GENDER MAINSTREAMING AND FAMILY POLICY IN EUROPE: PERSPECTIVES, RESEARCHES AND DEBATES

Edited by Isabella Crespi

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Contents

"Our differences are our strenght"

Foreword

Gender mainstreaming was established as a major global strategy for the promotion of gender equality in the Beijing Platform for Action from the Fourth United Nations World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995. Clear intergovernmental mandates for gender mainstreaming have been developed for all the major areas of the work of the United Nations, including disarmament, poverty reduction, macro-economics, health, education and trade.

Also Europe has been focusing increasing attention on gender issues, and especially on considerations on the female condition. This is the outcome of the long struggles of women and feminist movements but also of a general process whereby gender differences and their implications for people's work and family lives have gained increased prominence.

After 10 years (and something), the evaluation of equal opportunities mainly focus on qualification measures for unemployed women and improvements for childcare facilities, on the consideration of gender mainstreaming in other policy areas as well as macro economic effects on employment and unemployment of women.

Recent developments in European countries are that more and more women are joining the labour force, birth rates are declining and social policies are mainly orienting their measures towards gender equality. Whereas previously the countries with the highest period fertility rates were those in which family-oriented cultural traditions were most pronounced and in which women's labour market participation was least, these relationships are now wholly reversed. These problems, set within a European framework of public spending cuts, make it difficult to maintain and sustain the current type of welfare state.

Moreover, women's emancipation process and the improvement of the female condition through the mass entry of women into the workforce – according also to the indications of the 2000 Lisbon Declaration[1] – not only had an impact on the increase of school enrolment rates but, importantly, it also led to the entry of several women into employment with more qualified positions than the past (namely the 1950's and 1960's).

This is set within a culture of equal opportunities, which receive considerable attention at a European level and which have been set as one of the main goals towards a fairer society. This may have consequences for the way that both parents jointly determine their parenting, their participation in the labour market and the negotiations between genders. Such framework – equal opportunities on the one hand and female emancipation on the other, in a competitive and little-regulated market – seems to lead to a potential contraposition, or trade-off, between equal opportunity and family (or family-friendly) policies.

As it appears from recent literature, the common goal of reconciliation measures is therefore not only to support work-family balance, which is instrumental to achieving the Lisbon objectives, but also to solve some problems that are increasingly concerning various countries, such as lower birth rates or the postponement of childbearing and the ensuing ageing of the population.

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[1] In March 2000, EU Heads of Government met in Lisbon and agreed on a document with very ambitious goals. It aimed to make Europe "the most competitive continent of the planet", by increasing productivity and boosting employment by twenty million jobs within ten years. One of the main new features of the Lisbon document concerned employment targets. Until then, the governments had aimed at reducing unemployment rates, and thus decrease the number of unemployed people, not of inactive people who are on the margins of the labour market. Since the Lisbon Council, EU governments set the target of raising the working-age population in employment in the EU to US levels (70%), the female employment rate to 60% and the older workers employment rate (concerning people aged between 55 and 64) to 50%: all this within a period of ten years.

The work-family balance measures dealing with the different national frameworks are the result of the different social (or family) policies designed on the basis of the aspects related to work, gender roles, family forms and different welfare strategies mentioned above. As a general rule, social policies are intended to comply with the guiding principles sketched out in the European masterplan, and in particular with the March 2000 Lisbon agreements.

In particular this book focuses on the relation between family and gender mainstreaming to stress if and how the debate on the topic of reconciliation policies, the family policies and the gender issues are implemented and how in the contemporary sociological framework.

All the contributions are concerned with the relationship between family, gender and work: in particular, they illustrate the different ways in which this relationship is addressed in various European social policy systems. It shows, that the promotion of qualification measures and childcare facilities increases the activity rate of women, although there remain doubts about the quality and sustainability of many measures and the impact on families.

All this has been and still is very important; however, it appeared that, especially in single European Member States, the family is at a standstill. This situation calls for a review of the political agenda, since the family holds its own specific importance for at least three reasons: firstly, the family is the privileged site for individuals to develop a sense of balance and wellbeing; secondly, the family often mediates the rules and values of a given society; finally, the family has always served as a "safety net" during the times of weakness and need that individuals go through in the different phases of their life (when it provides childcare or looks after elderly or disabled relatives).

The family is finding it difficult to face the challenges posed by the economic sphere, which is increasingly intrusive (it suffices to

think of fragmented work schedules, which sometimes are in conflict with family needs) and demanding (like in the perception that the family should be subsidiary to work). This state of affairs requires a thorough analysis of the relationship between family, work and gender differences.

This work presents multiple viewpoints; each author addresses this issue in their own terms; thanks to their original approach, at the end of the book, it is possible appreciate a variety of aspects, which intertwine in different ways but which all contribute to simplify the complex and multidimensional framework of the relationship between gender, family and work in the European arena. Finally, and most importantly, it helps identify the challenging elements to be found in the current organisation of the European welfare system.

Sincere thanks are expressed to all authors for the valuable work done. Editing this book gave me (as I hope to readers) new opportunities for considerations about gender differences issues, the importance of family in Europe and the concrete impact of social and family policies on individuals' life, positive or negative as they could be.

This book contains contributions from: Almudena Moreno and Enrique Crespo (*Spain*), Anne Revillard (*France*), Anne Marie Fontaine, Cláudia Andrade, Marisa Matias, Jorge Gato and Marina Mendonça (*Portugal*), Strandh Matias e Karina Nillson (*Sweden*).

Isabella Crespi

Gender mainstreaming and reconciliation policies in Europe: perspectives and dilemmas

Isabella Crespi

1. Starting from Beijing 1995: ten years (and something) of gender mainstreaming

Social policies, aiming to promote gender equality, have evolved substantially in the last decades. Ever since 1975, when the United Nations established Women's International Year and most of the western nations started to acknowledge gender inequality – then known as women's discrimination – as a public issue that deserved public intervention, the strategies and political instruments of those policies have been changing. Focus on sex discrimination (discrimination based on biological differences) and especially women's discrimination has evolved to focus on gender (based on the cultural and social consequences of those biological differences).

In September 1995, some 5000 representatives from 192 countries, together with some 30.000 women and men representing 3000 non governmental organizations, gathered in Beijing for the Fourth World Conference on Women, and adopted a far-reaching 'Platform for Action'. One of the most important and innovative elements of this Platform was a provision calling on the UN and its signatory states to "mainstream" gender issues across the policy process: "… governments and other actors should promote an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective in all policies and programmes, so that, before decisions are taken, an

analysis is made of the effects on women and men, respectively"
(Beijing Platform for Action 1995, para 79).

Gender mainstreaming[1] was established as a major global
strategy for the promotion of gender equality[2] in the Beijing Platform
for Action from the Fourth United Nations World Conference on
Women in Beijing in 1995. Gender mainstreaming was not a new
strategy, in 1995. It was reaffirmed in the *Beijing Platform for Action*
and built on years of previous experience in trying to bring gender
perspectives to the centre of attention in policies and programmes.
Although the notion of mainstreaming gender issues across the
policy process had antecedents in the previous two decades, the
official recognition and endorsement of mainstreaming as a formal
goal of all UN member states has provided a global mandate for
change, and "a template against which to judge both national and
international policies" (Hafner-Burton and Pollack 2002, 339-340).
In addition to specific actions for women – positive actions – gender
mainstreaming emerged as a necessary strategy for fighting gender
inequality in the long term through many documents and many
directives.

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[1] Gender Mainstreaming is a globally accepted strategy for promoting gender
equality. Mainstreaming is not an end in itself but a strategy, an approach, a means
to achieve the goal of gender equality. Mainstreaming involves ensuring that gender
perspectives and attention to the goal of gender equality are central to all activities
- policy development, research, advocacy/dialogue, legislation, resource allocation,
and planning, implementation and monitoring of programmes and projects (Osagi
UN), http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/gendermainstreaming.htm.

[2] Equality between women and men (gender equality): refers to the equal rights,
responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys. Equality
does not mean that women and men will become the same but that women's and
men's rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are
born male or female. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities
of both women and men are taken into consideration recognizing the diversity of
different groups of women and men. Gender equality is not a women's issue but
should concern and fully engage men as well as women. Equality between women
and men is seen both as a human rights issue and as a precondition for, and
indicator of, sustainable people-centred development (Osagi UN), http://www.un.org/
womenwatch/osagi/gendermainstreaming.htm.

The focus on gender mainstreaming, was strongly reiterated throughout the Beijing Platform for Action which emphasized the importance of considering the impacts on women and men, and on equality objectives, of actions taken in every sector. The responsibility of all government agencies for supporting equality objectives through their policies and programmes was highlighted. The Beijing Platform for Action also identified the important roles of international organizations, NGOs and civil society, the private sector and other actors (United Nations 2002).

After this important starting points, some other followed.

The ECOSOC agreed conclusions (1997/2) established some important overall principles for gender mainstreaming and defines it as: "… the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It was a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality. A letter from the Secretary-General to heads of all United Nations entities (13 October 1997) provided further concrete directives.

The General Assembly twenty-third special session to follow up implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action (June 2000), enhanced the mainstreaming mandate within the United Nations. The UN assessment prepared for the Beijing+5 Special Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations in 2000 concluded that, although some progress had been made in achieving gender equality, there were still significant gaps to full gender equality[3].

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3   Women and girls still represent 2/3 of the world illiterates; fewer girls than boys finish primary school; women represent less than 15% of national elected officials;

More recently, the Economic and Social Council adopted a resolution (ECOSOC resolution 2001/41) on gender mainstreaming (July 2001) which calls on the Economic and Social Council to ensure that gender perspectives are taken into account in all its work, including in that work of its functional commissions, and recommends a five-year review of the implementation of the ECOSOC agreed conclusions 1997/2 (United Nations 2002).

In 2005, the representatives of Governments gathering at the forty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women in New York on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in 1995, declared some important guidelines:

• "reaffirm the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (held in 1995) adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly (2000);

• welcome the progress made thus far towards achieving gender equality, stress that challenges and obstacles remain in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, and, in this regard, pledge to undertake further action to ensure their full and accelerated implementation;

• emphasize that the full and effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action is essential to achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration and stress the need to ensure the integration of a gender perspective in the high-level

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rural women are responsible for half of the world's food production and yet, globally, women own less than 1% of land. In some cases the so-called 'gender gaps' are at the detriment of boys. This is particularly the case in some regions where the educational performance and participation of boy (Ruprecht 2003).

plenary meeting on the review of the Millennium Declaration;

• recognize that the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the fulfilment of the obligations under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women are mutually reinforcing in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women;

• call upon the United Nations system, international and regional organizations, all sectors of civil society, including non-governmental organizations, as well as all women and men, to fully commit themselves and to intensify their contributions to the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly"[4].

With regard to this, Walby (2005) explored to what extent the Beijing +10 process has led to the improvement of the lives of women and which are the key issues involved in making such an assessment, in particular, the conceptualisation and measurement of gender equality. It starts with a consideration of three different perspectives concerning the conceptualisation of "improvement" as either economic development, human capabilities or gender equality. The analysis of the tensions between this three different models of gender equality resulted in a critical review of the operationalisation of these concepts and the collection of data necessary to assess progress on each of the 12 critical areas of concern of the UN Platform for Action with a focus on their application in the European region.

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[4]   From: Economic and Social Council, Commission on the Status of Women Forty-ninth session, *Declaration adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women* at its forty-ninth session as orally amended on the 4 March 2005, (28 February-11 March 2005).

From this study and others (Booth and Bennett 2002; Bustelo 2003; Pollack and Hafner-Burton 2000) is it clear that gender issue is becoming more and more relevant in European policies even if different could be the single country interpretation.

1.1. Gender equality as the goal, gender mainstreaming as the strategy

As a matter of fact, gender equality is a goal that has been accepted, at least in theory, by governments and international organizations: it is enshrined in international agreements and commitments. Anyway there are many ongoing discussions about what equality means (and does not mean) in practice and how to achieve it because even if it is clear that there are global patterns to inequality between women and men[5], not so clear and common are the concrete actions to struggle them.

Gender mainstreaming entails bringing the perceptions, experience, knowledge and interests of women as well as men to bear on policy-making, planning and decision-making and aims to situate gender equality issues at the centre of analyses and policy decisions. In this sense "mainstreaming" is a process and a strategy rather than a goal and consists in bringing what can be seen as marginal (gender issue) into the core business and main decision-making process of an organization. While mainstreaming is clearly essential for securing human rights and social justice for women as well as men, it also increasingly recognized that incorporating

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[5] For example, women tend to suffer violence at the hands of their intimate partners more often than men; women's political participation and their representation in decision-making structures lag behind men's; women and men have different economic opportunities; women are over-represented among the poor; and women and girls make up the majority of people trafficked and involved in the sex trade (United Nations 2002).

gender perspectives in different areas of development ensures the effective achievement of other social and economic goals (Stratigaki 2000). Mainstreaming can reveal a need for changes in goals, strategies and actions to ensure that both women and men can influence, participate in and benefit from development processes. This may lead to changes in organizations – structures, procedures and cultures – to create organizational environments, which are conducive to the promotion of gender equality.

These specific issues – and others – need to be addressed in efforts to promote gender equality as a goal. Achieving greater equality between women and men requires changes at many levels, including changes in attitudes and relationships, changes in institutions and legal frameworks, changes in economic institutions, and changes in political decision-making structures through this kind of gender mainstreaming that includes as much as possible the empowerment of the individuals involved.

An important point, which should be raised in all discussions of gender policy issue, is that gender mainstreaming does not in any way preclude the need for specific targeted interventions to address women's empowerment and gender equality. The Beijing Platform for Action calls infact for a dual approach: gender mainstreaming complemented with inputs designed to address specific gaps or problems faced in the promotion of gender equality. This strategy seeks to ensure that, across the entire policy spectrum, the analysis of issues and the formulation of policy options is informed by a consideration of gender differences and inequalities; but also that opportunities are sought to narrow gender gaps and support greater equality between women and men. In this manner a complementary plan is "targeted interventions" that have as their primary goal the narrowing of gender gaps that disadvantage women. These types of targeted initiatives do not in any way contradict the mainstreaming

strategy because this could be implemented in somewhat different ways in relation to activities such as research, policy development, policy analysis, programme delivery, or technical assistance activities. It is important to underline different possibilities of gender mainstreaming actions because this enhanced various patterns which could better apply to possible situation.

There is no "set formula or blueprint" that can be applied in every context. However, what is common to mainstreaming in all sectors or development issues is that a concern for gender equality is brought into the mainstream of activities rather than dealt with as an add-on. Steps in the mainstreaming strategy are the assessment of how and why gender differences and inequalities are relevant to the subject under discussion, identifying where there are opportunities to narrow these inequalities and deciding on the approach to be taken (United Nations 2002). A profound transformation of the structures and systems, which lie at the root of subordination and gender inequality, is required; "to do this, we must uncover the hidden biases that limit women's and men's ability to enjoy equal rights and opportunities and find the most effective and culturally appropriate means to support women's and men's capacities to drive social change" (Ruprecht 2003, 6). In this sentence is included the necessity for different ways of thinking about gender equality.

2. Gender mainstreaming in the European context: perspectives and debates

2.1. Evolution and a critique of the idea of gender mainstreaming

The European community was one of the first major institutions to seek to ensure equal treatment for men and women on the grounds that, by treating individuals equally, discrimination will be removed. From its early days, the principle of gender equality was considered as a key factor of its policies (De Clementi 2003; Ellina 2003). This general notion includes the different identities of European citizens, the acknowledgement and the protection of minority groups, the valuing of differences and the creation of a social, cultural and legal framework supporting gender balance.

During the making of the European Union, issues of gender equity played – as they do today – a key role in fostering participation to the labour market in conditions of equality, and they have also started having an important and continued influence in the policy-making process of the new Member States. Article 119 in the Treaty of Rome (1957) referred to the right of women to equal pay with men and this inclusion in the Treaty related to the prevention of market distortion rather than being an explicit social-policy commitment. Yet, this and other articles, which made it possible for the Commission to prepare directives on equal treatment proved highly significant as the source of five gender-equality directives between 1975 and 1986[6] (O'Connor 2005). However, is to be noticed that Article 119

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6   Directive on Equal Pay (75/117); Directive on Equal Treatment (76/207); Directive on Equal Treatment in Matters of Social Security (79/7); Directive on Equal Treatment in Occupational Security Schemes (86/378); Directive on Equal Treatment Between Men and Women Engaged in an Activity Including Agriculture, in a Self-employed Capacity, and on the Protection of Self-employed Women During Pregnancy and

(the legal basis), five Directives, four Recommendations and four Action Programmes, which have followed are still largely focused on equal pay and related labour market matters. Like European Community social policy, "the policies on the equality of women have been substantially confined to measures essential to the making of the common market and the restructuring of labour markets" (Rossilli 2000, 5). It is clear since the beginning of this process that the core is the work and employment issue for gender equality that is prominent respect to family and education, in a workfare perspective.

Few years after the foreign and finance ministers of the European Community Member States signed the Treaty on European Union (1992)[7], which introduced the principle of the opportunity to promote women's employment, the Fourth World Conference on Women was held in Beijing (1995). The European Union participated actively, defining its intervention plan with regards to the Conference Plan for Action and becoming the first party to enforce the claims and the strategic objectives that were raised during the Conference. So, the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action was rather speedy: one week after the closing of the Conference, the European Parliament approved a specific resolution, which basically asserted that the rights of women and little girls could not be separated from universal human rights. It reaffirmed the need to eradicate poverty by reinforcing women's potential, to actively coordinate the female perspective in equality policies, to introduce gender issues in all policies, programmes and legislative frameworks, and to adopt measures in order to achieve women's actual participation in decision-making bodies. The importance of the principles asserted in Beijing was such that the European Council decided to monitor

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Motherhood (86/613).

[7] This treaty was signed on 7 February 1992; it was then ratified and it came into force on 1st November 1993.

the implementation of the Platform in the Member States on a yearly basis. This is done by means of annual reviews of gender relations in Europe.

Gender mainstreaming was then launched in 1996 to promote gender equality in all European policies, in the context of international and European mobilization on women's issues. It was aimed to transform mainstream policies by introducing a gender equality perspective. There was also some pressure on the Spring 1996 Intergovernmental Conference to revise the 1992 Treaty to broaden the scope of equal opportunities so as to include political, economic, social and cultural rights, but not to much effect (Rees 1998; Grecchi 2001).

At the end, the Amsterdam Treaty (1997) explicitly identified the removal of inequalities between men and women and the promotion of gender equality in all European Community activities as one of its main objectives, thereby validating concepts of equal opportunities mainstreaming in a legal and institutional framework. This process involved considering systematically all differences in the condition, the status and the needs of women and men in all the fields of intervention of the European Community. Gender and equality issues *must* therefore be introduced in all activities, namely in planning, implementation, monitoring and appraisal. This strategy has proved to be a valid tool to promote equality and gender mainstreaming which, when combined with specific actions – namely legislative and financial programmes – forms the dual-track approach set out in the Community Framework Strategy on Gender Equality.

European legislation was already advanced equal treatment, in particular through its new Directive on equal treatment of men and women in the provision of goods and services and equality between women and men was reinforced by the new Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe (2004). In addition to the provisions of the current Treaty on gender equality (1992), the Constitution expressly

stated that equality was a value of the Union, which should have been promoted not only inside the Union but also in its relations with the rest of the world.

The most innovative part of the European Constitution – which was signed in Rome in 2004 –Part 1, conferred on the European new areas of political and legislative competences within the framework of its enlargement to new member countries. Besides the strengthening of the powers of the European Parliament and the creation of an European Foreign Minister, it is worth mentioning the greater importance attached to social policies and increasingly effective actions against discriminations and in favour of equal opportunities. The central concepts of the Constitution are the notions of "social market economy", "full employment", "social justice", "inter-generational solidarity", the "fight against social exclusion and discrimination" and the "principle of gender equality". This was a great result for gender policies and establish that gender issue is one of the fundamental aspects towards which a social model could be oriented in the future.

The 2005 annual report on equality between women and men, as requested by heads of state and government at the Spring European Council, in March 2005, is the first to cover the enlarged European of 25 Member States. It states the challenges and the policy orientations of European[8]:

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8   Moreover, Member States, in cooperation with the Commission, have developed indicators for the follow-up of the 12 critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action. In 2005, the 10th anniversary of the Platform, Member States committed themselves to continue to develop indicators in the missing areas.

1. Gender mainstreaming and reconciliation policies

Strengthening the position of women in the labour market	Strengthening the position of women in the labour market, guaranteeing a sustainable social protection system, and creating an inclusive society remains fundamental in order to reach the Lisbon goal
Increasing care facilities for children and other dependants	The emergence of the ageing society calls for an adaptation of social policies that is financially and socially sustainable. The provision of adequate care facilities remains the fundamental instrument for allowing women to enter and remain in the labour market throughout their lives.
Addressing men in achieving gender equality	The promotion of equality between women and men implies changes for men as well as for women. Therefore it is essential that both men and women actively participate in creating new strategies for achieving gender equality.
Integrating the gender perspective into immigration and integration policies	Effective and responsible integration of immigrants in the labour market and in society is one of the key factors for success in reaching the Lisbon targets. The gender perspective is to a large extent lacking in integration policies, which hampers the possibilities to fully utilise the potential of immigrant women in the labour market.
Monitoring developments towards gender equality	The 10th anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action in 2005 provides an opportunity for the European to reaffirm the commitments made in the Declaration and the Platform for Action of the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing 1995 and to report on achievements in relation to gender equality since 1995. The assessment is based on a set of core indicators developed partly in the framework of the annual reviews of the Beijing Platform for Action in the Council and partly by the Commission. This set of core indicators is also the basis for annual monitoring of development presented in the annex to this report. The Commission's forthcoming proposal on the creation of a European Institute for Gender Equality will enhance possibilities to monitor achievements.

Source: European Communities commission (2005b, 6-9)

Further on 8 March 2005, the Commission (European Communities Commission 2005a) proposed the creation of a European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) between women and men. The idea of creating such a body was first included in the

Commission's social policy agenda proposals, adopted at Nice in December 2000 (European Council 2000). Subsequently, the June 2004 European Council invited the Commission to bring forward a proposal to set up a gender institute[9] (European Council 2004).

The progress made in the European towards equality between women and men over the last ten years is apparent[10], some kind of convergence can be found in new Member States too. Economic growth and the general development of society have made this progress possible. Despite this extension, which has been driven by the jurisprudence of the European Court of Justice and the political action of the European Commission and the European Parliament, European Community policies have only achieved "a certain degree of formal equality of women employed in full-time standard work and have opened new but unequal employment opportunities for women" (Rossilli 2000, 6). That is, changes did not occur automatically though they were the outcome of strategic political measures aimed at promoting gender equality at European as well as national level.

Furthermore, the achievements made in promoting gender equality and in decreasing the gender gap in strategic areas such

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9   The Institute will work with a wide range of Community programmes and bodies and will be an independent centre of excellence at European level. It will stimulate research and exchanges of experience by organising meetings between policy makers, experts and stakeholders and it will raise awareness of gender equality policies with events including conferences, campaigns and seminars. Another vital task will be to develop tools for supporting the integration of gender equality into all Community policies. The Institute will start operating 12 months after the regulation establishing it has been adopted by Parliament and Council and should be up and running in 2007. It will be funded by the Commission with a proposed budget of € 52.5 million for the period 2007-13 (Barbier *et al.*, 2005).

10   Over the last decades, Community laws on gender equality have built a coherent and consolidated legal framework that old as well as *new* Member States are required to comply with. These laws, which have also been consolidated through the rulings of the European Court of Justice, have become a strong and important pillar in the field of the individual rights of European citizens, creating a basis of equal rights guaranteed to all persons, irrespective of their gender. From a socio-economic viewpoint, these laws have played and still play a key role; this is so true that they are now a prerequisite to reach the objectives concerning sustainable development and economic growth.

as employment, social inclusion, education, research and external relations differ over time and among Member States, though gender gaps persist in almost all these strategic areas.

2.2. Gender mainstreaming, positive action and equal treatment: different talks about equal opportunities in Europe

As we seen before, gender mainstreaming is nowadays recognized as an official policy in many developed countries (particularly in Western Europe) and among international organizations such as the UNDP, the World Bank, the European Union and World Health Organization, but it is neither the only, nor the traditional approach to gender equality policy.

Over the past years, the European Union has developed an actual strategy to promote equal opportunities between men and women. In fifty years (1957-2007) European legislation has broadened the notion of equality between men and women workers. Beginning with equal pay (article 119 of the 1957 Treaty of Rome), European Community legislation has gone on to address equal treatment and equal opportunity, including parental leave and the measures to combat sexual harassment in the workplace. As illustrated above, at first, European Community equal opportunities strategies were mainly focused on the implementation of specific measures particularly addressed to women, which led to the introduction of numerous positive action programmes; at a later stage, this approach gave way to the adoption of the so-called gender mainstreaming strategy, which involved the incorporation of issues of equal opportunities between men and women in all political fields, as it was internationally recognised in the 1995 UN Conference on Women held in Beijing.

Meyer and Prügl (1999) reported the development of a gender mainstreaming strategy in the European by illustrating how this

strategy was shaped initially by other than gender equality policy goals. By exploring the historical periodisation of equal opportunities delivery strategies and challenging the compartmentalization of these developments they suggested that equality policies can better be conceptualized in terms of a *three-legged equality stool* (Booth and Bennett 2002), which recognizes the interconnectiveness of three perspectives – the equal treatment perspective, the women's perspective and the gender perspective. More than this it has become commonplace to divide European equal opportunities policies into three different phases or three ideal-typical approaches to gender issues: equal treatment, positive action, and gender mainstreaming (Walby 1997; Rees 1998; Miller and Razavi 1998; Aa.Vv. 1999).

The earliest and most common approach, *equal treatment (ET)*, "implies that no individual should have fewer human rights or opportunities than any other" (Rees 1998, 29), and the application of such a policy involves the creation and enforcement of formally equal rights for men and women, such as the right to equal pay for equal work. Equal Treatment derives from Article 119 of the 1957 Treaty of Rome, which asserted the need to move towards equal pay for men and women in respect of equal work. This stance corresponds broadly to liberal theories of equality and citizenship. The focus is on the individual, who, given equal treatment in respect of employment, is free to succeed or fail, as the case may be. Such an equal treatment approach is an essential element in any equal opportunities policy, but the approach is nevertheless flawed in concentrating exclusively on the formal rights of women as workers, and therefore fails to address the fundamental causes of sexual inequality in the informal "gender contracts" (Rees 1998, 32) among women and men and equality of access does not lead in practice to equality of outcome. Infact the equal treatment model is "rooted in a narrow distributive concept of justice, and focuses the debate upon the allocation of

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positions within a hierarchy which is given" (Rees 1998, 29).

It was argued that equal treatment policies were blind to the unequal position of men and women in relation to labour market access, not only in respect of past discriminations (for example, the inferior and gendered education customarily offered to girls in the past), but also because this approach neglected the consequences of the caring and domestic responsibilities that have customarily been assumed to be women's work.

In contrast to this one, a second one is called *positive action (PA)*, in which "the emphasis shifts from equality of access to create conditions more likely to result in equality of outcome" (Rees 1998, 34). The term is not new: it is the title of one of the first laws of this century, whereby American legislators introduced specific programmes in order to eliminate direct discrimination against men, women, persons of colour and other vulnerable groups in society. This approach rests on the notion that membership of groups makes a difference to outcome. More concretely, positive action involves the adoption of specific actions on behalf of women, in order to overcome their unequal starting positions in a male-dominated or patriarchal society. Thus in the 1980s and 1990s, in a number of countries within the European were developed policies of positive action, as a consequence of a series of judgements that justified positive action to help women catch up with men – particularly in respect of the labour market. These actions included, for example, training courses designed to attract women, child-care projects, assertiveness training, and projects such as New Opportunities for Women (NOW). Such policies recognize difference between men and women, and women are seen as requiring special treatment to enable them to compete with men. However, positive action is itself contentious; neo-liberals argue that it creates new inequalities since men and women are not given equal treatment (Rossilli

2000; Ellina 2003; Aa.Vv. 2004), and also comes into conflict with civic universalism. Finally, others have argued that helping women transforms them (women) into a client group in need of assistance, and that such policies might actually reinforce gender inequalities by perpetuating conventional assumptions relating to the gendered division of labour, particularly in the domestic sphere.

In the European experience, "positive actions are conceived as wide-ranging programmes aimed at identifying and eliminating discriminatory behaviour as well as the effects of any form of direct or indirect discrimination" (Grecchi 2001, 62). The Commission's Action Programmes on equal opportunities have recommended that Member States develop fairly comprehensive positive measures (training, flexible schedules and work life cycle, sharing of family responsibilities, childcare, and so forth) covering a wide range of aspects that negatively affect women in the labour market.

At the extreme, positive action may also take the form of positive discrimination, which seeks to increase the participation of women (or other under-represented groups) through the use of affirmative-action preferences or quotas. Positive discrimination finds many supporters among women's rights activists, but throughout most of the world it remains a controversial and divisive approach, raising questions about fairness and the individual rights of men who are thus discriminated against. It is clear, however, that gender equality cannot come about only through women-targeted and men-targeted projects that seek to improve individual conditions alone. Lovecy (2002) investigates the distinctive contribution made to the framing of women's rights over the last two decades Council of Europe, which recent studies of the `Europeanisation' of public policies have largely neglected. Elements of congruence are identified between the major mobilising themes of second wave feminism and the emphasis on protecting individual rights, and its sensitivity to the

incompleteness and shortcomings of 'actually existing' democratic institutions and practices. The relative openness of its agenda-setting processes is also underlined. Flag ship policies for women have been centred since the mid-1980s on a "politics of presence" frame and the (contested) concept of "parity democracy", and the tensions between these and the more recent turn to gender mainstreaming are explored. It is important to understand Council's role in diffusing into the E.U. governance arena women's claims to equal participation and presence in the policy process.

The third and most promising approach identified by Rees is *gender mainstreaming*. Attention to what has come to be known as 'gender mainstreaming' is not completely new; it has emerged and evolved from earlier debates on the role of women in the development process. Moser has shown that the way in which national governments have conceptualized and addressed women's position evolved gradually from a welfare approach in the post-war period until the 1970s, to one that emphasized efficiency, equity, and empowerment in more recent times (Moser 1993).The current phase of European policy, gender mainstreaming, has gained considerably in influence since the UN International Women's Conference in Beijing (1995). The emphasis has shifted from women, as individuals and/or as "a problematic or disadvantaged grouping, in order to focus critically on the institutions that generate gendered inequalities" (Crompton and Le Feuvre 2000, 335-336).

Gender mainstreaming means that, in addition to specific policies addressing gender discrimination – which are still necessary to deal with actual gender discrimination – there is "a need to look for a gender perspective in all public policies. And here, one should take into account the strategy of gender mainstreaming. If the main strategy of gender equality policies is gender mainstreaming, one would probably have to seek gender perspective as the searched

effect in other public policies (that is, whether public policies – not the gender-equality policy – are formulated, executed and evaluated with gender perspective), in addition to evaluating the gender policy itself" (Bustelo 2003, 384; 399).

The concept of gender mainstreaming has been defined by European institutions as the "the systematic consideration of differences between the needs of women and men in all Community policies, at the point of planning for the purpose of achieving equality" (European Commission 2005c, 21) and has been incorporated in European policies. It calls for the systematic incorporation of gender issues throughout all governmental institutions and policies. As defined by an Expert Group commissioned by the Council of Europe, "gender mainstreaming is the (re)organization, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes, so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated in all policies at all levels and at all stages, by the actors normally involved in policy-making" (1998). Mainstream organizations are gendered in terms of their culture, rules, and outcomes and therefore, "the decisions, policies, and resources from the mainstream are likely to neglect excluded or disadvantaged groups, including women, thereby reproducing gender inequalities and existing hierarchies" (March *et al.* 1999, 9). Therefore, gender issues should be incorporated in the 'mainstream', and the term 'gender mainstreaming' was born, referring to the integration of gender concerns at all levels of decision making, policy formulation, and implementation throughout all governmental institutions and policies.

The model of equal opportunities, which underlies mainstreaming policies, is based upon the notion of the politics of difference. While the significance of the concept of difference between groups rather than sameness among individuals is now widely accepted, its implications for policies seeking to ensure equal opportunity

are less well understood. Gender mainstreaming however, has been largely used as an alibi for neutralizing positive action. The successful implementation of positive action in political decision-making had challenged the gender distribution of political power over policy institutions and technical, human and financial resources. This led to policy softening and institutional weakening due to counteracting by the European political and administrative hierarchies (Stratigaki 2005).

The politics of difference perspective recognises the androcentricity of organisations and seeks to change it, thus facilitating women's full participation on equal terms. It is a longer-term strategy towards equal opportunities than either equal treatment, positive actions or positive discrimination and recognises, and indeed celebrates, diversity.

Mainstreaming policies are those which respect and respond to differences, rather than seeking to assist women to fit into male institutions and cultures by becoming more like men (Cockburn 1991).

These three conceptualisations of Equal Opportunity (equal treatment, positive actions and positive discrimination, and mainstreaming equality) can be linked to three approaches: "tinkering, tailoring and transforming" (Rees 1998, 42 and ff.):

• "tinkering is essentiality about tidying up the legislation and procedures for equal treatment. This includes providing a sound legal base with adequate resources to ensure law enforcement. While limited in its effectiveness, the law nevertheless has some capacity to change practice and policy;

• tailoring (Positive Actions and Positive Discrimination) involves the use of supplementary and support measures and sanctions to encourage more effective equality of access It allows for 'add-on', supplementary measures to take account of women's

'special' position: 'nips and tucks' to accommodate their different shape;

• transforming training provision builds upon the concept of politics of difference and seeks to feminise the mainstream or mainstream equality. It implies moving beyond add-on policies to support and encourage women's participation. It involves a paradigm shift from the thousand flowers of good practice we know to be blooming from various compendia and from specialist women's training projects to mainstreaming good practice. The transforming agenda is predicated upon the argument that opportunities to participate in education, training and employment should not be enhanced or restricted by membership of one group or another".

The European Community, which initially promoted positive action, now recommends that all Member States incorporate equal opportunities considerations at all levels, in all policies and fields of action: in other words, that they implement gender mainstreaming, which is defined as "the integration of the gender perspective into every stage of policy processes – design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation – with a view to promoting equality between women and men. It means assessing how policies impact on the life and position of both women and men – and taking responsibility to re-address them if necessary. This is the way to make gender equality a concrete reality in the lives of women and men creating space for everyone within the organisations as well as in communities – to contribute to the process of articulating a shared vision of sustainable human development and translating it into reality"[11].

Jahan makes an important distinction between 'integrationist' and transformative or 'agenda setting' approaches to gender

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[11] http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/gender_equality/gender_mainstreaming/general_overview_en.html.

mainstreaming: "the 'integrationist' approach introduces a gender perspective into existing policy processes without challenging policy models. This is in contrast with the 'agenda-setting' approach, which involves "a fundamental rethinking, not simply of the means or procedures of policy-making, but of the ends or goals of policy from a gender perspective" (Jahan 1995, 452).

The latest European guideline on equal opportunities policies concerns *mainstreaming*, in the way of supporting women's involvement in decision-making: this strategy consists in the horizontal implementation of equal opportunities in the widest possible range of sectors, while ensuring that issues concerning equal opportunities are considered at all phases of the policy-making process in each of these sectors[12] and is strictly related with the idea of gender mainstreaming as a transformative agenda. This approach promises a revolutionary change in the international and domestic policy process, in which gender issues become a core consideration not simply for specific departments or ministries dealing with women, but rather for all actors across a range of issue-areas and at all stages in the policy process from conception and legislation to implementation and evaluation. Equally clear, however, are "the extraordinary changes required in the mentalities and organizations of both domestic and international actors in order for the principle of gender mainstreaming to be implemented fully" (Hafner-Burton and Pollack 2002, 339-340). Thus defined, gender mainstreaming is a

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[12] For example in both the US and the European there has been pressure to introduce legislation to provide equal treatment for women at work, the implementation of which often depends on worker and other organizations (Acker 1989; Evans and Nelson 1989; Rees 1998). The European Union has passed a plethora of legally binding Directives as well as advisory Recommendations which require the equal treatment of women and men in employment and in employment-related activities. These Directives were passed not merely as a result of the interest of the European Commission, but as a result of political pressure from women activists (Rees, 1998; (Walby 2001).

potentially revolutionary concept, which promises to bring a gender dimension[13] into all international governance.

Yet, gender mainstreaming is also an extraordinarily demanding concept, which requires the adoption of a gender perspective by all the central actors in the policy process – some of whom may have little experience or interest in gender issues. This raises two central questions – why, and how, did the international community adopt a policy of gender mainstreaming at Beijing and since, and how has it been implemented in practice? (Hafner-Burton and Pollack 2002, 341-342).

On the whole, European equal opportunity policies have been part and parcel of European Community modernizing action; "on the one hand, they have contributed to creating new employment opportunities for women, especially in Southern countries, which were low in female labour-force participation, on the other hand, they have contributed to increasing sex/gender inequalities in terms of occupational segregation, wage differential, and social benefits" (Rossilli 2000, 10).

The notion of mainstreaming infact overcomes the traditional view of equal opportunities as the allocation of duties and responsibilities following an artificially balanced distribution, also known as "quota system". On the contrary, it can be a way to combine social responsibility and the promotion of women's participation to all European policies and political decision-making

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[13] Gender: refers to the social attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female and the relationships between women and men and girls and boys, as well as the relations between women and those between men. These attributes, opportunities and relationships are socially constructed and are learned through socialization processes. They are context/ time-specific and changeable. Gender determines what is expected, allowed and valued in a women or a man in a given context. In most societies there are differences and inequalities between women and men in responsibilities assigned, activities undertaken, access to and control over resources, as well as decision-making opportunities. Gender is part of the broader socio-cultural context. Other important criteria for socio-cultural analysis include class, race, poverty level, ethnic group and age, http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/gendermainstreaming.htm.

positions with a bottom up approach.

The underlying idea is to do away with the notion of policies "to help women" but to start thinking about policies involving women; the definition of mainstreaming asserts that it is about "not restricting efforts to promote equality to the implementation of specific measures *to help* women, *but* mobilising all general policies and measures specifically for the purpose of achieving equality" (European Communities Commission 1996). This could be "an example of empowerment, of responsible behaviour towards objectives with gendered outcomes, where women are no longer considered as a mere subject of legislation; in fact, it could trigger a kind of renewed politicisation of women, which would follow different practices in a context that, over the last thirty years, has undergone some profound changes" (Vincenti 2005, 124-125).

Some argued that specialized projects for women often failed to make women's lives better, and that the "very act of separating women's programming from the central, mainstream programming which involved men, resulted in increased marginalization of women and their roles" (Anderson 1990, 32). It took the view that women were not passive beneficiaries in the domestic realm, but contributed actively, through their labour, to the formal and informal economy and for this reason valuable citizens.

3. Towards a "gendered" European welfare state?

Jacques Delors was one of the first to popularize the term European Social Model (ESM) in the mid-1980s by designating it as an alternative to the American form of pure-market capitalism. The basic idea of the ESM is that "economic and social progress must go hand in hand; economic growth, in other words, is to be combined with social cohesion" (Jepsen and Serrano 2005, 234).

The ESM is not a reality in the sense in which we think of national welfare states, it is "an overarching aspirational model incorporating the broad parameters to which European welfare states conform" (O'Connor 2005, 346). It is generally used to describe the European experience of simultaneously promoting sustainable economic growth and social cohesion. The ESM change its shape and aim from a 'a social space' to policy coordination and is constantly a work in progress; it reflects a tension between aspirations and statements of values expressed at the European level and subsidiarity. Key statements on it are included in European treaties and in documents of the European Council[14] but its most consistent articulation emanates from the European Commission (European Commission various years) and are often referred to as enshrining common views and principles on different social issues and their importance within the European Community construction (Servais 2001; Vaughan and Whitehead 2003; Jepsen and Serrano 2005). It is described as a specific common European aim geared to the achievement of full employment, adequate social protection, and equality, but the different dimensions of the concept can be seen as rhetorical resources intended to legitimize the politically constructed and identity-building project of the European institutions.

This model is today facing some challenges that deal with the demographic changes with an ageing population and a shrinking working population that continue to be a major challenge in the European after enlargement.

Over the past two decades, a decline in birth rates in advanced industrialized societies to levels well below those required for population replacement has been accompanied by a major change

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[14] For example, the Treaty of the European Union (1992), the Amsterdam Treaty (1997) and the Treaty of Nice (2000); the Lisbon (March 2000), Nice (December 2000) and Laken (December 2001) Councils, Treaty of Rome (2004).

in the crossnational incidence of fertility. This has, in turn, given rise to a massive transformation in traditional cross-national patterns of relationships between fertility and other variables. Whereas previously the countries with the highest period fertility rates were those in which family-oriented cultural traditions were most pronounced and in which women's labour market participation was least, these relationships are now wholly reversed (Castles 2003).

One can readily see why such a shift in preferences is likely to produce an overall decline in fertility of the kind observed in Western nations since 1960. Whether premised on women's increased education and employment (Esping-Andersen 1996, 1999, 2002; Lesthaeghe and Willems 1999), a decline in the salience of breadwinner models of family interdependence and increasing demands for gender equity (McDonald 2000; or, in a somewhat different context, Sen 2001) the triumph of feminist ideas (Castles 1998), such a shift necessarily implies a much increased valuation of women's work and a consequently greater willingness on the part of women to make temporary or permanent adjustments to fertility aspirations in order to pursue valued career goals. Paradoxically, as Castels suggests, this same preference shift also provides important reasons why countries characterized by modern employment structures and modern cultural values are also likely to be characterized by higher fertility levels than countries which do not.

Many of the challenges, which lie ahead of contemporary welfare states and – as many politicians and scholars argue – will shake their very foundations, have indeed been prevalent for quite a while. Thus, assessing past reactions of welfare states to pressures of globalization, an ageing society or decreasing fertility rates allows projection of how states might handle these threats in the future.

Apropos of threats Castles (2004) is generally critical of accounts of 'crisis of the welfare states'; while demographic changes had an

effect on the cross-national distribution of pension spending, it has been of minor significance compared to changes in programme coverage and generosity. Castles argues that the "rhetoric about the budgetary consequences of population aging is motivated more by short-term considerations of containing or cutting back public budgets than by justified anxieties concerning the consequences of demographic change" (2004, 139).

The debate on the impact of integration in the world economy and the development of the welfare state is one of the longest-running story in the comparative public policy literature and started from Esping-Andersen (1990) *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*. He addresses the question of whether the welfare state is merely the sum total of a nation's social policy repertoire, or whether it is an institutional force above and beyond a given policy array. His answer is straightforward: the welfare state cannot be regarded as the sum total of social policies, it is more than a numerical cumulation of discrete programmes (Esping-Andersen 1994, 712). According to Esping-Andersen (1990), three interacting factors are significant: the nature of class mobilization (especially of the working class), class-political action structures, and the historical legacy of regime institutionalization. European societies are currently facing significant social, political and economic changes that are posing serious challenges to their welfare states. On the whole, European social policies are designed to follow the guidelines laid down in the European Masterplan and, in particular, in the March 2000 Lisbon Agreement.

The tenet of Esping-Andersen's treatise of the welfare state was that, "for a long time in both the theoretical and empirical literature, too little attention had been given to cross-national differences in welfare state structures" (Arts and Gelissen 2002, 138).

Most recently of all, some more nuanced contributions have

suggested that the impact of the global economy is strongly mediated by domestic factors, including, most prominently, a country's level of democratization and its balance of partisan forces (Glatzer and Rueschemeyer 2005).

Arts and Gelissen (2002) reconstruct several typologies of welfare states in order to establish, first, whether real welfare states are quite similar to others or whether they are rather unique specimens, and, second, whether there are three ideal-typical worlds of welfare capitalism or more. The authors conclude that real welfare states are hardly ever pure types and are usually hybrid cases; and that the issue of ideal-typical welfare states cannot be satisfactorily answered given the lack of formal theorizing and the still inconclusive outcomes of comparative research. In spite of this conclusion there is plenty of reason to continue to work on and with the original or modified typologies. It is clear that scandinavian states predominate; the 'liberal' cluster exemplified by the UK; and the 'corporatist, conservative' regime within which he places, for example, Germany, Italy and France. Esping-Andersen, however, does not really explore the importance of different family policies for women and men as mothers, fathers and citizens, nor does he elaborate on the importance of unpaid family-related work for welfare production, as observed, for example, in work by Lewis (1992) and Orloff (1993). What different welfare state regimes imply for the political and social definition of motherhood obviously needs further examination. Scandinavian family policies have had a mixed reception. Wolfe (1989) finds that the Scandinavian welfare states have created a new family form, 'the public family', in which both parents are in paid work, while the children are cared for in public day-care centres. For him, this family appears as a highly problematic construct. New family forms have also been interpreted as representing a democratisation of the relationship between genders and generations, even as an

indication of an emerging 'woman-friendly' welfare state (Hernes 1987). However that may be, both concepts, "the woman-friendly welfare state' and 'the public family' presume a renegotiation of the boundaries between the public and the private, and a restructuring of both families and labour markets along gender lines" (Drew, Emerek and Mahon, 1998, 159-160).

At a European level, this type of *reframing* aims at the convergence of national welfare systems, a process which is embodied by the "*Active Welfare State*" model (AWS). This system is founded upon the concept/practice of "activation", where the State is still construed as the central political institution in charge of creating and redistributing wealth. But, as Prandini highlights in his very interesting article:

• the problems of European societies cannot be ascribed solely to the challenges posed by globalisation. On the contrary, they largely depend on the way society is organised and on its inherent problems, like, for example, the ever-increasing demands in the fields of law and security. Therefore, European society should first be "analysed/deconstructed" from an intellectual viewpoint and then it should be "reconstructed" by means of some specific political practices;

• the economic system, with its trade-based structure, is the engine of growth. Economic growth, the activation of resources, and capitalisation are undisputed objectives and values because – although they are not sufficient – they are considered to be some of the prerequisites and the tools to reach any other objective;

• the economic growth of the system and the activation of all available resources call for a cohesive society. Each member has to contribute to growth in an "orderly" way. Hence, considerable importance has been attached to notions of "participation" and deliberative democracy (Prandini 2004);

• the value system legitimising the future European order

is based on the classic and modern notion of institutionalised (controlled) individualism (freedom), which stems from a combination of the liberal economic and political systems with the egalitarian tradition of Socialism. Policies are designed for adult, dependable, independent, mobile, and flexible individuals, with a high educational level, who are capable of making their way in society and reach their objectives: "these individuals enjoy complete freedom in their life choices; except when their actions impinge on other people's freedom or on the life of people who are not free to decide" (Prandini 2006, 82-84).

This should have been realized trough the development of the European Social Model from the recognition of the right to equal pay for men and women in the Treaty of Rome (1957) to agreement of a Social Policy Agenda in 2000 and the adoption of an open method of coordination (OMC) in employment (1997), social inclusion (2000) and pensions (2002). The Europeanization of significant aspects of economic policy and the pervasive differences across European welfare states in social outcome indicators and capacity for redistribution contribute to "the considerable constraints on the open method of coordination in social inclusion" (O'Connor 2005, 345). But, a new idea of inclusion ask for a specific space into new European welfare policies. Nevertheless, national welfare regimes (liberal, conservative-corporatist, social-democratic, universalistic) (Esping-Andersen 1990) can no longer be taken as the sole basis for comparison because, as many critics have noticed, this approach fails to take into account some key factors like family relationships and the gender dimension (Zanatta 1998).

Arts and Gelissen (2002) have been developed some critics towards Esping-Andersen in order to cope with the following alleged shortcomings of his typology: (1) the misspecification of the Mediterranean welfare states as immature Continental ones; (2) the

labelling of the Antipodean welfare states as belonging to the 'liberal' regime type; (3) a neglect of the gender dimension in social policy.

Let's consider this last crucial point.

3. 1. Models of gendered welfare states

By explicitly incorporating gender, several authors (Lombardo and Meyer 2006; Daly 2000; Hantrais 2002, 2004; Korpi 2000) have tried to reconceptualise the dimensions of welfare state variation. Subjecting the mainstream welfare state typologies to an analysis of the differential places of men and women within welfare states would, according to them, produce valuable insights. Gender analysis suggests that there are whole areas of social policy that Esping-Andersen simply misses. What seems to be particularly lacking is a systematic discussion of the family's place in the provision of welfare and care. Not only the state and the market provide welfare, but also families. A further omission is that there is no serious treatment of the degree to which women are excluded from or included in the labour market and the question of gender.

Lombardo and Meyer (2006) explore the extent to which a feminist reading of gender mainstreaming is incorporated in the European political discourse by analysing how family policy and gender inequality in politics are framed in European policy documents. Gender mainstreaming is treated as an open signifier that can be filled with both feminist and non-feminist content. The frame analysis of European documents on family policy and gender inequality in politics reveals but a partial adoption of a feminist understanding of gender mainstreaming and only in the area of gender inequality in politics (Lombardo and Meyer 2006).

In a similar way building on elements of existing feminist and mainstream comparative welfare state scholarship, Daly's analytical

framework is a triadic one (2000). It consists, in the first place, of dimensions which are designed to capture the distributive principles underpinning welfare state provision, namely: the treatment of 'male' and 'female' risks within the tax-benefit system; the construction of entitlement and treatment of different family types within the tax-benefit system; and the nature and extent of service provisions, especially care services. Second, the framework attempts to capture the processes through which welfare states construct gender relations. Daly describes these processes as "(de)familisation" (2000, 67), and specifies the construction of kinship obligations and the treatment of care work as two of the most critical. The final component of the framework is the resulting pattern of gender stratification. The dimensions of stratification that Daly is interested in span both income-related measures (inequality and poverty), as well as more qualitative measures (the construction of choices around paid work/care giving and marriage). It is the focus on outcomes and, more importantly, the relationship between social policy inputs and outcomes, which is perhaps the most valuable component of Daly's study, both at the conceptual and empirical level. This is an element which has been largely absent from previous feminist comparative welfare state research, reflecting in part the legacy of Esping-Andersen's 1990 study (it lacked any systematic analysis of the relationship between the three welfare state regimes and international variations in outcome measures), but also reflecting a long-standing division within comparative social policy research between studies of policies and micro-data policy outcome studies. Thus, while the former have tended to do no more than speculate on the possible outcomes of various institutional arrangements, the latter have lacked the detailed policy information to adequately account for variations in the patterning of outcomes. It is clear, though, from this study that measuring outcomes and relating inputs to outcomes,

particularly from the perspective of gender, remains a key challenge for comparative social policy researchers (Daly 2000).

As a standard of comparison, Hantrais (2000; 2004) has recently suggested a very interesting type of relationship between the family and the State. The ensuing classification shows the effects of *de-familisation* produced by various national family policies. De-familisation defines the degree of independence from family and kinship networks that citizens enjoy thanks to national welfare measures. This approach reveals that there is still much ambiguity in Europe with regards to the institution of the family (Prandini 2006, 93).

Korpi (2000) has distinguished between three ideal-typical models of gendered welfare state institutions of relevance to the above discussion. In this typology the distinction between paid and unpaid labour is of central importance, and institutionalized family policy measures are conceived in a two-dimensional space according to what consequences these measures have for the distribution of paid and unpaid work in the family and in society. More specifically, the categorization of social policy measures is based on whether a specified policy primarily contributes to the general support of a nuclear family (especially one of the single-earner type), or whether it is likely to enable and promote married women's work and thus a dual-earner family. Thus, the *general family support* model is based on the presumption that the wife has the primary responsibility for caring and reproductive work within the family and enters paid work on a temporary basis as a secondary earner. In contrast, the *dual-earner support* model encourages women's labour force participation by enabling parents, men as well as women, to combine parenthood with paid work and by attempting to create the conditions for a redistribution of caring work within the family. Countries where neither of the above two policy models is predominant would appear to have chosen to allow market forces to significantly shape gender

relations, and these countries are consequently characterized as having a *market oriented* gender policy model.

Another criterion for comparison was identified in the so-called "male breadwinner regime"[15]; the principle based on the "Families of Nations" classification (Millar and Warmann 1996) considers the importance that national laws and social policies attach to family care obligations and responsibilities for the weakest members. In Europe, following this approach, three clusters of countries can be identified. In Scandinavian countries, which are characterised by minimum family obligations and direct state intervention, work-family reconciliation and family-friendly policies are inspired by an integrationist approach and are aimed at combining work and family life by preserving gender equality (in parental leave schemes and labour market flexibility) as well as children's rights. In Continental Europe, unpaid care work falls on the nuclear family; work-family reconciliation is based on the segregation of unpaid family work and paid work – which do not occur concurrently, due to long parental leaves and the inadequate provision of childcare services. Finally, the third cluster is composed of southern European countries, where unpaid care work involves the extended family, and work-life strategies are mostly «family-oriented»: in this framework, all care responsibilities fall on women.

According to these indicators, especially Sweden and (to a somewhat lesser degree) Norway are characterized by high levels of dual-earner support (and medium levels of general family support). Countries characterized by having high levels of general family support (and medium levels of dual-earner support) are Italy,

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15 It is based on the sexual division of labour, with a special focus on the allocation of unpaid care work to women and their financial and social dependency upon the male breadwinner. Hence, some strong or weak male breadwinner models can be identified (Lewis, 1992).

Germany, Austria, and the Netherlands. Australia, Canada, Great Britain, Ireland, Japan, New Zealand and the USA are characterized by having low levels of both dual-earner and general family support. However, within the group with this family policy model, Canada and Great Britain have family measures of a sort that makes these countries score relatively high on the dual earner support dimension (Sjöberg 2004).

As we can already understand from above arguments, issues involved in the debate are gender, family and work, care and responsibility and social inclusion trough citizenship.

3.2. The citizenship of gender in the welfare state: inclusion, responsibility and care

As known today's discussion of the future of social inclusion and citizenship, stressing two major issues: the crisis of the European social model (the national-level of social citizenship) and the integration problems in the development of the European Union (the transnational-level of social citizenship) (Roche and Van Berkel 1997; Taylor-Gooby 2004).

The notion of citizenship, especially in its political connotation, is closely linked to gender and in particular to participation in the public domain; philosophers had a fundamental representation of the roles of man and women. They were the key advocates of change and movement toward the future. Yet, nowhere in this picture of reform did they see women. Rousseau is one of the philosophers who did not believe that women were of great potential, or that they needed higher education. To him, men were above women. He believed that the man did not need the man, and still the woman needed the man. He thought that "the educations of men and women must be different because they are different". Wollstonecraft, a feminist, expressed

an opinion much different than. She understood that from birth, a woman was educated in how she should act. She thought that men paid attention to the wrong qualities in women. She wanted for women to be able to show more than their femininity. To her, women were resilient and capable of caring for themselves: "women ought to have representatives, instead of being arbitrarily governed without any direct share allowed them in the deliberations of government" (Wollstonecraft 1992, 6). Women began to consider that the way they had been being treated might have not been fair. Women of the eighteenth century did not wish to have greater power then men. They only wished for equal rights. Today women want more.

Thus, women have to create a new meaning for citizenship, which had its foundations in the private domain. To do this instead of employing the all or nothing words 'inclusion' and 'exclusion' to gender differences, it seems sensible to stress the importance of partial citizenship (Bulmer and Rees 1996; Arnot *et al.* 2000).

In the attempt to overcome this model (men/public and women/private domain), there developed a so-called "differentiated universalism" model (Lister 1997; 1998) in the field of gender studies. This approach commits to a universalistic orientation of policies to the valuing of difference within democratic processes[16]. This model, however, highlighted the fact that, when it comes to practice, it is very complex to combine abstract and universal rights with the ones supported by a politics of difference (Young 1989), in other words, "to root citizenship rights in a notion of needs, which are seen as dynamic and differentiated, as against the universal and abstract vision of rights" (Taylor 1989, 27). On the whole, differentiated universalism consists in the articulation of women's claims with regards to citizenship; women have always been faced with, on

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[16] For an expounding of the notion of citizenship with a gendered perspective, please see Lister 1997, Walby 1997, Arnot *et al.* (2000), Bleijenbergh *et al.* (2004).

the one hand, universalistic claims – based upon the principle of equality between men and women – and, on the other hand, with particularistic claims – grounded in gender difference.

These claims represent the *gender-neutral model of citizenship* and the *gender-differentiated model of citizenship* respectively.

For example, Offen (1988) claimed that the traditional dichotomy between equality and difference derives from the thinking developed by a strand of "relational" feminism, which emphasizes women's difference and their contribution in the framework of non-hierarchical relationships, underpinned by the values of care and solidarity. On the other hand, Offen also identified "individualist" feminism, which focuses on women, their rights and their claims to independence and autonomy. In both cases, it is a male standard against which women's citizenship is measured, and where difference is conceived in binary rather than pluralistic terms.

To say that equality requires that women be treated alike when they are alike, and differently when they are different will often leave women vulnerable. For the traditionalist will respond that it is legitimate to discriminate against married women in the workplace because employers should be entitled to award plum jobs to workers who are not encumbered with family responsibilities that prevent them from devoting their full attention to their work. This is treating women differently because they are different. Is it consonant with the principle of gender equality for women? Clearly not. What these initial examples show is that treating women the same can leave women vulnerable (as in the case of alimony and custody reform) but treating women differently can leave them vulnerable as well. The language of sameness and difference is not only divisive; it is also confusing and analytically flawed.

Williams (2000) translates the "sameness/difference" policy debates into a new language and a new analytical framework:

"treating men and women the same is a strategy that works well where the goal is to eliminate the disabilities traditionally experienced by women, but it can backfire when applied to women's traditional privileges, for treating caregiving women the same as men who do not have caregiving responsibilities only exacerbates such women's gender disadvantage. To correctly apply the principle of treating men and women the same requires that formal equality be combined with an analysis of gender and power. Once this is accomplished, an analysis of masculine norms takes center stage. Where such norms exist, treating men and women the same will backfire unless they are first dismantled. Otherwise women will be further disadvantaged when they are treated the same as men in the face of norms that favor men because they are designed around men's bodies or life" (Williams 2000, 207)

Pateman summed up this situation as the "Wollstoncraft's dilemma", on the one hand, there are women who struggled to achieve full citizenship, according to the principles of liberal feminism; on the other hand, "women have also insisted... as did Mary Wollstonecraft, that *as women* they have specific capacities, talents, needs and concerns, so that the expression of their citizenship will be differentiated from that of men" (1989, 196 and ff.).

Wollstoncraft's book, The vindication of the rights of women, was written in 1792 and it is an example of an early woman writer who challenges the established order and who uses literature as her means of speaking out to the world. It is an insightful look into the life of women in the early portion of 18th century. It was a philosophical examination of the condition of women, in relationship to some very basic rights, and is also a very enlightening look at how short a distance we really have come, as a society, in relationship to perceptions of women. The author began her book with words which clearly illustrate her concerns: "after considering the historic

page, and viewing the living world with anxious solicitude, the most melancholy emotions of sorrowful indignation have depressed my spirits, and I have sighed when obliged to confess that either Nature has made a great difference between man and man, or that the civilization which has hitherto taken place in the world has been very partial" (1792, xi).

This dilemma seems to find a solution in the overall re-articulation of the divide between public and private spheres, where the relational understanding of concepts of equality and difference plays a key role.

In this regard, Pateman created a "dualistic or gender-differentiated model of citizenship" (1989, 14), which, in modern democracies, seems to be based upon the differentiation between "man-the-soldier" and the "woman-the-mother". Basically, in order to attain citizenship rights, women must be like men; this also implies that they cannot become citizens *as* women in their own right.

This has problematised the relationship between individuals and citizenship, which had all too often been based upon men's freedom from care tasks and responsibilities (Pateman 1988). This shift of household/domestic responsibility towards men would produce a new division of labour in a gendered perspective; more precisely, it would lead to a redefinition of the meaning and value of "public" (paid work) and "private", (unpaid care work)[17]. With respect to another issue, social care, Daly and Lewis (2000) argue that different styles of social policy have incorporated the key element of social care differently; they identify certain tendencies concerning care in specific welfare states. In conclusion, women's new proposals partly different from those that have gained favour so far are needed to push forward the construction of European citizenship and democracy from the

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[17] See the contribution of Strandh and Nillson in chapter 5.

gender perspective. This requires a search for different political models (Rossilli 2000, Sjöberg 2004; Lewis 1999).

Nowadays, European gender policy reflects the contradictions women must face in their struggle for equality, which are common to most public gender policies. All provisions devised to progress in gender equality could have negative retroactive effects on women, due to the patriarchal context in which they are applied, showing how European gender policy could be still trapped in the "Wollstoncraft dilemma". A more holistic approach to European gender policy, able to tackle all the areas of which patriarchy is composed, and an improved monitoring of European gender policy implementation in the member states, could both generate a more effective gender policy in the European and make further progress in solving the dilemma (Lombardo 2003).

As illustrated above, feminist scholars repeatedly emphasised the key role played by the family in constructing gender differences, especially with regards to women's and men's involvement in the political community; in this respect, women's experience of and identification with motherhood and care tasks have been viewed as the main obstacles to achieving complete citizenship. In a framework where "equality" and "difference" become incorporated and complementary, motherhood – and care in general – will be an integral part of the notion of citizenship and women will no longer be construed solely as mothers or carers.

Pateman, despite her pessimistic attitude towards Wollstonecraft's dilemma, identifies a point to achieve this objective: the proper allocation of responsibility, which citizenship carries for all citizens. This perspective also includes the argument for justice and care: these ethics should be viewed as complementary factors of the same problem, rather than as stand-alone solutions. This is acknowledged by a number of both justice and care theorists. In this regard, Okin

suggests that "justice has integral to it the notions of care and empathy, of thinking of the interests and well-being of others who may be very different from ourselves" (1989, 15).

Women obtained full civil and political rights a considerable time ago, but with regard to social rights, women are still discriminated against, sometimes formally, and nearly always informally because of different labour market positions, linked to different gender roles. According to many feminist authors, it is the sexual division of paid and unpaid work – especially care and domestic labour – that needs incorporating in the typology (Lewis 1992; O'Connor 1993; Orloff 1993; Sainsbury 1996; O'Connor *et al.* 1999).

Traditional gender-roles have been increasingly contested during the post-war period. Perhaps the most important challenge to the traditional division of labour between men and women in the industrialized world is the increase in women's labour force participation. Parallel to this development, most countries have introduced family policy measures that not only have influenced the actual labour force participation of both women and men, but in their institutional arrangements also reflect normative views about the roles of women and men on the labour market and within the family sphere. The changing nature of the social division of paid and unpaid work between men and women has brought traditional beliefs and orientations towards family and work into question. Although a number of studies have shown that there has been increasing acceptance of non-familial roles for women (see e.g. Lu and Mason 1988; Scott *et al.* 1996; 1998), this development has also varied substantially between nations, and important differences still exist between countries regarding attitudes towards women's labour force participation (see e.g. Alwin *et al.* 1992; Scott *et al.* 1998; Knudsen and Wærness 2001; Poelmans *et al.* 2003) as well as other aspects of women's social roles (see e.g. Stier, Lewin-Epstein and Braun 2001; Pfau-Effinger 2004).

Two different perspectives on explaining the role of family policy institutions are distinguished. Concerning the first perspective, gender-role attitudes will differ cross-nationally according to the capacity of family policy institutions to reconcile work in the home with work in the paid labour force. According to the second perspective, institutions such as family policies can give rise to a certain collection of norms regarding the 'proper' role of women in society. Cross-national variation[18] in family policies will, according to this perspective, have important implications for gender-role attitudes primarily because it will affect what is seen as normatively appropriate behaviour, rather then affecting the returns expected from alternative choices (Sjöberg 2004; Saraceno and Naldini 2001; Kaufmann *et al*. 1998).

The gender equality ideal appears to be in strong evidence among today's families with small children and in the public sector. It is even acceptable that men in relatively high positions can leave meetings at work, because they have to pick their children up from kindergarten. On the other hand, we are far from having realized any gender equality with respect to salary and career or with respect to workload in the home. Many parents of small children al so probably "pay a high price in the form of a heavy workload when trying to live up to today's ideal of gender equality" (Wærness 2005, 23).

Tronto (1993) asserts that ethics of care cannot be divorced from notions of justice: justice should serve as a tool for the allocation of care responsibilities and benefits as well as to redress power inequalities that might surface between the providers and recipients of care.

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[18] The empirical analysis, using multilevel regression techniques on data from the International Social Survey Programme (ISSP 2003), indicates that variations in family policy models can contribute significantly to our understanding of cross-national variations in gender-role attitudes. It is also shown that the way gender-role attitudes are measured and conceptualized can have important implications for how cross-national differences in these attitudes are explained. See the website http://www.issp.org/data.htm.

The Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian feminist-oriented research on care have gradually approached each other and today we can point to three lines of development in this research with respect to the understanding of what care is:

- "from either feelings or (manual) work to both/and eventually also intellectual work;
- from the family via unpaid women's work in the government's service, to the state as either a women-friendly and/or shaky social service state;
- from focus on women as carers and care workers to a perspective that also includes those who need and receive care" (Wærness 2005, 18).

These factors provide a framework where the notion of interdependence, which lies at the core of human relationships (and of care in particular), is attached the right value and meaning, while preserving the feminist critique of women's economic dependence on men and of the ensuing denial of autonomy.

Although women's independence has always been construed as a key element to achieve full citizenship and women's economic dependence on men has been perceived as the main obstacle to its achievement, interdependence between genders does not always place women on the receiving side. It is also important to consider men's dependence on women for care, whereby men are supported as citizens and workers (Thompson and Walker 1989; Finch and Mason 1993).

Both of these development trends will lead to greater gender equality, but "the latter trend will also result in greater social differences between women in a way that probably will also reduce the chance of care values gaining a bigger place in the *political* discourse" (Wærness 2005, 24). Regardless of how we might assess today's development trends with respect to distribution of

care responsibilities, we need greater political focus on working conditions for those care workers who perform the specific everyday care of our children, the sick, disabled and elderly. We also need political focus on what division of responsibility and labour in care we want to have and what division actually exists between the family and the political authorities. Basically, women's autonomy cannot be reduced to a sort of atomistic liberal individualism; autonomy is only made possible through the human relationships that generate it and the social structures that support it.

4. The heart of the matter: the relationship between gender, family and work in Europe

When looking at the European context (Rossi 2006; Abrahamson, Boje and Greve 2005; Frone 2002; Hantrais 2004), it appears that the work-family balance has been undergoing a gradual deterioration that has eventually made these two vital aspects of everyday life and adult identity incompatible.

With the growth of the industrial market economy during the past 300 years (Googins 1991; Coontz 1992), began a trend which segmented activities associated with generating income and caring for family members. Before the advent of industry and the growth of market economies, a large amount of production was done by families primarily for their own consumption. However, the more industrialized the market economy became, the more that workplaces were created outside of the home and organizations other than families were in charge of production.

The development of work-family conflict is placed along the transition from Fordist capitalism – based on industrial production and the entry of the working masses in the factories – to a late modern (or post-Fordist) capitalism. It The work-family conflict

originated in the advent of capitalism in modern society, as a result of the strict separation between the domestic and work spheres and paid and unpaid work; this led to an overload of care responsibilities and a "double burden" for women.

In the last twenty years, social orders have changed radically; the traditional family model where the male breadwinner was the sole source of income has given way to a dual-earner model. Young women attain higher educational and/or vocational qualifications, just like their male peers; however, they find it harder to strike a balance between family responsibilities and full-time employment.

As industrialization accelerated, the term 'work' became synonymous with 'employment'. While there was diversity in employment and in family situations, in general, work and family activities after the industrial revolution were carried out in different places, at different times, with different sets of people, and with different norms for behaviour and expressed emotion. Thus, today "most workplaces and homes have cultures and expectations distinct from each other" (Clark 2000, 748).

Within this changing framework, the flexibility, the irregularity, the unpredictability and the insecurity of the labour market have blurred the boundaries between different spheres of everyday life, and namely between family and work.

Moreover, women's emancipation process and the improvement of the female condition through the mass entry of women into the workforce – as provided for by the 2000 Lisbon Declaration – not only had an impact on the increase of school enrolment rates but, importantly, it also led to the employment of several women with more qualified positions than the past (especially when compared with the 1950's and the 1960's). As noticed above, greater labour market flexibility, its ensuing competitiveness and the growth of

female labour have brought about increasing problems in reconciling work and family life.

4.1. Work and family: a difficult balance

Work-family balance has been defined as "the degree to which an individual is able to simultaneously balance the temporal, emotional, and behavioural demands of both paid work and family responsibilities" (Hill *et al.* 2001, 49), and prior research has shown that work-family balance is related to indicators of overall well-being (e.g. Marks and MacDermid 1996).

Both work and care imply ethical codes and practices about how, in moral terms, people believe they ought to live their lives. However, these two ethics shape experiences in both contexts and may cross the work-family boundary. For some authors caring is a moral practice (Tronto 1993; Finch and Mason 1993), which is not contained within family or kinship contexts. Likewise, the business ethic is also transgressive as I have suggested when work-family boundaries are weakened. Moreover, the business ethic may permeate family life more easily than the reach of the care ethic into working life. For much of family life is subject to economistic notions of time, notably via the pressures of the market and consumerism.

The study of the work-family interface invites a focus upon time and the notion of time as having a plurality of meanings (Brannen 2002, Daly 1996; Hill *et al.* 2001). Many employees expect and are expected to use time purposefully – 'time is a project'. In contrast, as people enter territories outside paid work, they may draw upon different concepts of time such as taking 'time out'. Time here is used less purposefully: it passes or is 'spent' with children, partners, relatives and friends (Brannen 2005).

Family life is increasingly shaped by consumerism and becomes

a 'project' as parents subscribe to notions of the child as project (Hallden 1991).

Caring, however, is a practice and a moral activity which involves relationships and reciprocity; thus it does not readily accommodate economic notions of time – how much time can be spent on a particular activity and with what cost implications.

Those who are most 'work busy' are those in dual income households who have care responsibilities for children. Such working parents stand in marked contrast to those whose present time hangs heavily – those with no jobs to go to and fewer resources to enable them to fill their time, such as unemployed lone parents and the poor elderly.

In some families, economic notions of time may be more dominant than in others. In some work contexts the basis for the development of caring relations between workers is weakened through the intensification of work. Yet even for the 'work busy', there is an inherent contradiction between time in work and time devoted to care. On the one hand, the dual income lifestyle is driven by Marx's notion of 'time as commodity' (Daly, 1996): time here has an economic price aimed at the production of profit and efficiency and high income generation in order to bring in the resources to sustain a lifestyle. On the other hand, family life and care responsibilities are construed in relation to notions of morality (Finch 1989; Finch and Mason 1993; Tronto 1993; Smart and Neale 1998; Daly and Lewis 1999). In the 'moral economy of time', time ought to be given freely and should not be costed or measured. 'Family time' and 'quality time' are today's symbols of a 'proper' family life (see Daly 1996).

As people spend less time in social interaction in the workplace and are treated individualistically, so workplace cultures generate feelings of individual insecurity.

Family time has connotations of process rather than commodity;

for social interaction *is* the purpose as well as the outcome of spending time and is not simply a means to an instrumental end. Yet commodity time – what Daly (1996) calls 'a new kind of impatience' – seems to be the kind of time that is winning out among families, increasing numbers of whom are driven by work. As Hochschild (1997) claims: work environments for some professional couples were seen as preferable to the increasingly onerous, 'taylorized' character of family life.

One of the most significant consequences has been the increasing lack of care services not only under a quantitative but also under a qualitative viewpoint: the considerable increase in flexibility and working time variability cannot be tackled or managed through service management plans with standardised and rigid schedules. The tension between combining family and professional life, partly due to lack of child care and insufficiently flexible working conditions, appears to be contributing to the postponement of having the first child and to low fertility rates in most Member States. However, experience shows that Member States having comprehensive policies to reconcile work and family life for both men and women show higher fertility rates as well as higher labour market participation of women. The integration of a gender dimension into policies will contribute to attaining the overall Lisbon objectives.

Moreover, in the context of the blurring of boundaries (Lange and Jurzick 2006) between work and family life, the business ethic crosses the borders into family and caring responsibilities.

Functional differentiation between work and family follows some specific mechanisms: systems become specialised by surrendering some tasks and clearly separating them; the subsystems thus differentiated (family and work) are self-referential. In this type of differentiation, therefore, the subsystemic symbolic code dominates. Thus, on the one hand, we experience an emotional closure of the

family, which finds it difficult to regenerate itself as such, while, on the other hand, we notice an instrumental closure and an increasing dehumanisation of work. Where this happens the contradictions or disjunctions become stark. Without any institutional or group mechanisms to defray or diffuse these, the individual is left to 'cope' alone. He or she must negotiate on an individual basis with their employers, for example to work flexibly, and must draw upon their own sources of support.

Relational differentiation, on the contrary, is governed by different procedures: the specialization of different areas of life or subsystems occurs through some new forms of interchange, with spillover functions; subsystems, in their turn, specialise for their interrelations, following a code of mutual referencing (Donati 2005a, 66-69).

It is clear that even more recent studies and research about family well-being consider that the relation with external spheres of individuals' life is really important for the whole well-being of the family itself. The work-family relationship, therefore, comes out as being a relational good in itself (Donati 2005a; Siaroff 2004; Val Gillies 2005).

The wider context of the trade-off between work and maternity is not just a matter of changing preferences. For individuals and couples, questions concerning work and family always involve either-or choices, but these choices are likely to be more or less difficult depending on the policy environment in which they are made. Under this heading fall a wide range of the *nostrums* of contemporary family policy, although the focus of the literature in this area has, until recently, been "far more concerned with the identification of factors promoting high levels of female employment than with the location of policy determinants of cross-national fertility variation" (Castles 2003, 219).

The condition of women is currently characterised by the need

to find a difficult balance between different roles and time demands. Naturally, this sensitive task does not only concern women, but it also inevitably brings into play the desires, the expectations and the rights of the families where women live. Moreover, a work-life balance is not achieved merely by means of interventions restricted to single subjects belonging to some specific groups (like women or children). On the contrary, an effective approach should envisage a series of social policy measures and actions that promote a balance between different areas of life – namely work commitments and care responsibilities – while considering all the subjects involved in the process and, in particular, the family.

4.2. From another point of view: family spill over to work

The conflict (or bad negotiation) between work and family is often seen as a divergence that could negatively influence family life, while recent studies realized that this negative pressure is one of the main cause for decline of employees' work.

In today's fast pace competitive society, there is a significant underlying issue in every industry across all staffing levels which surround the issues of work life integration (Fagan *et al.* 2005; Hantrais 2002). It is more than a buzzword or human resource policy; it is a key component in understanding work retention, job satisfaction and career development for women. It is no longer about balance because balance implies that work and life are opposites of each other instead employees and employers need to view work-life as a well-integrated whole. The growing concern of work life integration is that it crosses over in other issues of the business, attract and retain quality staff, staff retention/turnover, health and wellness of employee and productivity. The strongest factors associated with an employee's ability to integrate work and family is a supportive

supervisor and workplace culture.

Research over the last two decades has provided ample evidence of continuing and increasing rates of work-family conflict and workplace stress for men and women. Such stress has been shown to result in distress and dissatisfaction at work and at home, as well as mental and physical health problems (e.g. Duxbury and Higgins 2001, Frone *et al.* 1997; Frone 2002; Greenhaus and Parasuraman 1999). This has serious consequences, both for workers and for their families, and for organizations that fail to benefit from talented employees and incur additional costs in absenteeism, turnover, recruitment costs, and lost productivity.

Byrne (2005) discusses the development of the concept of the 'work-life balance' as a means of tackling the problem of increasing amounts of stress in the workplace as people try to juggle a wide range of factors in their life/work environment, including work and family. It is argued that, of the factors involved, work is the one which is most elastic and can be managed in such a way as to avoiding jeopardizing the other factors. A major driver of the trend towards achieving work-life balance is the fact that younger people are not prepared to work in the same way as their parents, wanting greater control, and a bigger say in the structure of their jobs and what they could potentially offer in the future. The search for work-life balance is a process in which people seek to change things in accordance with changes in their own priorities, physical, psychological or both, and these can be triggered in their turn by individual's factors; "the achievement of better worklife balance can yield dividends for employers in terms of: having a more motivated, productive and less stressed workforce that feels valued attracting a wider range of candidates" (Byrne 2005, 58). The author considers some of the issues which might arise when implementing a work-life balance strategy and offers advice on implementing such a scheme.

Another set of studies, largely done in the European Union (European) adopted a more macro-level strategy: examples include Deven and Moss's (2002) excellent review of maternity and family leave policies and Stier *et al.'s* (2001) analysis of how different policy contexts affect women's employment and earnings over the life span, as well as work by den Dulk *et al.* (1999) and Poelmans *et al.* (2003).These researches has identified the critical importance of public policies that affect women's labour force patterns, earnings, and opportunities for economic and social equality. Such factors include social expectations about men's and women's roles, overall approaches to state-market-family relationships; and family-, gender-, and employment-supportive policies (such as public provisions for maternity and parental leave and benefits, family leave, and tax policies and social programmes that include publicly funded childcare).

In Korabik *et al.* (2003) view, it is critical that researchers and policy makers appreciate how different countries' responses to a variety of imperatives shape the need for and likelihood of workplace modifications and employer-employee negotiations, recognizing that these will still play out differently depending on firm size and culture and for different groups of employees.

Godard focuses on government policy because this reflects a society's "political structures, policy traditions, social norms and power relations" (1997, 252). Work organizations can affect governments, that multiple levels of government can be involved, and that it can be difficult for governments to alter the traditional rules, norms, practices, and beliefs that underlie most employer policies, especially when these are deeply embedded. Inevitably, employees will have to address some of these barriers as individuals and within families. But as long as the focus is on work-family policies that are organized at the employer level, especially in departments reserved for this

purpose such as human resources, they are unlikely to be offered to workers at all levels and will remain marginalized with limited impact on the prevailing gendered model of work and separation of work and family spheres (Lewis and Haas 2005).

Thornthwaite (2004) compares data from a number of studies[19] on working time preferences in order to explore the relative strength of different preferences, the factors underpinning differences among employees, areas of strongest unmet demand, and the implications that these findings suggest for HR policy.

For working parents, 'balancing' work and family involves establishing some degree of workable and acceptable combination of the two. Ultimately, "an individual's experience of balance rests upon a perception of satisfactorily resolving the multiple and often incompatible demands of work and family roles. Research suggests that an essential element of balance is some autonomy in how working parents manage their roles within these constraints. Each strategy requires that working parents have some autonomy to adapt their working time arrangements in response to life-cycle and parenting phase" (Thornthwaite 2004, 176).

The particular working time needs and preferences of working parents vary within and between countries. Although this prevents any simplistic transfer of findings, the differences throw into sharper relief those consistencies to which surveys point. Also critical is the household model, based on three factors: the number of resident parents, and income earners, and the proportion working full-time and parttime. Employees' preferences also vary according to gender, occupation, career orientation, and country. In particular, there is a strong, unmet demand among working parents for shorter working

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[19] This article focuses on the findings of some of the largest studies from Australia, Western Europe, the USA and Canada on employees' preferences for working time arrangements that facilitate work-family balance.

hours, part-time work and flexible working time: preferences vary according to life-cycle stage and parenting phase, defined by the age of the youngest child in a household and other factors. One of the challenges for human resources management, therefore, is "to make family-friendly working time arrangements a real option for all employees within an organization and to experiment with, and market effectively the benefits of family-friendly policies in organisations" (Thornthwaite 2004, 180-181).

The conclusion is an understanding of the individual and organizational variables, workplace policies, and mechanisms of support that can ease work-family conflict and can guide to the formulation of public policies and organizational practices aimed at reducing these negative consequences. The manner in which much research on the work-family interface has been carried out, however, has often made it difficult to attain this goal. In most of the previous work-family research that has been conducted globally, the focus has been either on the micro- or the macro-level, but not both.

So, family-friendly issues need to be mainstreamed and that the concerns of families should be added to those of the state, trade unions and employers on the agenda for negotiating work-life balance. It is also argued that the focus and scope of industrial relations need to be rethought to take account of the gendered nature of employment relationships (Hantrais and Ackers 2005). It is all too easy to tag equal opportunities onto the existing list of industrial relations 'issues' (Wajcman 2000). The focus and scope of industrial relations need to be rethought if we are to grasp the gendered nature of European employment relationships. The development of social policy at European level. As Ackers (2002a) has argued, all this calls for a reframing of the institutional context of working lives.

Organizational analysis is important, but if industrial relations takes the worker-employer "employment relationship as its core"

(Hantrais and Ackers 2005, 211), study indicates that it will not be enough to suggest a semi-permeable membrane (Edwards 2003) between work and family life. According to this approach, only at certain moments and with certain policies (for example, on equal opportunities and family friendliness) will the membrane open to family choices and policies. On the contrary, we would suggest that working arrangements are endemic to the choices that families make and vice versa. For instance, if joint regulation is to be a conduit for equal opportunities, family-friendly issues need to be a mainstream part of the bargaining agenda (Ackers 2002b, 2003). Even at European and national levels, policies need to be shaped by an understanding of women's (and men's) family needs, not just by narrow and short-term business needs. Dickens's (1999) tripod must perforce become a 'quadripod', adding the active individuals that make up a family to the agencies of the state, trade unions, and employers and also recognizing families as social actors.

5. Reconciliation policies: what, why and how

5.1. Reconciliation policies and gender mainstreaming

Reconciliation is a word that was first used in the early 1990's in European Community documents to identify the principle underlying Community's directives, briefings, recommendations and suggestions addressed to Members States in order to encourage them to support family-friendly policies. Work-family reconciliation policies include all those arrangements intentionally or unintentionally promoting a balance between paid work and care responsibilities and all the strategies aimed at balancing conflicting time demands in

order to reduce time conflicts in everyday life (Scisci and Vinci 2002, 2005; Donati 2005a, Rossi 2006; McManus *et al.* 2005; OECD 2001; Parcel 2006). In the ten-year period from 1990 and 2000, European Community policies were mainly focused on the promotion of work-family balance. The provision of care services for children and other people who are not self-sufficient is one of the hardest challenges facing future European society.

Even if work-family reconciliation issues have been on the national and especially on the European political agenda – although they are treated with varying degrees of importance in different countries – in the last few years, the compelling questions arising from the relationship between these two aspects of adult identity led to increased work-family conflict and to a greater demand for actions and policies to meet work-family needs, in line with the indications of the European Masterplan.

In March 2000, the Council of Europe held in Lisbon set out some daring and ambitious goals, whereby the European Union set out to become, within ten years, the most dynamic, competitive, and sustainable knowledge-based economy of the world, in a framework of full employment[20] and stronger social and economic cohesion (the so-called Lisbon strategy). The Council also identified new objectives for women in employment, basically aimed at increasing female employment rates.

One of the main new elements introduced in the Lisbon document concerned infact employment targets, and namely female employment rates. Until then, European governments had aimed at reducing unemployment rates and thus decrease the number of unemployed people, not of inactive people, who are on the margins of the labour market. Since the Lisbon Council,

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[20] The objective was to make Europe the "most competitive continent in the world", increasing productivity and employing twenty million more people within ten years.

national governments have set the target of raising the working-age population in employment in the European to US levels (70%), the female employment rate to 60% and the older workers employment rate (concerning people aged between 55 and 64) to 50%: all this by the year 2010. Consequently, there was a need for new initiatives to increase employment in order to meet the challenge of an ageing society, including providing adequate pensions for women and men. Particular attention must be paid to mobilising the full potential of female employment and to boosting labour market participation of older women and immigrant women who have the lowest employment rates (European Communities Commission 2005b, 2005c).

In particular, the Lisbon Council invited the Commission and Member States to promote all aspects concerning equal opportunities in the field of employment policies, including the reduction of occupational segregation and the possibility to balance work and family life. Therefore, *new* benchmarking standards were set to enhance childcare services and recommendations were made for a full women's integration in the so-called *new* economy. Further, since information and communication technologies (ICT) have an increasing influence in all economic fields, it becomes *essential to foster and mainstream ways of giving women equal access to the knowledge-based economy as well as helping them to participate in it*.

The common objective was not only to promote a balance between work and family responsibilities – which is needed to achieve the Lisbon targets – but also to solve some of the increasing problems affecting several countries, such as lower and later fertility and the ensuing ageing of the population. These problems, set within a European framework of public spending cuts, make it difficult to maintain and sustain the type of welfare state that has been maintained so far.

The green paper called "Equality and non-discrimination in an

enlarged European Union" of May 2004, states that "changes to attitudes and behaviour require sustained effort and action to back up legislation with concrete measures". Each Member State as well as the European are starting to mainstream the gender dimension, which involves incorporating equality between men and women in all policies and at all stages of the policy-making process by means of specific measures. This is stated in the European Commission Report on parity between men and women (2004), which reads: "inequality between women and men is a multidimensional phenomenon that has to be tackled by a comprehensive mix of policy measures. The challenge is to ensure policies that support equal opportunities for women and men in education, employment and career development, entrepreneurship, equal pay for equal work or work of equal value, better sharing of family responsibilities, balanced participation of women and men in decision-making and the elimination of gender-based violence".

These efforts call, above all, for a consideration of the value, the cultural construction and the ethical dimension of work-life balance and of the appropriate social policies that could promote and support it. The key role and the interconnection between fertility and employment among women, as well as the influence of the gender system and, on the whole, of the welfare system are corroborated by the results of the latest European Labour Force Survey (Eurostat 2005).

On 14 February 2005, the European Commission issued a report on equality between men and women. This report shows the main developments in the relative situation of women and men in education, employment and social life (European Commission 2005b).

But it emphasises that reconciling work and family life remains a problem (and a lonely/solitary task) for many women. For instance women with children have lower employment rates than those

without; the majority of domestic work is still carried out by women; and the lack of affordable childcare remains an obstacle to equality. Women's lower participation in the labour market means that their pension entitlements are significantly lower than those of men. Gaps between older men and women are more acute, with elderly women more at risk of poverty than men.

In order to address the new problems arising from work-family demands, European reconciliation policies are basically hinged on three pillars: "care, cash and time" (Millar 2006, 189). These measure are concerned with: firstly (care), ensuring care for children and young generations through the increased provision of services and their increased suitability to different contexts; secondly (cash), financial support to families in need through cash benefits or tax breaks; thirdly (time), a better temporal organisation of family life, through the extension of parental or sick leave, and compulsory paternal leave.

Work-family reconciliation has been widely understood as the attempt to achieve a work-family balance. Its declared aim is to create a sort of balance between these two spheres of life so as to resolve the conflict underlying the problems related to the temporal organisation of daily life. Consequently, reconciliation measures are mainly designed for some critical times – such as the birth of a child or times of sickness – and to a much lesser extent for the routine management of daily life.

Issues concerning work-family balance have been recognised as being key to the achievement of equal opportunities. These matters need to be addressed by means of appropriate social policies in all European Member States. Work-family reconciliation is a sensitive issue arising from the current demographic trends of populations and the care needs they originate; it has implications for a range of different policy fields like employment, labour organisation, social

protection, and family policies and it mainly concerns women, "who still have to shoulder most of burden of care work" (Grecchi 2001, 91). The European Union has laid out some principles to inform the design of more effective family-friendly policies in all Member States. On several occasions, the European gave some guidelines to balance the multiple roles of working mothers and to assist women to combine work and family life. In short, the European recommends Member States:

- a labour policy protecting women who decide to have children by means of incentives and by guaranteeing their reinstatement in the labour market. Consequently, part-time and fixed-term employment should be promoted;
- a rescheduling of opening hours for urban public services (shops, offices, and schools) in order to grant greatest flexibility and thus make it easier for parents with work and family time constraints;
- a public service policy able to establish a valid network of welfare and support services around families;
- increased men's participation in children's care and upbringing;
- a welfare policy targeting non-working mothers, who are strongly penalised in welfare systems where housewives are not recognised any value for their domestic work.

In fact, European legislation in this field is still very poor: "it is done by means of recommendations and directives that have to be ratified and implemented by each Member State. So far, directives in this domain have mainly been concerned with parental leave, night work for women and the promotion of equal opportunities" (Donati 2005b, 11).

Work-family policy comes in a wide variety of forms (see Kamerman and Kahn 1981; Gornick *et al.* 1997; Castles 2003), each

with somewhat different implications for encouraging higher rates of fertility among working women. At one end of the spectrum are measures capturing aspects of traditional population policy making it possible for women to leave the labour force on a more or less permanent basis. Prominent among these are child benefits and tax allowances compensating for a woman's loss of income when she stays at home to look after children. At the other end of the spectrum is the provision of child-care facilities, with viable arrangements for children aged 0-3 crucial to early labour force re-entry.

The idea is that if individuals have the means to purchase services that reduce the additional workload consequent on maternity, it will be easier to combine employment and fertility. The same applies where child-care services are cheaply available or are freely provided by the state. Women are also likely to feel more secure in temporarily absenting themselves from the labour force to have children if their right to re-entry is written into law and if their absence from work is compensated by generous parental leave arrangements.

These reconciliation measures, placed within a diversified context of social – or else gender or family – policies, can thus be identified, according to the different approaches used, as: gender or equal opportunities policies; policies aimed at only one of the subjects concerned (children, women, lone women, and the elderly) and not at the family as a whole; or, finally, workfare policies, where a work-focused problem-solving approach prevails.

Undoubtedly, each of these approaches have some strengths; however, they also contain some significant weaknesses. As a result, it would be necessary to adopt an approach to work-family reconciliation – and to the development of social and family-friendly policies – so that the wide variety of factors and stakeholders involved would be taken into account and, at the same time, the different aspects of this phenomenon (resources, objectives, local

culture, and norms) would be interconnected by regarding work-family balance as a social relationship.

5.2. Looking at different European models of reconciliation policies: perspectives and debates

Work-family measures in different countries are the outcome of different social policies that take into account aspects related to work, gender roles, family models and different welfare strategies mentioned above. National context is relevant to work-family issues because employees' work-family balance can be supported by national policies and programs (Haas, Hwang and Russell 2000).

This said, there are still some differences in the implementation and the concrete outcome of different family-friendly perspectives and in the emerging guidelines for the future. In this respect, it should be noted that, in different social and geographical contexts, concepts of work-family reconciliation have different contents and objectives, which reflect the different features of local welfare systems and their different ways of implementing equal opportunities. National gender equality reflects a society's support for women's development and achievements, and recognition of the importance of including women in all aspects of life (UNDP 2002).

Three aspects are particularly relevant. The first is the necessity of considering how research on work-family relationships can be undertaken in different countries in ways that both capture and respect the influence of different values and accepted roles within each culture. The second is the importance of accounting for how differences in social policies and programmes are likely to affect both the extent of work-family conflict individuals (especially women) experience, and the significance of workplace supports and negotiations to reduce work-family conflict. The third is the value

of testing and extending theories and hypothesized relationships in ways that are both rigorous and culturally sensitive.

Prior cross-cultural research has found that countries differ, for example, in beliefs about appropriate roles and behaviour for men and women; in some countries, men and women occupy highly differentiated roles based on biological sex, such as male breadwinners and female caregivers/ homemakers, whereas in other countries men and women occupy more similar or overlapping social roles (Emrich *et al.* 2004; Hofstede 1980). National gender equality is related to work and family issues because traditional expectations that women will be responsible for their children can be a significant barrier to women's employment opportunities (Haas 2003). Therefore, gender equality cannot be achieved without societal recognition of the need to provide resources and support to help employees manage both work and family responsibilities. Also, in gender egalitarian societies women are more likely to be included in decision-making roles where they can influence policies to reflect the importance of work-family issues (Lyness and Brumit Kropf 2005, 35-36).

Lyness and Brumit Kropf (2005) developed a model suggesting that the degree of national gender equality is an important contextual variable that is positively related to organizational work-family supports (i.e. supportive work-family culture and flexible work arrangements), which are in turn related to individuals' balance of their work and family responsibilities. Although there are many aspects of national context to consider, it is clear that the degree of gender equality is particularly relevant to work and family issues. By national gender equality, we wean the extent to which national cultures support women's development and achievements, and recognize the importance of including women in all aspects of life (UNDP 002). National gender equality may be related to work and

family issues because "it seems unlikely that gender equality in employment opportunities will be achieved without recognition and support for employees' needs to balance work with critical family responsibilities" (Lyness and Brumit Kropf 2005, 34).

Different welfare systems in Europe[21] are characterised by different degrees of responsibility on the part of the social actors involved, namely the family and, on the other hand, the institutions.

Firstly, there are Scandinavian countries (Denmark, Sweden, Norway, and Finland), where work-family reconciliation is addressed using a social-democratic approach. The State tends to resort to a heavy regulation of the market and sometimes even replace it; in the same way, it tends to replace the family as the provider of care services. Work-family balance is thus viewed as guaranteeing the highest female employment and, at the same time, ensuring universal access to equal services for all, both men and women. The State tends to protect women especially as workers, much less so as wives and mothers. This is because, on the one hand, it calls upon men to undertake family responsibilities and, on the other hand, because it encourages the creation of all kinds of family-support services outside the family. Emancipated individuals and communal services: this blend is deemed to solve the problems connected to work-family reconciliation.

Then, there are central European countries (France, Germany, Austria, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Luxembourg), which adopt a conservative-corporatist approach to work-family reconciliation. The family is the best solution to provide small children with the care they need, so much so that it is acceptable for a parent to leave his/her professional occupation even for extended periods of time to

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[21] For an overview on these aspects see also: Castles and Mitchell 1993; Millar and Warmann 1996; Hantrais and Letablier 1996; Abrahamson, Boje and Greve 2005; Donati 2003a, 2005a.

look after the family. Family responsibilities are supported by means of measures championed by union organisations defending the rights of the parents' occupational group. This model differs from the previous one in that the family here is considered as an institution mediating between the individual and society, which is also why some tasks are not recognised and allocated to it.

The third model groups the traditionally liberal islands (Great Britain and Ireland), where work-family reconciliation is dealt with by means of a conservative-liberal approach: it is conservative in that, as it happens in Continental Europe, it is deemed that the family is important to provide children with care. On the other hand, it is liberal because the State, after ensuring a minimum support, delegates the provision of support measures to families and civil society. The State does not aim to replace the family or even support it above the bare minimum; on the contrary, it leaves it all to families. Work-family reconciliation is considered as a political action to sustain women's labour market participation and ensure them basic support for a decent lifestyle. The rest is left to the independent action of civil society.

The fourth model includes Mediterranean countries (Portugal, Spain, Italy, and Greece), which take a conservative corporatist-family-oriented approach to work-family reconciliation (Naldini 2003). They are conservative in that their dominant culture invests the family with a greater role as a social institution that in other countries. They are corporatist in that they design welfare measures according to the occupational status of family members. Finally, they are family-oriented in that they entrust the family with more responsibilities that in other countries. Work-family reconciliation is considered as a political action that gives quite limited and unstable support to encourage women's labour market participation; this results in the poor development of external services and in little

benefits for women, who have to undertake multiple roles inside and outside the family.

In short, policies can be placed on a continuum embracing the following options: in some countries (Italy, Spain, and Portugal), negotiation is left to the private spheres of the couple or local communities, so that each family can decide on the best way to use the existing policies and consider the possibilities available to them; in other countries, the market – the supply and the demand of services – regulates choices (the UK and Ireland) or anyway, like in the mixed-model approach (the Netherlands, France and Germany), the involvement of the public sphere is minimal; finally, the interventionist model (Sweden, Norway) assigns most of the mediation and problem solving responsibilities with regard to work-family issues to the State which, in order to achieve the set goals, imposes decisions and modes of managing the work-family relationship.

Despite these differences, all the models seem to be enthused with individualistic principles, which focus on individuals and their condition in terms of work and care responsibilities within the family. However, when designing social policy provisions, they ignore relationships and family networks. It follows that, ultimately, the individual is entrusted with the task of mediating between the two spheres or, alternatively, he/she has to choose which sphere to favour, with the risk of producing a schizophrenic situation as well as an aggravation of relations in both fields with no realistic consideration of gender dimension.

These policies are still inspired by a Lib-Lab approach[22], which often fails to consider – or deliberately ignores – the relationships existing between the subjects involved, thus creating serious

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22 *Lib*eristic versus *lab*uristic/socialistic approach (see Donati 2003).

problems for the actors in charge of the management of everyday life. Family-friendly policies appear to be largely adjustment policies, which attempt often shaky combinations of the spheres of work and family without introducing radical changes that could actually do away with conflict.

Over the last ten years, in order to avoid the risks associated with this individualistic perspective, there have been several calls for a redesign of the welfare state and, more precisely, "for a shift from the welfare state to a welfare society" (Donati 1999, 63). This does not mean devolving tasks from central to local authorities nor does it simply involve mere denationalisation, like in the privatisation of services.

The objective is to enable each individual to meet his/her expectations regarding both work and family by means of work-family reconciliation policies.

The first point to consider is the virtual equivalence between "family-friendly" and "adjustment" policies: these policies strive to achieve an often unstable combination between the two spheres of family and work; when faced with the complexity of the relationships between these two spheres of life, they only tend to consider the gender (and often only the female) dimension rather than the relationships existing between the subjects concerned.

Secondly, as it ensues from the studies illustrated above, it is important to note that it is difficult to actually realise a real and effective negotiation between work and family (involving individuals and companies, and possibly actors of the civil society operating in between): this mediation is mostly regulated by a third party – usually the State – that, on each single occasion, structures work-family actions according to the dominant welfare and family models of the country concerned; these measures rarely result directly from the relationship between work and family. The way in which

this third party handles mediation is therefore decisive for the very outcome of reconciliation measures: this system might also be negative because, being it mandatory, it implies the impossibility to choose alternative solutions[23]. This shift implies first of all an overall reorganisation of society, which should be built upon four pillars (State, market, associations, families) that should become the four cornerstones of society and key factors underlying social policies, no longer in conflict with each other but components of a complex relational system.

Furthermore, moving from the welfare state to a welfare society implies, together with a review of relationships between the civil society and the political and administrative system, a review of the very idea of citizenship: "it means pursuing a deep citizenship" (Donati 1999, 64), whereby each individual of the community wins greater freedom but, on the other hand, takes on greater commitments and burdens. This increase in collective responsibilities towards the problems to be addressed by social policies should nonetheless be met by greater collective participation in the production of citizenship as a relational good. This would yield a *social citizenship* based on a *covenant* made by each citizen (whether individuals or collective bodies) with the political community, enhancing the connection between their freedoms and their responsibilities for the attainment of the common good.

The welfare models known so far and the latest attempts to forge a compromise between liberalism and socialism (*Lib-Lab)* through the development of some new mixed models (*neo-Lib-Lab*), however, show some limitations, in that they are still characterised

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[23]   On example of this is the debate emerging in several Scandinavian countries with regard to the possibility to also have a free choice concerning children's education inside the home and the choice made by some mothers to devote themselves to the care of their children instead of being in paid employment (Abrahamson, Boje and Greve 2005).

by an ambiguous relationship between political and administrative systems and civil society. In this way, they lead to a reciprocal impoverishment by means of – among other things – forms of social control that, as noticed above, promote individualism instead of social solidarity. Realising the limitations and the structural flaws of the *Lib-Lab* model could lead to the "… alternative notion of a society characterised by *competitive solidarity* or… *a society based on solidarity subsidiarity*" (Donati 1999, 66).

A comparative analysis should, by means of comprehensive interpretive schemes that take into account the differences between the various countries involved, inspire reflection on the family and its specific role in society. This would lead to the next level of theoretical and empirical reflection in the fields of work-family reconciliation research and policies and, at the same time, pay due attention to the gender dimension. In other words, it would create a virtuous circle between knowledge of family forms and relationships, gender dimensions and their interrelationships, which would consequently enable to identify effective family-friendly policies.

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Family, labour market and female employment in European countries: a compared perspective

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1. Introduction

Changes in the work and family situation of women have taken place in a very rapid manner in the whole of Europe from the sixties. In fact, the rates of women' activity and occupation have drastically increased in the whole of Europe, mainly in the last two decades, except in Southern European countries, where the increments have been more moderate. On the other hand, the families where both parents work and maintain the home have also become somehow important; this shows that the work contribution of married women with children has increased (Eurostat 2005; OCDE 2004). The socio-economic and regulatory context of the welfare states in which this change has taken place has been marked by the transformation in the public and market policies, in the gender relationships, in the family structures and relationships in what has been called the process of individualization (Beck 2003).

The labour market structure has gone from being reserved to the male breadwinner to become an open space for women, which undoubtedly has been linked to the change in the family structure, in the family policies and in the own market structure. The differences become obvious when we compare the trajectory of the welfare states, the family changes and so the division of homework in Northern

and Southern Europe. There are also substantial differences in the rates of women activity and occupation as well as in the conditions to access the labour market. That shows obvious differences in the institutional frame of the welfare states concerning family and employment policies, which have conditioned the employment and family strategies adopted by women in the different welfare states. Spain and Italy are two clear examples of how the rigidity of the labour market and the institutional frame of the welfare state have limited the incorporation of women with family burdens to the labour market.

The aim of this study is to identify the key issues concerning the female employment and the reconciliation of work and family life, with particular emphasis on examining the barriers to women's bigger involvement in labour market in the Southern countries. A major purpose of this study is to develop new evidences to explain the low female employment in the Southern countries, which could be utilised in other national and cross-national studies. Certain assets such as development of family policies, level of education, the female employment, the number of children, family structures, intergenerational solidarity and part-time job are associated with the male breadwinner model.

2. WELFARE REGIME AND WOMEN REGIME EMPLOYMENT IN A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

The conceptualization of the welfare regimes has as a key reference the work of Esping Andersen (2000). In this work, Esping Andersen refers to the "decomodification" process as the result of the transformations in the social structure, in the institutional context and in the work relationships, giving way for the so called defamiliarization and individualization process of the social

relationships that have had a different intensity in the redistribution of the resources and in the development of the citizenship in the different welfare regimes defined by the author. Taking this work as a theoretical start point many theories have been developed in order to explain how this process of "decomodification" has occurred through the incorporation of women to the labour market and how this process has influenced on the gender roles and solidarity within the family. This may be one of the more inconsistent points on the theory about the welfare regimes of Esping Andersen, as it includes the transformations in gender and family relationships in the frame of interpretation of the male breadwinner as the main category of worker on which the social rights of citizenship lie. Esping Andersen's typology was criticized by feminist writers for its rather exclusive focus on the relationship between market and the state, with the family and the gendered division of work addressed only partially (Daly, 1994): Lacking, in particular, is a systematic treatment of the division of women's work role in the family and how these affect women's employment (Daly 1994, 2000; Sainsbury 1999; O'Connor 1996). In this recent writings, Esping Andersen (1999) considers the state/family relationships more systematically by introducing the concepts of familialization and defamilialization to make differences between countries in which traditional family dependencies (family solidarity) prevail and those in which the role of the family is minimized. Notwithstanding the welfare typology, considerable variation in women's employment exists within of this typology. His main conclusion, however, is that this distinction largely corresponds to the threefold regimes[1].

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[1] According to Esping Andersen's (1999) analysis, social democratic countries have achieved a high level of defamilialization, while conservative countries preserved the role of the male breadwinner and the dependency of women on the family rather than on the state. In this analytical context, the Mediterranean countries would belong to the conservative regime.

This typology has been revised and extended by many researchers, amongst who Goodin, (2000) and Muffels (2002a) are included, they propose the introduction of the "Southern model of the labour market", characterized for, amongst other aspects, the reduced labour participation of women. Facing the typology of welfare regimes presented by Esping Andersen where the male breadwinner role is the priority as a guarantee of the stability of earnings and the status of employment, other authors such as Ferrera (1996) Bonoli (1997), Leibfried (1992) Saraceno (2003), Flaquer (2002), Moreno (2004), Naldini (2002), Trifiletti (1999) elaborate on the existence of a fourth Mediterranean welfare regime whose main feature is a restrictive family and gender policy as well as familism. In this welfare regime, family and women play a crucial role in the building up of the welfare regime through what has been called the "familism" typical in these welfare states as a guarantee of intergenerational guarantee and therefore social protection (Micheli 2000).

In the studies compared on the welfare regimes, a generalized tendency to base interpretations in a wrong premise has been observed: "the man is the worker and employment is a universal experience as the main head of the family". That is why researchers of feminist convictions have questioned this patriarchal conception, which ignores the unequal relationships between genders and the difficulties women face in order to get to the labour market (O'Connor 1993, Orloff 2001; Lewis 1992). Lewis incorporates the concept of the "male breadwinner" and O'Connor the concept of "personal autonomy" as a new gender dimension. This implies including the family dependency of women as a factor to bear in mind in the compared studies on the welfare state. The introduction of these new perspectives has led to explore an ample analytic frame on the effect that social and employment policies have had in the different

welfare regimes in order to favour the independence of women through rewarded work.

In this frame of interpretation, which has as its central crux the gender relationship, a varied literature on the effects of the welfare and employment regime in women work has become general. The works of Lewis and Ostner 1994, Meehan 1993; Walby 1999, 2001; Meyers, Gornick and Roos 1997) are worth pointing out amongst them, they have worked on the theoretical frame of the equality of opportunities between men and women under the prism of the impact that the social and employment policies have had in women's employment in Europe and therefore in the transformation of the male breadwinner role in the different welfare regimes. Precisely Von Wahl (2005, 6), starting from the typology of the welfare state presented by Esping Andersen (1999) and of "gender welfare state" of Sainsbury (1999, 250) refers to the concept of "equal employment regime"[2] to make a difference between three types of equal employment regime; liberal, conservative and social democratic. The differences between the different employment regimes is determined by the importance that gender and employment policies have had in order to favour women's integration in the labour market and therefore the transformation of the male breadwinner role, the reference prototype in the gender policies developed by the conservative regimes. However, these theoretical roles do not contemplate the idiosyncrasy of the welfare regimes in Southern Europe and therefore the effect that the gender, social and employment policies have had in the building up of a particular welfare and employment regime characterized by the limited incorporation of women to the labour market, the intense degree of familiarization and family dependence. These employment

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[2] Defines the "equal employment regime" as the result of the interdependent actions produced by the state, the market and the family concerning gender equality towards employment and opportunities.

and family guidelines represent the complete opposite to the social democratic regime, where the welfare states have achieved high degrees of women independence as a consequence of the massive integration in the labour market in what has been called the process of "defamiliarization". That is why it is so relevant for the compared studies on the welfare state to study in depth the explanation and interpretation of the acute differences observed in the work and family strategies adopted by citizens in the social democratic welfare regimes and in Southern Europe.

3. A framework to analysing women's labour market behaviour in southern European countries

The debate on the welfare regimes has become an attractive subject of study amongst academics and researchers. These compared studies have shown that there is a clear interdependence between the family and work strategies adopted by citizens and the institutional strategies developed by states and markets. In fact these studies have proven that the variability observed in the labour market and more precisely the different integration of women in the labour market is not explained only according to the economic and demographic situation but also according to the cross-national differences in the institutional context concerning family and employment policies (Muffels, Wilthagen, Van de Heuvel 2002).

The results of the empirical analysis done by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD 2004, 54) shows that policies which stimulate female participation include more neutral tax treatment of second earner (relative to single individuals), tax incentives to share market work between spouses, childcare subsidies, and parental leave. Contrary to childcare subsidies, child benefits exert a negative impact on female participation, due to an

income effect. Childcare subsidies and parental and paid parental leave tend to stimulate full time rather than part-time participation. Related to this, this study shows that the availability of part-time work opportunities also raises female participation, al least in countries with a strong female preference for part-time work. Other factors such as female education, well-functioning labour markets (which transfers into low unemployment) and cultural attitudes (such as familism) remain major determinants of female participation and male breadwinner model. However, this study summarizes that the policy simulations illustrate that some of the policy instruments could exert a potentially significant impact of female employment.

Authors such as Pettit and Kook (2002) as well as Huber and Stephens (2000) have tried to analyse the structural and individual factors, which explain the differences between the rates of women activity and occupation. In order to do that they have used the category of welfare regimes and have reached the conclusion that the typology of Esping Andersen turns out to be insufficient to explain the differences in women's employment due to the inter-regional differences in the women's activity and occupation rates.

According to Pettit and Hook (2002), who analyze social survey data from 18 countries using multi-level modelling methods, structural conditions including unemployment and service sector growth are important predictors of the overall level of women's employment vary significantly across countries, and results suggest differences in policy context are associated with women's employment. In particular, supported childcare is associated with an increase in the probability of employment among married and women with children. Likewise, studies such as those of Gornick (1997) and Huber and Stephens (2000) have shown that the state expenditure in family services is associated with high levels of women's employment. In fact, many researchers specialized in compared analysis have

found that the institutional variations can explain the international differences found in the ratios and rates of women's employment (O'Connor 1999; Gornick 1999 Blossfeld and Hakim 1997; O'Connor, Orloff and Shaver 1999).

More recently, interest in female participation has been grounded in preoccupations about population ageing. A high female participation rate is desirable on several grounds. High labour participation increases the numbers working and supporting the welfare state and reduces the numbers of dependent on it, thus making it possible to support more generous family and gender policies. Increasing women's labour force participation is expected to generate demands for a greater public role in care-giving and thus pressures for an expansion of welfare state services. In this context the government tend to result in policies that facilitate the combination of paid work and family care obligations, such as the provision of public day care and elderly care and parental leave insurance. Expansion of welfare state services in turn has a feedback effect it enables more women to enter the labour force and creates demand for labour to supply these services, a demand that is usually met by women. The main contrast between Southern welfare states and social democratic welfare states is that these last countries have instituted national family services while the Mediterranean countries have instituted the private familism.

In recent years, a growing number of studies have focused on comparing women's employment situation across industrialized countries (e.g. Gornick, Meyers and Ross 1999; Daly 2000; Rubery 1999; Stier, Lewin-Epstein ad Michael 2001). These studies document the variation in market behaviour and market consequences in relation to gender issues and emphasize the importance of the institutional context within which women operate, for understanding labour market outcomes at the individual, as well as the family

life, level. Our study aims to probe the variations across countries in women's employment pattern an their relationships with the regime's employment. We introduce an explanatory framework that links the country differences to structural arrangements associated with distinct welfare regime and employment regime. Comparison of countries, which represent different welfare regimes and labour market arrangements, permit us to explore variations in patterns of female employment between North and South European countries. In particular, we focus on the effect of institutional settings (care services, family policies, public employment, part-time employment), of the role of the family (breadwinner model, dual earner model) and individual settings (education, earnings, age) on women's employment in the different welfare regime.

We used a reduced form model of labour supply in which differences in women's employment is explained by the characteristics of women (age, education, marital status, number of the children, wage), by the institutional context (family policies), by the labour market (part time, full time, public sector, sector services) and family situation (male bread winner model, dual earner model). Some studies have shown that the effect of education is comparable in all countries: there is a difference in participation rates between high and low educated women, with the low-educated women working significantly less than the high-educated women. This difference is very large in Spain and Italy. Otherwise, the number of children proved to be an important factor in the decision to participate in the labour market, especially in the Southern European countries. In these countries when the number of children increases, participation rates of women are going down considerably (Vlasblom and Schippers 2004).

Apart from individual characteristics, the institutional context can also provide strong incentives or restrictions on individual behaviour. The institutions of most importance when it comes to female labour

participation are the tax system, the childcare facilities and the part-time labour facilities. In the literature it has shown that the level of childcare, combination of work and family, or leave arrangements will have effects on labour supply. It is generally thought that more of theses facilities will increase female labour supply. The welfare regime that are childcare facilities based (like the Swedish one) lead to higher female participation rates than familism based welfare with low family policies such as the southern Welfare State (Dulk 2000).

The part-time work opportunities is a relevant factor to explain women's employment because part-time working is often seen as a means to facilitate the integration of women in the labour market, by allowing them to combine market work with family responsibilities.

Preferences for part-time work, however, differ across countries. According to the 2000 European Labour Force Survey, which examine the preferences of couples with small children, found that part-time participation is most frequently preferred working arrangement for women in Austria, Germany, Netherlands, United Kingdom and Ireland. In these countries, an increase in part-time work opportunities would most likely raise female participation (OECD 2004, 68). Preferences for part-time work are lower in some Nordic countries (Finland, Sweden), southern European countries (Greece, Italy, Spain an Portugal) and in some western European countries (Belgium and France).

The supply of part-time labour by women is, to a large extent, driven by gender roles and women's education. Thus, a part-time job is usually preferred over full-time one by married women, mothers of young children, and wealthy women (high husband's income), but tends to be less preferred by more educated women. For example Falzone (2000) finds that the number and younger ages of children, and the husband's income, increase the probability that a married woman works part-time rather than full time. On the other hand,

Tijdens (2002) uses proxies for the gender roles model and each of the three demand models (optimal staffing, secondary labour market, and responsive firm) to test their respective predictive power for the probability that a woman works part-time in the European Union. The gender roles model and the responsive firm model rank first and second, respectively. According to Tijdens (2002), the gender-roles model, which assumes that women work-part time because they are secondary earners or have children at home, ranks first as a predictor of the likelihood that a woman will work-part time using data from the Second European Survery on Working Conditions. These findings indicate the *gender roles regime*[3] is the best predictor of part-time employment in the European Union. The effect of presence of children is large in one southern European country – Spain – and in four western European countries: United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Belgium, and western Germany. However in Denmark and Finland, the presence of children does not affect the likelihood of women working-part time. Within this regime, being a secondary earner is shown to have a larger effect and to be significant in more countries than being responsible for domestic chores of having children at home. On other hand, according to Buddelmeyer, Mourre and Ward (2005, 21), the comparison of the results of the multinomial logit model for women an men across three different specifications reveals that, compared to those working full-time, part-time male and female workers, household composition (number and age of children), country specific arrangements and recent work experience are the most important determinants of female part-time work in Europe.

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3   Within the "gender roles regime" it is assumed that the presence of children in the household , the time spent on household duties, the presence of a breadwinner, education, and age will have an impact on working hours (Tijdens 2002, 81)

4. The study: hypothesis, data and methods

In this paper we intend to explore the relationship between analytical employment regime and welfare regime in the context of low female employment and persistence of male breadwinner model in the Southern countries. We start from an amended version of Esping Andersen's typology of welfare regimes by including a Southern regime thereby focussing on three institutional an family related "performance dimension", namely restrictive family policy, labour market flexibility, familism (traditional family structure) and individual characteristics. This paper assesses the role of various factors in determining the pattern of female participation rate in the Southern European countries in compared perspective.

The association between "employment regime" and the performance indicators with respect to the family policy, labour market and family nexus is summarised in figure 1. We contend that the association between the classification of employment regimes and the performance indicators nexus has a different impact on the female employment. From this perceived association the following hypotheses are formulated.

In the following chart a synthesis, which represents the type of male breadwinner model predominant in welfare regimes as regards gender relations, family policies, the structure of the labour market and family forms. In summary, the figure tries to accentuate the following family and employment aspects:

1. The distribution of family responsibilities between the state, the family and the market.

2. The distribution of familial responsibilities between the state and women (female caretaker and shared tasks).

3. Method of work time of women (employed part-time, full-time or unemployed).

4. The forms of the family (extended and nuclear).

Figure 1 - Employment regime and welfare state

		LIBERAL	CONSERVATIVE	SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC	MEDITERRANEAM (FAMILIAL)
FAMILY POLICIES	Tax system	Familiar	Familiar	Individual	Individual and join
	Family services	Low	Low	High	Low
	Cash family benefits	Low except poor families	High	Universal benefits	Low except poor families
LABOUR MARKET	Part time employment	Medium	Medium-high	Medium.high	Low
	Services employmnent	High	High	Ver y High	Low
	Family services employment	Medium	Medium-high	Very High	Low
TIPOLOGY OF FAMILIES	Family	New forms of family	Nuclear family	New forms of family	Nuclear and Extended family
	Family ties and intergenerational solidarity	Low	Medium	Low	High
	Family and demographic	High crude divorce, medium fertility rate, high % persons living in consensual union and high births outside marriage	Medium crude divorce, medium fertility rate, high % persons living in consensual union and high births outside marriage	High crude divorce, medium fertility rate, high % persons living in consensual union and high births outside marriage	Low crude divorce, low fertility rate, low % persons living in consensual union and low births outside marriage
GENDER	Female employment	High	Medium	High	Low
	Family, work and gender	Male bread winner	Male bread winner	Dual earner couple	Male bread winner and extended family
	Labour market and gender	Male full time and female part time	Male full time and female does not work	Male and female works full time	Male full time and female in informal economy or unemployment

Each theoretical model presented in this figure evidences different models of welfare regimes such as different degrees of development of social and family policies. In the traditional male breadwinner model (conservative model) the responsibility of family functions is assumed privately and is relegated to the traditional nuclear family environment, while in the modified male breadwinner model characteristic of the southern European countries (Mediterranean model), the male breadwinner economically maintains an extended family in which various generations coexist including a collective of young people that delay considerably the emancipation of the family. In the case of the egalitarian model in which there are two economic wage earners (social democrat model) family responsibilities are divided among the family members; the woman works part-time or full-time the same as the male and the state actively participates in the provision of family services, in this way favouring work and family compatibility. In the case of the liberal welfare regime, the distribution of family services is done through the market, and women make family work compatible with paid work through a formula of part-time work.

The degree to which working women with family obligations have entered into the work force reveals the nature of gender relations, the degree of development of the welfare states as well as the introduction of the male breadwinner model. The reduced rates of employment of women with family obligations that characterizes countries like Spain, Greece and Italy evidences an elevated degree of *familism* and a limited institutional network of support to families with children, a labour and family situation that is found to be associated in the majority of situations with the maintenance of the male breadwinner and the mother caretaker model.

In the case of the countries of southern Europe, the limited possibilities that women have to work part-time due to the rigidity of

the labour market, the limited policy of work and family compatibility developed by the welfare states, as well as the family dependence and solidarity that characterize the family relations in these countries, would explain the persistence of the male breadwinner model as a basic referent of the welfare state (Flaquer 2002).

4.1. The data

For this study, we used the data set the European Community Household Panel (ECHP), which covers the period 1994-2001 commissioned by the European. This panel data set offers a comprehensive source of individual level information on employment, income, education, demographics and living condition. The ECHP is a longitudinal micro-dataset, which contains standardized household and the individual level social indicators. This panel offers too a source of typology of household and family situation in EU-15 and is collected using standardised methodology and procedures, yielding comparable information across countries.

The variables of the ECHP reduce our possibilities of research. Consequently, we work with the following independent variables: age, caring responsibilities, marital status, education, income, children, labour market (full-time, part time, public, sector service). Using these data, we conduct a multi-level analysis of women's employment. Our argument suggests that the propensity of women to join the paid labour force is related to demographic, economic and family variables and labour market conditions. We suspect that these effects may vary across regions in ways depend on institutional arrangements. According to empirical analysis of Muehlberger (2000) and Pettit and Hook (2002), about ECHP, political, labour market conditions, individual's and the household's characteristics have direct effect on the level of female employment.

Figure 2 describes the variables used in this study. We divide between four groups of labour market behaviour, which represent the dependent variable: women in unpaid housework, women in employment, women in part-time work and women in paid full-time work.

Figure 2 - Microlevel variable descriptions ECHP-UDB

ECHP DATA DICTIONARY	VARIABLE	DESCRIPTION
PE001	Employed	Dependent variable. Self-reported main activity status. Coded to employed if the women reported any form of employed. Coded to unpaid housework othervise
PE005C	Main job	Dependent variable. Self-reported main time work. Coded to one if the women respondent was part time
PD003	Age	Women between 25-55 years
PD003	Age squared	Age in years squared
PD005	Married	Code to one is the respondent was married
HI100	Total net Household income	Income banded
PT022	Highest levelof education	Code to one is the respondent was in the 3rd level
PT022	Medium education	Code to one is the respondent was in the 2nd stage of 2nd L
PT022	Low education	Code to one is the respondent was less than 2nd of 2nd L
HL001	Children	Children in the household under age 12
HI002	Care responsibilities 1	Code to one if women respondent: children looked after on a regular basis
HI003	Care responsibilities 2	Code to one if women respondent: pay for the children looked after
PI133	Family related allowances	Code to one if women respondent: family allowances
PR006	Daily care activities	Code to one if women respondent: main daily activities without pay looking after children or other persons
PE007	Current ocupation	Code to one if women respondent: employed service sector
PE009	Sector of the business	Code to one if the women respondent: employed public sector
PE005B	Work-Time	Code to on is the women respondent: family reason for working less than 30 hours in main job

As independents variables we include individual-level information on respondent age, age squared, marital status, educational attainment, level, household characteristics (total net household income, the presence of children, caring responsibilities), labour market condition (full time, part time, public and private sector, service sector). Our analysis includes one measure of policy conditions: family related allowances. Public and private provisions of childcare are very important aspects of family policy hypothesized to influence women's involvement in the paid labour force. This variables allow us to analyse the differences women's employment between Northern and Southern European countries and differences between welfare regimes.

Age is a continuous variable, although the ECHP only includes individuals over the age of 15 years. In the analysis of the determinants of women in paid labour, we only included women between 25 and 55 in order to exclude both women in education and retired women.

In the analytical framework we distinguish between three influential variables' group: first the family policies, second the caring responsibilities, third the labour market structure and fourth, the economic and demographic characteristic of the women. The variables of ECHP reduce our possibilities of research, however we work with the independent variables as shown in the figure 1.

The variable "caring responsibilities" is self-constructed an thus no directly collected. Unfortunately, the ECHP does no contain a distinction of children's age since it only differentiates between children under 12 year and children between 12 and 15 years. Although the age of the children is a very important variable, we can not test the influence of children of different ages using the ECHP. Nevertheless, with the purpose of solving this problem we have introduced in the model the variable referred to the number of children

aged below 12 living in the family. On the other side, the ECHP contains questions about unpaid care taking of other individuals of the household (except of dependent children). According to previous analysis realised by Muehlberger (2000) we have created a dummy variable "Daily activities include, without pay, looking after children or others persons".

The variable "family policies" is a self-constructed variable. I include women who receive benefits in concept of family related allowances.

The group of variables named "labour market structure" includes a series of variables related to employment conditions. On the one hand, the variable of work time, which includes women, employed full-time and part-time is included. On the other hand we have the variable referred to current occupation, where women employed in the services sector according to the definition of ECHP are included and lastly we have built the variable "sector of the business ", which includes women working in the public sector. The variable referred to the "reason for working less than the full time in main job", which includes the women who argue that having a family is a reason to work less than 30 hours in the main job has been included.

The last group includes the "demographic and economic variables". The age of women is included here and we have made three different age groups. Women aged between (25-55 years). The variable "marriage or consensual union" is a self-constructed variable. It includes women who either live in a consensual union o are married. The variable education distinguishes between three levels, namely a low (less than second stage of secondary education, a secondary (second stage of secondary level education) and a third level education. Lastly, the total net house income variable has been elaborated with six different groups of earnings made to that effect.

We estimate a multi-level model using two o one sets of regression

equation. First, using logistic regression, we model the probability that a women between 25 and 55 will be employed in the paid labour force o unpaid housework as function of economic demographic, labour market characteristics, family policies and caring responsibilities. In the second scenario, we model the probability that a woman will be full-time or part-time working. We estimate separate equations for each country, which allow the relationship to vary by regions.

5. Empirical Results

The second part of this section shows the results of a cross-section analysis, using the date or year 2001 (the 6th wage). The aim of this empirical part is to analyse the supply-side determinants of women's labour market behaviour across Europe.

In 2003 the total employment rate for women without children under 12 were lowest in Italy (50%), Spain (52%) and Greece (54%). It is especially outstanding for these countries to check out that the more number of children, the bigger decrease of the female employment ratio. Therefore, in these countries, the children clearly condition the probabilities of women for joining the labour market. These data confirm the strong implantation of the male breadwinner model in the families with children.

When analysing employment rate by the number of children there is clear pattern, with employment rates for women decreasing when the number of children increases (see figure 3). The differences between the rates for women with and without children are particularly significant in the Germany, United Kingdom. For the case of Germany it is mainly due to the negative effects of the family policy on the female employment, since it supports to the woman more as in her mother role than as a worker. On the other hand, for the case of the United Kingdom, it is due to the effects of a very

restrictive family policy on the working mothers, who find serious troubles to make compatible work and family.

Figure 3 Employment rates and part-time work of women aged 20-49 by number of children

	None	1 or 2	3 or more	Par-time with two children	Part-time work without children
Belgium	75	70	49	43	29
Denmark	77	81	67	18	
Germany	88	62	38	66	27
Greece	57	54	40	16	9
Spain	62	52	41	20	14
France	77	69	40	32	18
Ireland	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Italy	60	50	35	35	20
Luxembourg	75	62	35	50	21
Netherlands	82	71	59	84	40
Austria	83	73	57	50	20
Portugal	77	77	60	10	10
Finland	78	75	56	10	13
Sweden	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
United Kingdom	83	65	38	69	22

Source: Eurostat, Euorpean Labour Force Survey, 2003

* Not available or extremely unreliable

The part-time work as strategy to make compatible work and family has an unbalanced implantation on the European women. The highest part-time employment rates for mothers with two children were found in the Netherlands (84), followed for by the United Kingdom (69%), Germany (66%), Austria (50%), Belgium (43%) and Luxembourg (26%). The lowest rates were found among the Northern European countries (Finland 10%) and the Southern European countries, in particular in Spain (20%), Greece (16%) and Portugal (10%).

This dates shown that the percentage of women in part-time work increases overall with the number of children. However, these figures conceal differences among the countries (figure 3). Part-time work for women seems to particularly common from the first child in the Netherlands, Germany, the United Kingdom, Austria and Luxembourg, an more common from the second child in France. Nevertheless, in the countries of Southern Europe, part-time work is not a strategy commonly used by the women to make compatible work and family, which can partly explain the reduced rate of female employment for the mothers with children.

Women's level of education is a very important factor in their employment situation in the Mediterranean countries. Women who are better qualified more often have a job than those who are less well qualified. The greater presence of better-qualified women in employment is also the case in the Mediterranean countries when a number of children is considered (figure 4). In the case of Spain it is especially significant the observed differences in the ratios of female employment according to number of children al educational level.

In Spain, 37% the women aged 20-49 who have got with one or two children and are less well qualified have a job, compared with 75% of better-qualified women. It should be pointed out that this difference of 38 percentage points in the case of Spain is only the 22 in the case of Sweden, the 46 points in the case of Italy and the 27 points in the case of France. These data show that the education is an important factor of integration of women in the labour market in those countries that have the most reduced rates of female employment, such as Spain and Italy.

This means that the number of children are not the only factors involved. The level of education and probably the type of employment and the corresponding level of remuneration also play a part in whether women with children leave or stay at work. The reductions

in the employment rates as the number of children increases are always lower among better-qualified women compared to those who are less well qualified.

Figure 4 - Employment rates of women aged 20-49 by level of education and number of children under 12

	NONE				1 OR 2 CHILDREN			
	ISCED 0-2	ISCED 3-4	ISCED 5-6	ALL	ISCED 0-2	ISCED 3-4	ISCED 5-6	ALL
Belgium	58	77	89	75	47	70	87	70
Denmark	n/a	n/a	n/a	77	n/a	n/a	n/a	81
Germany	65	80	89	80	41	65	76	62
Greece	49	53	83	57	51	63	69	64
Spain	48	67	83	62	37	56	75	52
France	68	79	82	77	54	71	81	69
Ireland	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Italy	45	73	88	60	34	61	80	50
Luxembourg	67	76	88	75	62	61	69	62
Netherlands	n/a	n/a	n/a	82	n/a	n/a	n/a	71
Austria	74	84	94	83	58	76	86	73
Portugal	73	84	91	77	72	85	92	77
Finland	69	72	89	78	60	71	82	75
Sweden	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
United Kingdom	56	85	92	83	35	66	80	65

Note: The level of education is defined in concordance with 1997 International Standard Clasification of Education (ISCED 1997), divided into three levels:
ISCED-2 (Below the second cycle of secondary education
ISCED levels 3-4 (Second cycle of secondary education)
ISCED levels 5-6 (Higher education)
Source: Eurostat, European Labour Force Survey, 2003

The amount of time worked and how the work is shared in households are important factors affecting individual decisions on working hours and the gender roles model, since these decisions are generally

taken in the overall context of the household.

The figure 5 shows the maintenance of male bread-winner model in countries such as Spain, Greece and Italy, while the decline of the male bread winner is evident in countries such as Finland, Belgium or France.

Figure 5- Organization of work of couples aged 20-49 where at least one partner has a job (% of couples)

	Man and woman both full time	Only man working	Man full time/ women part-time	Man and woman both part-time or woman full time / man part-time	Only woman working
Belgium	43	25	24	2	5
Denmark	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Germany	37	26	28	2	7
Greece	47	44	5	2	2
Spain	44	43	9	1	3
France	52	25	16	2	5
Ireland	n/a	n/a	n/a	2	n/a
Italy	38	45	13	2	2
Luxembourg	40	35	21	n/a	4
Netherlands	27	21	44	4	4
Austria	47	22	27	1	3
Portugal	67	21	7	1	4
Finland	63	21	7	2	7
Sweden	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
United kingdom	44	21	30	2	3

Source: Eurostat, Euorpean Labour Force Survey, 2003
* Not available or extremely unreliable

The male breadwinner model (only the man has a job) is only common in Italy (45%), Greece (44%) and Spain (43%). Therefore, these data show a clear deficit in the family and labour policies

support to working mothers in the Southern countries. The difficulties that women find to make compatible work and family, as well as the familialist strategy, encouraged from the public and private institutions, are factors that explain the slow democratization of the family and the persistence of the male bread-winner model (Cooke 2002; Moreno 2004; Naldini 2003).

The factors explaining this situation are related to the institutional context, the labour market structure and the factors related to family and the division of homework.

Figures 6 and 7 show the result of a logistic regression analysis[4] of the above described variables for all EU member states and aggregated over all countries. As the logit estimation is nonlinear, we can only compute two scenarios.

The regression analysis in figure 6 illustrates the effects of the independent variables on the likelihood of being in unpaid housework or in paid employment. Concerning the first scenario (figure 6), we observe that for the countries of the European Union, the chances women have to be employed increase according to the academic level and with age.

The two following characteristics related to caring responsibilities and family policies reveal the impact of women's participation on the labour market on the family. Precisely family responsibilities and marital status have a negative effect in the possibility of getting in the labour market.

On the other hand, the option of working in the public sector and in part-time jobs increases the chances of integrating in the labour market. Concerning earnings, as expected, for women who belong to homes situated in the higher levels, the possibility of getting in

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4   A logistic regression analysis is used in cases of binary dependent variables.

the labour market is smaller. The most likely economic scenario for women to get in the labour market would be a Welfare State with generous family policies where the woman has a high education with the chance to work part-time.

Concerning the differences between the social democratic regime and the Mediterranean one, the following table shows that in Northern European countries there is only a small chance of finding women who do not get paid for doing the homework, as the rate of working women is very high. That is why the significant explanatory factors intervening in our role are considerably reduced. In Finland's case, the main explanation as to women's employment is the part-time work and public sector work. It is essential to point out, to that effect, that in these countries family responsibilities and marital status are not significant variables due to the fact that these welfare states have developed generous employment and family-friendly public policies to support families with children, addressed to working mothers. Unfortunately the variables referred to family services are not within the scope of the ECHP and so the explanatory role has not been introduced.

Concerning Southern European countries (Spain, Greece and Italy) the likelihood of women getting in the labour market increases considerably with the academic level, having the possibility of working part-time and working in the public sector. However, the results obtained for these countries show that the family situation (marital status and family responsibilities) has some kind of negative impact on women's employment. In fact, the Spanish case shows that the family responsibilities appear like a significant variable in order to explain the probability of women integrating in the labour market.

None of the Southern European countries offer family allowances of any relevance to explain the probability of women

getting in the labour market. This is fundamentally due to the fact that, in these countries, family allowances are, when compared to those of the Northern European countries, and in terms of family earnings, almost insignificant and so they have practically no impact on women's employment. However, the factors referred to the labour market structure do seem to have a significant effect on the chances of women getting in the labour market.

These results seem to coincide with those obtained by Pfau-Effinger (1994) for Germany and Finland, who has concluded that the rise of the tertiary an public sector has led to a rise in female labour participation. In other wise, she predicts that a rise in female labour participation only coincides with an increase in part-time work if the family structure is based on a single breadwinner marriage, as in Western Germany. For Spain, Greece and Italy, the marginal effect of the part-time and public sector work on the likelihood of labour participation for women is substantial. That is why the effect of the labour market structure, of education, of family responsibilities and of marital status are crucial factors in order to explain women's employment in Southern European countries.

The conclusions is that, in Southern European countries, where a single breadwinner is the dominant family structure, married women with family tasks and with basic academic level are less likely to get in the labour market. On the other hand, what we can deduce from this analysis is that employment in the public sector and part-time employment have a positive impact in women's employment.

On the contrary, in the Northern European countries, where the dual earner role is predominant and where the generous family policies addressed to working mothers have been developed, marital status and family responsibilities do not seem to have any effect at all on women's employment, whilst the public sector has a

remarkable positive impact on women's employment.

The values of the R2 demonstrate that we can explain between 90-100 per cent of women's labour market participation with this regression analysis.

Figure 6 - Explaining the likelihood that woman (25-55 years) will be in the labour force or unpaid housework

	EU	DK	NL	B	F	IRL	I	GR	SP	P	A	FI	SW	GER	LU	UK
AGE																
25-30	1.635*													7.115*		
	(0.16)													(0.59)		
31-35	1.698*			6.053*										7.300*		
	(0.15)			-1.054,00										(0.58)		
36-40	1.733*									2.269*						
	-0,14									(0.49)						
41-50	1.158							2.247*								
	(0.13)							(0.41)								
51-55	1.046															
	(0.13)															
TOTAL NET HOUSEHOLD INCOME (BANDED)																
0-3197	4.269*															
(first sixtil distribution or 16,7 percentils)	(0.16)															
31978-61057	5.142*														0.53*	
(second sixtil distribution or 16,7 percentils)	(0.14)														(1.59)	
61508-130053	6.718*								0.15*						0.18*	
(third sixtil distribution or 16,7 percentils)	(0.14)								(1.6)						(0.93)	
130054-304000	12.139*			12.467*	6.303*					0.34*						
(4th sixtil distribution or 16,7 percentils)	(0.17)			(1.01)	(0.65)					(0.41)						
304001-1218623	3.835*			5.981*	3.228*			0.201*		0.39*						
(5th sixtil distribution or 16,7 percentils)	(0.16)			(0.92)	(0.63)			(0.23)		(0.30)						
1218624 and more	1.417*															
(6th sixtil distribution or 16,7 percentils)	(0.14)															
EDUCATION																
Highest Level (3rd level)	6695*			6.189*	4.733*		9.179*	19.125*	4.036*	10.055*	38.351*			2.697*		

Variable	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)
General or Higher (2nd stage)	1817* (0.90)					4145* (0.28)	2.799* (0.27)		7.689* (0.67)				
Completed (Less than 2nd stage)													
MARITAL STATUS													
Married and cohabitation	.340* (0.10)			0.398* (0.43)		0.32* (0.39)	0.136* (0.35)	1.424* (0.46)		0.204* (0.66)		0.92* (0.37)	0.062* (0.89)
CARING RESPONSIBILITIES AND DIVISION OF LABOUR													
Children - 15 years	1769* (0.010)			3.258* (0.53)		2.211* (0.36)		0.382* (0.53)					
Daily activities (without pay looking after children or other person)	.773* (0.020)		0.729* (0.138)					0.328* (0.45)	0.398* (0.30)			0.217* (0.40)	
FAMILY POLICIES													
Family related allowances	1.722* (0.099)		2510* (0.446)	2510* (0.446)				3.738* (0.47)	3.738* (0.47)	2439* (0.45)		2.033* (0.30)	22.591*
LABOUR MARKET													
Full time/part time	1.358* (0.10)	21123* (0.83)	1504* (0.050)	1.935* (0.66)	1.332* (0.69)	1.584* (0.035)	2.264* (0.12)	2.610* (0.85)	1.678* (0.064)	1.583* (0.080)	1.600* (0.10)	1.312* (0.033)	2.331* (0.84)
women employed public sector	1.907* (0.010)	3712* (0.056)	1720* (0.056)	2.515* (0.92)	2.411* (0.93)	1.601* (0.47)	1.220* (0.19)	1.222 (0.51)	1.425* (0.045)	1.865* (0.060)	2.137* (-0.12)	2.205* (0.043)	4.306* (1.46)
Constant	-1.312,00		-1.312,00										-1.203,00
Pseudo R. squared	0.90	0.97	0.87	0.93	0.94	0.93	0.85	0.96	0.84	0.90	0.92	0.89	0.97
Log likelihodd	-5.353.874	-109.797	-189.645	-265.363	-129.342	-524.933	-752.669	-269.111	-518.243	-243.618	-70.183	-470.503	-75.988
N	26563	2785	1331	2889	1033	3871	2334	3136	2708	1447	1568	-3185	1503
Chi 2	26307.245*	2630.413*	834.771*	2205.507*	1079.309*	3809.600*	2093.389*	3292.507*	2013.426*	1241.495*	675.775*	2218.365*	1647.578*

*= Parametres are significant at a p< 0.05

Note: Only significant values have been considered

Source: European Community Household Panel (ECHP 2001)

Figure 7 - Explaining the likelihood that woman (25-55 years) will be in full-time or part-time jobs

	EU	DK	NL	B	F	IRL	I	GR	SP	P	A	FI	SW	GER
AGE														
25-30	1.341*	2.496*	3597*	2.454*					0.315*					
	(0.093)	(0.49)	(0.28)	(0.41)					(0.36)					
31-35	1.739*	4.057*	4.307*	3.148*		5.173*		2.573*	0.418*			3.601*		4.598*
	(0.096)	(0.50)	(0.39)	(0.39)		(0.53)		(0.47)	(0.35)			(0.77)		(0.63)
36-40	1.633*	4.783*	2.812*		2.473*	2.357*							2.050*	4.764*
	(0.094)	(0.52)	(0.31)		(0.24)	(0.50)							(0.38)	(0.63)
41-50	1.609*	3.359*	1.928*	2.914*	1.811*	3.524*		2.400*						4.422*
	(0.090)	(0.43)	(0.65)	(0.40)	(0.59)	(0.51)		(0.44)						(0.55)
51-55	1.281*		1.634*									0.467*		
	(0.087)		(0.24)									(0.45)		
TOTAL NET HOUSEHOLD INCOME (BANDED)														
0-3197	0.341*								0.55*					
(first sixtil distribution or 16,7 percentils)	(0.101)								(0.63)					
31978-61057	0.455*													
(second sixtil distribution or 16,7 percentils)	(0.099)													
61508-130053	0.531*									0.099*				
(third sixtil distribution or 16,7 percentils)	-0,10									(1.09)				
130054-304000	0.500*									0.297*				
(4th sixtil distribution or 16,7 percentils)	(0.100)									(0.40)				
304001-1218623	0.548*			2.867*				0.176*	0.145*	0.205*				
(5th sixtil distribution or 16,7 percentils)	(0.102)			(0.48)				(0.56)	(0.34)	(0.24)				
1218624 and more	0.585*							0.399*	0.535*					
(6th sixtil distribution or 16,7 percentils)	(0.103)							(0.32)	(0.18)					
EDUCATION														
Highest Level (3rd level)	1.911*	3.073*		2.970*	2.068*	3.099*			1.752*				3.698*	
	(0.066)	(0.37)		(0.31)	(0.25)	(0.41)			(0.20)				(0.31)	
General or Higher (2nd stage)	1.911*	2.986*		1.832*		1.629*			2.242*	13.492*	1.810*		1.957*	
	(0.64)	(0.35)		(0.31)		(0.28)			(0.25)	(0.86)	(0.29)		(0.27)	
Completed (Less than 2nd stage)														
MARITAL STATUS														
Married and cohabitation	0.811*		0.449*	0.506*					0.703*		0.373*		0.581*	0.354*
	(0.058)		(0.20)	(0.27)					(0.19)		(0.32)		(0.21)	(0.40)

2. Family, labour market and female employment in European countries

CARING RESPONSIBILITIES AND DIVISION OF LABOUR														
Children -15 years	2.823*	0.475*		0.579*				0.198*		0.440*				2.473*
	(0.50)	(0.28)		(0.30)				(0.27)		(0.31)				(0.34)
Daily activities (without pay looking after children or other person)	0.963*	1.905*	0.390*			0.596*		0.267*		0.633*				
	(0.012)	(0.38)	(0.20)			(0.27)		(0.22)		(0.27)				
FAMILY POLICIES														
Family related allowances	0.724*									4.070*				
	(0.065)									(0.36)				
LABOUR MARKET														
Family reason for working less than 30 hours in main job														
Women employed in the third sector	2.952*	4.519*	2.293*	4.4949*	2.065*	4.123*	2.099*	5.512*	4.360*	9.843*		2.372*		
	(0.098)	(0.58)	(0.31)	(0.51)	(0.38)	(0.41)	(0.45)	(0.35)	(0.35)	(0.74)		(0.36)		
Pseudo R. squared	0.51	0.34	0.66	0.56	0.51	0.66	0.48	0.22	0.44	0.46	0.75	0.31	0.090	0.86
Log likelihodd	-10.752.832	-449.281	-944.006	-562.104	-790.301	-405.810	-828.597	-590.169	-1.051.644	-813.738	-505.975	-371.551	-831.282	-405.648
N	34154	1158	2785	2968	2889	1033	3871	2334	3136	2708	1447	1568	2681	3185
Chi 2	7078.576*	156.094*	931.466*	403.961*	545.615*	429.773*	530.752*	127.520*	524.899*	510.398*	832.933*	115.682*	57.319*	1418.843*

* = Parametres are significant at a p < 0.05

Note: Only significant values have been considered

Source: European Community Household Panel (ECHP, 2001)

The regression analysis in figure 7 illustrate the effects of the same independent variables on the likelihood of being in paid part-time rather that in paid full-time work. The empirical analysis carried out by Mühlberg (2000) has proven the relevance of family responsibilities to explain female part-time work. However, in this same analysis it is concluded that the effect of family responsibilities is not significant in Finland and Denmark, due to the developed public services to working mothers.

In our analysis the results of the regression analysis show clear differences between Northern and Southern Europe. First of all to point out the fact that the values of R2 are much higher for Southern European countries compared to Finland and Sweden, which means that the model designed explains for the most part the probability in the Southern European countries of women working part-time rather than in Northern European countries.

In the case of Denmark, Belgium, Finland and Sweden, when the woman has followed further education and has a degree, she increases the chances of working part-time. However, in the Southern European countries, education seems to have no effect on part-time employment of women (no effects on part-time) except in Spain where the level of education decreases the probability of working part-time, due to the fact that in this country the job offers for part-time work is very poor and in low skilled jobs.

In Finland and Denmark, women aged between 31 and 40 are those who have more chances to work part-time, whilst in Italy and Greece age has no significant effects on part-time employment. However, in Spain it is observed that young women between 26 and 35 years of age are those with more chances to work part-time. These ages include the period of maternity, and that is why, facing the lack of a public policy of services addressed to working mothers, it is very likely that these women choose part-time work as

a conciliation strategy between family and labour life. The significant effect of family responsibilities on female part-time work in Spain and Italy has to be pointed out. In fact, marital status and children have also a remarkable effect in Spain, that is to say, married women with children have more chances to work part-time than those single and with no children. Greece is the exception, where children and responsibilities have no effect at all on part-time work of women, due mainly to the effect of intergenerational solidarity of the extended family.

In Finland and Denmark, family responsibilities and children have no effect at all on this type of employment but for different reasons to those of Greece, given that the generous family policies in these countries have solved the balance problems between family and employment.

It is worth pointing out the case of Netherlands, where the percentage of women working part-time is very high compared to that of the other European countries. In this country, part-time work has been developed as an active labour strategy to favour the work and family compatibilization. That is why it is not surprising that, married women with children and with family responsibilities have more chances of working part-time, given that this type of work is addressed in fact to these women. For this country the R2 explains the 66% of the model, and that is why the family variables are a key point in this country in order to explain the high participation of women in part-time work.

The results suggest that the household composition plays an important role in the probability of working part-time for women in the Southern European countries. Female part-times workers are more likely to be married with children and family responsibilities, regardless of the earnings and education. This shows a clear deficit in the family policies of attention to working mothers with family

responsibilities. However, in the Northern European countries, the probability of working part-time depends on the level of studies and not on the family responsibilities, that is to say, it is more related to qualifications and training than to family conditionings.

6. Conclusions

This paper has focused on the determinants of women's labour market participation and their differences between northern and southern countries of Europe. We conclude that the institutional arrangement and family life generates incentives as well as disincentives and influence women's labour market behaviour.

The empirical part of this study has tested some determinants of women's labour market integration using microdata for the European Community Household Panel. The main aim of this section was to analyze supply-side variables in order to show the reasons for differences in female labour market participation between North an South Europe. Indeed, we have found evidence for differences in welfare regime and employment regime. The findings indicate that the family tasks and welfare regime are the best predictors of female employment differences between the Northern and Southern European countries.

We find that the Southern employment regime can and should be quite clearly distinguished from the other regimes in terms of female employment with respect to the incidence of family responsibilities and institutional policies. Hence, the Southern employment regime is perfoming worse in terms of enchancing part-time employment and family policies.

Logit regression results reveal that first, household composition and family responsibilities plays an important role in the probability of female employment and working part-time in the Southern European

countries. Female workers are significantly less likely to be married and have children. However, female part time workers are more likely to be married, with family responsibilities. On the other hand, in the Northern European countries, the family responsibilities do not seem to have substantial effects on the female employment and the part-time work, mainly due to the important development of family policies addressed to the working mothers. Second, large marginal effects associated with the country dummy variables in the female regression results suggest that country specific arrangements strongly influence female decisions to work. Such country effects may reflect cultural factors (familism) as well as national differences in labour market institutions, family and labour policies.

These results suggest that more attention should be paid towards policies (family and labour), encouraging, particularly female, participation in the Southern European countries. Somehow, the future of the democratization of the gender relations and the family relations in these countries depends on the policies developed by the public and private institutions to support the total integration of the women in the labour market in conditions of equality.

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Chapter 3

Work/family policy in France: from state familialism to state feminism[1]?

Anne Revillard

1. Introduction

In France, maybe more than elsewhere, the family is a national stake[2]. The political importance of the family can be related to its demographic impact (Jenson 1986; 1998), to its role in social reproduction (Lenoir 2003), and to its role as a symbol for representing the political order (Commaille and Martin 1998). The family has been the object of mobilizations and political struggles at least since the French revolution, and these struggles led to a particular form of state recognition of family interests, through institutions and policies marked by the ideology of familialism (Lenoir 2003). This ideology has different modalities[3], but at its core, as demonstrated by Commaille, lays the recognition and promotion of the family *as an institution* (Commaille 1993, 26), whose interests outpace those of its individual members. Given the gendered division of labor, this promotion of family interests may impede women's participation in the labor market. However, another sociological feature that has historically distinguished France from many other western countries

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is women's early and long-standing labor force participation. Following several authors who have stressed these tensions and contradictions in French politics and practices regarding work and family (Commaille 1993; 2001; Jenson and Sineau 2001; Morgan 2003), the analysis of what could be labeled the "French paradox" – between the strength of the familialist ideology and women's high rate of participation in the labor force – will be at the core of this paper. Before turning to the French case, a few theoretical points must be stressed.

First, policies that target the interrelations between work and family (which I shall label "work/family policies") are a puzzling object for public policy analysis. Indeed, focusing on the relationship between family and work implies a challenge on the dichotomist construction of family and work as distinct public policy domains, which have their own logics and traditions and are embedded in different institutions. In other words, work/family policies are usually not a public policy domain per se; they stand at the intersection of work policy and family policy (and possibly, as we will see, feminist policy). This means that the analysis of these policies implies looking at the margins and at the implicit assumptions of 'work policies' (i.e. labor law, employment policy) on the one hand, and family policies on the other hand. Indeed, policies that explicitly target the family actually have an impact on work, and policies that explicitly target work (employment policies, labor law) actually have an impact on the family, but this is not necessarily explicit (Barrère-Maurisson 1992). Finally, policies that explicitly target the relationship between family and work can be framed[4] either as family policy or as work policy, and may or may not be explicitly gendered. In analyzing these policies, one must account for these various dimensions of the policy

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4   In using the concept of frame, I am inspired by Bacchi's "what's the problem" perspective (Bacchi 1999).

environment (Jenson 1988, 155). This type of public policy analysis implies an attention to the distinction between representations and public policy devices (and the effects of the latter), and an acknowledgement of the fact that public policy is the result of an array of non necessarily integrated devices, institutions, discourses and (state and non-state) actors (Commaille and Jobert 1999; Duran 1999). In order to account for the complex regulation implied in care policies, Jane Jenson has devised a very useful framework, which distinguishes between three dimensions of care: who cares, who pays, and how is it provided? (Jenson 1997). We should keep this distinction in mind throughout the description.

Second, in analyzing these welfare policies, I will be focusing primarily on their gender dimension, taking into account as often as possible the differentiations in gendering introduced by other social distinctions, notably class. This gender focus is based on the acknowledgement of the fact that due to the gendered division of labor, work/family reconciliation is socially constructed as a women's issue (Commaille 1993). In fact, today women in France still do twice as much domestic work as their male spouses[5], and it is still their labor force participation, not men's, which is challenged by the presence of young children in the family[6].

This gendering may or may not be explicit in welfare policies, but at any rate these policies are both influenced by normative representations of gender, and in turn have an important impact on women's social citizenship and on gender relations (Orloff 1993;

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[5] In 1998 in France, women provided 69% of the time devoted to domestic work within heterosexual couples, as opposed to 81% in 1966 (Méda, Cette and Dromel 2004, 8).

[6] In 2003 in France, among heterosexual couples, with one child under three the labour force participation of women was 80,2% (97,1% for men), and it fell to 58,3% (96,7% for men) with two children with at least one under three, and to 36,3% (95,6% for men) with three children among whom at least one under three (Colin, Djider and Ravel 2005, 3).

O'Connor 1993; Sainsbury 1996). In studying work/family policies, the choice of a gender perspective is reinforced by the assumption that the very (institutional and cognitive) distinction between work policy and family policy is rooted in the gendered division of labor.

Finally, in order to explain the current devices and discourses that define work/family policies in France, it is necessary to analyze their historical roots. Therefore, I will analyze the genesis and evolution of work/family policies in France, in order to explain (and eventually qualify) what I have labelled the "French paradox". In other words, I offer a genetic explanation of this paradox. In order to do so, I will focus on the cognitive and institutional framings of work/family policies: who defines these policies? Are they defined as work policy or as family policy, and how does this definition evolve over time?

I will first show that before the development of the explicit French "family policy" between the 1930s and the 1960s, several provisions within labor law and education policies had an important impact on work/family relations, and tended to favour women's and mothers' labor force participation, as opposed to the familialist tradition (already strong in family law) that favoured traditional gender roles. This mix of policies coming from various public policy institutions (devoted to work, education, and the family) helps explain the "French paradox". Even though the symbolic weight of the familialist family policy in France should not be underestimated, this family policy has been challenged and shattered since the 1960s by several social and political trends, which will be described in the second section of this paper. Among these is the development of state feminism, by means of the creation of governmental bodies specifically aimed at promoting women's rights. In the last section of this paper, I argue that this eventually implied a reframing of work/family policy in terms of a policy of equality in employment.

2. "Working mothers" and familialism: the genesis of the French paradox

In the XIXth century, the essence of familialism as defined by Commaille was crystallized in the Civil code (Napoleon code), enacted in 1804, which defined the legal regulation of the family following a model of strict gendered division of labour, putting married women under the authority of their husbands.

However, at the same time, women's participation in the labor force challenged this legal male-breadwinner model. Indeed, the feminization of the waged labour force in France dates back to the last third of the XIXth century. Women represented 25% of the labour force in 1866 and 35% in 1901 (Frader 1998, 11). In the beginning of the XXth century, this participation was helped by the constitution of women's social citizenship around the representation of the "citizen-producer" (Jenson 1989, 245). Jenson shows that at a time when demographic concerns were on the rise in many European countries, the concern with reducing infant mortality resulted in different measures in France and in Great Britain. Indeed, French political leaders took for granted working class mothers' participation in the labour force as a necessary evil, and framed the issue in terms of "protection" of working mothers, whereas in Great Britain, demographic concerns lead to the definition of a distinct citizenship for women, based on homemaking, which made it more difficult for mothers to access the labour force (Jenson 1986). In France, this led to a "protective" legislation inserted in labor law (Jenson 1986; Cova 2000; Battagliola 2004). In 1909, a legally ensured mother's leave of eight weeks (to be taken consecutively before and after giving birth) was created, with a guarantee for the mother to retrieve her job after giving birth. The Strauss law, voted in 1913, created a compulsory postnatal leave of four weeks, with a daily allowance (that was a measure of assistance, and not insurance, and did not compensate

for the lost wage). The law on social insurances of 1928-1930 represented the switch of protective legislation for mothers from assistance to insurance, with the creation of a maternity insurance, whose entitlement was based on the waged work status of the mother or derived from that of her husband. The insurance covered the medical fees, and ensured mothers an allowance to compensate for the lost wage for six weeks before and six weeks after giving birth (Cova 2000, 147-148).

It is important to stress that these measures were not designed by French politicians in a feminist goal[7], but mainly for demographic reasons. As Jane Jenson points out: "Women as individual actors remained enclosed and invisible within the family. It was always the family which needed both healthy and rested parents in order to produce the nation's babies" (Jenson 1989, 258). But even though these protective measures were not designed to help women but primarily for families, they resulted in facilitating mothers' labor force participation. Therefore the model of women combining maternity and waged work emerged early in France.

However, it should be stressed that this model of the "working mother" was mostly circumscribed to the working class (here, class affects the experience of gender). In this perspective, Lenoir puts forward the assumption of a dual system of legal regulation of the family at the time: family law (as defined in the Napoleon code) for the upper and middle classes, and labor law for the working class (Lenoir 2003, 290-292).

As far as care for young children is concerned, full-day preschools were developed since the middle of the XIXth century. Morgan shows how this development of early childhood education can be linked to

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7   However, it should be stressed that the women's movement was a strong supporter of these measures and lobbied for them (Cova 2000).

the fight of secular republicanism against the Catholic church[8]: "This extensive set of public services was born out of the victory of secular republicanism over the catholic church in disputes over education in the late XIXth century that raised the stakes in education and drove the decision to incorporate all forms of education – including schools for the very young children – into the national education system" (Morgan 2003, 261). Here again, although the provision was not meant to help women combine child-care and waged work, it certainly had that effect. It is also worth noting that the development of the preschool system, as well as protective legislation for women in labor law, initially targeted in priority the working class (Morgan 2003, 272).

Therefore, elements in labor law as well as in education policy tended to favour women's labor force participation, even though the latter was only a by-product of these policies.

This French social citizenship for (working-class) women, grounded on the participation in the labor force, did not mean equal citizenship with men. Indeed, women's pay was still conceived as a complement – and was indeed substantially inferior – to men's (which was defined as the main, if not the only, breadwinner). Family allowances – theorized in France by the social doctrine of the Catholic Church as a means to define a "just" pay according to the number of children[9] – were initially granted by individual factory owners to the male breadwinner, and they were made compulsory by a 1932 law[10] (Hatzfeld 1989, 103-172).

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8   This analysis challenges Esping-Andersen's classification of the French welfare state within the "conservative-corporatist" regime (Esping-Andersen 1990).

9   In France, there hasn't been a strong mobilization of men in unions in favour of a family wage, unlike what happened in Great Britain for example. This has facilitated women's participation in the labour force (Frader 1998).

10   In 1913, a yearly allowance had already been created for needy families of more than three children, which was a prefiguration of state-insured family allowances (Cova 2000, 150).

According to Lenoir, this shift from private nepotism to state-led social policy was an important step in the institutionalization of family policy in France by means of "state familialism" that defined itself against "Church familialism" (Lenoir 2003, 232-261). State familialism is a form of defence of family interests that Lenoir distinguishes from "Church familialism", in the sense that it is based on science rather than religious values, and puts forward the protection of families by means of different types of social provisions through a "bureaucratic management" of families. In making this distinction, Lenoir shows how state-led family policy in France was defined throughout a confrontation with the Church that implied a competition for social control.

Demographic concerns are at the roots of this state familialism (Lenoir 2003, 270-275), which resulted in a family policy promoting a model family of a married heterosexual couple and three children, with a strict gendered division of labor. This model was clear in the family policy that was institutionalized in the aftermath of World War II, by means of tax incentives and allowances that aimed at keeping women as care providers at home and encouraged families of at least three children. A good illustration of this orientation is the "homemaker's allowance" (*Allocation de mere au foyer*), created in 1939 and turned in 1941 into a "single-pay allowance" (ASU, *Allocation de salaire unique*), which was maintained in 1946 after the war. The ASU is an allowance provided to mothers staying at home full-time caring for their children[11]. Combined with family allowances, it represented in 1947 (at its peak), 90% of a workwoman's pay for a family with two children, and 150% of a workwoman's pay for a family with three children (Martin 1998, 1137). According to Martin, this allowance may have played a significant role in the decrease in

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[11] This allowance was suppressed in 1978 (Commaille, Strobel and Villac 2002, 77).

mothers' labor force participation that was observed after the war, especially for mothers of two children (whose labor force participation decreased from 23% to 17% between 1946 and 1954) (Martin 1998, 1140). Moreover, the social security system that was established in 1945 installed a broad system of derived entitlement, that hasn't stopped expanding since then (Commaille, Strobel and Villac 2002, 73). According to this system, social rights are easily guaranteed to the whole family based on one (usually male) breadwinner's participation in the labor force.

More broadly speaking, the distinct "family policy"[12] that was defined in the aftermath of World War II had an enduring symbolic (as well as material) impact. It clearly defined the French model of family policy as a pro-family/pro-natalist model (Gauthier 1996).

To sum up, work/family policies in France at the beginning of the 1960s are the result of a mix of various measures, some favourable, and some discouraging for mothers' labor force participation: on the one hand a strong preschool system, and some "protective" measures in labor law that actually enable women to keep their jobs throughout maternity, and on the other hand a family policy that promotes traditional gender roles. Although some provisions actually favour mothers' employment, the strength of familialism, with its promotion of a traditional gendered division of labor, should not be underestimated. At the level of representations, this model is hegemonic.

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[12] For a general presentation of family policy, see Pitrou (1994) and Commaille, Strobel and Villac (2002).

3. Challenges to the familialist model

This sway of familialism, that marked the "peak" of French family policy, was gradually challenged and shattered by new trends, both political and social, starting in the 1960s. First, within public policies, a contradiction appeared between the promotion of a male-breadwinner model in family policy on the one hand, and the labor force policies of the time on the other hand, which implied an increased appeal to women's participation[13]. At the same time, major social and demographic change was taking place (Lefaucheur 1992). Most important was the increase in women's – and especially mothers' – labor force participation. Women represented 34% of the labor force in 1960, and 43% in 1990 (Commaille 1993, 5). Women (of all social classes) increasingly remained in the labor force while bringing up children. Important family and demographic change was also taking place, with a rise in divorce rates[14], a drop in marriage rates and in fertility rates[15].

At the political level, the 1960s witnessed the rise of a new women's movement that increasingly challenged the gendered division of labor. Moreover, women, who had acquired the right to vote in 1944, were perceived by male political leaders of the time as a political stake. This was already manifest in the 1965 presidential elections, when socialist candidate François Mitterrand was the first to put women's rights at the core of his campaign strategy (Jenson and Sineau 1995, 56). This new political visibility, combined with the fact that women also represented an economical stake, contributed

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[13] As Jenson stresses: "The modern French economic system had come to rely upon women workers" (Jenson 1988, 159).

[14] The divorce rate, which had remained steadily around 10% until 1965, increased up to 20% in 1978, and 26% in 1982 (Thery 1996, 119).

[15] The fertility rate decreased from 2,9 children per woman in 1964 to 1,93 in 1975, to 1,65 in 1994 (Lutinier 1996, 1-3). Therefore the main decrease was in the 1965-1975 period.

in the creation of the first governmental bodies specifically devoted to the promotion of women's interests: a women's bureau (*Comité du travail féminin*) was created in 1965 within the department of labor, followed by the appointment of a secretary of state in charge of "women's condition" (*Secrétaire d'Etat à la condition feminine*), Giroud in 1974. Hence state familialism faced the rise of a potentially conflicting ideology, state feminism (see section 3).

How did these changes affect work/family policies? According to Jenson and Sineau, a shift in work/family policies appeared with the advent of the Fifth Republic in 1958. The political discourse then appeared more favourable to women's paid work. Supported by a new experts' discourse on the relevance of early childhood education, the day-care system started developing, although it remained way below the actual needs (Jenson and Sineau 2001, 88-89). In 1972, a means-tested allowance was created to compensate some of the cost of childcare for women in the labor force (Commaille, Strobel and Villac 2002, 78).

Yet the economic crisis, starting in 1973, questioned this "new model of gender equality" (Jenson and Sineau 2001, 89) that had developed within family policy. Therefore, work/family policies from this time period onward have been marked by ambivalence: while the political discourse broadly speaking encouraged women's labor force participation, some measures tended to weaken the work position of particular categories of women.

First, it is worth noting that in spite of the economic crisis, women remained on the labor market (Jenson and Sineau 2001, 94). In fact, the years between 1975 and 1985 have seen a fast increase in women's labor force participation, which increased from 58,6% to 70,8% for women, aged 25-49 from 1975 to 1985[16].

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16 Internet resource: INSEE: http://www.insee.fr/fr/ffc/chifcle_fiche.asp?ref_id=NATCCF03103&tab_id=303&souspop=1.

Within family policy, the model of the "working mother" was also encouraged by measures that aimed at helping to combine paid work and care for young children (Hantrais 1994, 151). First, the child-care system expanded. Between 1974 and 1980 the infrastructures (mostly day nurseries and family day care) grew by 72% (Jenson and Sineau 2001, 90). According to Norvez (1998, 63), the fast growth of the public day-care system was helped by the pre-existence of a strong administration in charge of implementing family policy at the local level, the *Caisses d'allocations familiales* (the bureaus in charge of distributing family benefits). These bureaus took over the responsibility for developing the public day-care system by means of allowances awarded to local day-care centers. The fraction of social spending, within family policy, devoted to non-parental childcare increased significantly from the 1970s onward: 2% in 1970, 12% in 1980, 25% in 1990, and about 30% in 1998 (*ibidem*, 63). Based on this example, the assumption could be made that the pre-existence of state-led familialist institutions may have been an asset for the eventual development of facilities that favour mothers' paid employment (notably as opposed to more liberal welfare regimes, without an explicit family policy). Indeed, the strength of familialism in France led to the creation of institutions that were eventually mobilized for other ends (i.e. work/family reconciliation), and the pre-existence of this dense web of local institutions in charge of family policy was an asset in ensuring the relatively fast development of the day-care system. However, it should be stressed that the expansion of day-care nurseries slowed down in the 1980s and 1990s, in spite of president Mitterrand's electoral promise of creating 300 000 places in day-care nurseries. Indeed, the increase was 44% between 1981 and 1988, and 29% between 1988 and 1995 (*ibidem*).

Meanwhile, other types of child-care arrangements were legally organized and promoted: the employment status of child caregivers

(*assistantes maternelles*) was defined in 1977. Child caregivers can care for up to three children in their own house, and they can also be regrouped in a family day-care center (*crèche familiale*) (Norvez 1998, 64). Two types of allowances were created to help parents hire child caregivers: the allowance for childcare at home (AGED, *Allocation de garde d'enfant à domicile*) in 1986, and the allowance subsidizing the employment of a licensed mother's assistant (AFEAMA, *Aide à la Famille pour l'Emploi d'une Assistante Maternelle Agréée*) in 1990 (Jenson and Sineau 2001, 103). The provision of pre-elementary education, which is provided by public schools starting at the age of 3 or 2, also increased during the 1970s and 1980s.

Finally, it should be mentioned that since the 1980s, the national administration federating the family benefits bureaus, the *Caisse nationale des allocations familiales* (CNAF), has also been a key purveyor of expertise on work/family reconciliation (Commaille 1993). This played a role in raising awareness on the issue, as well as enabling an assessment of the existing policies.

Nevertheless, tendencies to promote a traditional gendered division of labor still exist in family policy. For example, during his presidency, Giscard d'Estaing called for recognition of the "status of mother" (Jenson and Sineau 2001, 92). An unpaid parental leave was created in 1977, which enabled a working parent to suspend their employment for up to two years to take care of a child under three; as Jenson and Sineau point out, this leave was initially labelled the "mother's leave" in the government's draft bill (*ibidem*, 93), which clearly reflected the model of gendered division of labor that inspired the government.

In 1985, a paid parental leave was created, the *Allocation parentale d'éducation* (APE), which was made available to parents who left work to take care at home of their child under three, starting with the third child. This provision was clearly underpinned by pro-

natalist concerns, but it was also defended by its supporters in the name of work-family reconciliation. Its opponents, however, denounced it as a form of mother's wage. The allowance was extended in 1986 by means of a weakening of the employment criteria for eligibility[17] (Jenson and Sineau 2001, 99-101). In 1994, its reach increased, since it was made available starting with the second (as opposed to third) child, and it was made compatible with part-time employment.

This reform resulted in a halt in the so-far steady increase in labor force participation of mothers of two children among whom a child below three (Commaille, Strobel and Villac 2002, 80). While being promoted as a "work/family reconciliation" measure, the APE actually weakened (already low-qualified) women's position on the labor market: while the law guarantees women a right to recover their job after the leave, employers don't always abide by this legislation, and the leave often results in workplace discrimination and decreased chances of professional promotion, while favoring a traditional division of labor within couples (Fagnani 1998, 354-357).

The implementation of the APE, a measure overwhelmingly used by women (98% of the recipients are women), also illustrates the limits of gender-neutral discourse in family policy. As Fagnani stresses, the will to promote less gendered parental roles has favored the use of a gender-neutral discourse in family policy, but this may result in impeding the fight against gender discrimination by occulting actual gender disparities (Fagnani 2001, 106).

Therefore, as Norvez stresses, family policy in France is on the edge "between work/family reconciliation and the temptation of a mother's wage" (Norvez 1998, 59). However, these measures are not necessarily promoted for ideological reasons, according to a

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17 The parent only had to have been employed for a minimum of eight semesters within the ten years preceding the birth or adoption of a third child.

familialist vision of family policy, but they are above all driven by employment policy choices (Fagnani 2001, 111).

Indeed, as Commaille, Strobel and Villac demonstrate, the focus of employment policies on the fight against unemployment underpins these family policy measures in two ways. On the one hand, the employment of child caregivers by parents, helped by measures such as the AGED and AFEAMA, is seen as a way to create new jobs, especially for low-qualified, often unemployed women, as well as turning black market jobs into official ones. On the other hand, the APE is used as a way to take out of the labor market (and out of unemployment statistics) women who benefit from the allowance, who are also in their majority low-qualified women standing on the margins of the labor market (Commaille, Strobel and Villac 2002, 89-91).

In terms of care, this implies a differentiation of family policy impact on women according to social class: middle and upper class women are the ones who benefit the most from allowances such as AGED and AFEAMA, which enable them to remain on the labor market, while poor women suffer from the lack of provision of public day-care centers, and the APE pushes them to adopt a traditional gendered division of labor which marginalizes them even more from the labor market (*ibidem*, 80, Fagnani 1998, 347-350). Therefore, Norvez's analysis of French family policy as being on the edge between work/family reconciliation and the temptation of a mother's wage can be qualified in terms of class: actual reconciliation policies are promoted for upper and middle-class women, while poorer mothers are enticed to stay at home caring for their children, and receiving the APE (Fagnani 2001).

Therefore, it can be argued that the class differentiation of work/family policies has been reversed since the end of the XIXth century: while the model of women combining waged labor and mothering

was initially constituted within public policy as a working-class model, it is now a middle to upper class model, whereas poor, low-qualified women are more encouraged to stay at home caring for their children or work only part-time on the labor market.

When on the labor market, these low-qualified women also constitute a care labor force; they can be employed as professional caretakers, whose professionalization is still very limited (Bergeron and Saint-Pierre 1998)[18]. The development of "family services", more broadly speaking, also illustrates this increasing connection of family policy with employment issues (Lallement 2000). The creation of jobs related to these services has been encouraged by several tax rebates (1992, 1995), and provisions such as service-work cheques (1994) or service-work remittances (1996), that facilitate the legal hiring, by individuals, of helpers for specific caring and domestic tasks; 99% of these jobs, which involve care, housekeeping and educational tasks, are occupied by women, working part-time for the most (Lallement 2000, 278-279). The development of this type of family services also weakens women's position on the labour market.

While they are actually strongly linked to employment policy issues, these work/family policies have been developed as family policy; that is, they are part of the official explicit public policy labelled in France as "family policy". I will now examine another, more recent framing of work/family policies, that in terms of equal opportunities in employment.

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[18] The link with employment policies is also strong in policies that target care for dependent adults within the family (Martin 2001).

Table 1 - Work/family policies : the main legal provisions

Maternity and parental leave[19]	Maternity leave: mothers are allowed to suspend their job contract for 6 weeks before the presumed date of delivery, and 10 weeks after. They are obliged to suspend her work at least 8 weeks, including 6 weeks after the delivery. (Reference: Labor Code, articles L 122-26 and L 224-1) Parental leave: up to the child's third birthday.
Family allowances [20]	The *allocations familiales* are not means-tested. They are provided starting with the second child. Further if there are two children: 117,14 € per month; if there are three children: 267,21 € per month and for each additional child, add 150,08 € per month.
Financial provisions for childcare [21]	Since January, 2004, the various allowances devoted to childcare (APJE[22], AAD[23], AFEAMA[24], AGED[25], APE[26]) have been replaced by a single childcare allowance, the PAJE (*Prestation d'accueil du jeune enfant)*. The PAJE is composed of: A means-tested birth/adoption allowance: 840,96 € A "basic" means-tested monthly allowance during the child's first three years: 168,20 € per month

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[19] Reference: Labor Code, article L122-28-1 and online resource: www.legifrance.fr.
[20] Online resource: Caisse d'allocations familiales, http://www.caf.fr/catalogue/, visited on January, 9th, 2006.
[21] Online resource: Caisse d'allocations familiales, http://www.caf.fr/catalogue/, visited on January, 9th, 2006.
[22] Allocation pour jeune enfant, or young child's allowance.
[23] Allocation d'adoption, or adoption allowance.
[24] Aide à la Famille pour l'Emploi d'une Assistante Maternelle Agréée, or allowance subsidizing the employment of a licensed mother's assistant.
[25] Allocation de garde d'enfant à domicile, or allowance for childcare at home.
[26] Allocation parentale d'éducation, or parental educational allowance (paid parental leave).

	A complement for "free choice of activity" (*complément de libre choix d'activité*) if one of the parents reduces or interrupts their activity to care for their child(ren). If one of the parents interrupts their activity, this allowance is 353,67 € for parents who already benefit from the « basic » allowance, and 521,85 € for those who don't. The amount is lower if the parent's activity is only reduced. A complement for "free choice of childcare" (*complément de libre choix du mode de garde*) if the parents hire a child caretaker, directly or through a specialized service. The amount varies according to family income, and parents are eligible until the child's sixth birthday. For direct hiring of a child caretaker at home, in the lowest income range, the amount is 368,48 € per month for a child aged 0-3. For example, for hiring a professional child caretaker, hired through a specialized service, the amount can be up to 763,29 € for the same income category, depending on the type of child caretaker.
Day-care infrastructure[27]	In 2003: Day-care centers: 242 630 places Family day-care: 67 359 places

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[27] Online resource: INSEE 2003, http://www.insee.fr/fr/ffc/chifcle_fiche.asp?ref_id=NATENF02308&tab_id=198, visited on January, 9th, 2006.

4. Work/family policy as equal opportunity policy

Women's right to participate in the labour force, and eventually, gender equality in the family as well as in the workplace, are key stakes underlying work/family politics. However, the history of work/family policies in France shows that women's rights have hardly ever been promoted *per se*. Women's right to work has been, by and large, the by-product of policies that aim at other ends: macroeconomic policies, education policy (with the underlying Church/state rivalry), and demographic concerns. In view of this, it appears particularly interesting to analyze the action of state institutions whose official aim is the promotion of women's rights.

As mentioned earlier, starting in the mid-1960s, state familialism was faced with the institutionalization of women's interests within the state, with the creation of governmental bodies specifically in charge of promoting women's rights and interests. Following Amy Mazur and Dorothy McBride Stetson, I will use the term "state feminism" to describe the activities of these women's policy machineries (McBride Stetson and Mazur 1995, 1-2). This use of the expression "state feminism" does not imply a judgment on the actual feminist meaning or outcome of these activities; it only refers to the asserted intention of improving women's status. Similarly, I may refer to the policies promoted by these organizations as "feminist policy", based on their asserted aim to improve women's status.

State feminism in France was built around the issue of equality in employment (Lévy 1988). Even though it is hard to generalize because the political leaders in charge of this function of furthering women's status have endorsed different visions of what could be labelled the "women's issue", it is yet fair to say that women's paid work has always been a key stake in the definition of "women's policy" by these authorities (Mazur 1995).

For example, the women's bureau that was created in 1965 (and lasted until 1984) was devoted to women's paid labor (*Comité du travail féminin*). The promotion of the image of the "working woman" was also key in the action of the ministry for women's rights during the socialist government from 1981 to 1986 (Jenson and Sineau 1995, Thébaud 2001). Minister Yvette Roudy defined equality in employment as the key issue for women and her priority of action. This resulted in the 1983 equal employment law (*loi sur l'égalité professionnelle*), which notably set up a framework for some form of affirmative action in favor of gender equality in employment. More generally speaking, this ministry's action and discourse clearly promoted paid employment and equality in employment as the key to women's emancipation.

This focus on women's paid labor means that when they have been envisioned by these governmental bodies (which has not always been the case), work/family policies have mostly been apprehended as part of a broader policy of equality in employment. In other words, while they were framed by state familialists as family policy, work/family policies were framed by state feminists as 'work' policy[28]. For example the *Comité du travail féminin* (1965-1984) created from the beginning a work group on the issue of work/family reconciliation. Other governmental bodies devoted to women's rights have been more reluctant to tackle the issue of work/family reconciliation. For example, Yvette Roudy, ministry for women's rights from 1981 to 1986, clearly distinguished the issue of equality in employment from

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[28] This broad assertion should however be qualified according to the different political leaders in charge of women's policy machineries. For example, it can be stressed that in 1980-1981, Monique Pelletier was simultaneously in charge of "women's condition" and of family issues. Hélène Gisserot, Delegate for women's condition (déléguée à la condition féminine) from 1986 to 1988, was also more open to family issues, and endorsed the right wing government's campaign in favor of a recognition of mothers' status (statut de la mère de famille).

work/family reconciliation issues, which were dealt with by family secretary of state Georgina Dufoix in a rather conservative way (Jenson and Sineau 1995, 239-257).

Yet since the end of the 1980s, work/family reconciliation has been an asserted preoccupation of women's policy machineries. For example, in 1988, the advisory council for equality in employment (*Conseil supérieur de l'égalité professionnelle*) defined work/family reconciliation as one of its research priorities[29].

In the 1990s, this state feminist preoccupation with work/family reconciliation was reinforced, which can be linked with two contemporary dynamics. First, the debate over the reduction of work hours (with the establishment of the "35 hours" week) spurred a reframing of work/family issues as a time issue, around the idea of "articulation of social times", a concept that was widely spread by women's policy machineries. Second, at the European level, work/family reconciliation policies were framed as part of a broader gender equality policy, and part of equal opportunity policies in the workplace, especially since the 1990s (Hantrais 2000, 113-139; Hantrais and Letablier 1996, 116-135; Letablier 2002, 64)[30]. The latter definition of the issue was increasingly appropriated by French state feminists, especially during Nicole Pery's office from 1997 to 2002 under Lionel Jospin's left-wing government. Indeed, "facilitating the management of life's times" was one of Nicole Pery's eight

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[29] See for example (Conseil supérieur de l'égalité professionnelle 1989).

[30] The same dynamic (defining women's equality as women's participation to the labor market, and linking it to reconciliation policies) was observed in other western countries (Bacchi 1999). Interestingly enough, Linda Hantrais has argued that the French model of social policy, with its strong state intervention on work-family issues, may have influenced this orientation at the European level (Hantrais 1995). While the EU played a key role in the impulse to link reconciliation policy to gender-equality policy, its efficiency is now questioned, notably due to the effect of the gender mainstreaming strategy (Heinen 2004).

main policy orientations in her program entitled "equality marching" (*L'égalité en marche*). In this perspective, she even explicitly targeted family policy, aiming at a more "feminist" family policy, and insisted on the need for further male participation in family tasks (Secrétariat d'Etat aux droits des femmes 2000, 5-6). Women's main responsibility for childcare was identified as a brake on professional equality (*ibidem*, 32). This orientation regarding "time management" notably included an increase in the availability of public day-care centers (*crèches*), an experimental program for childcare in poor neighbourhoods, especially adapted for atypical working hours, an improvement in the availability of public transportation, and an action inciting municipalities to better take into account the issue of time management.

The creation of a paternity leave in 2002 can also be analyzed as a way to promote a more equalitarian view of gender relations in family policy. Indeed, in 2002, Lionel Jospin's left wing government created a new leave of 11 days (that added to the 3 days that were traditionally granted) that can be taken only by fathers within four month following the birth of a child. As Truc shows, the non-compulsory character of this leave made it uneasy for fathers to claim, and indeed, this leave is still under-used by fathers (Truc 2003).

Between 2002 and 2005, under Minister for parity and equality in employment Nicole Ameline's office[31], work/family reconciliation policy was still defined as part of a strategy of equal opportunity in employment. For example, the issue of work/family reconciliation is included in Nicole Ameline's 2005 draft bill on pay equality[32]. But this

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[31]   Nicole Ameline was replaced, in the Villepin government formed on June, 2nd, 2005, by Catherine Vautrin, who is delegate minister for social cohesion and parity (Ministre déléguée à la cohésion sociale et à la parité).

[32]   The bill passed its second reading at the National Assembly on December, 12th,

framing of the work/family issue as a work issue may also be used as a way to transfer the responsibility for work/family reconciliation facilities from the state to private firms. Indeed, firms are strongly incited to play their part in work/family reconciliation efforts, with measures such as the "equality label", created by Nicole Ameline in December 2004. This label is awarded to firms that develop innovative gender equality strategies, especially in terms of work/family reconciliation.

Therefore, in feminist policy, work/family reconciliation appears as a means to equality in employment. This new framing of work/family reconciliation introduced by state feminism should be qualified. Indeed, its reach is hard to assess, and is certainly very inferior to that of state familialism which, in France, is grounded on strong, well-established state institutions, as well as a strong family movement. Women's policy machinery, by comparison, is a small administration with little budget, and its position is rather weak and not very legitimate within governments. Moreover, work/family issues are not the core of state feminism, which is the defense of workplace equality in the strict (literal) sense. Therefore its discourse cannot be hegemonic. However, these administrations can be the breeding ground for new ways of framing work/family issues, and they are the first to frame these issues in terms of women's rights[33].

Conversely, in their promotion of women's rights, state feminists may be tempted to put forward traditional family policy goals. For example, Nicole Ameline argued in favour of her pay equality draft bill by putting forward its eventual positive demographic outcome:

2005, and the Senate is to give it its second reading on January, 17th, 2006. The initial draft bill is available at the following address: http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/12/projets/pl2214.asp.

[33] It should be stressed here that some feminist critiques argue against the «work-family reconciliation» perspective because it contributes to defining "reconciliation" as a women's issue (Bachmann, Golay *et al.* 2004).

"Women work, and the more they work, the more they have children. Seeing to it that women feel totally invested in professional life means winning on two fronts: creating performance, and favouring our demography"[34]. This type of statement confirms that women's rights are seldom promoted *per se*, and still need to be fought for, even according to state feminists, in the name of "higher" political concerns such as economic and demographic growth.

4. CONCLUSION

As the above quotation illustrates, the complexities and ambiguities of work/family policies in France cannot easily be reduced. As Commaille stresses, there is a structural tension in French family policy between the goals of emancipation, institution and protection that imply contradictory injunctions for women (Commaille 2001). These conflicting values embedded in work/family policy can be explained by the plurality of actors involved (expressly state familialists and state feminists) and the mix of various public policy devices implemented over the years. Beyond this structural tension, two main current trends may be stressed in conclusion. First, in terms of policy framing, in spite of the enduring strength of state familialism, work/family policy is more and more linked to 'work' policy issues, be it the political management of care work in relation with macroeconomic dynamics and employment policy, or the reframing of work/policy reconciliation by state feminism as an issue of gender equality in employment. Yet it should be stressed

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34 "les femmes travaillent, et plus elles travaillent, plus elles ont des enfants. Faire en sorte que les femmes se sentent totalement engagées dans la vie professionnelle, c'est réussir sur un double titre: créer de la performance et favoriser notre démographie", intervention by Nicole Ameline on April, 28th, 2005, in an Internet chat: http://www. premier-ministre.gouv.fr/information/actualites_20/egalite_professionelle_nicole_ ameline_52865.html. Visited on January, 9th, 2006.

that this definition of reconciliation policy as gender-equality policy is still far from being hegemonic. Second, in terms of impact, the recent evolution of these policies implies increased class inequalities, which are especially visible amongst women.

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FAMILY AND WORK DIVISION IN PORTOGUESE DUAL EARNER FAMILIES

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1. INTRODUCTION

The number of women in the labour market has increased during recent decades. However, an equal division of housework has not accompanied this movement. This situation causes overload for many working women and it may reflect difficulties in changing gender ideology, which assumes men as the main family-provider and women as primarily responsible for family harmony and household chores. Gender is still the best predictor of individual contributions to family work (Alvarez and Miles 2003; Batalova and Cohen 2002; Davies and Carrier 1999; Lavee and Katz 2002; for a review, see Coltrane 2000).

How do couples deal with the household chores? Are they satisfied with the present division? Which factors influence the evaluation of this division and what are the consequences on men and women's level of satisfaction?

We assume that cultural values, desired division, gratification derived from the performances of family tasks and the perception of overload will be important variables in this process.

Portugal offers an interesting analysis because it presents simultaneously traditional values, such as the mother's predominant role in the family, and more modern values such as the high number

of dual-earner families. Indeed, women's participation in the labour force is quite high: 61,3% of women work outside home (INE 2002) and constitute 46,9 % of the labour force (INE 2004). Their employment status does not vary when they become mothers (73,3% have one children and 71,3% have two children); they usually work full-time, contrasting with working women in other European countries, such as Denmark and the Netherlands, where women choose part-time work when they have young children (Famwork 2002)[1]. Dual-income families are the most common model in Portugal, even when children are toddlers. The question of the division of family chores is crucial at this stage of life because professional and family demands increase dramatically during this period.

2. DIVISION OF FAMILY AND WORK

The majority of studies about the division of family chores are focused on the evaluation of gender[2] inequalities and the exploration of its possible causes. More recently, some researchers have become interested in the impact of this situation on individual satisfaction and behaviour.

Most authors agree that the increase of women's participation in the labour force is associated with more egalitarian gender roles and increases the women power at home. Moreover, most adults also agree on a highly egalitarian division of household chores and child-

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[1]   The results presented in this paper are part of a broader project, the FamWork Project "Family Life and Professional Work: Conflict and Sinergy, funded by European Union, which involves 7 European Countries: Germany, Switzerland, Austria, Belgium, The Netherlands, Italy, Portugal. Only some Portuguese data are analysed here.

[2]   Distinction between "sex" and "gender" enhances the social determination of psychological characteristics viewed as masculine or feminine in each society. The term "sex" refers to the biological characteristics and "gender" to the attributes which are developed through the differentiation of the socialization processes for boys and girls.

care activities (e.g., Zimmerman *et al.* 2003). Nevertheless, research results show that married women still see themselves as primarily responsible for family work and do substantially more housework than men (Coltrane 2000; Kluwer and Mikula 2002; Shelton and John 1996). The increase in fathers' childcare hours is not enough to change this tendency (Perista 2002). The type of the household task performed by women and men is also different: female tasks are "routine" ones, more time-consuming, those that take place inside home and are associated with childcare; male tasks are outdoor, are discrete and clearly delimited, and are often experienced as leisure (Blair and Lichter 1991; Jackson 1997; Gupta 1999; Shelton and John 1996; Perkins and DeMeis 1996 in Coltrane 2000; Presser 1994). Some tasks, such as shopping and driving are assumed as gender neutral (Coltrane 2000; Perista 2002). The expressive role assigned to women makes them also responsible for the "emotional and social work", promoting the emotional well-being of family members, sustaining ties with relatives and developing significant networks outside the family.

Despite the fact that young parents usually maintain ideals of equal sharing of responsibilities, the division of family work becomes more traditional after the transition to parenthood: fathers increase their participation in the professional field while mothers typically concentrate their effort on the household and child care activities. The fathers' contribution to family work decreases quite substantially, even when the mothers resume their previous work (Franco and Winquist 2002; Jacobs, DeMaeyer and Beck 1999; Nomaguchi and Milkie 2003). Greater inequalities are observed in the division of family work when couples have children at a younger age (Bianchi, Milkie, Sayer and Robinson 2000).

According to equity theory, satisfaction in a relationship is higher when the rewards received are proportional to the individual's

contributions. These contributions are dependent on the resources the person can invest in the relationship. The level of satisfaction varies according to the balance between resources (personal characteristics, education, and job) and rewards (love, status, information, services, financial support). The power of each member of the couple depends upon the meaning attached to the resources they bring into the family (Mikula, Freudenthaler, Brennacher-Kröll and Brunschko 1997). Women's investment in relationship quality is a less valued contribution than the economic one. Being viewed as secondary breadwinners, women must make adjustments in order to balance paid work and domestic work (Cancian and Oliker 2000; Jackson 1997; Zuo and Bian 2001). The division of labour tends to be more unequal when gender differences in employment status and income are larger (Alvarez and Miles 2003; Arrighi and Maume 2000; Batalova and Cohen 2002; Bianchi *et al.* 2000; Davies and Carrier 1999; Helms-Erikson 2001). However, the complexity of intimate relationship makes it difficult to make a precise assessment of contributions and benefits.

Research results have demonstrated that egalitarian relationships are positively associated with satisfaction and negatively related with conflict (Frisco and Williams 2003; Pina and Bergson 1993,). But, unexpectedly, previous research has also demonstrated that women tend to be satisfied with a distribution of household labour which is favourable to their partners (Baxter and Western 1998). Several explanations are given to justify this satisfaction. First of all, spouses may feel entitled to play a particular role in society. When the normative climate of the social environment prescribes a sex-typed allocation of work, and this prescription is translated in spouses' values and traditional gender role ideologies, unequal division of family chores is expected (Alvarez and Miles 2003; Batalova and Cohen 2002; Bianchi *et al.* 2000; Buunk, Kluwer, Schuurman and

Siero 2000; Helms-Erikson 2001; Kulik and Rayyan 2003; Lavee and Katz 2002).

Moreover, gender also defines social categories: men and women do not feel they belong to the same category and are more likely to compare themselves with the same-sex member of another couple than with their own partner. In this way, one's own satisfaction is more dependent on intra-gender than on inter-gender comparison (Poeschl 2000; Van Yperen and Buunk 1991). Finally, analysis of unexpected cases, such as the more traditional family work division when the husband has lost his job, leads to the appearance of another explanation for the unbalanced distribution of family work – the "doing gender" perspective. This framework argues that domestic labour is a symbolic enactment of gender relations. It is not a rational choice due to time availability, to the maximization of efficiency, nor the conversion of external resources into the exercise of power at home (Coltrane 2000). Cunningham (2001) has reinterpreted the impact of socialization experiences into a "doing gender" approach. Upon reaching adulthood, children may draw on gendered models of housework performance to organize and justify their own behaviour. In early adulthood, as well as in any circumstances that question gender identity, individuals refer to this model. They adopt traditional gender roles to prove to themselves and to their partner that they are as near as possible to the idealised male or female. Traditional sex role allocations imply large advantages and make people resistant to the changes in attitudes and behaviours. It explains the slower change of men's gender ideologies and attitudes, when compared to women. The latter are more sensitive to contemporary experience (Myers and Booth 2002).

The gender identity through the "doing gender" perspective may take different features according to the gender model, which is dominant in each society. We shall conclude that family dynamics

cannot be exclusively explained through the quality of relationships among its members but are dependent on broader social values (Bronfenbrenner 1989; Bronfenbrenner and Morris 1998). Values are learned responses to the environment in which people grew up: they may be activated by events or experiences and affect the behaviour in other events (Hofstede 1998). Additionally, they are dependent on macro-systemic change, such as change in women's employment status. The way couples respond to work and family demands and their satisfaction with the chosen solution are also dependent on the cultural values adopted. Indeed, values define what each one considers to be the good or right ways of being and acting. They include cognitive structures, behavioural and affective dimensions play a major role in the establishment of personal goals and constitute the basis for self and other's evaluation (Brown 2002).

International studies (Hofstede 1991; Triandis 1995) show that Portuguese society is a "collectivist" one. The primacy of family, largely shared by Portuguese men and women may be threatened by individualistic tendencies to act and behave. However, a previous study among Portuguese university students observed that they value individualism highly, probably because they are actually striving for their own independence from parents (Fontaine and Matias 2003). In this way, opposite values coexist in Portuguese society; those shared by the young couples with preschool children will influence the way they respond to family demands.

If values influence family decisions and relations, the reverse is also true. In fact, as far as the division of household labour is concerned, several researchers have found that it reflects and perpetuates cultural representation of family and it structures gender and class relations (Coltrane 2000). Schwartz and Bilsky (1987) suggest that values promoting the welfare of the group will be emphasized in collectivistic cultures (i.e., family security, honouring

elders, etc.). Inversely, in individualistic societies, values promoting individual goals (i.e., exciting life, independence, daringness, etc.) would be more prevalent.

Triandis, McCusker and Lui (1990) suggested that it is possible to draw a parallel between individualism/collectivism and modernism/ traditionalism. According to traditional values, even in dual earner families, the professional role is seen as a male domain while housework and family chores as a female one (Costa 1992; Davey 1998; Helwig 1998). When values are assessed in the family context, collectivist values have been identified as "familism". Individuals who hold familism values tend to engage in behaviours and to make decisions congruent with family opinions, tend to accomplish the social and family prescribed roles and to adjust to family needs. Individuals with high individualism values emphasize the ideals of individual liberty and equality, tend to act according to personal choice and feel responsible for their choices (Raeff 1997). However, the meaning of these constructs must be carefully explored. For example, Fontaine and Matias (2003) found that familism covers two distinct dimensions: patriarchal power and familiar solidarity and support. While the former can be related to traditionalism values, the latter does not present such a clear association. In fact, individuals with traditional or modern values both agree with the importance of supporting (financially and emotionally) family members. This dimension seems very consensual, as it is upheld by most people. Moreover, a study carried out in 1996 in some European countries (France, Germany, Italy, Spain and United Kingdom) found that, for most people, the meaning of family values did not imply a traditional family structure or moral and abstract values. Rather, it was explained by support, mutual help and emotional caring among family members (Vicente 1998).

In most studies, egalitarianism is considered to be a mediating

variable between the previous values and household labour division (Apparala, Reifman and Munsch 2003; Coltrane 2000). More modern and individualistic values are associated to more egalitarian values (Raeff 1997) and more traditional values associated to less egalitarian ones (Apparala *et al.* 2003). Thus, when men or women assume more traditional beliefs and attitudes, less sharing of the housework is expected. On the other hand, more liberal and "non-traditional" attitudes, and consequently egalitarian beliefs relate to men's greater contribution in household labour (Apparala *et al.* 2003; Coltrane and Ishii-Kuntz 1992; Coltrane 2000). In fact, assessed at a country level, individualism was significantly and positively associated with the country's level of egalitarianism (Apparala *et al.* 2003) perhaps because individualistic people feel strongly responsible for their own actions.

More egalitarian attitudes are also more likely to be endorsed by individuals who are younger, highly educated, live with an employed spouse and hold liberal political attitudes (Apparala *et al.* 2003). Concerning gender differences, the strongest predictor of egalitarianism among men is their marital status while among women it is their social class. Finally, it was also found that in half of the studied countries, women held significantly more egalitarian attitudes than men (Apparala *et al.* 2003). These results were also found in a Portuguese sample (Poeschl 2000). In sum, traditional and familism values, related to patriarchal power, are associated to less egalitarian values and consequently to less sharing of household labour. More modern and individualistic values are associated with more egalitarian attitudes and therefore to a greater sharing of household labour.

Notwithstanding the theoretical explanations and empirical findings that have been offered and their impact on satisfaction, it is important to analyze more deeply how men and women evaluate

the modalities of division of family labour that they practice in their everyday life. The next section will take a closer look at this topic in the Portuguese society.

3. Portuguese study

3.1. Aims and sample

This study aims to observe the relation between the division of family work in dual earner families with preschool children and the individual satisfaction of parents.

Firstly, we analyse gender differences in the Portuguese culture, in relation to previous research results about (a) values related with family life (b) the division of various types of household labour (domestic, maintenance/repair and childcare tasks), (c) the gratification resulting from the performance of these tasks (d) the perception of overload resulting from the performance of family tasks, and (e) the desired division of family work. Secondly, we will (f) test whether the adherence to different values by both men and women is associated to the perception of the housework division among partners. Finally, we will try to identify (g) the influence of some variables, such as the amount of family work done by oneself and by the partner, the gratification resulting from family work and the perception of overload resulting from this work, on men and women's level of satisfaction.

The sample is composed by couples with at least one child between 1 and 5 years old were selected, as the level of family demands are particularly high in this period of a life. Hence 245 dual-earner couples (490 subjects) with ages between 24 and 56

years old compose the sample. The average number of children per couple is 1,58, one child per couple being the most common situation. The average age of the youngest child is 3 years old, of the second child 7 years and of the first child 10 years. The majority of parents have completed a university degree.

3.2. Variables and instruments

Some variables associated to family labour have been selected[3]: the "perceived division" of family labour[4] for him/herself and the partner, the "perceived overload" and the "perceived gratification" resulting from family labour, the "desired division" of family labour and the "degree of satisfaction" about the actual division. Values associated to traditionalism vs. modernism and individualism vs. familism were also included in our analysis. These variables were assessed through 36 items[5] from a large questionnaire, individually filled out by each partner. As men and women do not necessarily share the same perception about a particular situation, results of husbands and wives of each dyad are compared. Each item covers 3 specific family tasks (domestic work, maintenance/repair and childcare).

A factorial analysis of the value items revealed four distinct dimensions: Conservatism, Open-mindedness, Equity and Individualism[6]. "Conservatism" implies the maintenance of the *status quo* and restraint from actions that might disrupt the group or the

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3   The items have been selected from a larger item pool gathered during the Famwork Project in Portugal.

4   Example: "How much of the housework (for example, cleaning, cooking, washing the dishes, doing the laundry…) do you and your partner perform?".

5   All items are measured in a 6-point rating scale: For instance: "nothing" = 1 to "everything" = 6.

6   This four-factors structure explains 43,01% of variance.

traditional order (social order, respect for tradition, family security, and wisdom). The person finds meaning in life largely through social status and group identification (Schwartz 1999). "Open-mindedness" items emphasize independent thought and action and favour change; they are more related to individual life goals that value the diversity of experiences and enjoying life. "Equity" defends egalitarian gender role attitudes, but is also associated to a life concept based on respect for other people's needs and rights, including women's rights. Finally "Individualism" enhances individual goals, even when they are against family purposes, encouraging people to live exclusively following their personal choice. While in individualism a person has to resist others influence and to break with others' points of view, open-mindedness does not imply this conflict because it is simply open to experience and ready to enjoy it.

3.3. Results[7]

3.3.1. Cultural values: gender differences

Both men and women tend to adhere to Equity values more than to Open-minded or Conservative ones. Individualistic values are the less shared ones[8].

Individualism is not broadly accepted in our society. Although previous research has observed that university students value individualism highly, it is not the case for the young couples with

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[7] All differences were tested through Oneway Anovas and only significant differences are referred to.

[8] Average levels: Conservatism = 3,98; Open-mindedness = 4,20; Equity = 5,31 and Individualism = 3,48.

young children included in the present study: the construction of their own family is their main life project at the moment and, in case of conflict, family interests will prevail over individualistic ones. In this period of life, the value of family cohesion and solidarity is more important.

Gender differences are observed with regard to Equity and Open-mindedness. Hence, men tend to give more value to Open-mindedness and women to Equity[9]. Studies conducted in several cultures reported by Kulik and Rayan (2003) also conclude that women more than men tend to maintain a more egalitarian perspective about gender roles and household tasks and, as they are more relationship oriented, they are more concerned with people's well being and rights (Scott 1997). On the other hand, Open-mindedness, more valued by men[10], better matches the traditional gender role which assumes that men are more likely to engage in and enjoy exploration tasks and leisure activities than women. In fact, research has consistently reported higher scores for men in dimension such as "Excitement Seeking" (Costa, Terracciano and McCrae 2001) or "Openness to Experience" (Goodwin and Gotlib 2004).

3.3.2. Division of family work and other related aspects: gender differences

Perceived division of family work

As far as the division of family tasks is concerned, our results are consistent with earlier research (Jackson 1997; Gupta 1999; Nock, 1998 in Coltrane, 2000; Shelton and John 1996) as they state that

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[9]   Average levels: Equity = 5,04 and 5,40 for men and women, respectively (F = 27,33; p < 0,001).
[10]   Average levels: Open-mindedness = 4,29 and 4,11, for men and women, respectively (F = 4,86; p = 0,03).

men perform more maintenance tasks[11] and women more domestic and childcare tasks[12]. There is also a correspondence between men's and women's perceptions of the amount of work done by women. However, concerning men's work, women consider that men perform significantly less domestic and maintenance[13] tasks than they themselves perceive and about the same amount of childcare. Women's underestimation of their partner's contribution to domestic and maintenance tasks may be a reflex of men's lack of awareness of the total amount of work actually involved in these particular areas (Cappuccini and Cochrane 2000). The fact that there were no significant differences in the estimation of childcare may be explained by men's increasing participation in this type of task (Perista 2002); however, it may also be that women feel responsible for facilitating the relationship between father and child, giving more value to their partner's involvement in this task particularly (Cappuccini and Cochrane 2000).

Overloading of family work

Given this unequal division, women perceive family tasks (domestic, maintenance tasks and childcare[14]) as more burdensome than men. This may be attributed to the overload caused by women's dual role at home and at work, to socialization processes

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[11] Average levels (maintenance tasks): 4,32 and 3,25 for men and women, respectively; F = 158,44, p = 0,000.

[12] Average levels (domestic tasks): 2,96 and 4,70 for men and women, respectively; F = 762,74, p = 0,000 and (childcare tasks): 3,62 and 4,94 for men and women, respectively; F = 16,24, p = 0,000.

[13] Average levels (men's domestic tasks): 3,67 and 2,86 perceived by men and by women, respectively; F = 4,03, p = 0,045 and (men's maintenance tasks): 4,47 and 4,17 perceived by men and by women, respectively; F = 8,07, p = 0,005. and (men's childcare tasks) = 3,62 both perceived by men and women.

[14] Average levels (overload of domestic and maintenance tasks): 2,77 and 3,82 perceived by men and by women, respectively; F = 82,690, p = 0,000 and (overload of childcare tasks): 2,51 and 3,30 perceived by men and by women, respectively; F = 43,30, p = 0,000.

that encourage women to express feelings and emotions such as stress and frustration more than men (Kulik and Rayan 2003) and to their desire for an equitable division.

Gratification with family work

Both men and women perceive all types of family work as gratifying (average level >3,0), but women perceive childcare as significantly more gratifying than men do[15]. Since women have longer experience in this field and spend more time with children, conditions for building more intimate relationships may be present, leading to higher levels of gratification.

Desired division of family work

Both men and women tend to desire an equitable division of family work (4 + 0,5), except in the case of maintenance tasks (men would like to perform a higher amount)[16].

These results were consistent with previous research done in the Portuguese context: dual-earner couples tend to subscribe to equity values (Fontaine, Andrade, Matias, Gato and Mendonça 2004) and to agree that family labour ought to be shared (Poeschl 2002). Moreover, in a survey by Vasconcelos (1998) in Portugal, young people agreed with the right of everyone to pursue individual projects in the professional field. However, when they were asked about parenthood, both men and women showed more traditional values: women should give priority to motherhood when there is conflict with professional demands. Our results are also consistent with the traditional male gender role in the case of maintenance and repair tasks: men would like to increase their involvement in this area.

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[15] Average levels (gratification with childcare tasks): 4,69 and 4,93 perceived by men and by women, respectively; F = 5,02; p = 0,026.

[16] Average levels (desired division of maintenance tasks done by men): 4,48 and 3,11 desired by men and women, respectively; F = 327,51, p = 0,00.

3.3.4. Cultural Values: division of housework[17]

Conservatism

More conservative individuals, when compared with the less conservative ones, (a) perceive greater contribution of women to domestic work and to childcare[18]; (b) consider that men perform more repair and maintenance tasks[19]; (c) but also perceive higher contribution of men to domestic work[20].

Traditionally most households have a clear distribution according to gender. Women tend to perform chores that take place inside the home and are closely associated with childcare. Past research confirms this tendency: whereas women contribute with a larger share to household labour than men, men do more household repairs and various maintenance tasks than women (Blair and Lichter 1991; Coltrane 2000; Mikula, Freundenthaller, Brennacher-Kroll and Bruschko 1997; Perista 2002; Presser 1994; Sanchez 1994). Moreover and according to a "doing gender" perspective, performing specific household tasks provides opportunities to demonstrate, to oneself and to others, that one is a competent member of a sex category able and wanting to perform appropriate gendered behaviours (Coltrane 2000). In this sense, men by doing more repair tasks and women by doing more housework are both complying with gender stereotypes and maintaining the tradition.

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[17] In order to observe differences according to values, individuals were distributed in 3 groups (high, medium or low), according to their standings on each cultural value.

[18] Average levels (contribution to domestic work by women): 4,99 and 4,36 by more and less conservative, respectively; $F = 1\,5,46$, $p = 0,00$ and (contribution to childcare by women): 5,06 and 4,82 by more and less conservative, respectively; $F = 3,76$, $p = 0,02$.

[19] Average levels (contribution to maintenance tasks by men): 4,55 and 4,03 by more and less conservative, respectively; $F = 7,85$, $p = 0,00$.

[20] Average levels (contribution to domestic work by men): 3,15 and 2,82 by more and less conservative, respectively; $F = 3,57$, $p = 0,029$.

Although both partners assume that the amount of domestic work performed by women is superior to the amount of work performed by men, why do more conservative men perceive themselves as doing more household chores than the less conservative?

It seems that stronger agreement with traditional gender roles and with the power of family authority over individuals leads to the perception of more housework performance. As we have seen previously, the conservative dimension includes two main ideas: one related to the maintenance of gender roles and other related to the maintenance of family cohesion. Conservative men's contribution to domestic work can be interpreted in this framework. Kulik and Rayan, stated that "the desire to maintain family harmony and stability encourages spouses to help each other cope with daily pressures" (2003, 69). Thus, in order to preserve family union and harmony, men realized they had to make greater contributions to the performance of housework. Furthermore, men who perform domestic work, attach a positive meaning to this task, because it is not expected, it is a matter of choice. They feel that engaging in these behaviours is a way of showing care for their family (Kroska 2003).

However, this result may not represent a truly equal contribution to household labour but just the perception that men do a lot, compared to what could be expected, according to their gender stereotype. Indeed, Benin and Agostinelli (1988), showed that wives' levels of satisfaction increase when husbands take on some of wives traditional tasks, even when the amount of time husbands spend on household chores is much less than the amount of time spent by their wives.

Open-mindedness

More open-minded individuals, compared with the less open-minded ones: (a) perceive women as performing more repair

and maintenance tasks[21]; (b) perceive men as performing more childcare[22]; (c) consider themselves as performing more domestic work[23]. This last phenomenon is more salient in the women's group: more open-minded women, in contrast with less open-minded ones, perceive themselves as doing more domestic tasks[24].

Open-minded values are associated to flexible reasoning and individuals who adhere to this value are more open to novelty and more likely to engage in exploration tasks, even if these tasks are traditionally considered typical of the other sex. Thus, from the more open-minded point of view, women perform more repair tasks and men more childcare, tasks that are not stereotypical for their gender.

According to a choice hypothesis (Kroska 2003), women and men do not have the same level of choice regarding the performance of housework. Performing task stereotypically assigned to own gender is not a matter of choice but is perceived a matter of obligation. On the other hand, doing work that is socially assigned to the other sex is a matter of choice. Therefore, men who do non-masculine chores (domestic or childcare chores) are more likely than women to be doing so out of choice, whereas women do the same tasks out of obligation. The opposite will be observed with regard to repair and maintenance tasks (Kroska 2003). Tasks performed out of choice are more salient and associated to more positive evaluations.

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[21] Average levels (contribution to maintenance tasks by women): 3,38 and 3,04 by more and less open-minded, respectively; F = 3,20, p = 0,04.

[22] Average levels (contribution childcare by men): 3,77 and 3,35 by more and less open-minded, respectively; F = 6,08, p = 0,00.

[23] Average levels (contribution to housework tasks by men): 3,13 and 2,87 by more and less open-minded, respectively; F = 3,05, p = 0,05 and (contribution to housework tasks by women): 4,86 and 4,54 by more and less open-minded, respectively; F = 3,89, p = 0,02.

[24] Average levels (contribution to housework tasks by women): 4,86 and 4,33 by more and less open-minded females, respectively; F = 5,77, p = 0,00.

More open-minded individuals also perceive themselves as doing more domestic tasks, and women to a higher degree than men. If men and women are perceived as more involved in non traditional family work, their total amount of housework may increase. Among women the phenomenon may be explained, on one hand, through the perception of the real division of home tasks and, on the other hand, through the perception of the distance between this and the desired division. Women are culturally expected to be accountable for household labour, thus the performance of this type of work is not a matter of choice but of obligation. Therefore women who value more non conventional and exciting tasks may feel domestic chores as more routine and boring and so perceive themselves as doing more than their partner, even when it is not the case, and certainly more than they want to do. When they also perform extra tasks (repair and maintenance), they may be more sensitive to the total amount of housework performed, and feel themselves overloaded.

Equity

Individuals with an average level of equity perceived that women perform less childcare than those with higher or lower level of equity[25]. To interpret these results we must analyse each equity groups separately.

Individuals who endorse less equity beliefs expect women to perform more childcare. This result is consistent with traditional gender roles, where women are expected to be the primary caregivers, especially when the children are young.

When the degree of adherence to equity rises to average level the perception of the amount of work performed by women is the

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[25] Average levels (contribution to childcare tasks by women): 5,01 and 4,82 and 5,00 by individuals who show lower, average and higher levels of Equity, respectively; F = 3,35, p = 0,04.

lowest. Research results are not very consistent in this domain. Some studies found that people with egalitarian ideologies evaluate the unbalanced division of family work as more unfair than those with traditional ideologies, while others do not present the same results. Some studies have stated that egalitarian gender ideology is a very consistent predictor of household labour sharing and others point out that the match between partners is the crucial aspect to be considered: spouses with similar views of egalitarianism are more likely to put this ideals into practice and to alter their contribution and their partner's to childcare (Apparalla *et al.* 2003; Coltrane 2000; Mikula 1998; Mikula *et al.* 1997). To understand these results, we are aware that even though individuals tend to behave in ways that fulfill the ideological identity they profess, it is not unusual that other factors make it impossible (Kroska 1997). In fact, many couples face a strong problem as they encounter social and economic obstacles to affirm self-identities behaviourally. Even when the level of equity is higher, women still perform more childcare than men. Despite disparities between the ideal division of household tasks and the reality, some individuals do not seem affected by this disparity because they managed to adapt cognitively to the situation. So, in order to sustain individuals' well being, one way to reduce stress is to change self-identities. This procedure is probably easier for individuals with lower commitment with equity values. Another way is, according to Kroska (1997), to change the meaning attached to elements of the situation, which are incongruent with one's identity. Thus, as the unequal division of family work causes a conflict between ideology and behaviour, in order to minimize this conflict, these individuals may alter their perception of the amount of work performed. Therefore, rather than changing their identities, people may revise their understandings of housework arrangements, so that these elements become congruent with their situational identities.

However, this leads us to another question: why do individuals with higher equity values perceive that women perform more childcare? Why do they not use the above mentioned strategies? These individuals are expected to suffer great distress in response to a discrepancy between their identity and behavioural patterns. Simultaneously, their commitment to equity values leads them to resist more in changing their self-identities. As childcare is the task where a more equal division is expected, both by men and women, they are also more aware about the real amount of work undertaken by women in this field. Therefore, they are more likely to alter the meaning of their contribution and their partner's to childcare, in order to be more congruent with their identity. Despite endorsing equity values, these individuals do not feel so threatened with the amount of women's childcare performance because they have attached a positive meaning to these tasks that is somehow harmonious with their identity.

The distance between ideal and reality increases according to commitment, while the likelihood of changing their self-identity decreases. To solve such a conflicting situation, highly committed groups should alter their perception of reality (women are less involved in childcare than they really are) or give a positive meaning to their behaviours to be less conflicting with their ideal.

3.3.5. Family work division and satisfaction

Unexpectedly, both men and women are satisfied (>3,0) with the present division of family work, although men are significantly more satisfied than women with this division[26]. As in other countries, this

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[26] Average levels of satisfaction (domestic/maintenance tasks): 4,48 and 3,98 by men and women respectively; F = 22,66, p = 0,000; and (childcare): 4,53 and 4,20 by men and women respectively; F = 10,30, p = 0,001.

apparently unbalanced division is perceived as fair, equitable and satisfactory, both by men and women (Baxter and Western, 1998). To explain these apparently contradictory arrangements many theories have been advanced, including women's lack of resources and power within marriage and the influence played by traditional gender representations. Some research examining the relationship between quality of marriage and satisfaction with domestic labour arrangements has shown that wives' dissatisfaction with the division of labour often results in overt marital conflict, whereas husbands' dissatisfaction does not (Stevens, Kiger and Riley 2001). In order to avoid these conflicts and to deal with a situation over which they feel they have little control, women may be compelled to readjust their expectations and demands, objectively defining unsatisfactory circumstances as satisfactory. Additionally, individuals may be comparing their own division practices with their parents': by doing so, the present division seems more egalitarian and satisfactory (Poeschl 2002).

Besides the previous accounts, two other variables may be influencing men and women's levels of satisfaction with family work division: the perceived gratification resulting from the performance of family work and the amount of work performed by oneself and by one's partner (view Figure 1).

Figure 1. Family Work Division and Satisfaction
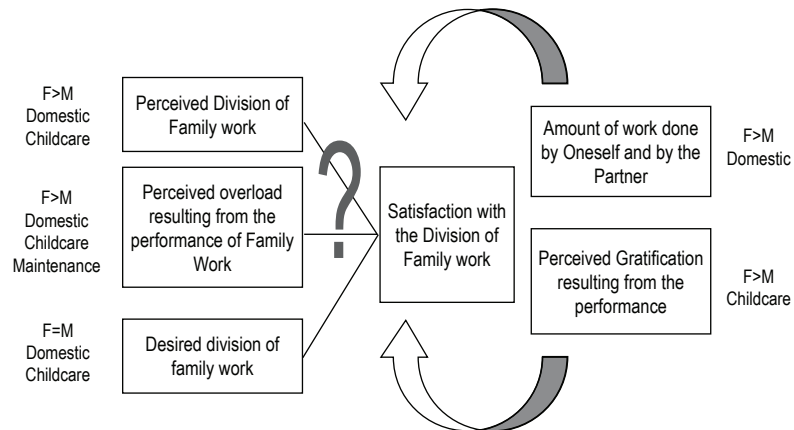
Both for men and women, the higher is the level of gratification, the higher the satisfaction with its division[27]. Additionally, when men view themselves as performing more housework (domestic and maintenance tasks), and women view their husband as performing more housework, both are significantly more satisfied with the division of these tasks[28].

In our sample, the fulfilment derived from the performance of childcare seems to contribute to explain women's level of satisfaction with the present division of this task. Additionally, the higher the level of gratification with the performance of family labour, the higher the satisfaction with the division, both for men and for women.

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[27] Average levels of satisfaction (domestic/maintenance tasks): 4,56 and 3,90 for more and less gratification, respectively; $F = 13,98$, $p = 0,000$; and (childcare): 4,49 and 3,67 for more and less gratification, respectively; $F = 13, 46$, $p = 0,001$.

[28] Men's average levels of satisfaction (housework done by men): 4,74 and 4,17 for more and less domestic work, respectively; $F = 5,14$; $p = 0,006$.
Women's average levels of satisfaction (housework done by men): 4,64 and 3,52 for more and less domestic work, respectively; $F = 15,94$; $p = 0,000$.

We also observe, that the more men contribute to domestic and maintenance tasks, the more satisfied women are and also men themselves. For the majority of men, maintenance tasks are consonant with their traditional gender role and an expected source of fulfilment. However, non traditionally gender allocated tasks, such as domestic chores, which are probably a matter of choice, are seen as more satisfactory (Kroska, 2003). Moreover, by "helping" their partners, husbands may be contributing to marital satisfaction and to family cohesion (Kulik and Rayan 2003). We may conclude that for women, satisfaction with the division is not necessarily a simple function of the degree of equity in hours worked, but also of the degree of solidarity shown by their partners. Some support for this view has been found by Benin and Agostinelli (1988), who reported that wives' levels of satisfaction increase when husbands take on some of women's traditional tasks, even when the amount of time they spend on household chores is much less than the amount of time spent by their wives.

In sum, the amount of work done by each member of the couple, the perceived burden deriving from family tasks and the desire for an equitable division contradict with women's levels of satisfaction with the division of family work. This paradox is better understood if we take into account the amount of work performed by the husband and the gratification resulting from the performance of family tasks perceived by both members of the couple. These results undoubtedly raise issues about the meaning of equity within households.

4. Conclusions

The number of dual earned families is increasing in Europe and is the most common pattern in Portugal. Even though the breadwinner role is shared by both partners, equality in the household division

has not yet been achieved.

The question of the division of family work gains additional relevance in families with young children. Lack of satisfaction with the actual division of labour will have negative implications for the couple. At the same time, results of previous research show that the division of family work becomes more unequal when individuals become parents.

Portuguese results confirm this pattern. Both partners agree with the higher women's involvement in house work, with some specific features (more maintenance tasks for men, more domestic chores and childcare for women); both men and women perceive all types of family work as gratifying, although women, more than men, experience the overload of all tasks. Results also demonstrated that women tend to be satisfied with this unbalanced distribution. These unexpected but consistent results have stimulated research to identify which factors could explain this paradox. Since both men and women desire a more equitable division of family work, they need to readjust their expectations, defining unsatisfactory situations as satisfactory.

An overview of several theoretical explanations and research findings has shown that the introduction of a bias in perceptions and cognitive interpretations can change the characteristics of the situations. From the equity theory perspective, individual satisfaction depends on the balance between the amount of personal contribution to family life and corresponding rewards. Rewards vary according to the power each member of the family has. Since economic contributions are more valued than emotional or social ones, more power will be gained from the former than from the latter. The fact that women have a lower economic income than men (INE 2002) puts women in a less favourable position to accede rewards. Therefore, in order to increase their relative power, women also take on most

of the household tasks.

Strangely enough, the situation does not change when both partners have the same level of income, or when the women's incomes are higher. It means that the distribution of family work is not exclusively due to a rational choice, whose aim is to balance the partners' power after a careful evaluation of resources, contribution and rewards. The distribution of family work seems to have a symbolic function, which is closely related to gender identity. In order to build, confirm or reinforce their gender identity, people refer to masculine and feminine models, which vary according to social and personal values.

Our results enhance the association among values and division of family chores. In Portugal, the dominant gender role model is a traditional one: men are expected to be the main family providers and women to be responsible for family household chores and emotional well-being. In order to be considered by society as a "good" man or woman, partners need to conform to this dominant model. According to the "doing gender" perspective, this process is activated when gender identity is more salient, after marriage or parenthood, for instance. The male and female socialization processes help to develop competences that allow both of them to play these traditional roles well, to get more gratification when performing them and to be more satisfied with the distribution of professional and family duties. This process is clear when people share conservative values. Even in this case, individuals perceive men as doing more household tasks. Our results also show that this perception is associated with higher levels of satisfaction with the division of family tasks. The masculine involvement in family tasks is not expected from traditional gender roles. It is assumed to be an option. When something is performed out of option, it leads to more satisfaction and is viewed as an act of solidarity. In Portuguese

couples, satisfaction with the distribution of family work is more associated to men's participation, more particularly in the case of the non-conventional tasks such as domestic ones.

Our results also report that equity is highly valued by young couples who desire a more egalitarian division of family work. They also show that these intentions are not translated into concrete action and the real division is unbalanced in everyday life. It is clear that several factors make it difficult to fulfil the ideological identity they profess. In order to reduce conflicts and distress caused by the gap between ideal and reality, they must narrow this gap cognitively. Several strategies are commonly used: (a) to assume that men and women are not members of the same social category and to only make comparisons among same sex member of other couples; (b) to introduce bias in perception of the amount of work done by each partner to fit the value they share and (c) to attach a positive meaning to the present division in order to be less conflicting with the ideal one.

We can conclude that the necessity to balance family power and to confirm gender identity, according to social and personal values, jointly contribute to maintain the unbalanced division of family work and also for both men and women to perceive this division as satisfactory.

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CHAPTER 5

The gendered organisation of paid work, housework and voluntary work in Swedish households

Karina Nilsson and Mattias Strandh

1. Introduction

Sweden is often presented as a positive example when it comes to gender equality. And there are indeed many aspects of Swedish men's and women's lives that differ from many other Europeans'. For example, Swedish women's labour force participation rate is almost as high as men's (OECD 2001), a fact that has contributed to women's increasing economic independence. Many changes have played a role in this development such as individualisation of taxation and comprehensive day-care for children. These changes have not only resulted in a new reality in the Swedish labour market, where women's employment is now taken for granted. Paid work and access to an income also play an increasingly important role not only for women's daily life and bread-winning, but also for women's self image and identity. Employment is a natural part of both men's and women's lives, and is even regarded as one of the more important preconditions to start a family and to have children (Löfström 2003; Duvander and Olsson 2001; Hoem 2000). The increased labour market participation of women has meant a radical change in the household division of paid labour, and it has not been relevant to speak of a male breadwinner in Sweden for decades. This change in the household division of one form of labour also changes

the preconditions for other forms of labour performed within the household. Women's increased participation in paid labour means that they have less time for housework and voluntary work, types of work women traditionally have had the main responsibility for in most households.

In this article we argue that the necessary work conducted in and by the household is much wider than paid labour, and consists of all housework necessary for the functioning of the household, as well as unpaid voluntary work is crucial for the reproduction of society. The aim of this article is to empirically investigate how Swedish households and who in them participate in different forms of work. In order to study this we use a national representative survey of 1287 households.

2. What is work in the household?

The rising participation of women in the labour market has probably been one of the most remarkable shifts towards increasing gender equality. At the same time, the traditional neoclassical view of work as something that only is conducted in the labour market has been contested, upgrading the traditional activities of women in the household to the status of work. These two processes are to a large extent interrelated. The large scale entry of married women in the labour market made the necessity and workload represented by housework much more visible through the strain of keeping it up within dual earning households. Because of the limitations of available time and resources, paid work and housework are interrelated, as demonstrated through the strain the double workload for women shown in several studies (see, for instance Hertz 1986; Orpana 2003). This so much that there is a growing consensus among researchers that the solution to the problems of the remaining of

gender inequalities in the labour market actually might have to be sought less in the labour market than in the gender distribution of housework (see for instance Perrons 2000).

The interrelatedness as well as the household perspective on different forms of work are issues still often neglected in studies of work. However, proper research of the gender division of paid work and unpaid housework cannot be conducted separately. Glucksman (1995) has suggested an approach where she argues that work in a given society best can be understood as the "total social division of labour" (TSOL). A society could thus be defined through the social division of all labour between the public and private spheres. Work is here defined as all those activities necessary for the production and reproduction of a given society, irrespective of how and where it is carried out. According to Glucksman, this approach entails a broad perspective on what constitutes work that nevertheless keeps the concept useful by limiting it to economic activities. Work becomes all those activities, paid and unpaid (in the labour market or in the household), necessary for the physical survival of the species and the social survival of the given society.

The TSOL approach as developed by Glucksman is designed for the historical comparison of societies. Despite this, the broad concept of work as activities necessary for the reproduction of society, and the emphasis on the interrelationship between different forms of work could make it a useful tool when analysing how households participate and organise work. If instead a household perspective is applied on work we can define it as participation in activities that might take place in different spheres (public or private), but which are necessary for the reproduction of the household. Looking at what, from this perspective, constitute work for the household several more or less central forms can be delineated. Firstly, there is *paid labour* in the labour market. Participation in paid labour provides the

necessary economic resources for reproducing the household both physically (for instance, paying for food and a roof over the head), but also socially through providing the resources necessary for fully partaking in society. Secondly we have what could be labelled unpaid *housework*. This work is of course also necessary for the physical survival of the household as well as its social reproduction.

We would finally also like to argue for a third form of work done by households. This is unpaid work outside the household, something which is usually somewhat neglected in studies of work, but is of importance for the household's reproduction. Unpaid *voluntary work* for non-profit organisations or within social networks is responsible for a large part of society's reproduction (for instance, education of children, care of children or elderly and necessary handiwork). These activities are in many cases directed towards solving problems and needs of households and are therefore often necessary for the reproduction of the household. The term voluntary work does not mean that it is completely voluntary for households. Activities in clubs where the household's children are educated, helping friends and family with care or pitching in when help is needed are parts of exchange relationships. If the household does not participate in the activities it can not count on relying on them for their own benefits. Beside this very economic side, participation in voluntary work might also be necessary for the household's social participation in extended family and local society.

We have identified three forms of work and acknowledged that they, through resource limitations, are interconnected within the household. This allows us to see work in the household as a balance between these three forms of work. To investigate the balance between different forms of work would however not supply a good picture of work in the household, as it would treat the household as a unit and not as an organisation. Work in the household consists

not only of the balance between these different forms of work, but also of the social organisation of it. As both the man and the woman in the cohabiting household are able to participate in all three forms of work, there is quite likely a gendered division of labour that needs to be investigated. The large scale entry of women in the labour market shows also that the gendered division of labour is socially constructed. This means that it could be expected to vary between households according to household demands and characteristics of the available workers within the household, as well as values or traditions.

This article aims to investigate how households in Sweden participate in and organise paid work, housework and voluntary work. This is done through answering the following research questions: 1) What work does the household participate in, and what does the gender division of this labour look like in different household types? 2) How do different household characteristics affect the household participation in, and division of, labour in cohabiting households?

3. Earlier research

The first question focuses on *how housework, paid work and voluntary work are gendered in different types of household*. Let us first consider *paid work*, which in Sweden, as mentioned earlier, is a norm for both men and women. In 2002, 76% of the women between the age of 16-64 were part of the labour force. This can be compared to the 2001 average of 60% in all EU countries and 70% in the US and Canada (OECD 2001). However, even if paid labour seems to be a strong norm for women, the organisation of this labour differs from that of men's. The Swedish labour market is gender segregated, with women mainly working in the public sector. Furthermore, women generally have a lower income, and have more part-time

positions compared to men, differences accentuated by children in the household. These gender differences correspond well with other western countries (see for example, Tijdens 2002; Bittmann 1999; Coltrane 2000; Sirianni and Negrey 2000).

Turning to *housework,* the general pattern is that women still have the main responsibility for housework, and men spend more time in paid labour (Statistics Sweden 2002). This is of course not unique to Sweden, and the uneven responsibility for housework often starts with marriage. Gupta (1999) finds that the marital status has a different effect on men's and women's time spent performing routine housework in the USA. For men who form a couple household, the time spent doing housework is reduced, whereas women increase their time for housework. When studying the effect of separation, the reverse effect was found: women decreased their time in housework while men increased theirs. Thus, living with a partner has opposite effect for women and men. However, not only having a partner increases women's time spent in housework, children are one very important issue for the workload. Becoming a mother seems to be the crucial point in life, where women's responsibilities in the household increase (Flood and Gråsjö 1997; Bittman 1999).

The tendency to conceptualise work as a dichotomy of public employment and private unpaid work has to a large extent excluded *voluntary work* from the sociological understanding of work (Taylor 2004). For this reason relatively little research has been done on the topic, at least in comparison with the two other forms of work discussed in this paper. What is clear, at least from a Swedish perspective, is that voluntary work is an important activity. In 1998 58% of the Swedish population worked an average of 12 hours a month for non profit organisations. Looking at more informal voluntary work, 30% of the Swedish population did in 1998 same amount of work within social networks. The work was gendered insofar that men had a somewhat

higher involvement in voluntary work for organisations (SOU 1999, 84). This would appear to make involvement in voluntary work somewhat differently gendered in Sweden as compared to Anglo-Saxon countries such as Australia and New Zeeland where female involvement seems to be higher than male involvement. A reason for this might be found in the differences in welfare systems where care in Sweden to a large extent has become public, leaving voluntary work for organisations to be less care related than what might be the case in New Zeeland and Australia. Voluntary works appears however, in Sweden as well as in Australia and New Zeeland, to be connected with middle age (Ongley 2001; ABS 2002; SOU 1999, 84) and to be more common the higher the education a person has (SOU 1999, 84; Egerton 2002). Our second research question concerns *how different household characteristics affect the household participation in, and division of, labour in cohabiting households*. One such factor already mentioned is household composition, where different composition renders different demands and possibilities regarding work. Here not only the presence of children seem to be a potential factor influencing the household participation in and gender division of labour, but also the age of the children. For instance, women with young children do more housework and are more likely to work part-time (Kalleberg and Rosenfeld 1990).

Another factor that could be expected to be influential is the human capital make up of the household. As the cohabiting household consists of two persons who might have differing market value this might be of great importance for how paid and unpaid labour is divided in order to maximize the income earning capabilities. This argument has often been used in order to explain gender differences in participation in paid work and housework, where the higher education of men is used in order to explain the lower labour market participation of women (see for instance, Becker 1991). That the human capital of

household members does spill over from paid work to housework has been shown in several studies. Blair and Lichter (1991) for instance show that in U.S. couples where women have a higher education, the housework is more equally shared, although their results show that housework is highly segregated even for highly educated couples. The results regarding housework do not always support the notion that households would divide the work in order to gain maximum effect of their combined human capital. Davies and Carrier (1999) find that, in Canada, lower income for women is associated with a higher degree of unpaid housework, but they also find higher income for men correlates with more time in unpaid housework. In the same way "better educated men" in Canada, Norway and Sweden have been found to do higher proportion of unpaid housework (Kalleberg and Rosenfeld 1990), while lower social class for men in the United Kingdom have been found to be connected with a higher degree of housework responsibilities for their partners (Bond and Sales 2001).

A final characteristic of the household that might affect the participation in different forms of work and the household division of this labour is age. This could be through differential values carried by different generations (such as post-materialists' values argued by, for instance, Inglehart 1990), something perhaps indicated by Kalleberg and Rosenfeld finding older Norwegian women doing more household work (1990). Another way age could be of importance would be through age differences between the partners. The age difference between spouses would here explain differences in the division of labour within the household. Rothstein (1999) has argued that the income differences between men and women could be explained by the woman typically being three years younger than her spouse. Age could here be seen as human capital that is used to maximize the income earning capabilities of the entire household.

4. WORKLOAD IN COHABITING HOUSEHOLD: DATA AND VARIABLES OF THE STUDY

This article focuses on the total workload, and the distribution of it, in cohabiting households. This means that access to information is needed, not only of paid work done in the labour market, but also of unpaid housework and voluntary work done for non-profit organisations or friends and neighbours. We also have to be able to break this information down further as all these three forms of work can be conducted by either the man, the woman or by both. In order to do this we make use of the Swedish part of a survey, collected within the EU fifth framework project "Household Work and Flexibility" (HWF) and designed to cover combinations of paid and unpaid labour among household members. The Swedish HWF survey was conducted through telephone interviews on a national random sample of 1892 individuals 18-64 in the spring of 2001. Of these, interviews were conducted with 1287 respondents (response rate 68%) representing the same number of households. Comparative analyses of respondents and non-respondents using register data indicate that the falling off creates no problems for the generalisability of the data set.

In order to take into account the three different forms of work conducted by households, and the distribution of work within the household, we had to construct three measures for each form of work. The three variables used in order to investigate households participation in paid work are the simplest and of the best quality. Here the numbers of weekly working hours in all paid jobs for 1) the man, 2) the woman and 3) for the household in total are used as measures. When looking at housework the HWF-survey does not provide the possibility for the same exact measuring, as was the case with paid work. Here we instead had to create three relational variables where housework essentially is assumed to be an equal

burden in all households. This assumption is of course wrong, as we know that there are circumstances, such as children, that will make the workload heavier. Despite this, we had to construct three variables based on the respondent's statement of who is mainly responsible for the cooking, the cleaning of the house, laundering, and the daily shopping. Concerning each of these tasks the respondent could answer that it was her/himself, that it was her/his partner, that it was shared equally or that somebody else did it (in most cases as a bought service). From this we constructed three variables that essentially measured the distribution of housework: 1) the number of tasks for which the man is mainly responsible, 2) the number of tasks for which the woman is mainly responsible and 3) the number of tasks shared equally. All of these variables go from 0-4 but can together add up to only four (as there were four tasks), although the total can be lower than four as the household can buy the service.

For measuring voluntary work two questions intended to show the household members' activity in unpaid work outside the household were used. Here the respondent has a chance to indicate if: a) In the last year, has he/she or her/his partner done voluntary work for a non-profit organization such as a charity, church, sports club, educational or recreational association and so on, at least on a monthly basis, and b) In the last year, has he/she or her/his partner done any unpaid work for a relative or friend outside the household at least monthly. For each spouse the positive answers on each question were counted as one, creating two measures of the spouses' voluntary work activity. 1) The man's participation in voluntary work, 2) the woman's participation in voluntary work, both of which can vary between 0-2 independently of each other. These were added to a third measure: 3) the household's total participation in voluntary work, which could vary between 0-4. The measures

of involvement in voluntary work thus share with the measures of paid work the possibility of different levels of involvement between different households.

As discussed previously there are a number of household characteristics that could affect the household participation in, and division of, labour. In order to investigate this a number of independent variables indicating household characteristics are used in the article. The household composition of the cohabiting household is indicated through presence of children in the household and the age of the youngest child. The human capital make up of the household is measured through an educational variable that take into account both spouses' education with the possible values: man high/woman high, man high/woman low, man low/woman high, man low/woman low. A spouse is here counted as having a low education if he/she has less than a completed three year gymnasium education and high if he/she has a three year gymnasium education or higher (university). Factors related to the age of the household members are measured through two variables. The combined age of the spouses, which is meant to capture generation, and the mans age with the woman's age subtracted (a positive number means that the man is older than the woman) in order to capture gendered age differences within the household. The article finally also uses a five tiered regional variable as an additional control variable.

4.1. Results

After having discussed what might be regarded as necessary forms of work for the household we shall now look at how different household types participate and distribute this work. In table 1 the mean level of involvement in the different forms of work by the household members are presented. The household types presented

in the table include not only couples with and without children for whom the gendered distribution of the work in the household is an issue, but also four different kinds of single adult households. This is done in order to achieve an understanding of what happens to the participation in different forms of work for a man or a woman entering cohabitation and, perhaps at a later point in time, having children. Such a development is of course not necessarily the case for single individuals or couples (as the presence of single parents show, the development could also go in the other direction), but the idea of it and comparison of the different types makes it possible to have a look at what happens to the work situation for men and women in the household during a common life course.

Starting with looking at participation in paid labour in table 1 we can see some interesting, although well known, differences between the household types. Looking only at those who live in single adult households, there are initially no significant differences in working hours between men and women or between single fathers/mothers and those who do not have children. Working hours for single adults are around 30 hours and the two groups who slightly stand out, although not significantly, are single fathers, who work a couple of hours more, and single women who work around 25 hours. If looking at the difference between single women and single men this difference also becomes statistically significant at the 0.05 level. There are a couple of factors that might explain why single women should have somewhat fewer working hours than other single groups. This group is to some extent dominated by younger individuals as women enter cohabitation earlier than men, and single women have to a larger extent not finished their education and have become established in the labour market. Women also study longer than men in Sweden which also would help to explain single women's somewhat lower participation in paid labour.

If there are relatively small differences in participation in paid labour between the single adult households, we find some more interesting differences when including those who cohabit. Looking at the working hours for men, we find that they are significantly higher (0.05 level) going from those who are single men to those who are cohabiting. Whereas the single men on average work 30 hours a week, those who cohabit work on average 35 hours. This might be a question of age, but is probably less so than in the case with the single women discussed above, as this group also contains a large proportion with grown children. The group, which stands out, is however the cohabiting fathers, who work on average almost 42 hours a week. This difference is strongly significant in relation to both the cohabiting men and the single men. What makes this especially noteworthy is that we see nothing of the sort when looking at the women. There are no statistically significant differences between single women (although as mentioned before they seem to work less), cohabiting women and cohabiting mothers, who all work around 30 hours.

Looking at the total hours, single households, both male and female, work roughly 30 hours regardless of the presence of children. For cohabitating the average working time is higher than the combination of the working time of a single man and a single woman, over 65 hours a week. The higher working time is further accentuated for households with children, when working hours reach almost 73 hours a week. This development of working hours appears almost totally to be the result of the man's greater working hours when cohabiting and/or being a cohabiting father.

Table 1. Mean level of involvement in the different forms of work by type of household

	Working hours			Responsibility for housework			Voluntary work		
	Man	Woman	Household	Man	Woman	Shared	Man	Woman	Household
Single man (n=165)	30,25		30,25	3,91			0,49		0,49
Single woman (n=110)		24,88	24,88		3,84			0,36	0,36
Single man with children (n=21)	32,10		32,10	3,95			0,52		0,52
Single woman with children (n=57)		30,58	30,58		3,91			0,49	0,49
	***	No sig,	***	(*)	***	*	**	No sig,	(*)
Couple (n=362)	35,08	30,31	65,39	0,43	1,91	1,64	0,46	0,40	0,86
Couple with children (n=500)	41,75	30,94	72,69	0,34	2,20	1,43	0,58	0,41	0,99

Levels of significance: ***=0,001-level **=0,01-level *=0,05-level (*)= 0,01

Turning to the responsibility for housework, the second form of work for the household, we see something that might explain what facilitates this development of male participation in paid labour. If we start looking at the responsibility for housework among the single household types we see that there are no differences between single men or single women. Both men and women take responsibility for all their housework and it is very uncommon for single households in Sweden to have alternative solutions, such as buying services or having their own parents take responsibility for housework. As discussed earlier, we do not know if taking responsibility for the

housework means the same level of work (in the case of those with children as compared to those without we certainly know it does not), but in all cases it means that they take the responsibility themselves for the reproduction of the household in the form of necessary housework.

This similarity in housework responsibility among single men and women is however not replicated among the cohabiting couples. Even though the weight of housework might be argued to decrease for a couple as compared to two single households through economy of scale, the housework is not distributed equally. Of the four housework items the woman in a cohabiting couple takes the responsibility for almost two (1,91), the man for almost a half (0,43) with the rest shared equally. With a child the distribution of housework is even less equally distributed, even though the workload probably increases. The cohabiting mother has statistically significantly more responsibility for the housework than the cohabiting woman without children. These are responsibilities taken over mainly from the previously shared responsibilities, but also seem to be taken over from the man to some extent. It is here interesting to note that the larger workload in the form of housework for the cohabiting mother as compared to the cohabiting woman is not as we have seen offset by lower participation in paid labour. One possibility is that the development of male paid working hours in the different household types is made possible by the entry of a woman into the housework of the cohabiting couple. The conclusion for the development of men's participation in paid labour and housework could then be that men are more or less like women until they marry, and even further take on what can be seen as the traditional role of the man when they get children.

In the same way as there are no differences between singles when it comes to the responsibility for the housework items there

are also differences when it comes to voluntary work. The trend is that the single parents participate somewhat more in voluntary work than the singles of the same sex do but this difference is not significant. Cohabiting men and women do also not significantly deviate from the singles when it comes to participation in voluntary work, and this also goes for the cohabiting mothers. The group that statistically significantly stands out is the cohabiting fathers who participate in voluntary work to a greater extent. Having a child in a cohabiting relationship is thus not only connected to increased participation in paid work for the father and a further transfer of the already unequally distributed housework to the mother, but also an increased household participation in voluntary work via the father.

4.2. The effect of household characteristics

One factor that has been discussed earlier is the possibility of differences in education and thus market value of men and women. Through different values on the labour market, the maximum use of the man's and the woman's labour ability might be reached through a division of labour where the partner with the greatest market value concentrates on participation in paid employment and the partner with lower market value on housework. The need for such an arrangement would be intensified by the extra demand for both economic resources and housework that having children implies. This could very well explain the differences between male and female participation in paid and unpaid labour and the differences in participation and organisation of work between couples with and without children. In table 2 the means for the different forms of work by the man and the woman in cohabiting households have been divided up, depending on the education of the woman and the man, and if there are children in the household.

Table 2. Mean level of involvement in the different forms of work by educational status in the household.

	Working hours			Responsibility for housework			Voluntary work		
	Man	Woman	Household	Man	Woman	Shared	Man	Woman	Household
Couple	**	*	*	*	***	***			
Both low (n=120)	30,59	28,27	58,86	0,31	2,31	1,37	0,39	0,41	0,79
Man high-woman low (n=34)	39,35	23,03	62,38	0,50	1,91	1,53	0,55	0,38	0,94
Woman high-man low (n=45)	35,98	29,82	65,80	0,27	2,40	1,33	0,64	0,53	1,18
Both high (n=154)	37,86	33,65	71,51	0,56	1,46	1,94	0,44	0,37	0,81
Couple with children	***		**		***	*			
Both low (n=140)	37,71	30,05	67,76	0,27	2,34	1,34	0,50	0,34	0,84
Man high-woman low (n=47)	40,62	27,06	67,68	0,26	2,68	1,06	0,63	0,35	0,98
Woman high-man low (n=85)	40,25	31,52	71,76	0,38	2,28	1,33	0,60	0,42	1,01
Both high (n=205)	44,48	32,71	77,19	0,40	1,95	1,61	0,62	0,45	1,07

Levels of significance: ***=0,001-level **=0,01-level *=0,05-level (*)= 0,01

What we can see in table 2 is that there are indeed variations in the participation in different forms of work depending on the educational makeup of the household. As could be assumed from a human capital explanation there is a strong relationship between

the education of the man and the participation in paid labour in both couples and couples with children. Higher educated men do longer hours in paid labour. Somewhat curios, however, is the fact that if the woman in the household has a high level of education and the man a low level of education the man works longer hours than in a household where the woman also has a low education. This is further accentuated when looking at how the education affects the woman's participation in paid labour. Here higher education is related to longer hours among couples without children, with the twist that if the man has a high education and the woman not, she actually works fewer hours than if the man also has a low education. Looking at couples with children we further find that the predicted relationship between working hours and education does not exist at all for women. In all types of couples women also work shorter hours than men. This is also true in couples where the human capital value of the woman should be greater than that of the man. This contradiction of the human capital assumption is replicated when looking at the responsibility for housework, where, despite a significantly lower responsibility for the high education group of women, the responsibilities of men in any group come even remotely close to the responsibilities of women. The gendered division of household labour does thus not seem to be created by human capital differences between men and women; in fact the households seem to often divide the household labour in a way that is contradictory to the most efficient use of it. This is something that implies that patriarchal roles and power relations within the household might be much stronger than economic rationality.

So far we have bivariately seen that the household type and human capital of the household affect the participation in, and division of different forms of work. In table 3, multiple regressions for the man's and woman's participation in the different forms of work are

presented. Here it is possible to see how the independent variables influence the man's and woman's participation in the different forms of work, controlled by the other independent variables in the model.

Table 3. OLS-regression models on the different kinds of work in the household.

	Working hours			Responsibility for housework			Voluntary work		
	Man	Woman	HH	Man	Woman	Shared	Man	Woman	HH
Constant	39,96	26,27	66,22	0,31	0,86	2,85	0,17	0,24	0,40
Age of youngest child (no children ref,)									
0-5 years	3,41	-3,32	0,08	-0,10	0,44**	-0,36*	-0,04	-0,10	-0,14
06-10 years	7,14***	1,29	8,43**	0,04	0,17	-0,22	0,07	-0,14(*)	-0,07
10-15 years	6,23***	1,09	7,33**	-0,08	0,28*	-0,24(*)	0,16*	0,10	0,26*
16- years	7,02***	2,92	9,93***	-0,04	0,34**	-0,30**	0,23***	0,11(*)	0,34**
Age diff, Partners	-0,21	0,08	-0,13	0,01	0,01	-0,02*	0,00	0,00	0,01
Combined HH age	-0,06*	0,04	-0,02	0,00	0,01***	-0,01***	0,00	0,00	0,00
Education level (both low ref,)									
Man high/woman low	4,55*	-4,05(*)	0,50	0,07	0,11	-0,17	0,18*	-0,01	0,18
Woman high/man low	1,39	2,6	4,07	0,08	0,16	-0,22(*)	0,19**	0,07	0,26*
Both high	5,06*	5,02**	10,1***	0,19**	-0,33**	0,13	0,18**	0,09	0,27**
Region (Stockholm ref.)									
Gothenburg/Malmö	-1,71	-1,93	-3,64	-0,13	0,37*	-0,25(*)	-0,01	0,05	0,05
Middle sized town	-2,88	-2,54	-5,42*	-0,10	0,46***	-0,35**	0,09	0,02	0,12
Small town	-1,24	-2,73	-3,97	-0,18*	0,55***	-0,36**	0,18*	0,06	0,24(*)
Country side	-0,45	-3,07	-3,52	0,15	0,25	-0,35	0,21	0,23(*)	0,44*

Levels of significance: ***=0,001-level **=0,01-level *=0,05-level (*)= 0,01

Previously we have seen that the presence of children is of importance for the participation and division of household work. Looking at the effect of the age of the youngest child we see these tentative findings more confirmed also when inspecting other characteristics. It is clear that having children mean increased

involvement in paid labour for the man, while it does not affect the working time of the woman. Something, which is interesting to note, is however that the age of the youngest child does seem to be of importance. If there is a preschool child in the household the men do not work significantly longer hours compared to men in couples without children. It is not until the child is older that there is a strong positive effect on working hours for men. The increased workload that the care of a young child means possibly prevents an immediate strong increase in working hours. This is supported by the fact that women with preschool children have lower working hours than other women (this is not significant in this table but the differences between women with young children and women with older children are significant if either of these groups is used in the constant). Turning to housework, the presence of children in the household have the same effect on housework responsibilities seen earlier in the paper. Having children means increased female responsibilities for housework; work tasks, which previously might have been shared. Notable is that this effect seems to be strongest for those couples with preschool children, something that perhaps not would have been expected given that the men in this group do not significantly increase their paid labour. Concerning voluntary work, having younger children is not connected with an increased participation for the household (if anything, having young children means decreased participation). We find the increased participation in voluntary work for mainly the fathers only in those households with children ten years or older.

When investigating other household characteristics in table 3 we find that age, which is here measured through two variables, has relatively little effect. Looking at the age difference between the spouses, measured according to how much older the man is than the woman we find only one significant relationship and that

is that households where the man is older tend to share less of the housework. It is thus very unlikely that the general gender division of labour is caused by structural age differences in couples. Looking at the combined household age we find that men participate in paid work somewhat less in older couples, something that fits in with older groups doing shorter hours. What we also find is that the distribution of housework is more equal in younger couples than in older couples. The shared responsibility is less the older the couple is, which then entails a greater female responsibility for the housework. This would appear to provide quite a positive outlook for a generational shift in the gendered division of household work (at least housework). It is, however, the result of the strong relationship between age and housework in couples without children. When the regression model is done split for the presence of children there is no relationship between household age and the division of housework in couples with children. Neither of the two age variables have a relationship with voluntary work.

What we see in table 3 mainly confirm our previous findings for the issue of education. A higher education for the man means increased labour market participation while a higher education for the woman means higher labour market participation only if the man also has a higher education. It is also in these couples where both the man and the woman have higher education we can find a more equal gender division of housework. Having a higher education is for the woman connected with less housework responsibilities only if the partner also has a higher education. Higher education in the household is further connected with a greater degree of participation in voluntary work, something that agrees with participation in voluntary work being connected to a greater degree of public activity in households with more resources. This greater participation in voluntary work in households with higher education is, as has been noticed before

when looking at voluntary work, mostly a male activity. It is interesting to note that we find a higher degree of participation in voluntary work not only when the man has a higher education, but also in households where the man has a low education but the woman a higher education. The higher public activity in the form of voluntary work, of households with more resources, is thus carried by the man even if he is not the individual in the household who would represent these resources.

5. Conclusion

In this article we have empirically investigated the households participation in three types of work (paid labour, housework and voluntary work), and how this work is organised by household members. Two research questions were asked, the first dealing with what kind of work the household participates in, and in what manner the work performed is gendered. When it came to paid work, we studied working hours for men and women in different household types. Despite the fact that single women without children worked the fewest hours, we did not find any significant differences between women when it came to hours in paid labour. For men, however, having children and/or a partner had effect on hours in paid labour. Men living with a partner, and especially cohabiting men with children, worked more hours. When studying responsibility for housework, we found no difference between single men and women. The gendered division of housework became visible among couples, where men had disproportionably fewer responsibilities as compared to single men. Women had a greater responsibility for housework in cohabiting couples than men, and an even larger share of the responsibilities in household with children, thus showing that couples with children have the most unequal relationship when it comes to housework. For

voluntary work, a significant difference between men and women was once again found among couples with children, where men seem to put more effort into voluntary work. These initial results indicate the importance of household type when identifying and analyzing gendered differences in work. Having a partner and having children accentuated gender differences in all types of work studied. From these results it could be argued that men's participation in work, rather than women's, change depending on the household situation, since men with children and/or partner differ significantly from single men.

Secondly, we asked how different household characteristics affect participation in different forms of work, and the household division of work within cohabiting households. We divided our analyses into two steps; firstly we studied the role of education (i.e. human capital) separately. Secondly we made a multiple regression model where we incorporated other variables into the analysis. In our analysis of education, we found a strong relationship between education and working hours for men, supporting the idea that higher education would mean longer working hours. This effect was however strongly gendered, and the same effect was not found for women when it came to both working hours and responsibility for housework. In fact, women's participation in paid work and housework did to a large extent seem to be more connected to the education of their partners than their own education, something that indicate that the gender ideology of the man might be of importance for the gendered division of labour. The organisation of working hours and housework thus seem to be influenced more by both traditional gender structures and men's position in them, than by economic rationality.

The meaning of different household characteristics was further investigated in our OLS-regression model, where we looked at the age of the youngest children, age differences between partners,

age in household, educational level, and region where the couples lived. One surprising result was the absence of age differences and a generational effect, since one hypothesis could be that gender roles change over time and thus differ between generations. Even if the age of the adult household members did not have an effect on the organization of labour, we however found that the *age of youngest child* played an important role. Having children younger than 6 years did not mean increased working hours for men, but it did mean increased housework responsibility for women. Men with children older than 5, however, had longer working hours than men without children and young children. The results for voluntary work similarly showed significant effect only for men with children aged 10 and up. Men with older children had higher involvement in voluntary work, indicating that men also take on more of at least one form of unpaid work when having children. It thus appears as if not only the presence of children is of great importance for the gendered organisation of work in the household but the age of them as well, where the increasing age of the child seems to be related to the increasing participation in both paid work as well as voluntary work for men in Sweden.

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Conclusions: some unsolved dilemmas and the risk of forgetting family

Isabella Crespi

Although some significant improvements have certainly been made – especially in terms of women's emancipation, gender equity and maternity policies – it should however be noticed that some fundamental issues still remain unresolved and continue to pose problems. Many studies highlight the need for a more deepened approach to gender, family and work relationship. As we saw, in recent years great attention as been given to family well-being effects in workplace and to community studies. These push forward in order to consider the possibility to involve more social subjects in the redefinition of social policies facilitating work-family balance.

Let us briefly investigate them.

a) Individual (*subject*) vs. relational (*network*)

Firstly, it should be noticed that gender relationships in the labour market and within the family – expressed through the gender division of roles and responsibilities – have produced different family models in terms of income and occupation. Most countries show a tendency towards a dominant family model (dual earner family), which present some interesting differences related to the different cultural frameworks where family-friendly provisions are issued.

The tendency towards individualisation is a sort of cultural "super dimension" inspiring the design of social policies; it also underpins the workfare approach and it informs policies addressing single

subjects (women, men, children, and the elderly) who, according to the urgency of the hour, are targeted as the beneficiaries of actions.

The drift towards the individualisation of the social sphere is an additional reason to detect where emphatic, care, equality and relational behaviour develops or can be developed in the light of sexual difference. No subject is neutral: gender is not only a sociological variable: it becomes a relational concept, where relationality is not understood as a mere structural element of feminist psychology, but also as an exploratory approach opposed to the one underpinning public/private, and production/reproduction dichotomies: relationality is perceived as a convention of feminist thought.

Being involved in relationships with others is the precondition of individual responsibility. But when and how should people be responsible? How can feelings of responsibility develop in a market which causes a fragmentation of time, space and distance between individuals? In this market, is there room for individual choice? In which case, are people willing to undertake the risk connected to it?

On the one hand, this risk is presumably avoided through a greater legal regulation of social relationships, whereby the law is called upon to regulate relationships. On the other hand, women know that excessive regulation contributed to institutional control over their lives and bodies, which deprived them of their own sex and embedded it in an imaginary and dangerous neutrality. Social interaction underlies responsible behaviour, which we do not consider as a component of the ethics of care but, on the contrary, as a behaviour informed by relationality, which presumes a voluntary participation in building social relations or producing rules regulating relationships. This notion of responsibility is a concept that should be implemented in sociological analysis. For this reason, a particular attention was given to the idea of care, that is taking care of others and taking in serious consideration other people's welfare (Heimer

and Staffen 1998), choice, promotion and autonomy (Vincenti 2005, 179-180).

The lack of attention towards family welfare results in a tendency to consider family policies as provisions to be addressed always and exclusively to individuals and not to the relationships between them. This inattentiveness is all the more significant in work-family measures: is it possible to envisage work-family reconciliation policies targeting individuals (women, men, and children) and, at the same time, safeguard relationships?

Hence, an individualistic approach prevails. Although Equal Opportunities commission also advance claims on behalf of families, demands and perspectives are basically of an individualistic nature. Actions are driven by circumstantial considerations and they are aimed at the provision of particularised material services rather than at the production of relational goods. Evidently, it becomes necessary to combine workers' and employers' interests for the sake of mutual utility. However, mutual utility is construed in a strictly material sense, where no consideration is paid to the importance of an atmosphere of mutual trust and cooperation (Donati 2005b, 14-15).

Consequently, it is important to redefine the issue of work-family reconciliation: the work-family balance must be focused on and translated in terms of citizenship. Relational citizenship, in itself and for itself, implies that:

• "people's rights must be understood in a relational way; they should not be constructed according to an individualistic perspective but, on the contrary, they should be perceived in terms of relationships;

• the satisfaction of requirements and needs should not be construed following a utilitarian approach, but, on the contrary, it must meet existence needs;

• workplace practice should not be *gender neutral*: on the

contrary, it should value and ensure respect for gender differences. Differentiating practice on the basis of gender differences means pursuing reciprocity between sexes and having due regard of the different production modes of males and females" (Donati 2005b, 18).

Relational differentiation, however, should not be understood as synonymous of a lesser or less advanced functional differentiation; it does not imply a de-differentiation of the work-family relationship; on the contrary, it is a multi-stranded approach: it is a differentiation made according to the very distinctive features of relationships.

Inevitably, as a result of the shift from a functional differentiation (Lib-Lab) system to one based on relational differentiation (societal), actors and forms of governance change. Although the former model (Lib-Lab) is characterised by indisputably important measures (prescriptive, negotiation, and birth incentive policies), it should be noticed that it has a serious limitation, being the result of a compromise between the State and the market, excluding the family. The guiding principle should not be "work at all costs and then take care of the family" but, on the contrary, "ensure that work could add to (be subsidiary to) the family just like the family should add to (be subsidiary to) employment" (Donati 2005b, 21). This approach is being adopted by companies that have embraced a subsidiarity model, which implies the introduction of the "family time" element in work contracts. After all, this is what the new economy is about: a range of diversified work activities as opposed to standardised jobs regulated by collective agreements, as it used to be in the Fordist era.

b) Gender vs. family

Secondly, the trade-off between gender equality and family policies is engendering a sort of competition in individual life paths

between women's aspirations and the creation of a family.

The problem has become feminised: though it is now evident that work-family reconciliation issues concern both men and women, in practice, these questions are considered mostly in terms of women's responsibilities; alternatively, they only address women rather than gender difference (Lewis 2003; Kimmel 2000).

There is a need for recognition that inequality between women and men is a relational issue and that inequalities are not going to be resolved through a focus only on women.

'Gender' is often used as shorthand for 'women'. Most development practitioners direct the bulk of their 'gender mainstreaming' efforts toward activities that aim to empower women economically and politically, protect their rights, and increase their representation in all manner of decision-making bodies. But gender isn't just about women. Gender refers to socially constructed roles of both women *and men* as well as the relationships between them in a given society at a specific time and place. Yet where are men in the discourse on gender, family and work?

A feminised gender construction still prevails. Only few actions are developed in consideration of a work-family balance; most policy interventions still reflect the construction of these questions as *women's issues*.

Gender difference is therefore overcome by a gender neutral approach, where the neutralisation of differences between men and women (differentiated universalism) – though inspired by the positive principle of doing away with inequalities – might eventually prove to be a very doubtful advantage: when gender relations are considered solely in terms of equality/inequality, there is a danger to lose sight of or remove attention from the original, positive difference underlying gender relations. This results in a neutralistic attitude, where the actual value of gender difference is removed from political

and cultural discourse. To solve or prevent inequalities, you null differences.

More attention needed to be brought to the relations between women and men, particularly with regard to the division of labour, access to and control over resources, and potential for decision-making. There was increased understanding of the importance of seeking out male allies and in working with men to jointly redefine gender roles and relations. Thus there was a need to move away from 'women' as a target group, to gender equality as a development goal.

Consequently, scholars and policy makers stress that equal opportunities schemes should not be addressed exclusively or almost exclusively to women since, in spite of their undeniable usefulness, they might reinforce the traditional separation of life spheres between genders and consequently strengthen gender stereotypes. These measures should address men too and meet needs that several studies show to be growing, at least among younger male generations (Donati 2005b).

In fact, not only do they demand greater male commitment to the family, which would be wholly justifiable; they also implicitly advocate the full exchangeability of gender roles, which, on the contrary, appears inappropriate: in fact, male opposition is not only indicative of men's cultural backwardness; it also reveals a different way of perceiving and experiencing the family.

Realistically, the question is how to promote a cultural change – without necessarily imposing it by law – and get men increasingly involved in childcare and "household" tasks: in fact, the model whereby men are the breadwinners and women look after the family and the home still seems to be the unspoken rule. It clearly appears that if the subjects themselves are not able to develop a shared life plan, work-family reconciliation cannot possibly be achieved since,

to a certain extent, this also calls for a culture change. In all countries, irrespective of their degree of gender equality, it appears difficult and sometimes even unthinkable to implement family-friendly policies – and especially legislation on parental leave – unless a real culture change is brought about. A major cultural problem still underlies hierarchical relationships between men and women and, to some extent, work relationships too. The culture change towards men's involvement in household tasks is rather slow, though it is showing some positive signals.

The real objective of European policies is not to achieve parity and equality in a strictly statistical sense, but to promote mutual change through the permanent development of social and personal relationships. Gender equality means an equal visibility, empowerment and participation of both sexes in all spheres of public and private life. But, gender equality is the opposite of gender inequality, not of gender difference.

Hence, the principle of equal opportunities does not only concern women, but men and women alike as subjects who should contribute to the detection of their respective specificities and ensuing responsibilities in a positive way. The ultimate goal, however, remains a profound institutional, social and labour change, where parity could easily be accomplished in a new cultural context.

At a European level, family policies seem to be oriented towards childcare policies or lone parents policies, which are, probably not coincidentally, the fields where there are greater calls for policies and interventions to tackle new poverty. Moreover, as a result of the reconciliation between work and family, family policies are currently being replaced by gender equality policies (Bould 2006).

Such framework – equal opportunities on the one hand and female emancipation on the other, in a competitive and little-regulated market – seems to lead to a potential contraposition, or trade-off,

between equal opportunity and family (or family-friendly) policies In this regard, an interesting paradox should be noticed: although in the countries considered in this work the family is seen as the key element of family-friendly measures, in actual fact, it appears that the two pillars of the current European strategy to promote work-family balance (equal opportunities and full female employment) might actually destroy the family, which is exactly what they intend to protect.

Instead of focusing on the family and on the welfare of the individual within family relationships, in order to compete in both European and global markets, greater emphasis is placed on equal opportunities and the possibility of self-determination as individuals in the labour market. This trade-off is not a desirable integration of the two dimensions; on the contrary, it produces a sort of schizophrenia, which becomes apparent in the difficult management of the times of everyday life or in the dissatisfaction with one's way of life.

Furthermore, this choice, embedded in a culture of individualisation, considers family welfare as irrelevant and secondary to the wellbeing of women, children, and lone mothers: it thus appears to favour individual wellbeing to the detriment of a collective subject like the family and its potential for the whole society (Donati 2003a).

According to Prandini (2006), following a multidimensional and multi-layered process of growing social and political convergence, Europe is developing an active welfare state characterised by mother-friendly policies. This selective blend of liberal and social democratic principles has produced a social-liberal (Lib/lab) welfare model (Donati 2005a), which adopts an ambiguous and contradictory approach towards the family. This new "system" has some ironical consequences; it produces individualisation, the erosion of social networks and the contracting, the marketing and the de-socialisation of citizenship, and other things which are the very occurrences that

it is supposed to "make right". Family is shoved to the background and concealed, exactly when its presence is needed the most. This results in a highly critical social situation (Donati 2003a; Prandini 2006) which is characterised, on the one hand, by openness and new individual freedoms and, on the other, by increasingly pervasive control. In order to break this downward spiral, it is necessary to review the very foundations of family welfare and re-think it in a pluralistic and societal perspective.

It is important to emphasise that equal opportunities policies have been interpreted as "facilitating an equal chance of securing employment in addition to determining one's equal chances in securing social welfare benefits" (Drew, Emerek and Mahon 1998, 158). Equal opportunities in the workplace, citizenship rights and social welfare policies are all intertwined. It is therefore vital to examine the concept of equal opportunities understood as equality in conditions conducive to access to and participation in the labour force in a comparative perspective. State policy can be more or less mother friendly.

c) Individualisation vs. responsibility

A key element for establishing the structure and the outcome of family-friendly measures is the supposed and the actual relationship between families and, on the other hand, the labour market and the State.

The dominant approach in Europe nowadays is "utilitarian/ productivist, and work-oriented. Although in principle Equal Opportunities commissions refuse to deal with work-family reconciliation issues on utilitarian grounds, and especially for the sake of greater work efficiency, in practice, on the contrary, they consider equal opportunities as a means to make the whole system

increasingly productive and competitive. The notion whereby work eradicates poverty, which is certainly true on a sociological level, should be used with caution when dealing with situations like lone mothers with children or family situations incompatible with employment. Furthermore, women who choose to devote their time entirely to their family should be protected and respected; in Europe, only France and Germany seem to show some concern for this issue. The corporate perspective prevails. The variety of issues and situations addressed by the best practices analysed in this study is wide: as described above, they range from vocational training to counselling, from the redefinition of organisational models to the rescheduling of working times. Workfare strategies are definitely the norm. They are for the most part corporate measures (which were adopted in a corporate perspective) with little or no coordination with families and with entire local service networks" (Donati 2005b).

Therefore, the underlying, workfare notion that seems to prevail is that the family and the time allocated to it should anyway be subsidiary to work; the opposite case is not acceptable, since it goes against Europe's most extreme versions of free competition.

Finally it should be noted that there is a persistent difficulty in making the labour market share some responsibility in the pursuit of effective family-friendly policies.

Work-family conflict stems from a process of functional differentiation, which started in the modern era. This process, which reached its climax with the individualisation of work and family life, eventually led to the decline of this very type of differentiation and brought about a new form of social differentiation between the two areas of life. Nowadays, in order to reduce conflict, new synergies are being developed with the aim of bringing family and work together in a less alienating and estranging way. Generally, the strategies produced so far have been of a political and administrative nature

(at central and local levels) or, to a lesser extent, of a market nature (employers' offer). Families and third sector organisations have been considered solely as actors needing assistance and benefits. Consequently, work-family reconciliation has been considered predominantly as a matter of "increasing women's participation in the formal labour market and demanding more strength for women when competing with men on the success ladder" (Donati 2005b, 18). Relational policies, on the contrary, are based upon concepts of reciprocity in relationships and cultural identity; they therefore involve a number of different actors, such as political institutions, companies, the private non-profit sector and families (Donati 2005a). The issues concerning the relationship between work and family are surely complex and multidimensional: "striking a balance therefore means enabling multiple strategies that could reflect a more satisfactory way of living" (Donati 2005a, 76).

Recently, work-family scholars and practitioners have suggested that our understanding of the work, community and family domains would be also enriched by incorporating community into the analysis of work and family. In response, beginning steps have been taken in this direction. Voydanoff (2001) provides a framework for integrating community into the analysis of work and family. It reviews existing research on two types of mesosystem connections among work, community and family: (i) direct relationships, in which characteristics of one or more microsystems are associated with characteristics of another microsystem; and (ii) the combined effects of two or more microsystems, that is, the work-family, work-community, community-family and work-community-family interfaces, on various outcomes. The article reveals important gaps in our knowledge and provides suggestions for future work that can lead to an integration of community into work and family research.

Also Rayman and Bookman (1999) review existing work, family,

and community research and public policy in terms of prevailing strengths and deficiencies and then set forth possibilities for a future agenda. In the last decades, there has been considerable effort from researchers and public policymakers to set an agenda for the United States on work, family, and community issues. There has been movement in both research and public policy to connect work and family perspectives, and, more recently, community contexts have been recognized as well. However, current research and public policy models have been limited by a number of deficiencies that prevent them from developing and implementing an agenda that has the capacity to move our nation forward to meet the challenges that lie ahead. In addition, there is little direct connection between the findings from current research and the content of new public policies.

The fundamental principle that could convey the spirit of the new society most effectively is subsidiarity (Donati and Colozzi 2005), which should not be separated from solidarity. In the broader sense of the word, this principle states that "the action of each subject, whoever he or she may be, must be subsidiary to other individuals not simply by helping them in case of need, (as implied in the etymological meaning of "subsidy"), but also because by helping them, he/she respects and promotes them in their dignity and autonomous responsibility" (Donati 1999, 70).

The principle of subsidiarity rediscover the connection between the freedom and, on the other hand, the responsibility of each (individual and collective) subject within an overall framework where each person – in their own sphere of action – contributes to the common good by collaborating to the design and the realisation of effective and innovative social policies; these policies, in their turn, should no longer be focused on specific groups or individuals but they should be inspired by the same relational principles informing civil society. Such are *subsidiary strategies*. They define and deal

with work/life reconciliation through work-family enhancement and they consider work as subsidiary to family – or rather they value work, wherever it might be, provided it is humane. The State is considered as subsidiary to civil society (a combination made of companies, families and the non-profit sector); consequently, the State only steps in to define family-friendly measures only where this is necessary and useful to promote work-family balance. The objective is a community-based welfare system, to be achieved through the promotion of a good work-family balance; this synergy is realised within a community framework and the success of this approach is measured by the welfare of the community. Work-family balance, according to subsidiarity, should be inherently satisfying; it is a good in itself, which is generated by means of a relational framework. The framework illustrated above represents an ideal model that should inspire social policies and reconciliation tools in order to promote apparently scarcely reconcilable or even conflicting rights in a harmonic way.

This new perspective overcomes the *Lib-Lab* idea of the welfare state and focuses on three key elements. Firstly, it builds welfare around the subjects involved, who become makers and receivers at the same time. This notion has a clear bearing on the design and the implementation of social policies, which are no longer imposed upon citizens but, on the contrary, are the expression of their own needs. Secondly, the State takes its original political role as guardian of the common good: it becomes the maker of general rules, not the "producer" of civil society or a power system that "(in its view, understanding and practice) considers civil society as a means to political hegemony" (Donati 1999, 66). Lastly, the notion of an all-inclusive institutional structure gives way to the promotion of competitive solidarity between various different groups.

As mentioned above, this new system, among other things, creates

a proliferation of sites and places for developing civil relationships. Civil society thus becomes a collection of places for communication and dialogue where subjects meet, exchange opinions and make plans for the future. The family, school, and community agencies become the basic institutions of this society, where human identity is shaped by means of interpersonal communication. These places are and will be the site where the challenge of welfare and, consequently, of social policies will lie.

Work-family reconciliation should result from a common recognition and taking of responsibility on the part of the various spheres of society: the family, work, the State and civil society. Existing work-family policies, on the contrary, seem to find a great obstacle – which is undoubtedly mainly culture-related – in the resistance of the labour market to view itself as being accessory and related to the family and to acknowledge family-friendly policies as a way to resolve not only individual but also relational conflicts. Therefore, the challenge ahead is for policies to find a way to make all subjects truly participate and share responsibilities.

Summing up...

Gender mainstreaming process and strategy and gender equality principle seems to become the core of every policy related to reconciliation policies, family policies and even employment ones. Given a so strong cultural and symbolic orientation seems always more and more difficult make progress about relational aspects of individuals' life. In this sense gender policies, that emphasise the importance of dialogue, practice and negotiation in the relationship among men and women/work and family/ individuals and institutions, fail in catching the specific relationality of this process. The lack of attention towards family welfare results in a tendency to consider

family policies as provisions to be addressed always and exclusively to individuals and not to the relationships between them.

The risk of underestimate the importance of family relationship is high and growing. This inattentiveness is all the more significant in work-family measures: is it possible to envisage work-family reconciliation policies targeting individuals (women, men, and children) and, at the same time, safeguard relationships?

Within this framework, the introduction of new tools and approaches addressing the changes in family life and its organisation, but also in workplaces can enhance the understanding of this phenomenon and the design of social policies, both in terms of equal opportunities and for the development of gender mainstreaming, respecting the multidimensional and relational life of individuals.

The new challenge seems to be the need to reconcile gender, family and work not only through policies but in their basic meaning for individual life; people experiences different spheres of life as an intertwined process, not artificially separable.

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GENDER MAINSTREAMING AND FAMILY POLICY IN EUROPE: PERSPECTIVES, RESEARCHES AND DEBATES

Edited by Isabella Crespi

Gender mainstreaming was established as a major global strategy for the promotion of gender equality in the Beijing Platform for Action from the Fourth United Nations World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995. Also Europe has been focusing increasing attention on gender issues, and especially on considerations on the female condition. After 10 years (and something), the evaluation of equal opportunities mainly focuses on qualification measures for unemployed women and improvements for childcare facilities, the consideration of gender mainstreaming in other policy areas as well as macro economic effects on employment and unemployment of women. Recent developments in European countries are that more and more women are joining the labour force, birth rates are declining and social policies are mainly orienting their measures towards gender equality. Whereas previously the countries with the highest period fertility rates were those in which family-oriented cultural traditions were most pronounced and in which women's labour market participation was least, these relationships are now wholly reversed. These problems, set within a European framework of public spending cuts, make it difficult to maintain and sustain the current type of welfare state. This book focuses on the relation between family and gender mainstreaming to stress, if and how, the debate on the topic of reconciliation policies, family policies and gender issues are implemented in the European social policy systems. Each author addresses this issue in their own terms; thanks to their original approach, it is possible appreciate a variety of aspects, which intertwine in different ways but which all contribute to simplify the multidimensional framework of the relationship between gender, family and work in the European arena.

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