<b>.07*</b>
<i>L2 - Countries</i>														
GDP per capita							<b>.44*</b>	-.01	<b>.55*</b>	.00	-.09	-.39		
Childcare 0<3							-.19	<b>-0.37*</b>	-.14	<b>-0.34*</b>	<b>-0.18*</b>	<b>-0.34*</b>		
Parental Leave							-.36	-.20	-.33	-.18	-.10	-.06		
Societal care ideal									.28	.12				
Part-time rate											<b>.91***</b>	.62		
Anglo-Saxon													Ref	Ref
Eastern Europe													<b>-2.22***</b>	-1.98
Southern Europe													<b>-2.10***</b>	-1.12
Continental Europe													-.12	.97
Nordic Countries													<b>-2.35***</b>	<b>-3.57***</b>
France & Flanders													<b>-1.42*</b>	-1.80
<i>Cross-Level</i>														
Care attitude *Anglo													Ref	Ref
Care attitude *Eastern													-.44	<b>-1.06***</b>
Care attitude *South													-.28	<b>-.88*</b>
Care attitude *Continental													<b>-.85**</b>	<b>-.87**</b>
Care attitude *Nordic													-.26	<b>-.86**</b>
Care attitude *FR/FL													-.43	<b>-.92**</b>
<b>Random Effects</b>														
<i>L2-Countries</i>														
Intercepts	<b>1.18**</b>	<b>2.27**</b>	<b>1.21**</b>	<b>2.33**</b>	<b>1.28**</b>	<b>2.34**</b>	<b>.90*</b>	<b>2.11**</b>	<b>.87*</b>	<b>2.16**</b>	<b>.40*</b>	<b>2.22*</b>	.40	<b>1.68*</b>
Covariance		<b>1.03*</b>		<b>1.16*</b>		<b>1.19*</b>		<b>1.10*</b>		<b>1.09*</b>		<b>.85*</b>		.45
DIC		2244.04		2186.57		2178.57		2175.41		2174.83		2169.53		2171.94
pD		51.99		55.23		57.35		54.73		55.08		48.10		63.74
N		1,309		1,309		1,309		1,309		1,309		1,309		1,309

Sample: Women aged 20-50 with at least one child under compulsory schooling age and cohabiting with a partner. The dependent variable is women's employment status in three categories: not in paid work (NE), in part-time employment (PT; <30 hours per week) and in full-time employment (reference category). The estimates reported represent logit values. The models are estimated using the Markov Chain Monte Carlo (MCMC) procedure available in MLwiN 2.02 (5000 burn-in iterations; 50,000 monitoring iterations). The DIC is the Bayesian Deviance Information Criterion. It is a goodness of fit measure which decreases with the quality of the model fit. A decline in the DIC by at least three points would suggest the move to a better fitting model. \* represents significance at p<0.05; \*\* represents significance at p<0.01; \*\*\* represents significance at p<0.001



This is also true for women, who believe that ‘A pre-school child is likely to suffer if his or her mother works’ (‘care attitude’)<sup>27</sup>. Attitudes appear to mainly affect mothers’ participation decision while they have no effect on their propensity to work part-time. Moreover, Model 3 shows a significant interaction effect between mothers’ education and their care attitudes, which can be interpreted as follows: the higher the education of the woman and thus the higher her income potential, the greater the impact of her care attitude tends to be. This can be explained by the fact that highly-educated women (who also tend to be partnered with high income earning partners) are more likely to be able to afford to act as full-time carers if they wish so. The inclusion of this interaction effect significantly improves the model fit<sup>28</sup> and is hence retained in Models 4-6, which test for macro-level effects.

As shown in Models 4-6, our multilevel model confirms prior findings on policy effects. We find significant positive effects of childcare provision for small children on mothers’ paid work involvement. Yet, no effect of parental leave provisions can be discerned. Models 4 and 5 would also suggest that economic affluence in terms of GDP per capita increases women’s

propensity to work part-time. However, this effect disappears upon the inclusion of the percentage of part-time work as a share of total employment (Model 6), suggesting that the original affluence effect was spurious (i.e. driven by the strong positive correlation between GDP per capita and the prevalence of part-time work in a country, see Table 1). Neither childcare coverage for children aged 3-6 nor unemployment rates add to the explanation of cross-country differences in mothers’ employment (not shown). Model 5 tests for a potential effect of care ideals and gender culture at country-level. While we find women’s personal attitudes to significantly affect their work involvement, we fail to find any evidence for an effect of culture at the country-level, neither of prevailing gender attitudes (not shown)<sup>29</sup> nor of care ideals (Model 5). Given that this remains to be the case when we remove individual-level attitudes from our models, we conclude that cross-country variations in women’s employment are not significantly related to and therefore cannot be explained by societal differences in terms of gender culture or care ideals.

Finally, we investigate whether women’s education and attitudes have similar or different effects across societal contexts. While we fail to find evidence for cross-country variations in the effects of education or gender attitudes, the results from random slopes analyses would suggest that the effects of women’s care attitudes vary across countries. Yet, there are rather few countries, for which we have reliable evidence for the claim that attitudes have a stronger or weaker effect than in other countries. Interestingly, when estimating random slopes for women’s care attitudes, we find them to have the significantly strongest ‘effect’ on the participation decision in the United Kingdom, followed by New Zealand and Australia.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Two versions of this variable have been tested. Apart from a linear transformation of the original variable v5, another variable was created as the difference between the attitude of individual women and the country-average. This is to account for the possibility that women from countries where part-time work is the common panacea for combining employment with motherhood think about part-time work when deciding on whether or not ‘A pre-school child is likely to suffer if his or her mother works’. This ‘country-demeaned’ variable can be assumed to attain a higher level of cross-country equivalence. The inclusion of one or the other variable does not alter the model dynamics or the effect of any other variable (also very similar DIC). The final models include the ‘country-demeaned’ attitude variable, which shows somewhat stronger fixed effects.

<sup>28</sup> The Deviance Information Criterion (DIC) is used as a measure of model fit. A decline in the DIC by at least 3 points would suggest a move to a better fitting model. The DIC can also be used to compare non-nested models.

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<sup>29</sup> The establishment of this effect is difficult due to multicollinearity problems with GDP (see Table 1).

<sup>30</sup> When comparing each country with each of the others (comparing the 1.4 S.D. interval for overlap in

With the aim of taking a closer look at potential differences in the strength of attitude effects across societal contexts, six country-clusters are formed: the English-speaking liberal welfare states (Australia, Britain, Ireland, New Zealand, United States), the Nordic social-democratic welfare states (Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden), the Southern European residual welfare states (Cyprus, Portugal, Spain), the conservative welfare states in continental Europe (Austria, Switzerland, the Netherlands West Germany), the French-speaking region (France, Flanders) and the post-communist countries (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, East Germany, Hungary, Latvia, Poland, Russia, Slovakia, Slovenia). For Western Europe, the grouping is more or less in line with Esping-Andersen's typology of welfare state regimes (1999), but the differentiation is somewhat more fine-grained to account for within-regime differences in care policies.

Estimating cross-level interactions between women's care attitudes and the six country clusters (Model 7), we find a rather interesting pattern. In the Anglo-Saxon countries, mothers' care attitudes appear to be more strongly related to their employment behaviour when compared to all of the other country-clusters<sup>31</sup>. Moreover, we find the effect of attitudes on the choice between part-time and full-time hours to be stronger in the Anglo-Saxon than in the Continental European countries (in the other country-clusters, part-time work is not a relevant option).

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residuals, any pair of countries can be compared at the 95% security level), we find significantly stronger effects on the participation decision in the UK, New Zealand and Australia than in the Czech Republic and Poland. Moreover, we find significantly stronger attitude effects on part-time work in the UK than in the Czech Republic and Switzerland.

<sup>31</sup> Differences in attitude-effects between the other country-clusters are non-significant (not shown). Sensitivity analyses have been carried out with different country-groupings.

## 4.4. Discussion

The study addressed the vast differences in mothers' employment behaviour that exist within and between countries. Using an integrative theoretical approach that combines the diverse approaches to the study of female labour supply applied in economics, sociology and social psychology, it examined the determinants of women's employment behaviour, focusing on the group of mothers of small children. The central aim has been to investigate the potential of women's personal childcare attitudes for explaining differences in the employment behaviour of mothers that exist within and across countries.

Regarding institutional effects, our results are in line with prior studies that have found state efforts to support mothers' employment to exert a positive effect on mothers' propensity to work. Moreover, efforts have been made to test the effect of different policy configurations, diverse economic and labour market conditions. Yet, attempts to estimate such effects based on data for 26 countries are constrained by concerns about limited degrees of freedom and problems of multicollinearity. While multilevel models generally yield more accurate (and conservative) estimates of institutional effects than single-level models, clearly, their full potential can only be utilised when information on macro-level characteristics is available for a greater number of countries (or regions). This would allow for more rigorous tests of moderating effects of contextual conditions on the individual-level mechanisms that shape mothers' employment in different countries. Yet, notwithstanding such statistical limitations, the results of this study contribute to our understanding of how mothers' work-care decisions relate to their attitudes, and are the first to highlight important societal differences in this regard.

Our results suggest that individual mothers' care attitudes are strongly related to their paid work involvement. Yet, causality is difficult to establish with cross-sectional data. While attitude-behaviour consistency may reflect a situation in which mothers with negative views on maternal employment and non-parental care self-select into non-employment (full-time mother care), it may also be the result of 'attitude-adaptation' with working mothers developing more favourable attitudes to maternal employment over time, either based on novel insights from actual labour market experience, or to avoid the unpleasant state of 'cognitive dissonance' (Festinger, 1957). While to date, we lack knowledge about the situations in which one or the other of these two processes is stronger, there is a great deal of consensus in the literature that attitude-behaviour relations in women's work and care decisions are reciprocal, involving both causal effects of attitudes on behaviour as well as feedback effects of behaviours on women's attitudes and beliefs (Pungello and Kurtz-Costes, 2000; Himmelweit and Sigala, 2004). This is also the background against which our findings from cross-sectional analyses on individual and societal differences in levels of attitude-behaviour congruency are interpreted.

First, in line with the argument that the effect of attitudes will depend on the type of attitudes investigated (Ajzen, 1991; 2001; Hakim, 2003; 2004), we find that mothers' generalised gender attitudes are less strongly related to their employment behaviour than are their beliefs about the impact of their paid work involvement on (their) small children's welfare (which have been conceptualised as personal care attitudes).

Second, the established interaction effects between women's attitudes and their level of education suggest that more highly educated women, who have higher earnings potentials and who tend to be partnered with high income earning men, have the financial means that allow them to act as full-time carers, if they wish so.

Lower educated women, by contrast, are more likely to face the economic necessity to be employed, even if they would prefer to stay home during the early childrearing phases. This corroborates the findings of an earlier study on mothers' childcare choices that would suggest that financial constraints moderate the effects of mothers' beliefs about childcare on their subsequent choices (Pungello and Kurtz-Costes, 2000).

Third, apart from differences in 'attitude effects' between more and less highly educated women, the study also revealed significant differences between countries in this regard, suggesting that it is in the liberal welfare states, where mothers' care attitudes are most strongly related to their employment behaviour. In other six groups of countries, attitude-behaviour relations were shown to be significantly weaker. This finding runs against the predictions from the perspective taken by social policy analysts, who tend to ascribe the greatest levels of 'choice' to the universal care policies established in the Nordic countries and France (Wall, 2007)<sup>32</sup>. Against the backdrop of recursive attitude-behaviour relations, potential explanations for why we find the greatest level of attitude-behaviour consistency in the liberal regimes can be divided into two groups, depending on whether they focus on processes of 'selection based on attitudes' or of 'attitude-adaptation':

Based on the assumption of selection (causal effects of attitudes), the interpretation would be that in the liberal countries mothers enjoy the highest degree of freedom to choose their preferred mix of work and care. Focusing on cross-country differences in economic constraints as an explanatory factor, it may be argued that the economic necessity to work full-time

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<sup>32</sup> Parental choice oriented policy models are, according to Wall (2007), established in Finland, France and Norway, where we find a complementary relationship between the leave system and care service for small children.

tends to be lower for mothers in the Anglo-Saxon countries than in the less affluent Southern or Eastern European countries, where the great majority of women face economic constraints that prevent them from choosing caring as their main activity. Yet, the economic perspective fails to explain why attitude-behaviour relations also tend to be less consistent in the Continental European and Nordic countries. An alternative explanation for stronger effects of women's attitudes in the Anglo-Saxon countries emphasises differences between welfare states in the extent to which they favour certain models of care: while liberal welfare states do not set strong incentives or disincentives to maternal work, in the Continental European and Nordic countries, state efforts are more strongly directed at encouraging particular models of work-care integration and put more pressure on women to conform to these models.

Conversely, when assuming that observed attitude-behaviour relations are mainly the result of attitude-adaptation, our findings would suggest that women from Anglo-Saxon countries more readily adapt their attitudes to match their behaviour, than women from elsewhere. The theory of cognitive dissonance, which holds that people's desire to resolve attitude-behaviour inconsistencies is strongest when there is no external justification for their behaviour (Festinger and Carlsmith, 1959) can help us to explain the particularly high level of attitude-behaviour congruency observed in the liberal regimes, where the state plays a minimal role in supporting parents' with combining work and care. The liberal model assumes that care is the private responsibility of parents, rather than a public responsibility. Given that parents thus have to find their private, individualised solution to the combination of work and care, they may also feel more personal responsibility for choosing a mode of work-care integration that is not

to the detriment of child well-being than parents from countries, where the state plays a central role as a provider of care and as a 'family-friendly' employer. Processes of attitude-adaptation among working mothers in liberal welfare states may also be catalysed by policy debates on childcare which had a strong focus on the issue of child poverty since the late 1990s (Gregg et al., 2006). The emphasis on the positive effects of improvements in employment and earnings potentials for parents as important means for improving children's welfare in public debates may help working mothers to emphasise the benefits of their employment for their kids' welfare.

In sum, there are two strands of explanation for why mothers living in liberal welfare economies show the highest level of attitude-behaviour consistency: they are most likely to choose the behaviour that conforms to their attitudes or they are most likely to change their attitudes when these are at odds with their behaviour. While one may be lead to conclude that at least the first explanation is in line with Hakim's (2004) argument that it is in the liberal welfare states where women enjoy the greatest freedom of choice and face the lowest level of external pressure to conform to certain work-care models, it shall be emphasised that this interpretation of findings is not valid. In the context of minimal state efforts to facilitate the combination of the high rates of maternal employment with children's need for care in the liberal welfare states, parents are forced to find private solutions, which often involve mothers' take up of low quality part-time work in which they cannot use their skills (Gornick and Meyers, 2003, pp. 8). The take-up of employment, in which they have to sacrifice their career ambitions in favour of their family, can hardly be described as genuine choice. Indeed, women's choice between different employment options might be particularly constrained in liberal

countries, where most couples need two incomes to secure family welfare (Himmelweit and Sigala, 2004) and it is very hard for women to choose full-time care (Lewis and Giullari, 2005; Lewis, 2006). Moreover, in these countries full-time employment tends to involve very long weekly hours, blocking many mothers' access to full-time work. Hence, part-time work is for many women in fact the only means by which they can attain the dual goal of economic welfare while attending to their children's need for care.

#### 4.5. Conclusions

How does the remarkably high level of attitude-behaviour consistency that we observe for mothers' from the liberal welfare states come about? There is some evidence which would suggest that this is mainly the result of ex-post rationalisation. In fact, we find full-time working mothers from liberal welfare states to hold the most strongly positive attitudes toward maternal employment, even when compared to their equivalents from the Nordic countries. This may result from a situation in which women from liberal countries feel most strongly personally responsible for ensuring that their children do not suffer when they work. As has been argued, mothers whose behaviour is at variance with their attitudes are more likely to adapt their attitude to match their behaviour when they feel personally responsible for their choices (Himmelweit and Sigala, 2004). Hence, full-time working mothers, who may initially be concerned about the effects of their work on their children, are likely to change their attitudes over time, especially when it is not financial necessity that has forced them into the dissonant behaviour. Moreover, the high attitude-behaviour congruency among full-time working women may also derive from the fact that in liberal countries the quality of childcare tends to correlate with parents' income (Mandel, 2007), which is less the case in countries, where the state is a central

provider of care. Irrespective of the provenience of the pronounced attitude-behaviour consistency in liberal welfare states, this finding cannot be interpreted as good news for the liberal model. Mothers' care attitudes clearly are shaped by circumstances – by their own work situation and domestic circumstances as well as by the characteristics of available work and care options (Fagan, 2001, pp. 244). They can therefore not be taken as expressions of women's personal ideals. Consequently, also attitude-behaviour congruence cannot be taken to indicate that mothers enjoy the genuine freedom to choose a work-lifestyle that corresponds to their personal ideals, as suggested by Hakim (2000) and adopted by a number of recent studies which use attitudes as proxies for 'preferences' in an attempt to test her 'Preference Theory' (e.g. Kan, 2007; Kangas and Rostgaard, 2007). Attitude research can yield interesting insights into the determinants of parents' work-care decisions. Yet, this will only be the case when due consideration is given to the complex processes underlying the generation of attitudes. This strand of research would benefit from a greater availability of cross-country comparative panel data, and an important avenue for future research would be the test of cross-country differences in the strength of 'causal effects' of attitudes on women's and men's work and care choices. Accounting for the complex process of attitude formation, however, interpretations of differences in the strength of attitude-effects across different groups of women and across countries remain a challenging task. When women are observed to choose behaviours that are in line with their attitudes to this behaviour, this cannot be taken as evidence for genuine choice, given that in the presence of socially constructed choice sets their attitudes can hardly be taken to be exogenous, i.e. determined outside the work-care system.

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*Part 2*

*MAPPING ORIENTATIONS TO WORK AND CARE IN  
EUROPE*

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Anália Torres, Bernardo Coelho & Inês Cardoso  
With Rui Brites and Paula Jerónimo



## 5.1. Introduction

As once said Gunnar Myrdal, every research starts from questions, and those questions emerge from a point of view, these are our general questions, our starting point: (i) What are the dominant orientations to work and care in the EU-25? (ii) Can we detect country clusters and how do they align with welfare state regimes or more precisely with work-care arrangements? (iii) How do orientations to work and care differ according to age, education, parental and employment status?

Based on the main discussions about orientations to work and care and on previous research results, we intend to contribute to enlighten regularities and singularities among European countries. Several other research results showed already that orientations to work and care differ across Europe. Thus, besides mapping them it is important to identify and assess the interplay between structural, institutional and cultural determinants of orientations (Haas, 2005) and try to find the more relevant to explaining country diversity.

In this report we first present the theoretical framework, the discussion that enabled the drawing of research hypotheses and account for methodological procedures. In our analytical scope we pay attention to orientations to work and care by briefly analyzing in a cross country perspective gender roles in Europe as a fundamental ideological background for the emergence of material and practical orientations; and looking to more objective and specific orientations to work and family. On doing this we shall

not forget the importance of the broader contexts that frame the orientations production: cultural and structural constraints.

The second part is dedicated to briefly discuss and clarify methodological aspects: data sources and quantitative analysis techniques.

On the third part based on ESS 2002 and EB 2003 data we found a sustainable European trend valuing work and family as main dimensions to personal projects.

We also analyze and discuss orientations to work and care and gender roles. Here we better understand the way the valuation of work and family for Europeans is introducing a dynamic of change of gender values, roles and relations in the family. We look closer to the specificities of these dynamics trying to characterize and clarify them.

Next on orientations to work and care and differences among European women our analysis is centred around the hypothesis that women's orientations towards work will vary less among countries than orientations to care. In some countries, orientations towards work can be modern but orientations to care can be traditional.

On the fifth part we analyze indicators translating the relevance attributed to conciliation between work and family care, among other factors, within the scenario of job seeking.

Finally, on the conclusions we return to the hypotheses clarifying how the analysis produced helps to test them.

## 5.2. Theoretical background and hypotheses

Therborn, in a perspective of the twentieth century, argues that crediting urbanization and industrialization alone with the role of providing the main motor for the family changes observed in the last hundred years does not seem sufficient to understand these changes. The author takes the example of the pioneering role played by Nordic countries in certain transformations that, with regard to the family, are today considered as the “norm” in other European countries<sup>33</sup> – gender equality in marriage, the freedom to choose a partner, the greater value given to individual rights and a secular vision of conjugality. In accordance with this, he tends to give pre-eminence to political, cultural and ideological factors such as strong secularization to explain the differences in the European family system that can be observed between countries (Therborn, 2004: 78). The greater or lesser influence of secularization on topics associated with the family, the existence or absence of policies on gender equality or sexuality is also a factor to be taken into account in explaining these differences.

For Hakim (2000, 2003) orientations, attitudes and preferences are very relevant because they tend to explain the choices made by individuals in work care arrangements. But testing Hakim’s preferences theory (based on ISSP data) Crompton and Lyonette

(2005) showed that life style’s preferences, choices or attitudes towards mothers’ employment, were not the main factors determining work and care arrangements. Moreover they distinguish between specific arrangements and orientations, the former being influenced also by institutional and structural factors that can be different from the factors influencing attitudes or orientations. They conclude that individuals and couples choices are the result of a complex inter-relation of attitudes and practical constraints and are made according to several contextual factors like labour market conditions, individual’s qualifications and education attained or the presence of children at home.

These recent results actualize other critiques regarding preference’s theory like the ones made by a group of British sociologists that stated, among other issues, the equal commitment to work by men and women (Ginn, et al, 1996). They particularly refute Hakim’s thesis that women prefer to work part-time, and demystify the relation between the number of hours worked and the degree of commitment, since the satisfaction with part-time options must be understood in the context of demands on women’s time and childcare costs and also in line with cultural traditions, employer policies and tax and benefit rules (Ginn, et. al., 1996) and reinforcing the observation of Dex, to whom “Most women want to enjoy both work and home life to the full” (Dex et. al. 1995 in Ginn, et. al., 1996). More recent results actualize and reinforce these critiques (Torres, Hass, Steiber and Brites, 2007; Torres, Mendes e Lapa, 2007) not only for Britain but for all Europe.

In fact, from different sources as the results from European Social Survey 2002 and 2004 or Eurobarometer 2003 showed very clearly the attachment or

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<sup>33</sup> The Swedish author explains that when some of the basic legislation on marriage, the family and women's rights was applied in Scandinavian countries at the very beginning of the 20th century, a large part of the working population was still engaged in agriculture (Therborn, 2004: 77). Accordingly, he tends to question the acknowledgment of urbanisation and industrialisation, made in particular by W. Goode, as the fundamental factors in the change in family structures in the world (Goode, 1963).

commitment of women and mothers to work as well as the perception of difficulties raised by part-time jobs. It is also important to stress that contrary to Hakim's assumptions the results of EB 2003 show that mothers of pre-school and school children don't reveal less commitment to their jobs than any other women or men. Several authors conclude also that, for the majority of the countries, modern attitudes tend to be assumed by women more than men, by younger than by older, by the more educated and the less religious.

Knudsen and Waerness (2001), comparing Great Britain, Sweden and Norway regarding attitudes to mother's employment reveal that differences between countries have to be attributed to welfare state regimes to socio-demographic characteristics but also to historical and national contexts. That is what becomes very clear when comparing Norway and Sweden as other authors had already concluded (Leira, 1992).

The differences within Scandinavian countries, in spite of sharing the same social democratic welfare state regime, have to be assessed and explained by other specific historical national contexts. And the case is the same when we compare countries within southern Europe, as shown in the example of the Portuguese case (Torres, 2006). Transformations in Eastern countries are another example of the need for drawing our attention to social and historical processes when comparing countries at a certain moment in time.

But for explaining differences between countries it is also necessary to assess other kind of issues. Conjuncture changes such as political orientations of governments do not fail to affect existing policies in both the area of family policies and that of unemployment. An example of such change is the alternation in the same country between social

democratic/socialist governments and conservative governments, which makes it possible to introduce modifications in the direction and variations in the related effect. This is the situation in the United Kingdom, which, while maintaining a liberal model, has seen certain policy alterations in the areas that we have mentioned. In recent years United Kingdom invested on work and care policies giving different shape to the traditionally liberal welfare state regime. there has been an introduction of more services supporting the families and longer and better paid leaves for working mothers - along with the economic development and the unemployment decrease.

Between 1995 and 2001, a set of public policies was also implemented in Portugal in the field of childminding and pre-school education<sup>34</sup> (the same process happen more recently Spain). Portuguese and Spanish work-family political packages aren't an ideological heritage of the familalist or maternalist stance; they found themselves in this position as an effect of trajectory from a disadvantage system to a deepened welfare state system and work-family political packages. A fast-forward move in terms of work-family political packages; following the extended model a large spectrum of solutions toward work-family articulation and gender equality have been taken in the last decade.

Cultural differences incorporated in gender ideologies assume accurate importance when analyzing orientations to work and family in a cross country perspective.

Although research has already shown that the differences within the sexes are

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<sup>34</sup> They partially filled a gap in coverage that was particularly obvious in a country with such a high employment rate among mothers of small children. There is still no public coverage, however, for the group of children aged 0-3 years.

much more important than those between them, the truth is that the latter are frequently inflated in a manner that tends to essentialize the biological differences between women and men (Amâncio, 1994; Kimmel, 2000). In fact, in contrast to the common view and the image portrayed in airport best-sellers, which constantly tell us that women and men come from different planets, close study of the differences between the two allow us to conclude, with some surprise, that as Connell states: “(...) the main finding, from about eighty years of research, is a massive psychological similarity between women and men in the population studied by psychologists. Clear-cut block differences are few, and confined to restricted topics”. (Connell, 1987: 170)<sup>35</sup>. In his book ‘Gender’, published in 2002, R. Connell reaffirms his rejection of the “dichotomy of the character” of men and women on the basis of gender differences and discusses more recent research results (Connell, 2002). Retaining gender culture as an important constraint and the theoretical discussion revolving around it, it seems inescapable to explore the ways gender roles and relations are being shaped in the interplay between work and family spheres.

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<sup>35</sup> Even in an analysis of such characteristics as the distribution of attributes connected with masculinity and femininity, it can be seen that, despite the differences in averages, the overlapping of characteristics is much greater than the distance and difference between them. As Kimmel also shows: “In fact, in virtually all the research that has been done on the attributes associated with masculinity or femininity, the differences among women and men are far greater than the mean differences between women and men” (Kimmel, 2000: 15).

Our analytical prism (Fig.1) presents our research point of departure on the topic of the individual strategies Europeans adopt, in order to cope with daily work-family articulation. To understand that articulation we must perceive work and family as two fundamental dimensions in a process of constitution of personal life projects, and consider the inherent division of paid and unpaid work. Concurrently, to make a cross-country comparison regarding these issues, we must account for the structural, institutional and cultural aspects that rest underneath those configurations of action.

This dynamic combination of concepts combined with the reflection around individual values and orientations, ascertains the emergence of some main questions:

What are the dominant orientations to work and care in the EU-25?

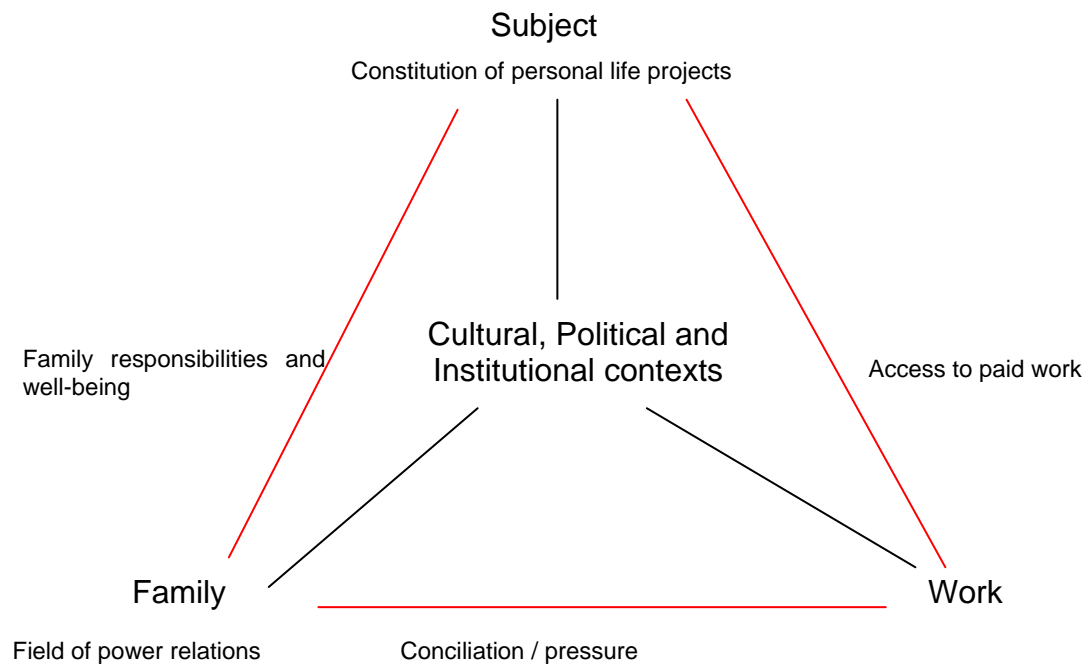
Can we detect country clusters and how do they align with welfare state regimes or more precisely with work-care arrangements?

How do orientations to work and care differ according to age, education, income, household type?

With the intention of answering these questions and accounting for the theoretical discussion and other research results as background it was possible to draw some hypothesis

We have started with a wide range of hypothesis, which included different inputs and perspectives about this theme. We have researched for instance the relation between orientations and the welfare state regimes, basing our stance on the analysis of the political packages (family policies targeted at work and care arrangements) prevailing in every country.

Figure 1: Analytical Prism



Our assumptions were that 1) different welfare states produce different kinds of orientations and values and 2) the existence of policies facilitating the balance between work and care would decrease the work-family conflict and increase wellbeing and satisfaction (although those policies tend to have more effect on women's employment than on the division of household tasks). We are exploring all of these different hypotheses, but in this document, we will only focus on three of them, since are the ones which aggregate the key topics of this project. The others are being improved and deeply tested in parallel academic papers. Therefore, with respect to this report, we will concentrate our attention on the following hypothesis:

	Hypothesis
1	<p>Orientations to work and care will differ in Europe in different gender regimes and according to specific national and historical contexts - income, education, working hours and household type.</p> <p>Women's orientations towards work will vary less among countries than orientations to care.</p>
2	<p>In some countries, orientations towards work can be modern but orientations to care can be traditional.</p> <p>Different ways of asking questions produce different answers. Questions addressed with a gender neutral perspective will be answered according to personal projects and wishes. When gender roles are directly at stake the answers tend to be filtered by gender stereotypes.</p>
3	<p>Different ways of asking questions produce different answers. Questions addressed with a gender neutral perspective will be answered according to personal projects and wishes. When gender roles are directly at stake the answers tend to be filtered by gender stereotypes.</p>

The first hypothesis lies on the supposition – supported by many authors (Leira, 1992; Knudsen and Waerness, 2001; Therborn, 2004; Torres, 2006) -

that orientations to work and care result from the interaction between the dominant gender values and the dynamics of change in the various countries, which will be different in every specific contexts. Countries with analogous gender regimes are most likely to have similar orientations to work and care.

The second hypothesis assembles and materializes a mix of ideas: having in mind that men and women are alike in the establishment of their life projects (Connel, 1987, 2002) and share the commitment towards work (Ginn, 1996; Torres, Hass, Steiber and Brites, 2007; Torres, Mendes and Lapa, 2007), we might expect that, in terms of family roles, cultural and institutional contexts (eg: family and gender policies and childcare facilities coverage) produce differences among European women. In some groups of countries women tend to assume for themselves the duty of family care.

The assumption that, questions directly addressing female professional activity may somehow deviate women's positioning, lead us to our third hypothesis, which considers the influence of the methodological frame on people's answers to far-reaching surveys.

Results from recent research led us to conclude that people respond differently if they are demanded to comment a personnel question about what they feel, for example, about their work or the way they value family than when the questions are specially addressing or referring gender roles. In the former case, they tend to assume more neutral perspectives and being so, when analyzing the answers we conclude for example that women's attitudes towards work don't differ so much to men's. Otherwise, when gender roles are directly at stake the answers tend to be filtered by gender stereotypes. We intend to use this differences and contradictions as guidelines to explore and analyze the data from different surveys.

### 5.3. Methodology and data

Trying to answer our questions and enlightening our starting point of view over European orientations to work and care, we mobilize mainly European Social Survey data from three different rounds (2002, 2004 and 2006) and complementary data from other sources like the Eurobarometer 2003. The combination of these different data sources allow us to better portray, assess and understand regularities and singularities among European countries. Other research background on childcare, marital life and the division of paid and unpaid labour between men and women was also mobilised<sup>36</sup>.

Portraying gender roles in the family and understanding how they interplay with orientations to work and care we produced a cluster analysis using a gender role index. By this method we draw three clear distinct country

clusters: egalitarian; intermediary and traditional.

Bearing in mind the goal of mapping orientations to work and care and aim of assessing the interplay of those orientations with a broader social, political and institutional context, we have done multiple regressions (Enter Method) analysis. The explanatory model takes into consideration indicators for structural and cultural constraints from the ESS 2004. Assessing the impact of cultural constraints in the definition of a more egalitarian stance among the countries selected, we have chosen the following predictors: years of full-time education completed and sex. Assuming gender as dimension for instantiation of deep cultural differences and values across Europe, we have activated the sex variable. Assessing the interplay between structural constraints and gender roles equality we identified the following predictors: income, working hours per week and household type; the household typology is defined by four different case-types: (i) living alone; (ii) childless couple; (iii) couple with children; (iv) lone parent.

Doing an individual scale analysis with quantitative data for Europe, we produced a two step cluster. This analysis allow us to escape from country means and centre our scope on individual answers, creating a typology of individual positioning about gender values in the family. On a second moment, this technique portraits the distribution of different types of individual positioning across Europe.

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<sup>36</sup> Several researches constitute this background: within the European Research Network *Social policies and the division of paid and unpaid work between men and women* we carried out two surveys: a survey applied in 1997 to a sample of around 500 households of parents of at least one child until 10 years old in the area of Lisbon (Great Lisbon); another survey at National level applied in 1999 to 1700 men and women a representative sample of the population resident in Portugal aged between 20 and 50. Results from qualitative research about marriage, marital life and work carried out in Lisbon in mid-nineties consisting on in depth interviews of more than 36 couples of men and women interviewed separately in Lisbon about marriage, marital life and work (mid-nineties) were also useful. And more recently *Work, Family, Gender Equality and Social Policies: European transformations from a comparative perspective* research dealing not only with quantitative European survey data but also with qualitative analysis of in-depth interviews to couples in different towns in Portugal (Porto, Lisbon and Leiria).

## 5.4. Orientations to work and care and gender roles

Contradicting the stereotypes, women tend to attribute the same importance to work as men do (Fig: 2). Work is a value in itself, making part of a

feminine social identity, even in countries where there is a lower participation of women in the labour market.

Figure 2: Work attachment for working men and women (%)

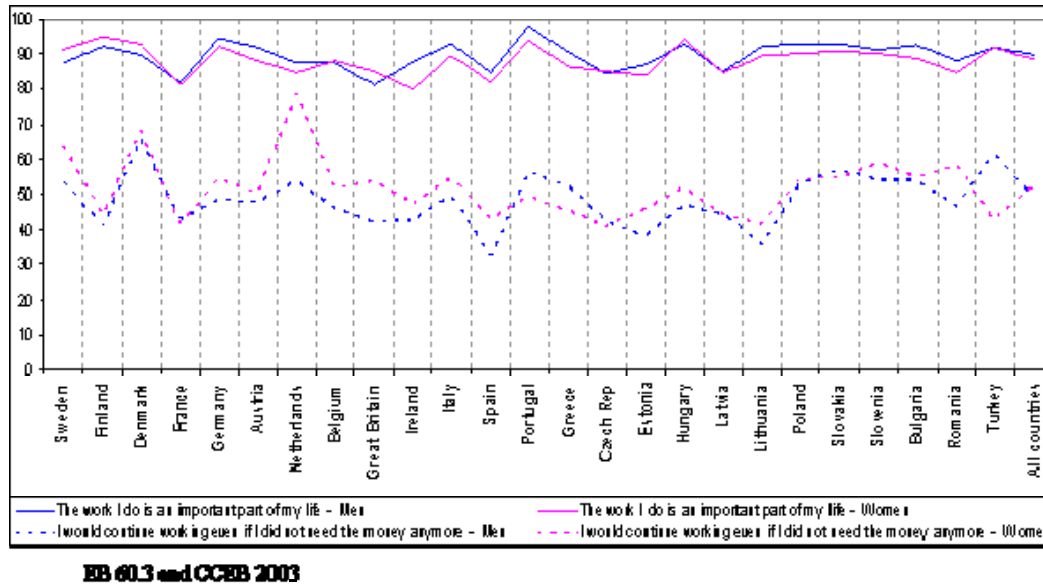
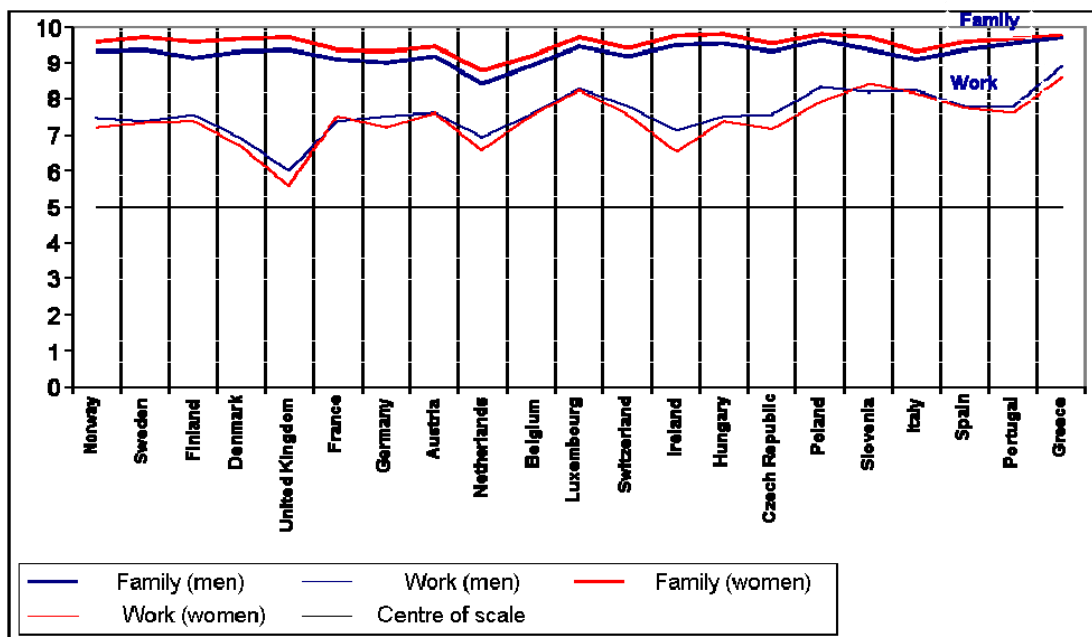


Figure 3: The importance of family and work in Europe



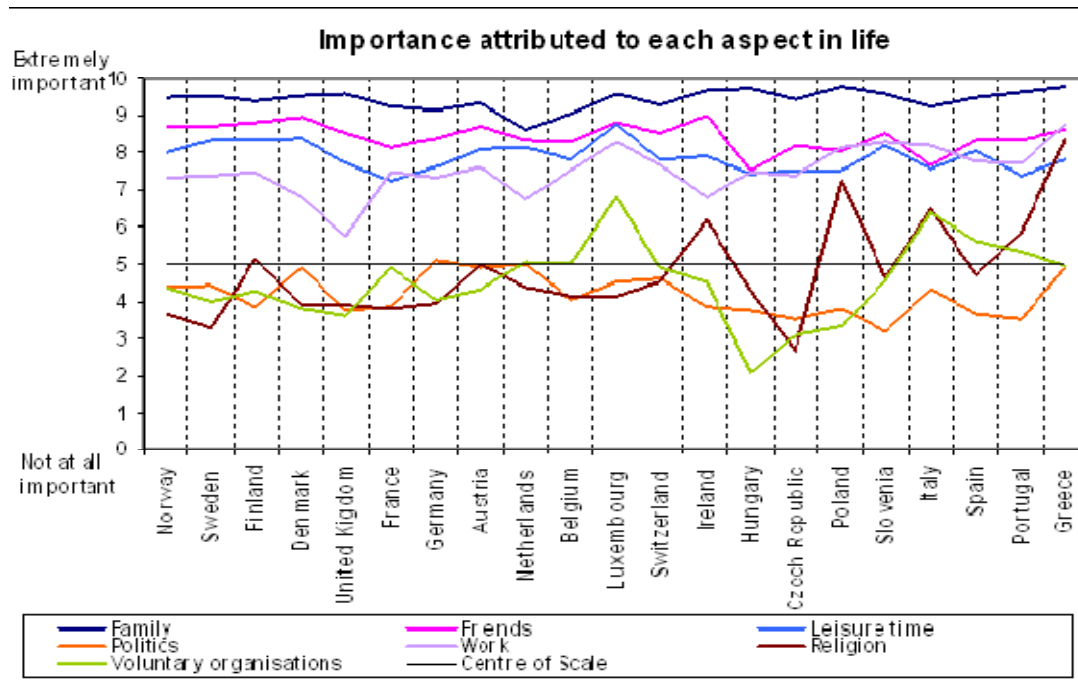


Family is the main sphere of personal investment for both, men and women. The discrepancies between the sexes are far narrower than the differences between countries. For men too family is important. Moreover, contradicting common sense that traditionally portrait Europe, we can say that family is not more important in the south than in

other regions of Europe; family is a taken-for-granted value for each of the countries that participate in ESS (Fig: 3).

Actually, the importance of feelings and emotional life - family, friends, leisure - is globally valued everywhere (Fig: 4).

Figure 4: Importance attributed to each aspect in life



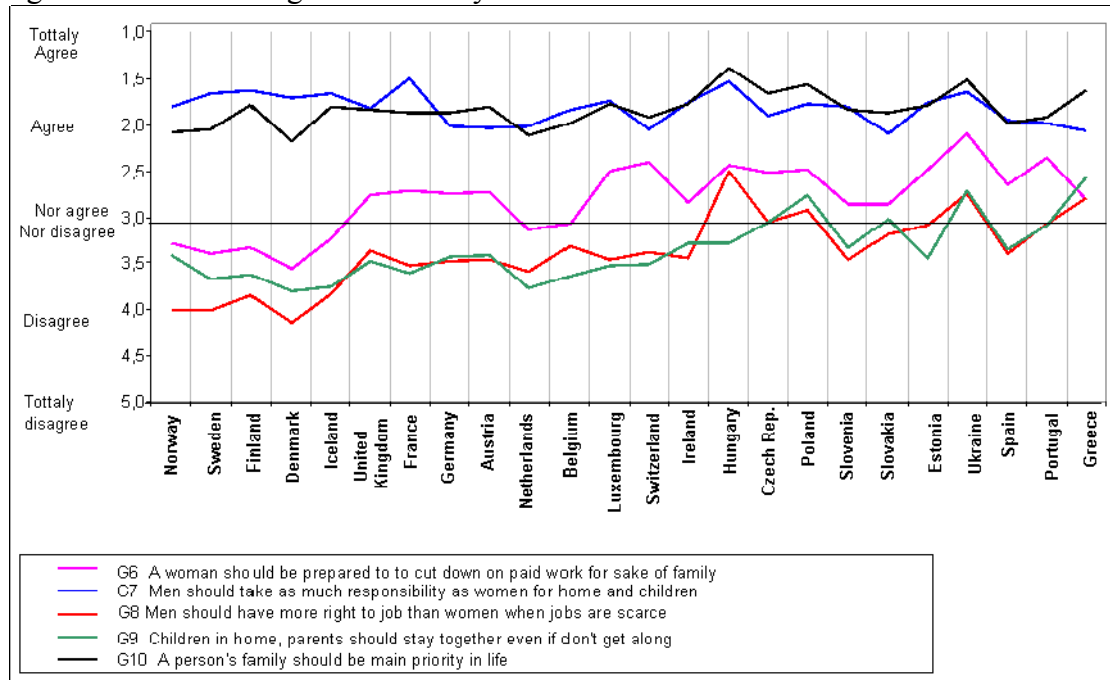
ESS (round 1) 2002

Some authors claim that, regarding work and family, women choose a life style according to their preferences (Hakim, 2000 and 2003). Others have shown that structural, institutional and cultural constraints shape “preferences” (Crompton and Lyonette, 2005a and 2005b; Crompton et al, 2005c). Choices seem though constrained.

We have seen that work and family are dimensions of social identity for both women and men. This trend was identified by qualitative research held in Portugal during the 1990’s, and presently the importance of this trend is confirmed across Europe by European

Social Survey data. Women “prefer” to work professionally and both men and women desire a stronger participation of men in family matters and childcare. The management of these personal investments (work + family) is introducing new meanings of family, new forms gender relations in family. Having as background the debate around preferences theory we can ask: how can we define these new meanings? What feeds the emergence of new meanings of the family? How are those new meanings connected with structural and institutional conditions?

Figure 5: New meanings of the family



ESS (round 2) 200

From the chart resulting from five ESS 2004 indicators (Fig:5) we can draw some European patterns. First, there is a general consensus and very high agreement about the idea that a person's family should be main priority in life and that men should take as much responsibility as women for home and children.

The wider agreement with the first statement isn't unexpected. We had already observed the predominance given to family in all countries. The second statement brings however some innovation: in the ideological plan, Europeans tend to adopt an egalitarian perspective and to reject a traditional vision of men and women's roles in the family. We are observing a change in symbolic representations and images associated to masculinity and paternity, which is reflected in the growing literature dedicated to the "engaged fathers", who participate more intensely in the care of children, as an opposition to the traditional role of breadwinner (Sullivan, 2004).

Secondly, we found what can be called an intermediary position or less defined

position about the idea that a woman should be prepared to cut down on paid work for sake of family's well-being - 47% of the European agree. But we observe marked differences among countries, Nordic countries tend to reject but the majority is near the middle or undefined point (nor agree nor disagree), and some tend to the agreement.

When asked if Men should have more right to job than women when jobs are scarce it became clear that apparently the majority of the Europeans doesn't support the sacrifice of the female professional work in favour of men (52,9%). However, we must account that an unequal vision in what concerns access to paid work – priority to men when jobs are scarce - increases as long as we move from the North to the South of Europe.

The idea of the indissolubility of marriage due to the existence of children - Children in home, parents should stay together even if don't get along – which also expresses a conservative attitude, is also globally rejected (52,2%). This idea reaches

again a medium agreement in the South and Eastern European countries.

In this descriptive analysis we must look at differences between countries. Nordic countries express a much clear position of rejection, while the others have more difficulty in standing for or against the statements. We may then understand that Nordic countries present very consistent positions of disagreement towards the three statements (A woman should be prepared to cut down on paid work for sake of family's well-being; Men should have more right to job than women when jobs are scarce; Children in home, parents should stay together even if don't get along). In the remaining countries – South and Enlargement – the figures of agreement are around half of the sample, reflecting more ambiguous predispositions and with a more conservative trend in what concerns work-family relation.

It looks like the idea that gender equality is a more deep-rooted reality in the Nordic countries is confirmed. And also that, institutional conditions – gender equality friendly policies - which enable the double investment on family and work might have an important role on this issue (Gornik e Meyers 2004; Leitner e Wroblewski, 2006).

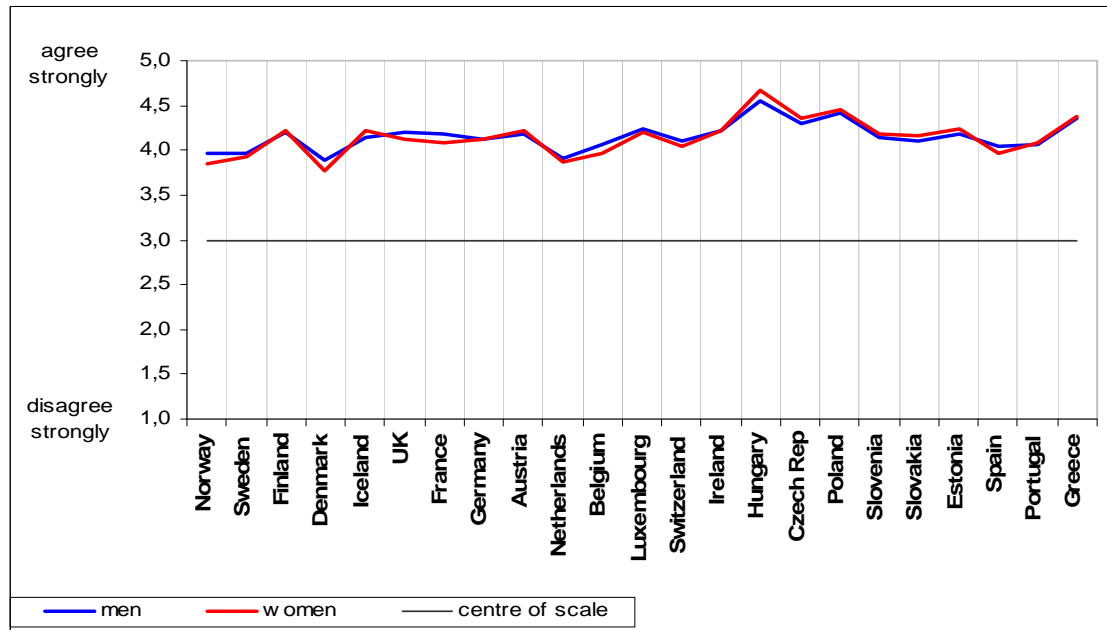
The general trend is the rejection of very classical and traditional gender stereotypes; this is particular evident on

the positioning of both men and women about the priority of men in labour market integration. But gender discrimination and reproduction of traditional gender roles and values still stands, with results showing a certain level of female incorporation of gender stereotypes, namely those concerned with female naturalized competences for care and family responsibilities.

The existence of new egalitarian trends along with the persistence of more traditional gender values is the result of a process of change going on in gender relations inside family scenario. However these transformations do not occur without some set backs or contradictory movements due to the implicit profound transformations about the meaning of being man and woman and gender normativity.

These results can also be the effect of the way questions are asked. When we ask questions formulated in a gender biased perspective we have answers that tend to reproduce stereotypes. That is if questions are formulated in a stereotypical way answers will also be stereotypical, reproducing more traditional gender norms and values. On the other way, if questions address the individual, man and women tend to respond as they feel for themselves and according to their individual life projects.

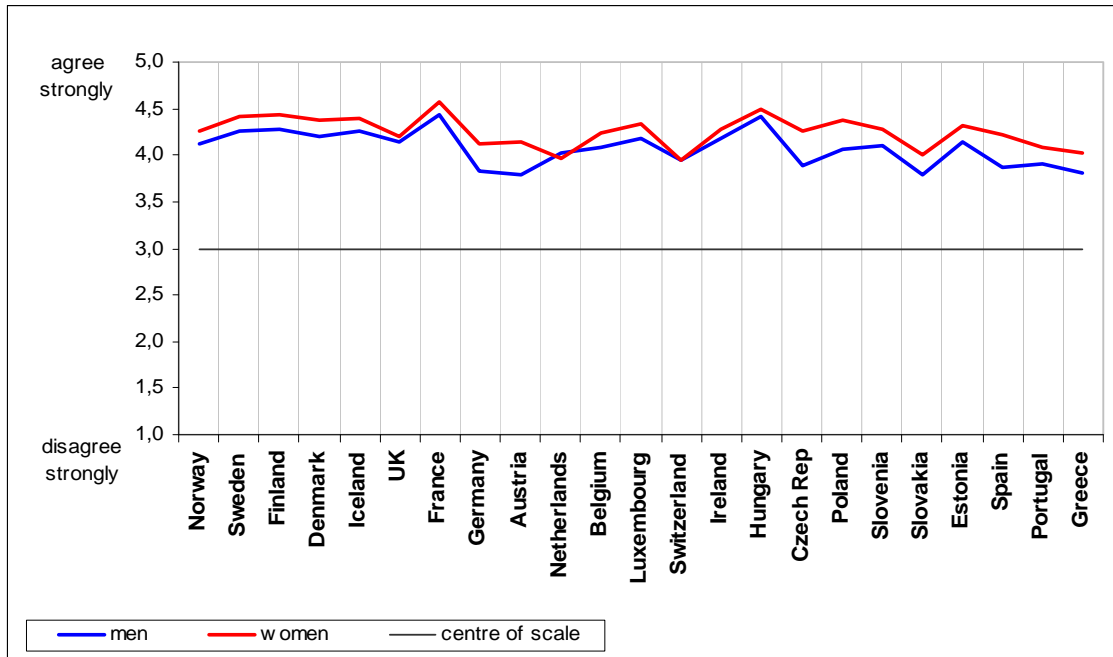
Figure 6: A person's family ought to be his or her main priority in life (means)



ESS (round 2) 2004

Country  
 $F(22, 43143) = 98,341$ ,  
 $p < 0,000$   
 $ETA2 = 0,048$   
 Gender  
 $F(1, 43098) = 0,031$ ,  $p = 0,860$  (n.s.)  
 $ETA2 = 0,000$

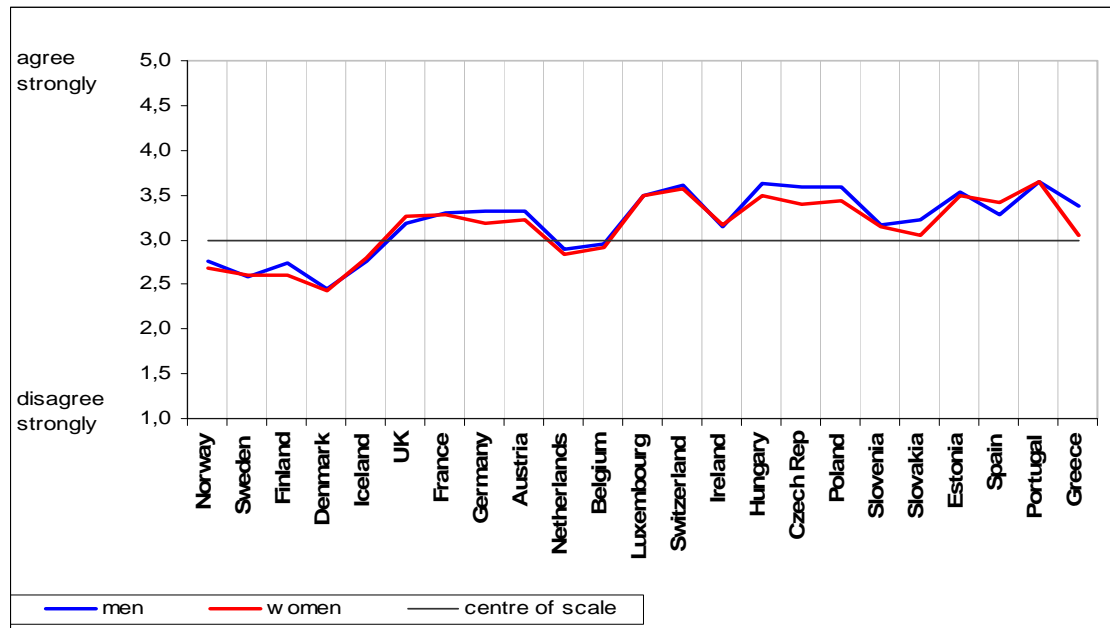
Figure 7: Men should take as much responsibility as women for the home and children (means)



ESS (round 2)2004

Country  
 $F(22, 43174) = 88,344,$   
 $p < 0,000$   
 $ETA2 = 0,043$   
 Gender  
 $F(1, 43132) = 533,731,$   
 $p < 0,000$   
 $ETA2 = 0,012$

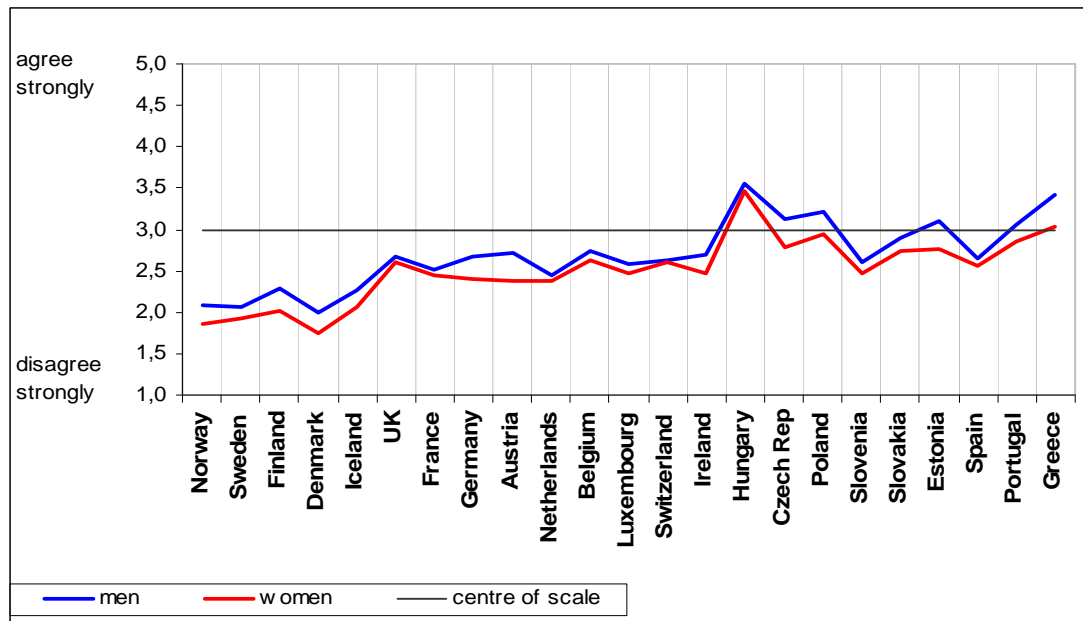
Figure 8: A woman should be prepared to cut down on her paid work for the sake of her family (means)



ESS (round 2) 2004

Country  
 $F(22, 42766) = 180,165, p < 0,000$   
 $ETA2 = 0,085$   
 Gender  
 $F(1, 42726) = 24,835, p < 0,000$   
 $ETA2 = 0,001$

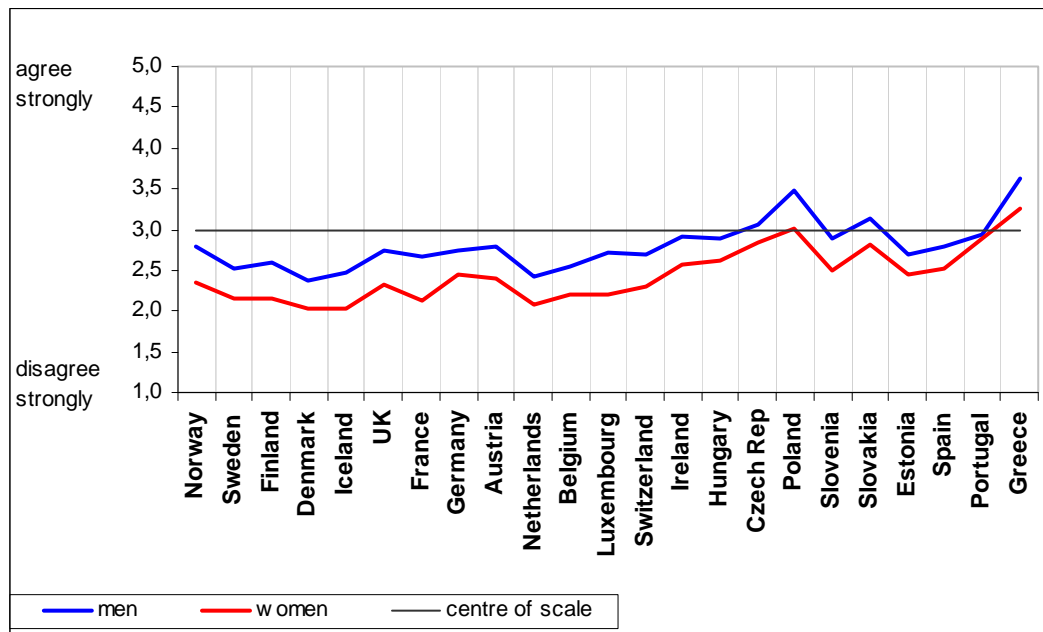
Figure 9: When jobs are scarce, men should have more right to a job than women (means)



ESS (round 2) 2004

Country	
F(22, 42913)	=
206,087, p < 0,000	
ETA2 = 0,096	
Gender	
F(1, 42867) = 228,516,	
p < 0,000	
ETA2 = 0,005	

Figure 10: When there are children in the home, parents should stay together even if they don't get along



ESS (round2) 2004

Country

$F(22, 42384) = 151,002; p < 0,000$

$\eta^2 = 0,077$

Gender

$F(1, 42341) = 910,429; p < 0,000$

$\eta^2 = 0,021$



Looking now at the same questions but trying to differentiate the answers for both sexes we find out that there are statistical significant gender differences<sup>37</sup>, but they are small and not enough to endorse the naturalized view on gender differences, namely those setting apart men and women in different social worlds: paid work as a masculine universe and the family as a female sphere. Besides, both men and women agree that men should take as much responsibility as women for the home and children (Fig: 7) and both disagree (less in the south and eastern European countries) with the idea that when jobs are scarce men should have priority (Fig: 9): family and paid work are realms of reality for both

However – despite the fact that differences among the European countries are more important than the gender differences - we can't neglect that in some of the indicators above we found some gender differences. Reinforcing the importance of our methodological hypothesis, it became evident that those gender differences revolve around themes that activate gender stereotypes.

Due to the persistence of traditional gender values is not difficult to understand that across Europe women assume more modern positions than men, especially accounting for family gender roles. This more modern and egalitarian positioning of women might reveal the defence of women as individuals with their own life projects, both at professional and emotional.

European women show a slightly more egalitarian position than men, indicating stronger disagreement with the priority of men in the labour market - women seem to have a clear professional oriented individual projects when compared to men - and strongly

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<sup>37</sup> In large numbers all small differences easy turn out to be statistically significant, that is the case when of the European Social Survey.

agreeing with the importance of male commitment in the household sphere<sup>38</sup>. So, finally, we can say that women - in some European countries more than others, and particularly in the South and Eastern countries - face the possibility/tolerate the idea of sacrificing their professional career for the sake of the family (Fig: 8), but they seem not to appreciate the idea of women's sacrifice for the sake of male labour market integration.

When analyzing the answers to this particular question, we should not forget some methodological remarks that can help us to interpret the results. We can not neglect two semantic details on the statement "a woman should be prepared to cut down her paid work for the sake of her family": first, the statement is on the conditional form, tracing a hypothetic scenario; bearing this in mind the answers can show us a state of prevention, a conditional agreement with the scenario. Second, to be prepared doesn't mean to actually do it or deeply agree with the statement; it means to be aware of the possibility, it can be interpreted almost as kind of B plan for specific situation when the family well-being is at risk. Therefore, an answer near neither agree or disagree seems like a preventive position.

The idea of the indissolubility of marriage due to the existence of children (Fig: 10) is the case where the sexes are more distant from each other, with men adopting more conservative positions than women.

Using the previous indicators<sup>39</sup> we produced a gender role index to portrait

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<sup>38</sup> At first look these differences seem to be neglectable, but they play an important role in the multiple regression analysis (further in this document). In our explanatory model the independent variable sex have a strong explanatory capacity.

<sup>39</sup> A woman should be prepared to cut down on paid work for sake of family; Men should take as much responsibility as women for home and children; Men should have more right to job

gender and country positioning in a scale that vary from gender roles strongly attached to a traditional view to more modern gender roles marked by an egalitarian view.

Again, in a cross country perspective women tend to be more egalitarian than men (Fig: 10). Comparing countries, we notice that egalitarianism tend to decrease from Nordic countries (Norway, Sweden, Finland and Denmark), to the continental Europe (France, Germany, Austria, Netherlands, Belgium) and from there to the Southern (Portugal, Spain, Greece) and eastern European countries (Hungary, Czech Republic, Poland, Slovenia, Slovakia, Estonia). These country differences allow us to follow the hypotheses that structural, cultural and institutional constraints underlie the different gender values.

Following the ideological changes about masculinities and fatherhood, and the new emotional expectations about fathering, to be a father means also to become slightly more egalitarian about gender roles in the family. Gender roles in the family are perceived differently by men without children and men with children under 12 years of age (Fig: 12). But the main pattern is maintained: country differences are more important than differences between men and fathers. The same can be said about women and mothers of children under 12 (Fig: 13).

It is important to state once more that egalitarianism tends to diminish as we go from the Nordic countries to southern European Countries, and this is valid both for men and women with or without children under 12 years of age. In this case, the overlapping trend for both men and women seems to translate cultural differences deeply rooted across

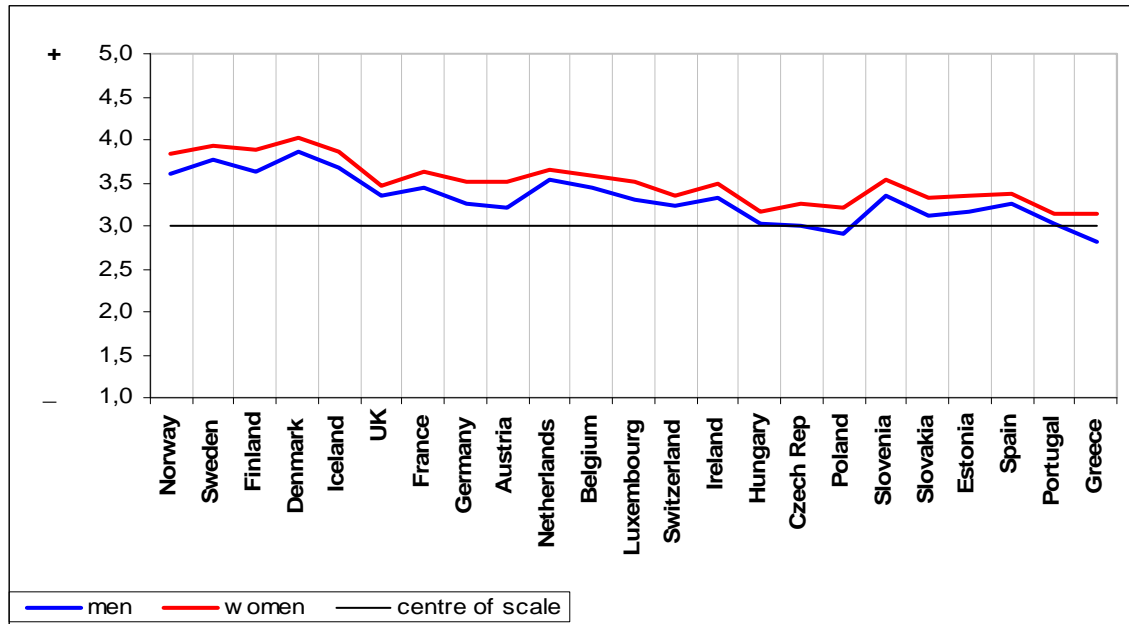
Europe at the ideological level. These differences are materialized in an synchrony between a masculine and feminine normativity (Connell, 1987): where women are more modern and egalitarian, men express a similar view ; where women are more traditional or less modern, men seem to assume a parallel positioning. Probably we can talk about differences across Europe regarding gender normativity, the ways gender roles and social relations are organized, lived, negotiated and perceived by individuals.

Going a step forward in the European analysis we produced a cluster analysis using the gender role index (Fig: 14). By this method we draw three clear distinct country clusters: egalitarian (Nordic countries, Belgium and Netherlands); intermediary (France, Luxemburg, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, UK, Ireland, Estonia, Slovenia, Slovakia, Portugal and Spain) and traditional (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Greece).

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than women when jobs are scarce; A person's family should be main priority in life.

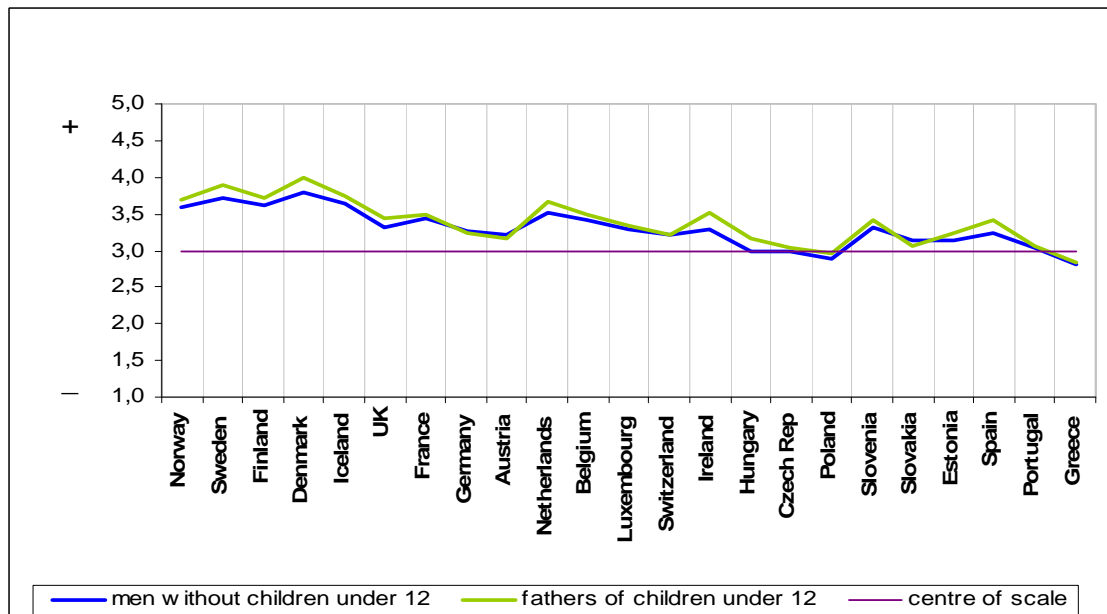
Figure 11: Gender Roles Index



ESS (round 2) 2004

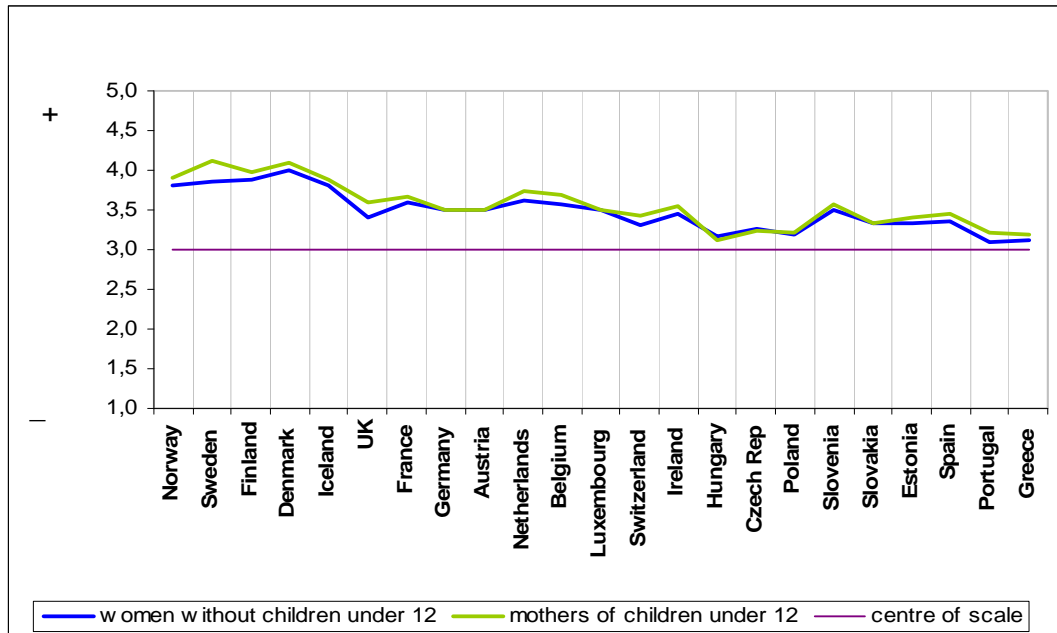
Analysing gender roles by:  
 Gender and country  
 Men and fathers and country  
 Women and mothers and country  
 Gender Roles Index:  
 A woman should be prepared to cut down on paid work for sake of family;  
 Men should take as much responsibility as women for home and children;  
 Men should have more right to job than women when jobs are scarce;  
 A person's family should be main priority in life.  
 Scale: 1=Traditional; 5= Egalitarian  
 Variance explained = 44,834%;  $\alpha = 0,588$

Figure 12. Gender roles by men with and without children under 12



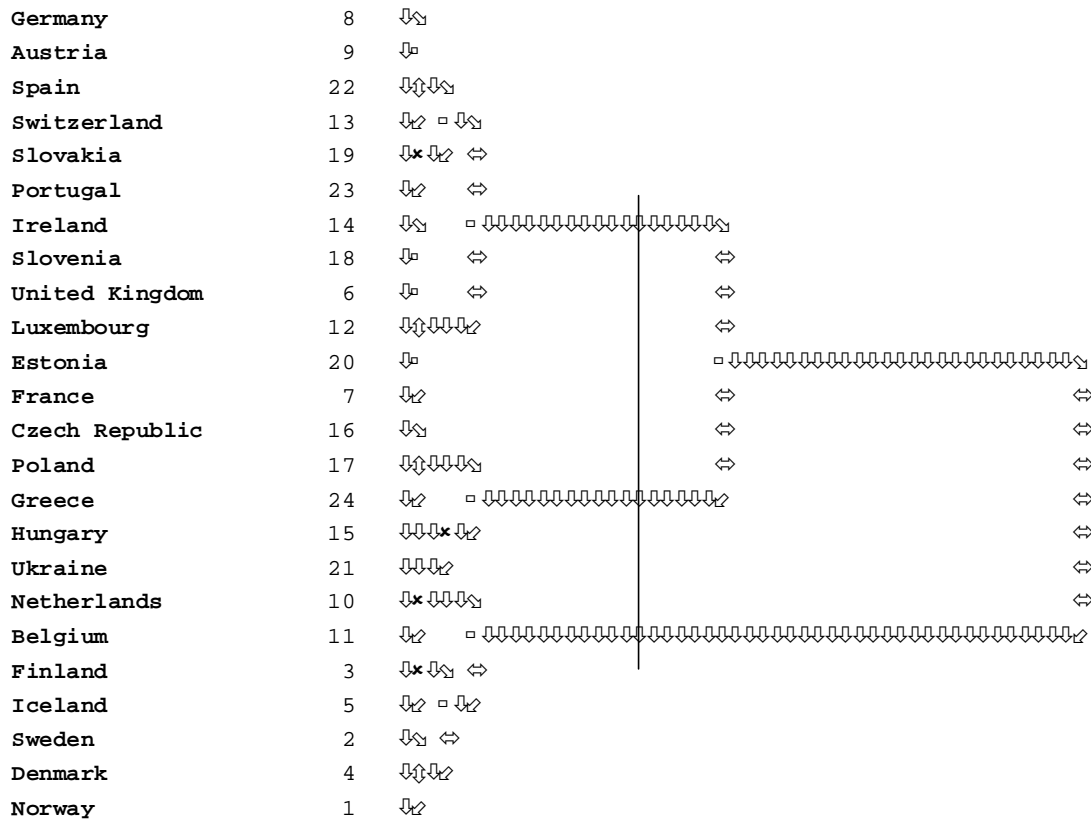
ESS (round 2) 2004

Figure 13: Gender roles by women with and without children under 12



ESS (round 2) 2004

Figure 14: Hierarchical Cluster Analysis (Ward Method) by Gender relations in the family



ESS (round 2) 2004

The country cluster analysis has a descriptive function of the European reality. The country cluster works like a kind of snapshot over Europe, portraying differences and similarities among countries about gender roles, and more deeply about gender ideology.

The country clustering by gender roles opens up several research questions that can be synthesized in one question: does this clustering has something to do with cultural, structural and institutional contexts? So, besides the descriptive analysis these clusters have an instrumental function working as a reference to further analysis.

Selecting countries from the different clusters we intend to identify and assess the interplay between structural and cultural determinants of orientations (Haas, 2005) and try to find the more relevant for explaining country diversity about gender roles: in what measure does cultural and structural constraints

impact the definition of an egalitarian position?

Answering this question by a multiple regressions (Enter Method) analysis, the explanatory model takes into consideration indicators for structural and cultural constraints from the ESS 2004 (Table: 1). Assessing the impact of cultural constraints in the definition of a more egalitarian stance among the countries selected, we have chosen the following predictors: years of full-time education completed and sex. Assuming gender as dimension for instantiation of deep cultural differences and values across Europe, we have activated the sex variable. Assessing the interplay between structural constraints and gender roles equality we identified the following predictors: income, working hours per week and household type. The household typology is defined by four different case-types: (i) living alone; (ii) childless couple; (iii) couple with children; (iv) lone parent.

Table 1: Multiple Regression: dependent variable: Gender Roles Index

	Sweden	Netherlands	UK	France	Austria	Spain	Portugal	Czech Rep.	Greece
Adjusted R2	.094	.070	.068	.124	.103	.254	.147	.084	.208
Years									
Education Completed	,236***	,241***	,145***	,288***	,181***	,458***	,262***	,209***	,333***
Income	-	-	,119***	-	-	-	,197***	-	-
Sexa	,123***	,119***	,074*	,066*	,193***	,135***	,101*	,187***	,284***
Working hours (week)	-	-	-	-	-	-,103*	-	-	-,061*
Living alone	-	-	-	-	-,085*	-,103*	-	-	-
Household Typeb									
Chidless Couple	-	-	-	-	,170***	-	-	-	-
Couple with children	-	-	-	-	-,122*	-	-	-	-
Lone parent	,066*	-	,118***	,097*	-	,083*	-	,089**	-

\* p< 0,05; \*\*p< 0,001; \*\*\* p< 0,000.

A dummy variable: 0=men, 1=women

B dummy variable: reference: "Other"

First, cultural constraints seem to have a clear importance for the definition of more modern and egalitarian gender roles concerning the family life. The years of completed full-time education are the most powerful predictor of the model. In a cross country perspective is possible to say that gender roles vary positively, by that we mean towards a more modern and egalitarian stance, according to the years of completed education (highest the level of education more egalitarian). Following Crompton and Lyonette (2005a and 2005b) we can say that for the countries tested individual qualifications and education attained are determinant for a more egalitarian stance.

However, the education variable (years of education completed) impact differently across Europe. Among the selected countries we identify different levels of impact of the education variable: United Kingdom, Austria and Czech Republic face the lowest impact of the level of education on the definition of egalitarian position facing gender roles; Sweden, Netherlands and Portugal constitute a second group; the third group France and Greece; finally, Spain is the country where the definition of a egalitarian position facing gender roles vary more according to education (highest is the level of education more egalitarian).

Analyzing the second predictor for the impact of cultural constraints, is possible to say that to be a woman means to be more egalitarian for all countries selected, which reinforces the information we had already advanced. This interplay has a particular importance in Greece, Czech Republic and in Austria.

Second, the structural dimensions do not have an explanatory capacity across countries. However, is important to analyze the impact of income on defining a position facing gender roles, since it reflects differences regarding

material resources that actively produce objective living conditions. Apart from the UK and Portuguese cases, income isn't a strong predictor. The differences of income are for Portugal and UK important factors for explaining the positioning about gender roles. The higher is the income, more egalitarian tend to be the individuals.

In the Portuguese case income clearly become a structural factor in the definition of gender roles and relations in the family. Economic resources are actively invested in the production of gender egalitarianism in the family scenario by transferring domestic and care responsibilities and activities to someone outside the household. This transfer of responsibilities to a professional is perceived as an enhancer of egalitarianism not only because it balances housework done by the members of the family, but also because it allows both members of the couple to invest in their professional careers.

At the same time, we can't neglect a hidden traditional gender roles reproduction: this kind of transfer is mostly done by women to other women.

We have seen that when gender roles are directly at stake, in average, and more in some questions than in others, answers tend to be close to the centre of the scale, in a place of difficult interpretation: nor agree nor disagree.

In order to find out a little bit more about what lies behind such tendency, it has become inevitable to ask for the individual positioning of respondents in face of every one of the statements.

Having the individual has analytical unity, and consistent with these indicators of beliefs which orient gender relations in the family, we understand individual positioning of Europeans towards gender roles, which is translated in a typology. According with every person's answers, we are able to

gather them in three distinct groups (Table 2): moderns (N=11.004); traditional (N=9.841); and intermediary (N=22.445), differently distributed among the various countries. We confirm once more that intermediary position is in fact the dominant one.

As we were expecting, agreement percentages are high when evaluating family centrality and gender equality in what concerns home and children. It is patent once more the transversal drift of these family meanings across Europeans, whether they are more modern or more traditional.

It is nonetheless surprising that the last of these new meanings (men should have the same responsibility as women for home and children) has such a high agreement rate among the more traditional Europeans, because such positioning represents in itself the placement of these individuals in a situation of profound dissonance between what is said to be thought and what is putted in practice.

In the remaining three questions, answers have a much more varied distribution. Traditionalists make a difference by the agreement with the three statements, assuming an isolated agreement with the idea of women's centrality in the construction of family well-being.

On the other hand, Europeans which assume a more modern and egalitarian positioning get isolated in the disapproval of men's priority in the access to paid work, along with the disapproval of the maintenance of a marriage due to the existence of children. If we take into account that these are the Europeans (men and women) who assume masculine colonization by values and practices embodied of the symbolic adhesion to the domestic sphere and affective care

of children, we clearly understand their receptivity to ideals recomposition and to the rejection of an identity and gender normativity which tended for a long time to separate men and women in mutually exclusive social spheres.

Intermediary individuals, as expectable, present a big partition, being the answers divided almost evenly by the three answer categories ("disagree", "nor agree nor disagree", and "disagree"). Only in what concerns the sentence "When jobs are scarce, men should have more right to job than women" we find a marked movement towards disagreement, with around half of the answers placed in "disagree". We may then conclude that, even in the case of more undefined Europeans regarding opinions about gender roles in the family, priority given to men in the job access is widely rejected, showing a global tendency for an egalitarian perspective in what paid work is concerned.

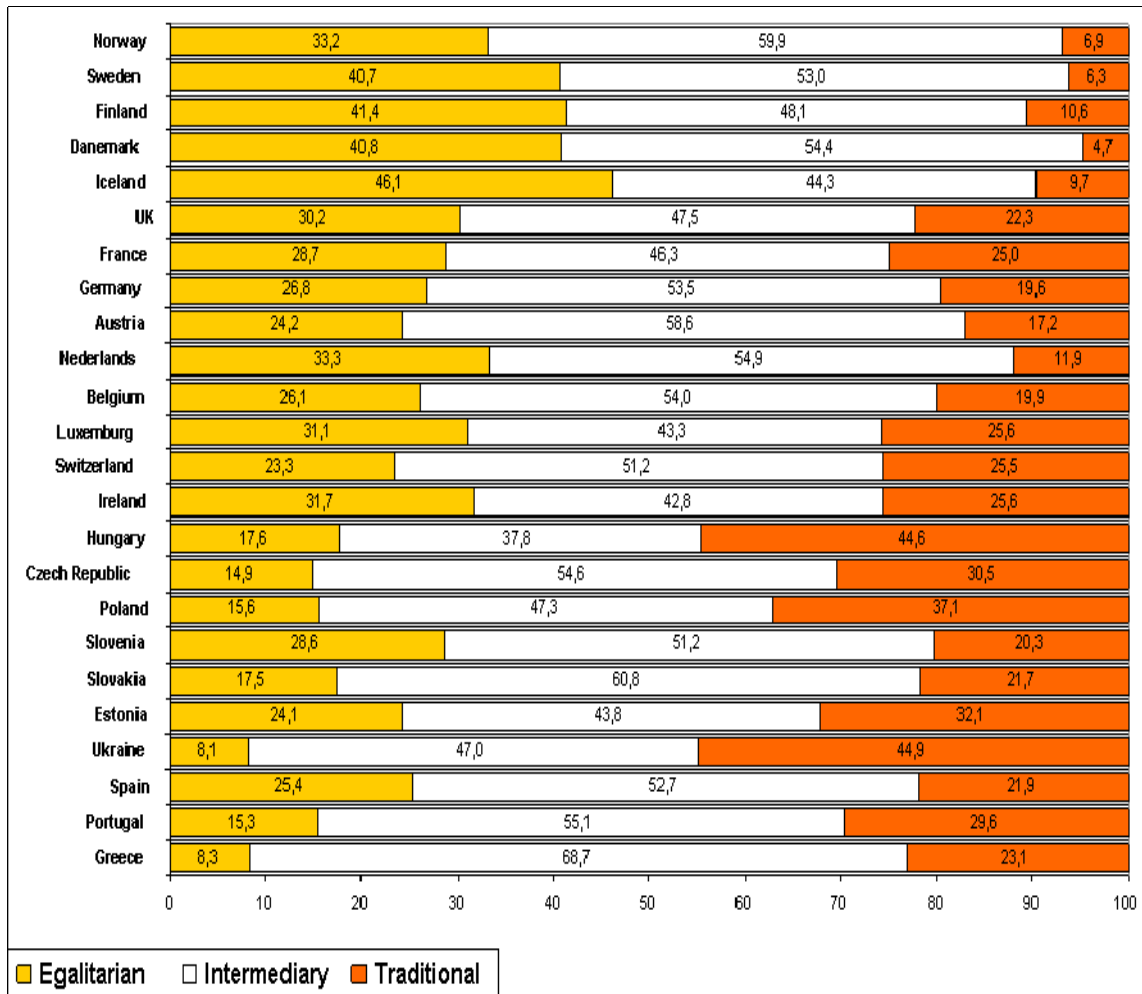
[Table 2 please see appendix]

After a brief characterization of these three groups, we assess their distribution across Europe.

Confirming what has been said, Nordic countries (Iceland, Finland, Denmark, Sweden and Norway) show a stronger trend towards modernity in gender relations in the family. In those countries we found the lowest European percentages of conservative individuals. In opposition, Southern (Portugal) and Eastern European countries (namely, Hungary, Ukraine, Poland and Estonia) we verified the highest percentages of individuals with a more conservative positioning towards gender roles in the family (Torres et al, forthcoming).



Figure 15: Egalitarian, Intermediary and Traditional by country

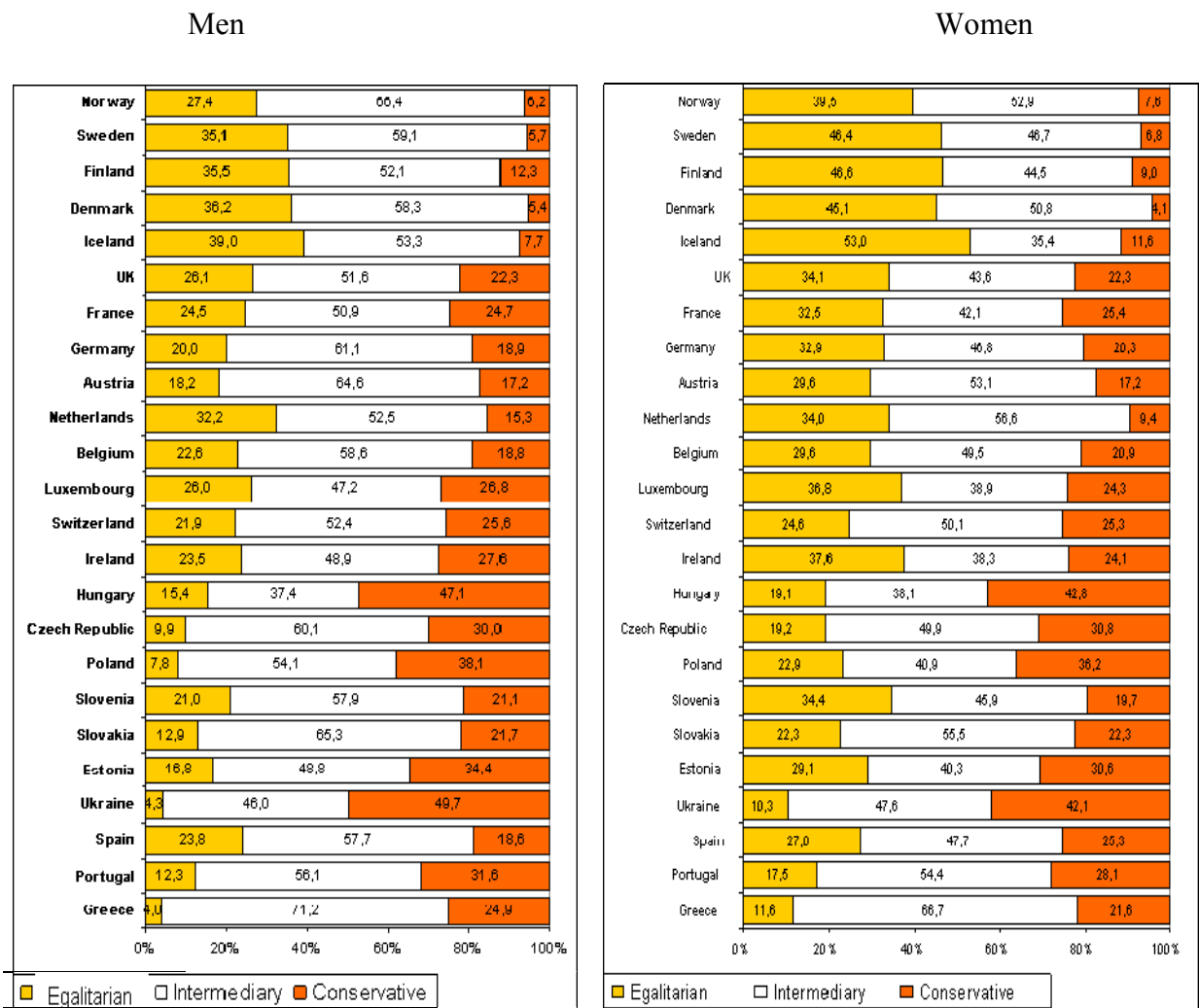


ESS (round 2) 2004

We need to understand the way these different profiles vary not only across Europe, but also according gender. We verify that across Europe women position themselves always in a more modern stance than men; in all countries we found higher percentages of modern women than modern men. However, Hungary (42,8%), Ukraine (42,1%), Poland (36,2%) and Estonia (30,6%) are

exceptions to this trend, showing relatively high percentages of conservative women. But, confirming that gender differences aren't natural or essential, and showing the importance of cultural, social (historic dynamics of change) and institutional context play an important role, these countries also have the highest percentages of conservative men (Torres et al, forthcoming).

Figure 16: Egalitarian, Intermediary and Traditional by country and gender



ESS (round 2) 2004

Until now we have been portraying changes at European context about gender orientations to family. To describe is a fundamental task for sociological analysis, but this is only the first step; in a second moment is important to dive into the reality trying to shed light over the generator mechanisms of the phenomena (Denemark et al, 2002; Torres et al, forthcoming). Therefore is necessary to go a step forward in the direction of interpretation based on a dialogical relation between theoretical framework and data, conceptualizing how structural and cultural properties incorporated in

gender are transmitted to social agents, working as constraints or enhancers to their daily actions in family scenario (Torres et al, forthcoming): defining and gendering work-care orientations. Taking as a paradigmatic example the high level of agreement in a cross country perspective with the statement “Men should take as much responsibility as women for home and children” is possible to assess the production of a novelty at the ideological level and the implications on gender identity. If it is true that gender egalitarian discourses are not novelty and are classical in sociological,

feminist and social theory discourses, we can't neglect the implicit transformation grounded at the responses in all different European countries participating in the ESS 2004. This transnational and transcultural consensus means change on the reality of the gender social relations in Europe, and an example of incorporation of egalitarian discourses by common sense ideology (Torres et al, forthcoming). In the analysis of this phenomenon we must be aware of a fundamental distinction that differentiates discursive habits, beliefs and ideals; and practices and orientations to action.

In ideological basis, Europeans tend to adopt an egalitarian perspective rejecting the traditional family roles of men and women. We identify a broad consensus in the family valorisation and men entrance in the private sphere. Taking care of children and housework are increasingly seen as relational and egalitarian activities in the conjugality and in family life.

These modifications challenge family's practices and also make demands in the field of values and gender identities (Aboim, 2007). Frequently, men feel uncomfortable and confused towards their masculinity. They find it hard to define themselves as men (Seidler, 1997). Uncertainty about what means to be a man, about what the others expect from him and about what he expects from himself is amplified in the process of discovery of a space for him in the family's scenario (Torres et al, forthcoming). This is the space traditionally seen as exclusively feminine. Being a man in the creation of this individual space in the family means an auto-constructive exercise that simultaneously maintains a controlling position, promoting the recognition as an individual in full control of himself and of the surrounding circumstances (Seidler, and) and avoiding getting rid

of the traditional hegemonic masculinity mythology (Connell, 1987, 1998). In this sense, we can argue that the modification of the gender ideal is not supported by a transformation in the organizing normativity of daily life activities and in the confirming rituality of masculine and feminine performances (Torres et al, forthcoming).

It is persisting a gender normativity directly connected to traditional values, or to a masculine image, according to masculine hegemonic parameters (Connell). In this sense, we can say that men are changing, although, not in an explosive way, but creating new directions and meanings to themselves. New masculine models are not replacing previous models, but are growing in a parallel dimension, in a dynamic tension (Kimmel, 1987; Torres et al, forthcoming).

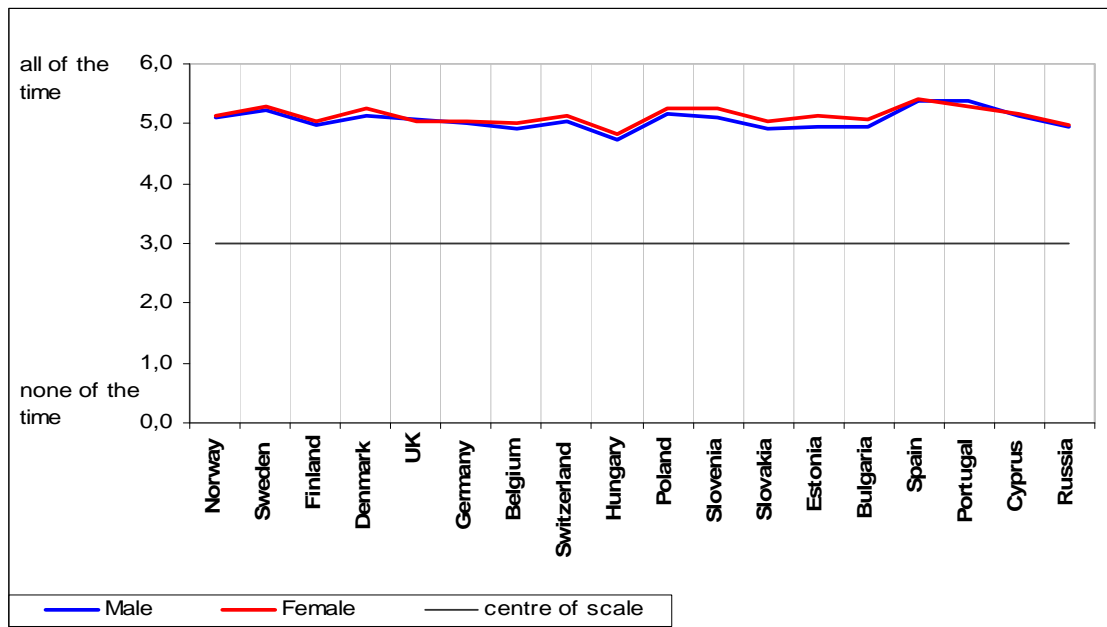
We are facing a moving masculinity, or a hesitate-modifying process, revealing an important dissonance between what are the believing disposals and acting disposals. This symbolic grind where we find men, help to form uncomfortable and guilt feelings: the persistent and incorporated disposals that organize the action, and the way-of-doing, do not correspond to the new ideal expectations of gender now incorporated (Torres et al, forthcoming). But if we realise that masculinities in Europe are transforming and dealing with uncertain paths in the definition of what is to be a man within and beyond the family, the truth is that this phenomenon of partial colonization of masculinity by aesthetic and expressive dimensions, traditionally associated to the feminine, is carried by the reinforcement of the principle of woman-individual (Torres, 2004).

## 5.5. Orientations to work and care and differences among European women

In this section we will develop two analytical trajectories, based on ESS 2006 data: initially we will focus on some variables, through which individuals were asked to evaluate their familial and work time in terms of joy/interest and stress. This will enable us to observe the difference of

importance ascribed to each of these life components. Then we will interpret some data on men and women's social images concerning gender stereotypes about parenthood, enabling us to assess women's orientations and test our second hypothesis.

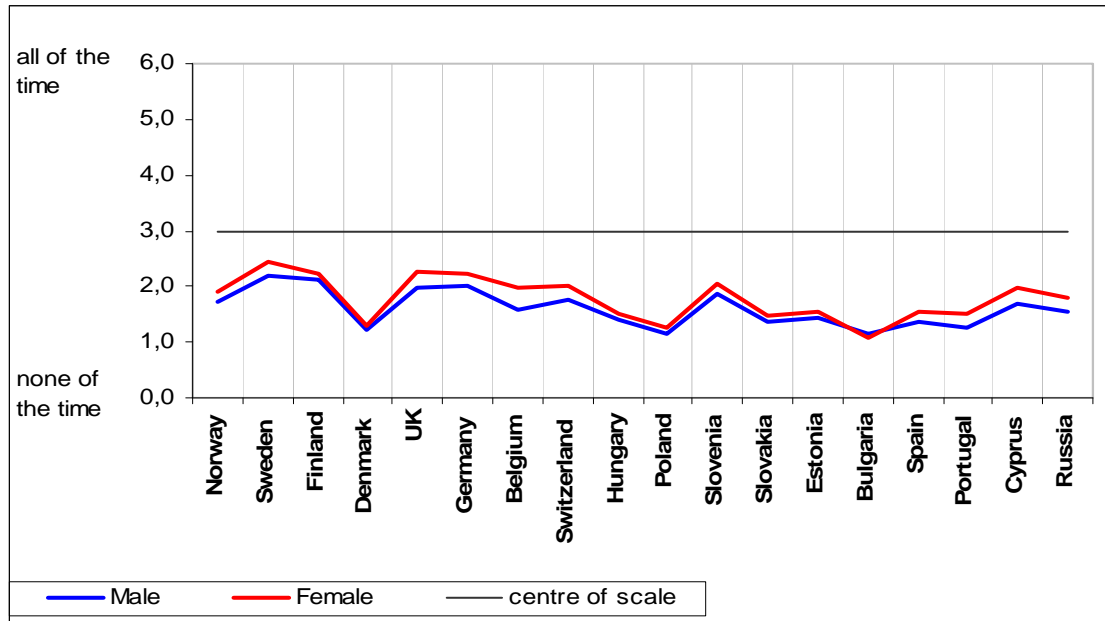
Figure 17: How much of the time spent with your immediate family is enjoyable (means)



ESS (round 3) 2006

Country	
F(18, 33883)	= 41,137; p < 0,000
$\Omega^2$	= 0,021
Gender	
F(1,33879)	= 30,684; p < 0,000
$\Omega^2$	= 0,001

Figure 18: How much of the time spent with your immediate family is stressful (means)



ESS (round 3) 2006

Country	F(18, 33612) = 111,964; p < 0,000
	$\Omega^2 = 0,057$
Gender	F(1, 33609) = 101,26; p < 0,000
	$\Omega^2 = 0,002$

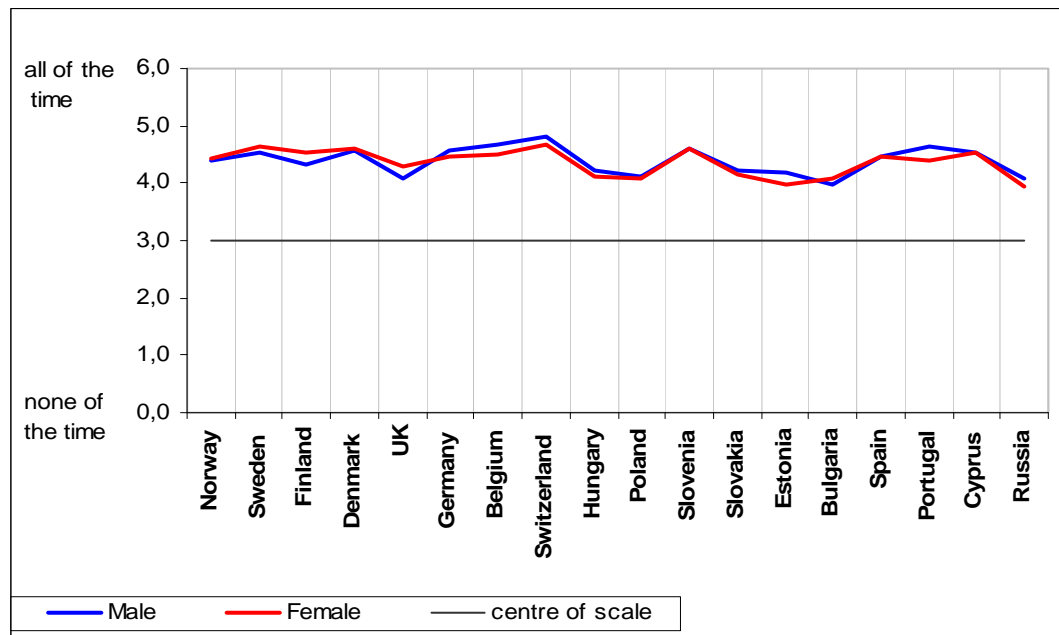
The way Europeans perceive their family time is one-sided, family is perceived as source of well-being and stress felt in familial contexts is undervalued (Fig: 17 and 18).

Clearly the time spent with the immediate family is enjoyable both in a gender and in a cross country perspective (men and women for all European countries with values near the top of the scale). For all European countries and for men and women, with slightly higher values in southern Europe (Portugal and Spain), perceive almost all the time spent with the immediate family as enjoyable. At the same time there is a rejection or undervaluation of stressful moments felt in the time spent with the family (men and women for all European countries

under the middle point of the scale). However, following Horschild (1997), the family sphere can also be a contradictory field, a field where stress also takes an active part. And in fact we also observe that stress is felt in family contexts of interaction, in which moments, women are the most stressed. We notice that is in the northern European countries (Norway, Sweden and Finland) that both men and women admit greater deal of stressful time spent with the family.

It is then easy to remark that in a cross country and gender perspective, the perception about the time spent with the family generally assumes more extreme positions rather than those about work.

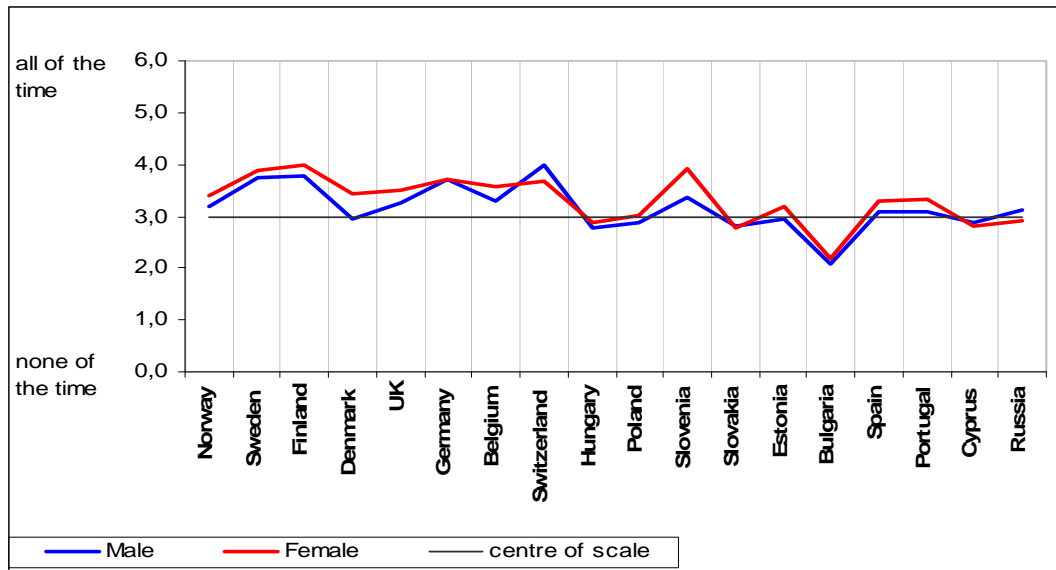
Figure 19: How much of the time do you find your job interesting (means)



ESS (round 3) 2006

Country  
 $F(18, 19024) = 30,275; p < 0,000$   
 $\Omega^2 = 0,028$   
 Gender  
 $F(1, 19028) = 4,209; p = 0,04$   
 $\Omega^2 = 0,000$

Figure 20: How much of the time do you find your job stressful (means)



ESS (round 3) 2006

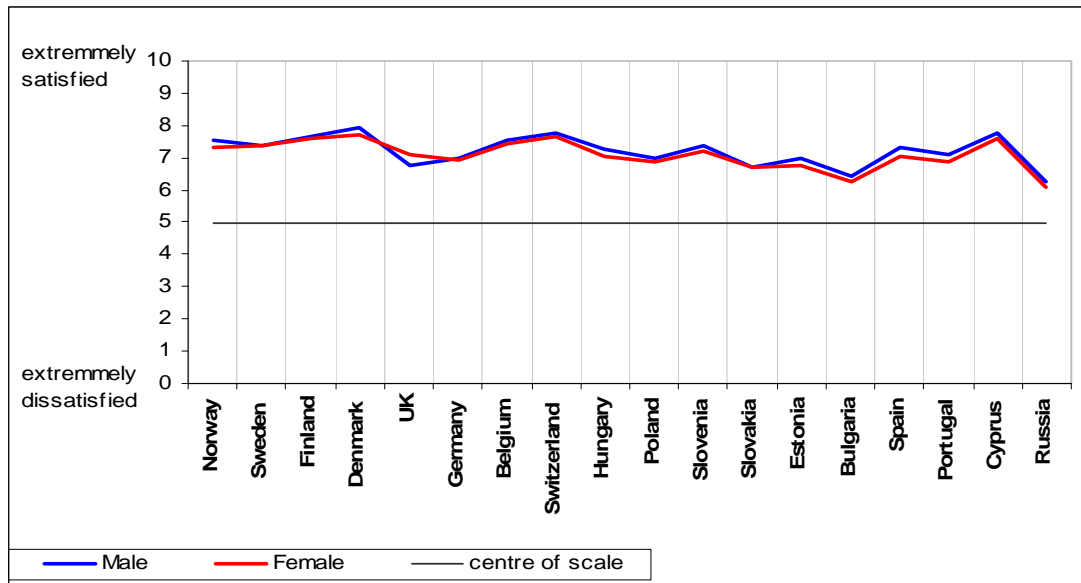
Country	
F(18, 19016)	= 66,05; p < 0,000
$\Omega^2$	= 0,059
Gender	
F(1, 19021)	= 14,248; p < 0,000
$\Omega^2$	= 0,001

Analyzing similar questions but this time regarding the work dimension (Fig: 19 and 20), we notice that having an interesting job and a stressful job isn't totally contradictory. All over Europe individuals (men and women) perceive their time spent at work as interesting, clear above the centre of the scale, and they are very satisfied with it (Fig: 21). However, moments of stress in the work sphere are also relatively frequent, with answers positioned around points 3 and 4 of the scale, always closer to "all of the time" than to

"none of the time", and with women leading the more stress positions.

Moreover, the "satisfaction with the balance between the time spent working and the time spent on other aspects of life" (Fig: 22), compared to the values expressing "satisfaction with present job", fall a little bit and get close to the centre of the scale, revealing that Europeans would like to dedicate more time to other spheres of interest, apart from their professional activity. However, satisfaction with this balance doesn't drop to values below the centre of the scale in any country.

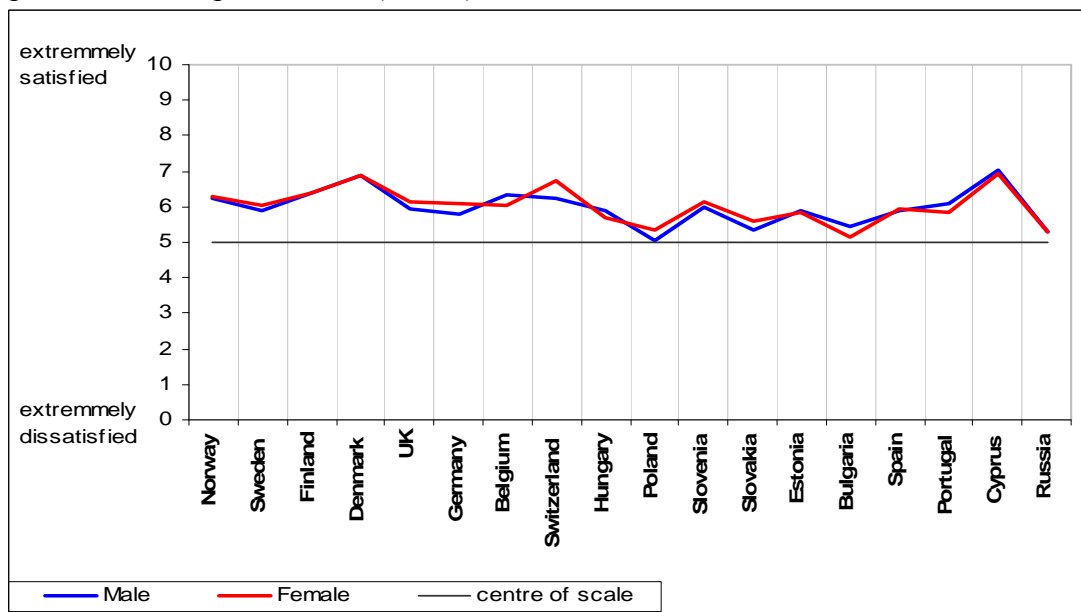
Figure 21: Satisfaction with present job (means)



ESS (round 3) 2006

Country  
 $F(18, 19086) = 46,766; p < 0,000$   
 $\Omega^2 = 0,042$   
 Gender  
 $F(1, 19091) = 15,583; p < 0,000$   
 $\Omega^2 = 0,001$

Figure 22: Satisfaction with the balance between the time spent on paid work and time spent on other aspects of life (means)



ESS (round 3) 2006



Concluding, in a cross country and gender perspective we identify across Europe a stronger commitment with the family, trend that is coherent with the importance given by Europeans to the emotional sphere of life shown earlier in the paper. This commitment is somehow materialized on the rejection of the idea that the moments spent with family can be stressful or in the idea generally disseminated that time spent with family is mostly enjoyable. Perceptions about the time spent working are more moderate, compared to the vibrant positive evaluation of the family. Work is qualified as interesting but somehow stressful (values of work stress moments around the centre of the scale).

Summing up, family and work are perceived as enjoyable and sources of well-being. Stress is undervalued in both spheres, particularly in familial context in a very consensual way across Europe.

Recalling the importance given to family and work by both men and women (Figure: 3); it became imperative – with the aim of responding to our second hypothesis - to understand if there were differences in the priorities of women only (intra gender differences). Although we may not find strong variations in the female positioning - we must remark that, when interpreting large numbers, even slight differences are important and become statistically significant - we've concluded that European women differ more among them (cross country perspective) in what concerns work (Figure 3;  $ETA2 = 0,06540$ ) than what concerns family (Figure 3;  $ETA2 = 0,05541$ ). This statement corroborates the idea that family is perceived as

important in a very consensual way across Europe.

However, 2004 data added a variant feature to our information. When asked if a woman should be prepared to cut down her paid work for the sake of the family (Fig: 8), women's answers got more discrepant ( $ETA2 = 0,08142$ ), which means that in some countries they positioned themselves in favour of the statement and in others they reacted against it, reflecting different cultural and institutional contexts. Despite the general trend around the middle point of the scale (neither agree nor disagree), Nordic countries (Norway, Sweden, Finland, Denmark and Iceland) show a more clear position towards disagreement; while Eastern and southern European countries tend to agree with the statement.

It is pertinent to assume that the positive evaluation of the family widespread through Europe doesn't necessarily mean, particularly for women, the acceptance of the sacrifice of a professional life or career. This is obviously true in some countries more than others.

We may finally say that in a cross country perspective, orientations to care (if they signify paid work sacrifice) differ more than orientations and valuation of work importance for life, confirming the first part of our second hypothesis.

Nevertheless, we cannot confirm the second part of our hypothesis - that in some countries orientations towards work can be modern and orientations towards care can be traditional - because the fact that women may agree with the idea that women should be prepared to reduce their working time in the name of family, may not necessarily mean a traditional attitude, but simply the assertion of what they observe around them.

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<sup>40</sup>  $F_{(21, 21472)} = 70,663, p < 0,000$

<sup>41</sup>  $F_{(21, 21472)} = 70,663, p < 0,000$

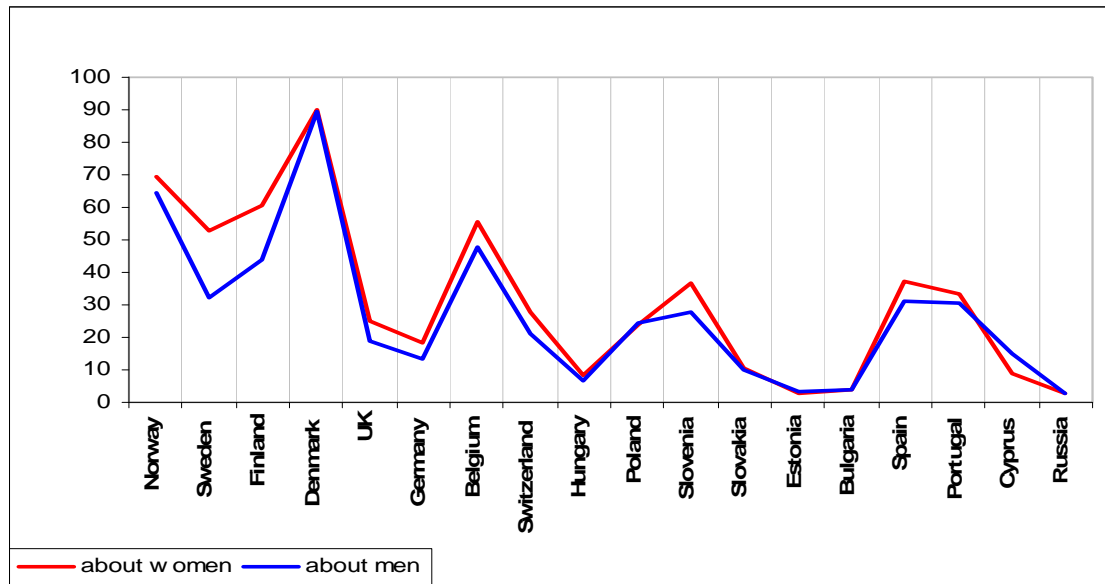
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<sup>42</sup>  $F_{(22, 22738)} = 91,222, p < 0,000$

When women answer these questions they have in mind their very particular objective conditions and institutional constraints. So more than just subjective evaluations and subjective positioning we face the way institutional – political packages, for instance – contexts objectively differentiate them and influence their perception of reality.

Continuing on the analysis of family orientations, we've considered two additional indicators from ESS2006. The answers are divided by opinions about women and opinions about men, so we may distinguish the social representations in terms of gender.

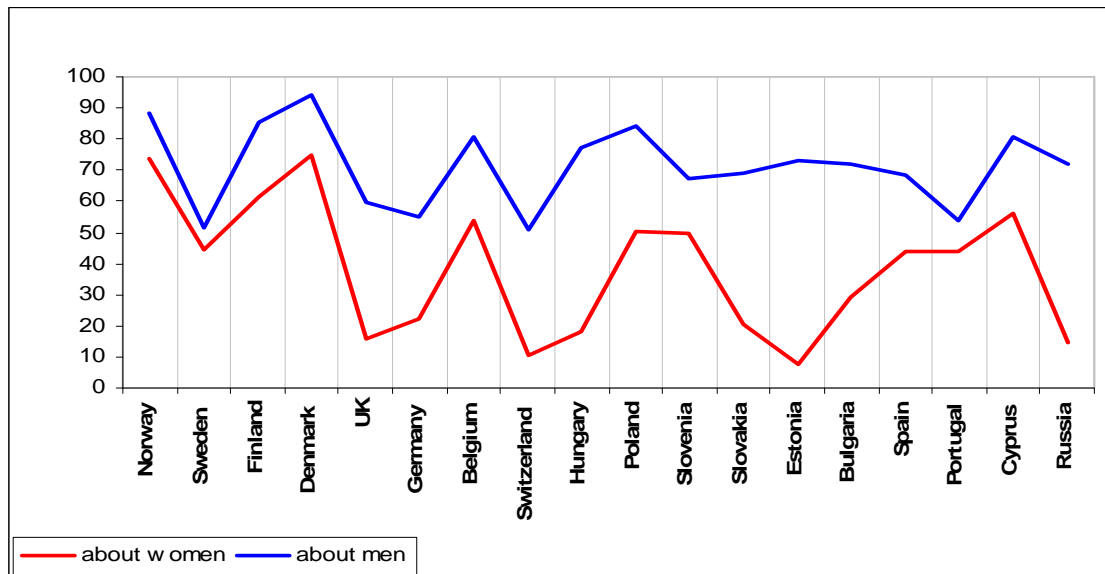
Figure 23: Choose never to have children (percentages approve + strongly approve)



ESS (round 3) 2006

Country  
 $F(18, 34253) = 966,42; p < 0,000$   
 $\Omega^2 = 0,337$   
 Gender  
 $F(1, 34247) = 24,442; p < 0,000$   
 $\Omega^2 = 0,001$

Figure 24: Have a full-time job while she/he has children aged under 3 (percentages approve + strongly approve)



ESS (round 3) 2006

Country  
 $F(18, 34291) = 178,669; p < 0,000$   
 $\Omega^2 = 0,086$   
 Gender  
 $F(1, 34285) = 2,111; p = n.s.$

The approval of the option never to have children (Fig: 23) is considered a modern attitude, in the way that it is a defence of individualization and of freedom of choice, away from traditional family composition. So, it is not surprising to find stronger levels of approval among the Nordic Countries, where egalitarian gender ideologies are consolidated and in strong interplay with individualization processes, and less approval in southern Europe.

The approval of full-time job arrangements in early parenthood (Fig: 24) can also be considered a modern attitude if defended equally for both men and women, as an expression of parity in labour market participation. However, apparently against the idea that Europeans tend to be more and more modern and egalitarian, it became clear that generally for Europeans is easier to approve a full time job when having a children under 3 years of age for men than for women.

But there are some details that we must take into account before feeling on temptation and consider this attitude as traditional or conservative. First, when analyzing these data in a cross country perspective, we must distinguish three different situations: the Nordic countries that clear approve this situation (exception for Sweden). Then we identified those countries that approve with some resistance the idea of women working full-time when having a child less than 3 years of age (Sweden, Belgium, Poland, Slovenia, Spain, Portugal and Cyprus). Finally, those countries with low approval of the statement.

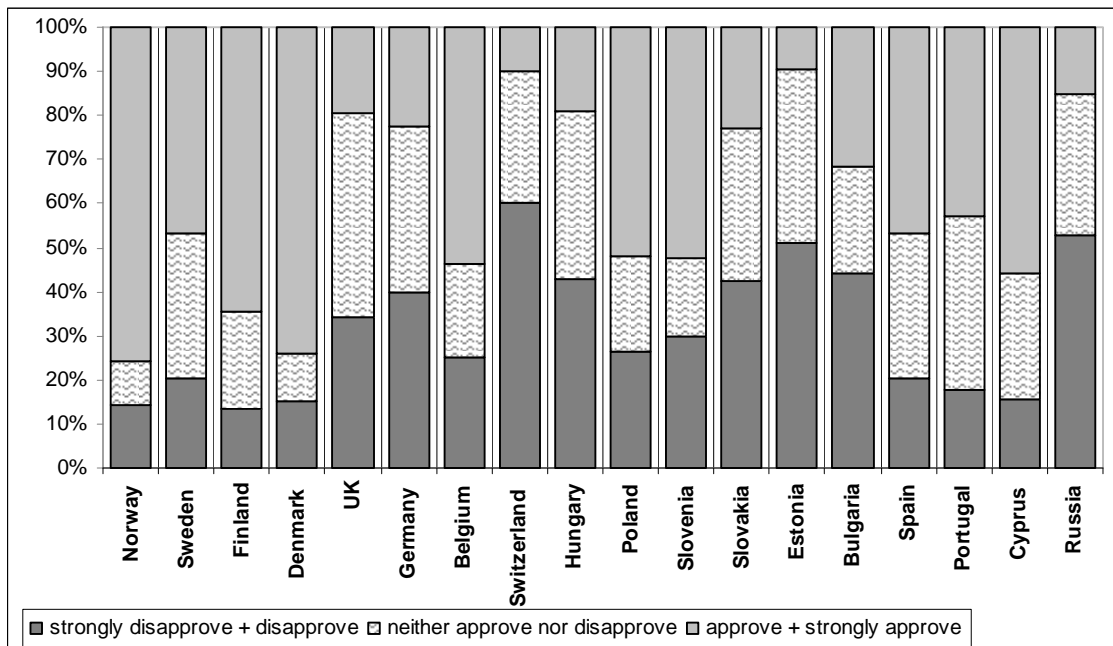
In Nordic countries and Portugal, we find the smaller gap between what is expected for fathers and mothers.

These differences among European countries can be rooted in cultural factors and gender roles ideologies. For instance, a maternalist stance – the inescapable importance of

women and mothers for childcare - can be the justification for the apparently conservative positioning of United Kingdom, Germany and Switzerland. Secondly, we must be attentive to the way the question is asked, avoiding misinterpretations. Europeans don't say that women shouldn't work at all; they

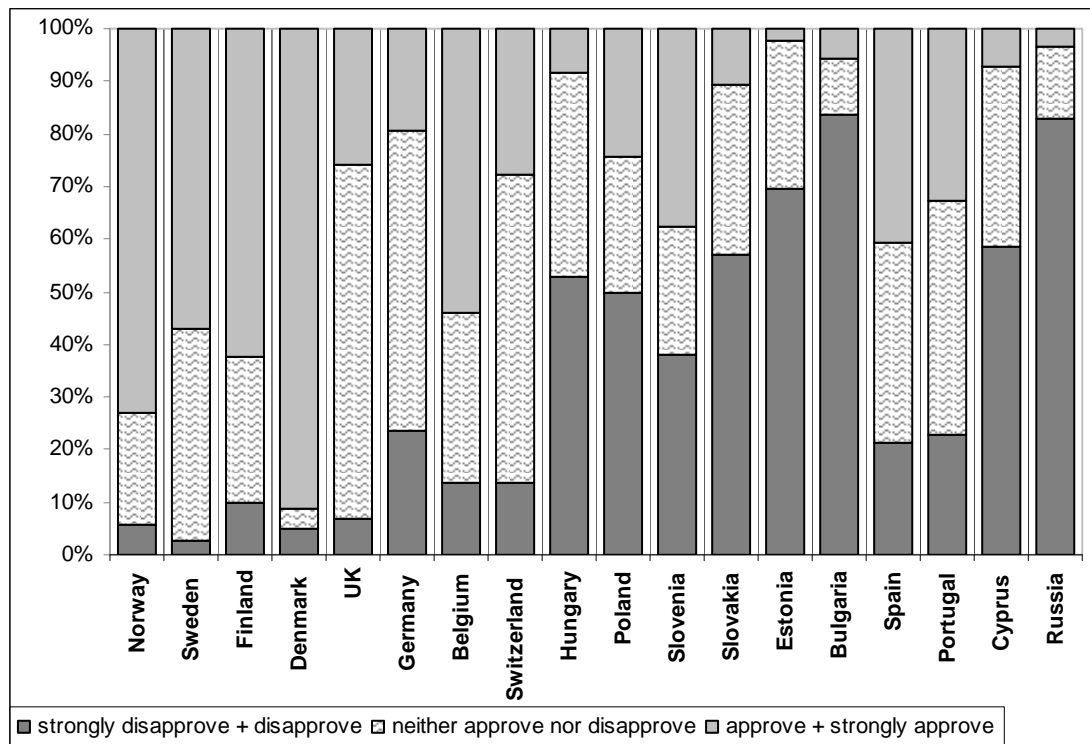
are just evaluating the full time job situation. This opens up for other possibilities of arrangement between paid work and care of children, and don't necessarily mean sending women back home.

Figure 25: Have a full-time job while she/he has children aged under 3 (women about women)



ESS (round 3) 2006

Figure 26: Choose never to have children (women about women)



ESS (round 3) 2006

Last but not the least, these country differences, besides reporting attitude discrepancies, may also be due to differences on the extension of childcare political measures (the influence of cultural and structural constraints). In the Nordic countries policies facilitate a double earner double carer career, while in other countries care for very young children is faced as a private problem and there is a lack of structures and support. In some of these apparently more conservative countries, however, the predominant positioning is “neither approve nor disapprove” reflecting the ambivalence towards practical obstacles (Fig: 25 and 26).

Because these questions may address to practical obstacles of everyday life, respondents easily remember their objective conditions of life when answering, therefore differences between countries and between women in Europe are understandable. We may find two

dominant trends: one for the approval and the other for the disapproval of this kind of work-family arrangement. The first includes a vast group of countries: Norway, Denmark, Finland and Sweden (where the approval is completely clear), Cyprus, Belgium, Slovenia and Poland (where there is a strong approval of the idea, although not so evident), Spain and Portugal.

Switzerland, Russia, Estonia, Bulgaria, Hungary, Slovakia and Germany constitute the second group.

The UK appears as a country with a particular trend, where the higher percentage of answers are positioned in the option “Nor agree nor disagree”. And we can’t neglect the fact that there are other countries where, despite their dominant trend, this option has also a significant weight as Hungary, Slovakia, Estonia, Portugal and Spain

The information emerging from these results allows us to present some conclusions: It is confirmed the

hypotheses that across the European countries women's orientations to care tend to vary more than women's orientations to work. As we have seen, every time the social female role – particularly mother's - is directly at stake (as in the case of the choice of working in a full-time basis while children are very young) the positions of women tend to diverge more between countries (we have tested that the difference between countries is statistically significant), than in other questions, posed in a more general way – namely those related to work (satisfaction with present job, interesting job, enjoyable family time). We had already found the same trend when addressing the gender roles issue. We recall that there was a consensus around the idea that family should be the main priority in life, but things get less consensual when we moved into the analysis of orientations concerning the labour market assess and mothers role (a women should be prepared to cut

down on paid work for the sake of her family; men should have more right to job than women when jobs are scarce). The fact that Nordic women tend always to assume a different (more egalitarian) position from their European counterparts highlights the idea that orientations to family (by women) tend to vary in a cross country comparison.

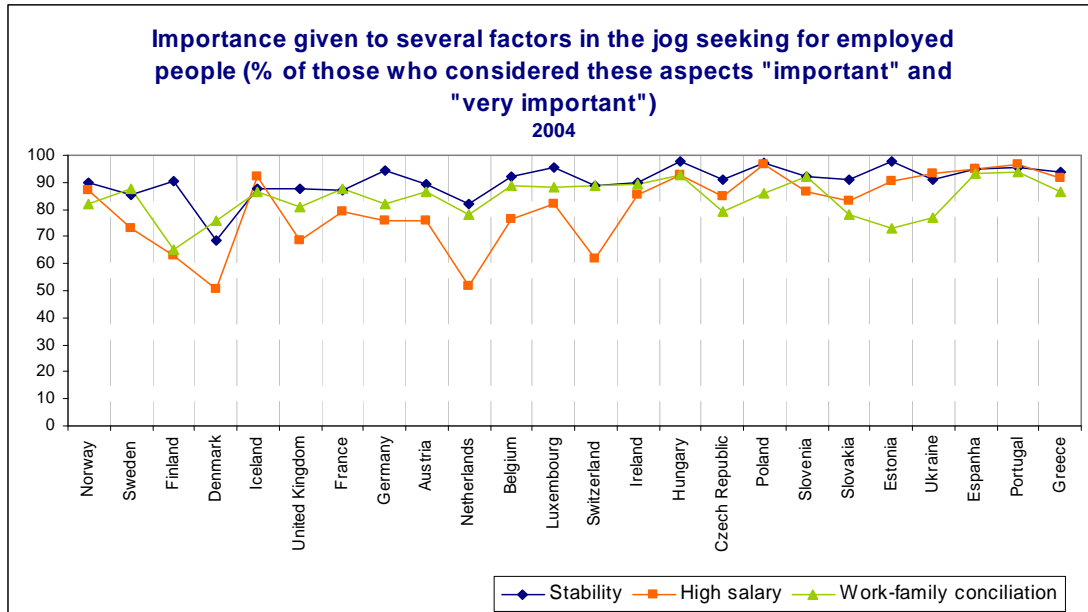
These results also help to sustain our hypotheses, that people tend to answer in a more neutral way when questions refer to their personal projects, but tend to change when questions are filtered by gender roles stereotypes.

## 5.6. Orientations when job seeking

When Europeans are confronted with a hypothetical scenario of job seeking we verify a transnational hierarchy of factors common to most of the countries

when people are seeking for employment (Fig: 27): Stability; Work-family conciliation; high salary.

Figure 27: Importance given to several factors in the job seeking for employed people

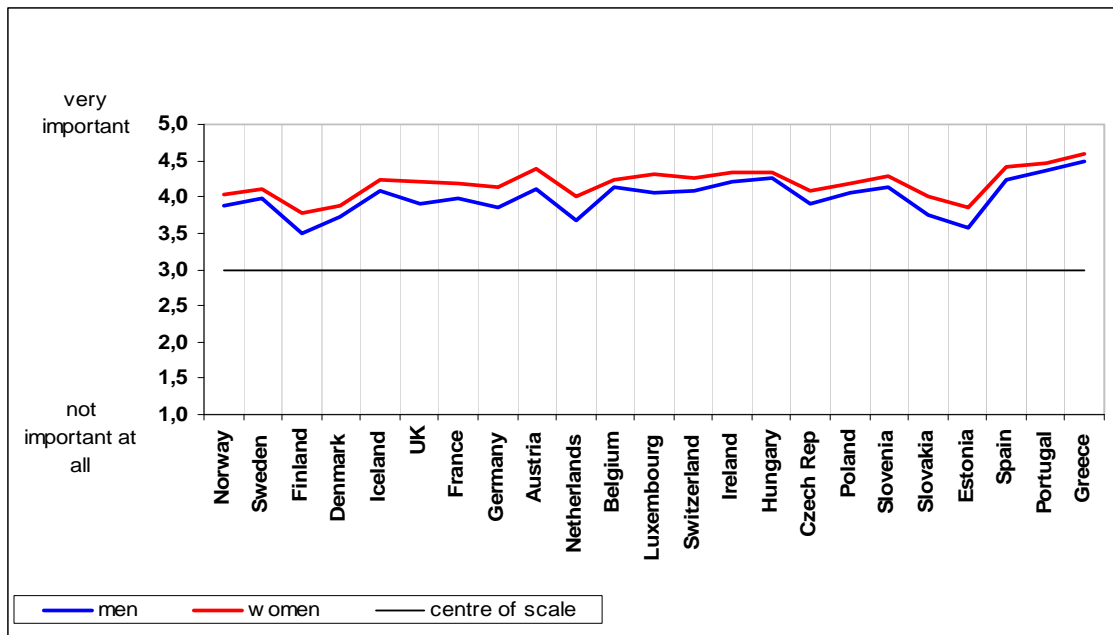


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But there are country differences that we must not forget: in many countries the conciliation that an occupation might offer is even more important than a good salary (Sweden; Netherlands; UK; Switzerland); but the southern and eastern (post-communist) countries give more importance to factors related to structural conditions of life like high salary and stability. In Portugal and

Spain the three factors came together in order of importance, people can't distinguished clear what is most important. Or, in other words, all the three criterions are equally important. In the Scandinavian, northern and central European countries follow the main trend or hierarchy of factors. But the importance of stability is everywhere.

Figure 28: A job which allowed to combine work and family responsibilities (means)



ESS (round 2) 2004

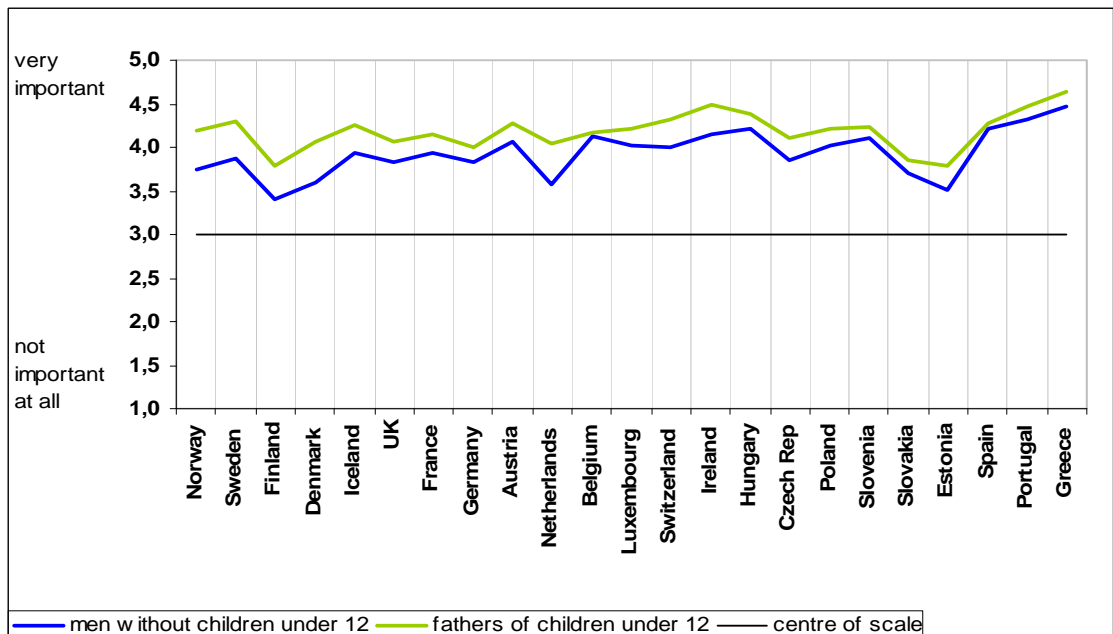
Analysing the importance given to the combination of work and family when on job seeking :

Gender and country

Men and fathers and country

Women and mothers and country

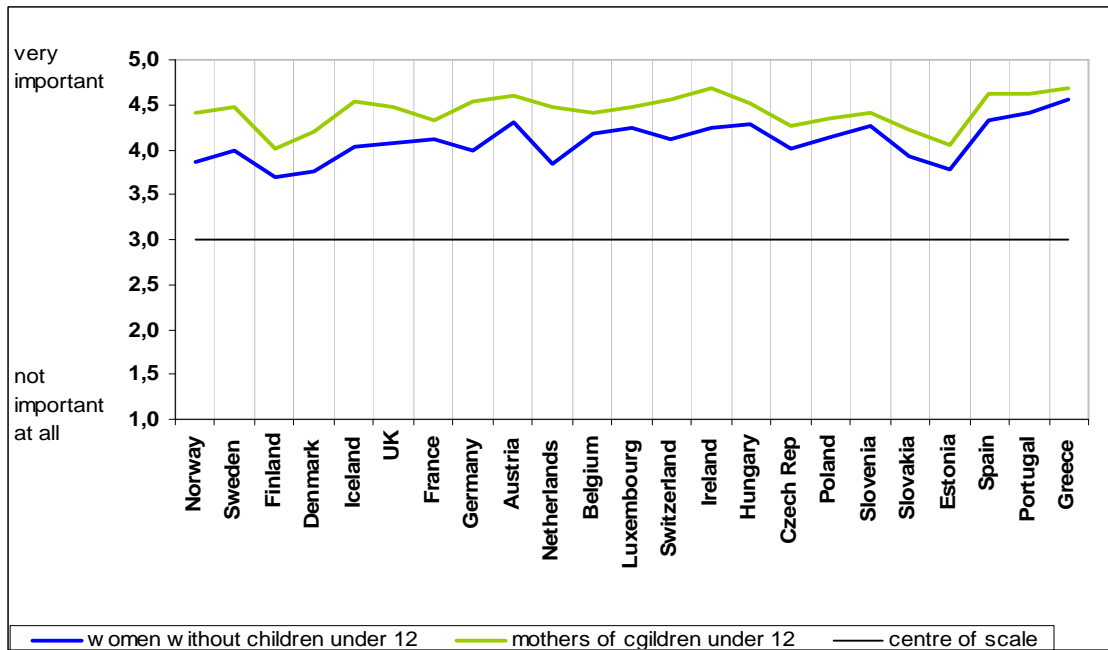
Figure 29: Importance of a job that allowed to combine work and family responsibilities, men with and without children under 12 (means)



ESS (round 2) 2004



Figure 30: Importance of a job that allowed to combine work and family responsibilities, women with and without children under 12 (means)



ESS (round 2) 2004

Work-family conciliation is more important to women than to men in a cross country perspective (Fig: 28). The highest gap between men and women is localized in some Post-communist countries and in the specific case of the Netherlands. The gap is bigger when we analyse the distinction between men and fathers' answers and especially between women and mothers' answers (Fig: 29 and 30).

Trying to understand interplay between structural and cultural determinants of orientations and the valorisation of a job which allows combining work and family responsibilities it seem pertinent to us to activate the explanatory model once again.

Table 3: Multiple Regression: dependent variable: A job which allowed to combine work and family responsibilities

	Sweden	United Kingdom	France	Austria	Netherlands	Czech Rep.	Spain	Portugal	Greece
Adjusted R2	,073	,093	,055	,058	,109	,043	,038	,029	,025
Years Education Completed		-	,060*	,069*	,110***	-	,095*	,113**	,127***
Income	-	-	-	-,093*	-	-	-	-,129***	-,112***
Sexa	,053*	,169***	,149***	,097*	,136***	,129***	,104**	,081*	,091**
Working hours (week)	-	-	-	-	-,096*	-	-	-	-
Household Typeb									
Living alone	-	-	-	-,169***	-,086*	-,096*	-,116**	-,091*	-
Chidless Couple	-	,096*	,183***	-	,131*	-	-	-	-
Couple with children	,254***	,228***	,277***	,089*	,208***	,111*	,094*	-	-
Lone parent	-	,154***	-	-	,147***	-	-	-	-

\* p< 0,05; \*\*p< 0,001; \*\*\* p< 0,000.

A dummy variable: 0=men, 1=women

B dummy variable: reference: "Other"

ESS (round 2) 2004

For almost all countries tested the presence of children has a great impact on the importance given to the conciliation factor (Table: 3). Following Crompton and Lyonette (2005) we clearly verify the importance of structural and cultural contexts in the definition of orientations to work and care, namely to choose a job which allows the combination of work and family suffer the impact of presence of children in the household. However, there is an important European cleft, in Southern countries education and income are factors with more importance to the variation of the dependent variable than the “household type”.

In southern Europe (Portugal and Greece) people earning lower salaries tend to value more the conciliation element when job seeking. Bearing in mind

Sex is an important predictor in all countries and women tend to value the opportunity of work-family conciliation more than men. At this particular point more important than understand gender as a dimension for instantiation of cultural differences across Europe (there are differences among European countries: in Sweden the sex variable impact is weaker than in Portugal, and in Portugal is weaker than in Greece, Austria, France or Netherlands), we verify how gender differences are embodied across Europe as a generalized cultural communality.

When Europeans plan their lives according to work and care responsibilities becomes evident the persistence of gender scripts making and naturalizing women as responsible for the domestic and care work. European women are somewhere in the border between an emphasised femininity (Connell, 1987) and a transgressive stance producing women as an individual (Torres, 2004).

## 5.6. Conclusions

Common sense states that men and women are different types of persons, in terms of needs and tastes men give more importance to work and women give more importance to family. However research demonstrated that differences between the sexes are much narrower than differences within them.

That is, contradicting an essentialist differentiation putting men and women in different social worlds, we found fundamental social distinction mechanism affecting family and work orientations as well gender roles in the family. Considering similar cultural and social backgrounds and contexts, the differences between men and women are narrower than those putting them apart from other men or women with different backgrounds. Therefore gender differences result from the instantiation of broader and structural constraints; gender cultural scripts individually embodied.

This social differentiation becomes evident when analysing education as predictor for gender egalitarianism: the highest the level of education the more egalitarian individuals are. A high educated Norwegian woman is much more alike a high educated Norwegian man, than a Norwegian woman without scholar skills.

Moreover, in global terms and bearing in mind the cultural, institutional and structural differences in Europe, on average Norwegian women tend to be more egalitarian than Spanish women.

The differences among countries are thus the result of contextual differences that are inscribed in individual practices.

This is clearly observed in the answers given to questions directly addressed to the importance given to several spheres of life. Men and women give much

importance to work and to family, this latter being assumed as the main priority by both sexes. Professional activity is also perceived as a source of income and identity with both men and women giving much importance to work.

Portraying gender differences in a cross country perspective we must be aware of methodological issues. Because language embodies gender differences, different ways of asking questions produce different answers. Questions addressed with a gender neutral perspective will be answered according to personal projects and wishes. When gender roles are directly at stake the answers tend to be filtered by gender stereotypes.

Men and women tend to answer in a more neutral way when questions refer to their personal projects, but tend to change when questions are filtered by gender roles stereotypes. Work is a source of social identity both for men and women but this conclusion is only possible if we consider questions that are not pointing out directly at gender roles. For instance, mothers of young children say as much as fathers, women or men that their job is very important for them. But when we ask people in general if mothers should not work full time when they have children with less than three years of age, people hesitate – answer more nor agree, nor disagree – or reject more this idea.

Variables behave differently when they are framed in a more ambiguous manner and relate to the roles men and women are supposed to perform for instance if women should be prepared to cut down on paid work for the sake of the family; or if men should have priority entering the labour market. As the purpose of this type of questions is to collect an opinion (measured by the degree of accordance), it tends to reaffirm the biological essentialist differences, compelling the respondents to position

themselves in favour or against the statements.

To be traditional about orientations to work and care depends, partially, on the definition of gender roles and gender relations in the family. The emergence of new meanings of the family in Europe not only means a gender relation's transformation, but also implies a more deep process of change being experienced at the gender identity level.

Gender relations changes at family scenario have implications in what concerns to be a man, or in what concerns the patterns defining masculinity. If men are changing and those changes are visible at family dynamics – being expected that men and women assume the same care responsibilities -, is also true that these new masculine models are not replacing previous models; old and new masculinities live together in a dynamic tension. This tension reveals important dissonance between what are the believing disposals and acting disposals, producing a moving and hesitating masculinity.

What happens to women in this process of transformation? What implications this has in orientation to work and care? It is confirmed the hypotheses that women's orientations to care tend to vary more (between countries) than women's orientations to work. As we have seen, every time the social female role – particularly mother's - is directly at stake (as in the case of the choice of working in a full-time basis while children are very young) the positions of women tend to diverge more between countries (we have tested that the difference between countries is statistically significant), than in other questions, posed in a more general way – namely those related to work (satisfaction with present job, interesting job, enjoyable family time).

We had already found the same trend when addressing the gender roles issue.

Women's orientations to family in some countries tend to be more conservative than orientations to work (Slovakia, Switzerland, UK and Germany). Nordic women always tend to be more modern and equalitarian both on work and care.

Facing this difficult choice, individuals tend to express what is socially accepted and, at the same time, what belongs to their territorial, cultural and objective references, that is, considering the situational reality in which they are included. We cannot confirm our hypothesis, that in some countries orientations towards work can be modern and orientations towards care can be traditional, because the fact that women may agree with the idea that women should be prepared to reduce their working time in the name of family, may not necessarily mean a traditional attitude, but simply the assumption of what they observe around them. This positioning reveals the local historical dynamics of social change in which the respondents are participating; makes evident cultural gender scripts and the way those scripts interplay with practical needs, namely the connection between practical orientations for work and care and the institutional and political contexts.

In countries where the childcare facilities coverage is weak, women will tend to consider the hypothesis of having to sacrifice themselves, when there are few care alternatives. Thus, despite women always assume more egalitarian positions than men (as has also been confirmed in the ESS 2004 data analysis), answers tend to be more ambiguous and less reflective of an egalitarian perspective, the diversity of the answers being determined by the cultural and institutional constraints, of the different countries.

The interplay between the everyday definition of orientations to work and

care and the structural and objective conditions is fundamental, avoiding the temptation of looking to orientations as a-historical and a-social preferences. In fact, orientations to work and care differ according to education, household type and working hours. Education and sex

are the variables that have more impact on gender roles and orientations to work and care. The more educated are the more egalitarian in all countries. Women tend always to be more modern than men. Hours of work have a clear impact on pressure of work on family.

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	N	A person's family should be main priority in life				Men should take as much responsibility as women for home and children				A woman should cut down family
		Agree	NAND	Disagree	Total	Agree	NAND	Disagree	Total	Agree
Egalitarian	11004	100,0	-	-	100,0	100,0	-	-	100,0	32,4
Intermediary	22445	72,7	19,9	7,4	100,0	73,5	17,4	9,1	100,0	31,9
Traditional	9841	100,0	-	-	100,0	100,0	-	-	100,0	100,0
Total	43290	85,8	10,3	3,9	100,0	86,3	9,0	4,7	100,0	47,5

## ***APPENDIX***

Table 2: Gender values in the family Individual positioning typology  
(Percentage of individuals)  
ESS (round 2) 2004