

FAMILY PLATFORM

Existential Field 5:

Patterns and Trends of Family Management in the European Union

Working Report (April 2010)



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Working Reports

Funded by the European Commission's Seventh Framework Programme and co-ordinated by Technical University Dortmund, FAMILYPLATFORM gathers a consortium of 12 organisations working together to articulate key questions about the family for the *European Social Science and Humanities Research Agenda 2012-2013*.

There are four key stages to the project. The first is to chart and review the major trends of comparative family research in the EU in 8 'Existential Fields' (EF). The second is to critically review existing research on the family, and the third is to build on our understanding of existing issues affecting families and predict future conditions and challenges facing them. The final stage is to bring the results and findings of the previous three stages together, and propose key scientific research questions about families to be tackled with future EU research funding.

This *Working Report* has been produced for the first stage of the project, and is part of a series of reports, as follows:

- EF1. Family Structures & Family Forms**
- EF2. a) Family Developmental Processes**
 - b) Transition into Parenthood**
- EF3. Major Trends of State Family Policies in Europe**
- EF4. a) Family and Living Environment**
 - b) Local Politics – Programmes and Best Practice Models**
- EF5. Patterns and Trends of Family Management in the European Union**
- EF6. a) Social Care and Social Services**
 - b) Development of Standards for Social Work and Social Care Services**
- EF7. Social Inequality and Diversity of Families**
- EF8. Media, Communication and Information Technologies in the European Family**
- CSO Civil Society Perspective: Three Case Studies**

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1 Introduction

In this section of the report models of family-management in Europe are investigated. By *family-management* we mean the allocation of tasks and duties that typically need to be carried out by members of the households. We differentiate between *paid* and *unpaid work* and – within the second category – between *household duties* and *childrearing* and look at how these activities are shared by household-members. We focus on *heterosexual couple families* and investigate how they manage and find their strategies to share labour between themselves and as a consequence to allocate their time between the various duties.

Couple families include families of married or unmarried couples with or without children. Although the division of paid work as well as of housework is an issue also in families without children we will see that much more variability can be found in the practice of families with children. Therefore even in these areas more attention will be paid to those couples who have a child or more in their households. Obviously, the problem of childrearing can only be interpreted for this group.

There is a strong *gender aspect* involved in this topic. Paid as well as unpaid work is unequally distributed between men and women in each European society – although the extent of the differences varies considerably. Cultural traditions relating to gender roles shape individual attitudes as well as social norms in a number of ways that can have a direct effect on work-sharing behaviour. Despite the efforts taken by several European societies to create a policy environment that conforms men and women equally, gender remains a substantial factor of the work-distributing behaviour in the labour market as well as in the household. Both areas offer different opportunities for men and women and also the rewards they provide for their performance tends to vary. This statement holds to some extent even in the most equal societies.

We have to notice that our three domains – paid work, household duties and childrearing – are strongly interrelated themselves. This is not only so because the amount of time spent on one of these tasks will inevitably restrict the amount of time available for the others, but also because they are all underpinned by very similar factors: beliefs and values regarding gender roles, the structural environment of the families and also to individual characteristics of the

actors. Still, it is often (explicitly or implicitly) assumed in the literature that the decision about paid work precedes the decisions about how unpaid housework and childrearing will be shared in the household. Therefore the involvement in paid work is often considered as an explanatory factor in the contribution to the other two domains. In our review we will be following a similar logic when starting with the description of paid work and continuing on the other duties, but we have to keep in mind that the situation is much more complex than this, influences often operate in the opposite direction and the relationship between paid and unpaid work is far from deterministic.

Before turning to our findings, we have to mention that family management as discussed in this paper is rather close to the widely used concepts of *work-family (or work-life) balance* or *reconciliation of work and family life*. Although not always applied with the same meaning, work-family balance and reconciliation of work and family life have been in the focus of scholars of family life as well as European policy-makers for decades now, and they have been attached to a series of policy aims including gender equality, increased fertility rates, prevention of loss of human capital and (consequently) economic growth (Knijn & Smit, 2009). The work-life balance (or reconciliation) perspective focuses on state-policies as well as employers' measures that facilitate employment of individuals (especially women) with family commitments. Our approach of concentrating on family management as described above is certainly concerned about these issues, but beside the policy- and labour market constraints and facilitators of women's employment, we also take cultural aspects and individual preferences into account. Furthermore, we do not consider women's employment normatively but as one possible way of coping with families' needs, constraints and opportunities. As far as available resources allow, we will look at the combined strategies of couples and women's behaviour will also be discussed in the light of her partner's labour market position and attitudes. On the other hand (as it was said before) unlike scholars of work and family balance, we narrow down our investigation to couples and among caring responsibilities we concentrate on care for children and not the elderly or other family members.

The present research review is based on two main types of resources. First we looked at reports, reviews, statistics and overviews of related areas produced or commissioned by international bodies, such as the European Commission and OECD. Since „family

management” as such has rarely been a subject of such reports, we turned to summaries of related areas, most importantly reconciliation of work and family life or work-life balance. Secondly, a throughout review of academic journals was carried out, making use of major online resources such as www.jstor.org and www.sage.com. In most of the cases we restricted our search to papers written in English. Although many relevant research in this field of family life were carried out outside Europe (mainly in the USA), we concentrated on European resources and a preference was given to inter-country comparisons. Notes and comments on non-European research papers will be included when we found that they were raising important issues and interesting aspects that have so far been missing from the European research agenda. Preference was given to empirical studies that imply multivariate statistical techniques in order to differentiate between the various explanatory factors that determine individual behaviour.

Our section is divided as follows. Chapter 3 describes the main findings of this research review in the area of our two domains, paid work and unpaid work. Under each domain we will start by introducing key statistics on major trends in Europe (although this effort of us was strongly limited by data-availability as we will see later). Statistics will then be followed by the description of empirical research findings on the key factors influencing the behaviour described before. Together with empirical findings the theoretical underpinning of the research strands in question will also be described. Chapter 4 includes methodological discussion. Here we describe the main data sources used in the empirical studies introduced and we will also comment on data constraints and methodological problems encountered in our work. Main conclusions and comments on gaps in existing research will be provided in Chapter 5.

2 Results of the research review

3.1 Paid work

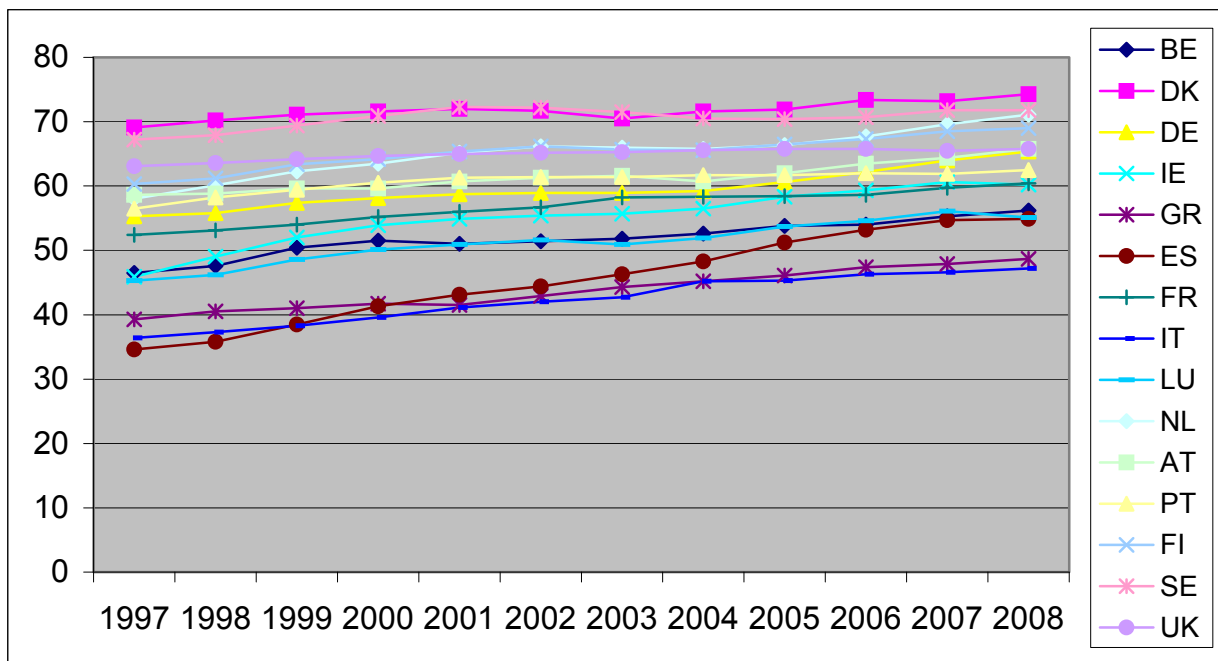
3.1.1 Main trends and cross-national (dis)similarities in the division of paid work

The key trend in the division of labour in the past decades in Europe is undoubtedly the substantial growth of women's employment that – on the household-level – resulted in the expansion of the two-earner model. Such a brief summary is however necessarily simplifying and hiding major variations within as well as between countries and also in time. Some of these variations can be highlighted by basic labour force statistics.

Figure 1. shows that women's employment rates in most of the old member states (EU-15) continued their already increasing trends also after 1997 and reached relatively high, although strongly varying levels by 2008¹.

¹ EULFS provides comparable data from 1997 onwards only.

Figure 1. Female employment rate in the old EU member states between 1997 and 2008. Population aged 15 to 64.



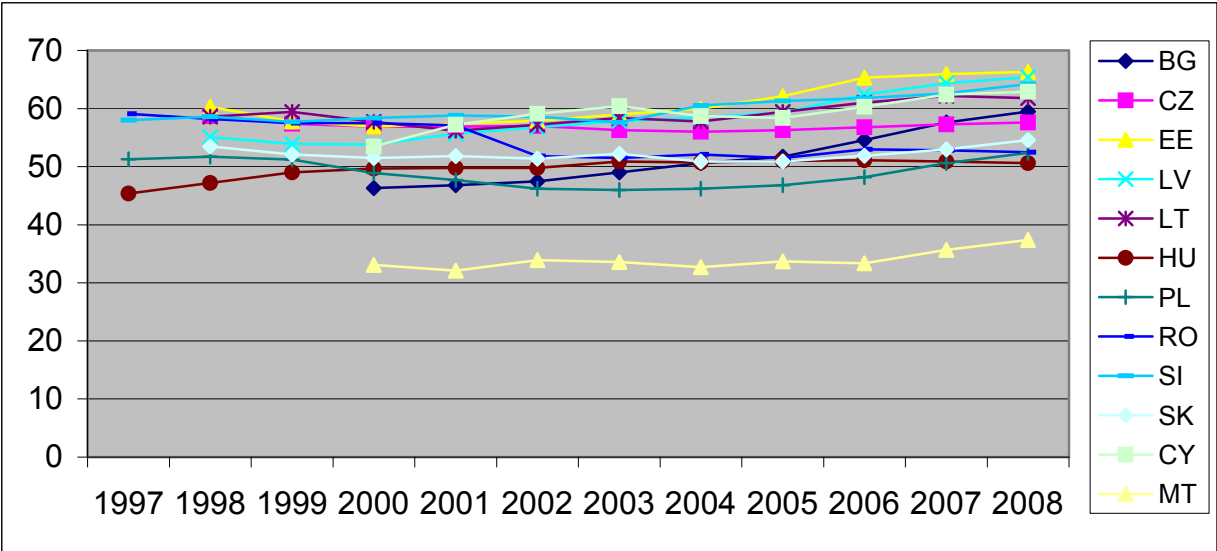
Source: EUROSTAT online database, LFS data

As also demonstrated in Figure 1, pace of employment growth varied in time – typically depending on the economic cycle (Eurostat, 2009). Growth of female employment since 1997 exceeded the EU-15 average (9.6 percentage point) most notably in Spain (20.3) but also in Ireland (14.3) and in the Netherlands (13.1). Still, the Nordic countries – with their ratios exceeding or at least almost exceeding 70 % – remain to be the leaders in Europe as far as female employment is concerned. Other old member states with a female employment ratio over the 60 % Lisbon target set by 2010 and already approaching 70 % include Austria (65.8), Germany (65.4 %), and the UK (65.8 %). On the other end of the scale are two Southern countries: Italy (47.2 %) and Greece (48.7 %). They are lagging far behind Spain, their counterpart in the region (54.9 %) and the „Southern exception”, Portugal (62.5 %).

With their socialist past the Central and Eastern European (CEE) member-states show similar but also some diverging patterns in the area of employment. In these countries an almost universal female employment was typical before the political change in 1989-1990, which was then followed by a marked drop in most of these countries. Most often, this fall-back was a

consequence of the general crisis in the labour market and drop in female employment did not exceed (considerably) the drop in men’s employment. After the collapse however, the different countries in the region followed different patterns as far as female employment is concerned (see Figure 2.).

Figure 2. Female employment rate in the old EU member states between 1997 and 2008. Population aged 15 to 64.



Source: EUROSTAT online database, LFS data

Since 2000 a marked growth has been taking place in Bulgaria, Latvia and Estonia, whereas the pace of increase has been more moderate in Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia, and

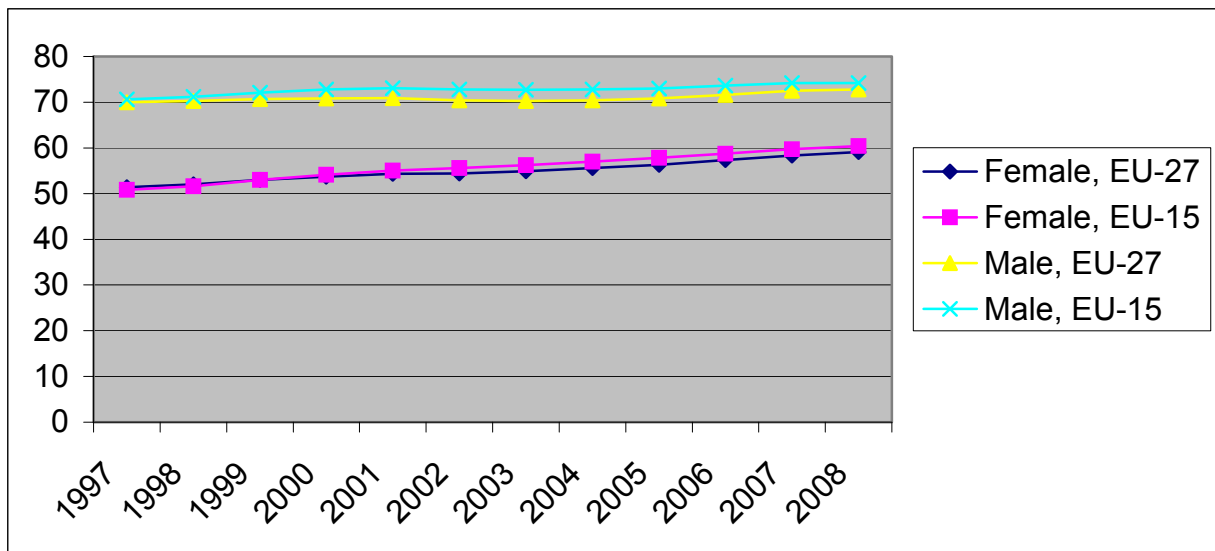
no increase could be witnessed in the Czech Republic, Hungary and (presumably)² also in Romania. As a consequence of their different paths after 1989, by 2008 marked differences in female employment are present in the region. Female employment rate in 2008 was just above 50 % in Hungary, Poland and Romania whereas Estonia, Latvia and Slovenia has already passed the Lisbon target with a female employment level around 65 % (see also e.g. Scharle, 2007)

Among the so-called new member states Malta and Cyprus have their specific historic routes. Malta has a traditionally low level of female employment, with only a slight increase since 2000 (37.4 % in 2008). Cyprus on the other hand even exceeds the EU-15 average with an employment level of 62.9 % among women in 2008.

Indeed, changes in the labour market activity in the past couple of decades can mostly be attributed to changes in women's employment and not to changes in male activity. As Chart 3 suggests, employment rate of men shows a much more moderate increase during this period in Europe than does the similar figure for women. Although it has narrowed, the gap between men and female employment remained considerable also in 2008.

² In Romania the break in the data-series provided by EUROSTAT is accompanied by a significant fall in female employment ratio therefore we do not compare data from before and after 2001.

Figure 3. Employment rate of population aged 15 to 64 in the European Union by gender



Source: Eurostat online database, LFS data

The overall trends in men’s and women’s employment provide us with only basic indication of how the overall share of labour between couples has been changing over historical time. More details on the nature of the dynamics in these patterns can be learned from statistics concentrating on women (and men) around their typical birth-giving age and on parents’ employment. In fact such data – although they include cross-sectional information – already give some indication of the highly dynamic nature of the division of labour between couples. Significant events in the life-course, most importantly child-birth make couples re-organize their previous arrangements. When a child is born, typically the mother will reduce her activity in the labour market – but to what extent and for how long this happens, depends on a range of factors which we will discuss later. At the same time, men with children tend to work more than childless men do – although the nature of the relationship between having a child and employment is less clear.

In Table 2 general employment rates of women aged between 25 and 49, and then employment rates of mothers with children at various ages are given. We also present what we call the „toddler-effect” (calculated as the difference between column 1 and 2), the „small child effect” (calculated as the difference between column 1 and 3) and the child effect

(calculated as the difference between column 1 and 4). Size of the toddler-effect shows that young mothers decrease their labour market activity in each European country (with the exception of Malta) and they do so to quite a significant extent in some of them. Countries with the greatest „toddler-effect” include the Czech Republic (50.4 %), Hungary, (49.3 %), Estonia (45.7 %), Slovakia (45.6 %) and also Bulgaria (33.6 %) and Latvia (32.1 %). More modest is the toddler-effect in the old member states, with the highest measures found in Finland (26.8 %), Austria (20.8 %) and the UK (18.2 %).³

The size of the small-child effect and even more so the size of the child effect make it however clear that in the majority of the cases mothers’ absence from the labour market is only temporary. The negative impact of having a small child exceeds only in the Czech Republic, Bulgaria and Lithuania - 15 %, and the only country where the gap between the employment rate of mothers with under-16 children and the employment rate of the overall female population exceeds 10 % is Ireland.

³ For variations in the definitions of maternal employment between the various countries, interpreting this data requires great attention. „In principle, all women on maternity or on statutory paid parental leave (legal or contractual) are counted as employed. EU-guidelines stipulate counting parents on parental leave as employees absent for other reasons: they should be counted as employed if the period of absence is less than 3 months or if they continue to receive a significant portion of previous earnings (at least 50%). However, national treatment of long or unpaid parental leave varies widely. For example, many parents on parental leave in Austria (up to 2 years) are counted as inactive, while leave is technically unpaid (there is an income support benefit for all parents with a child not yet 30 months old (see indicator PF7). By contrast, many of the parents in Finland on home-care leave (which is often taken when the child is 1 to 3 years of age) are often included in the employment statistics”. (OECD 2009b pp 4.)

Table 2. Female employment ratio by age of child in the European Union 2007

	Female employment ratio (25-49 age cohort)	Maternal employment ratio (child under 3)	Maternal employment ratio (child 3-5 years - "small child")	Maternal employment ratio (child under 16)	Toddler-effect	Small child effect	Child-effect
AT	76,1	55,3	67,1	72,3	-20,8	-9,1	-3,9
BE	74,1	64,4	67,9	72,7	-9,6	-6,2	-1,4
BG	75,1	41,6	59,4	72,0	-33,6	-15,7	-3,2
CY	76,5	69,4	73,1	74,8	-7,0	-3,3	-1,6
CZ	69,2	18,9	53,4	61,5	-50,4	-15,8	-7,7
DK	79,4	71,4	77,8	76,5	-8,0	-1,6	-2,9
EE	77,0	31,3	73,3	72,7	-45,7	-3,7	-4,3
FI	78,7	51,9	81,4	76,0	-26,8	2,7	-2,7
FR	75,1	57,4	72,6	72,8	-17,7	-2,5	-2,3
DE	73,3	54,3	63,5	68,1	-19,0	-9,9	-5,2
GR	61,6	50,6	53,6	58,7	-11,0	-8,0	-2,9
HU	64,1	14,8	53,0	57,0	-49,3	-11,1	-7,0
IE	69,5		55,0	57,5		-14,5	-12,0
IT	58,9	50,4	52,6	55,6	-8,5	-6,3	-3,3
LV	77,8	45,7	69,4	75,5	-32,1	-8,4	-2,3
LT	81,0	64,7	64,4	80,1	-16,3	-16,6	-0,9
LU	71,5	64,3	65,7	66,8	-7,2	-5,8	-4,7
MT	25,4	37,9	37,6	35,8	12,5	12,2	10,4
NL	78,2	72,9	73,3	75,7	-5,4	-4,9	-2,5
PL	70,2	49,3	56,4	67,9	-20,9	-13,8	-2,3
PT	76,5	67,4	71,6	76,4	-9,1	-4,9	-0,1

RO	69,9	55,1	56,4	68,2	-14,8	-13,4	-1,7
SK	67,6	22,0	53,4	62,0	-45,6	-14,2	-5,6
SL	85,6	74,1	79,0	86,5	-11,4	-6,6	1,0
ES	65,7	54,5	59,7	61,9	-11,2	-6,0	-3,8
SW	79,8	71,9	81,3	82,5	-7,9	1,5	2,7
UK	72,1	53,8	58,9	67,9	-18,2	-13,2	-4,2

Source: OECD family database, EULFS data

As we will see later, much less attention is paid to the impact of parenthood on the level of male employment. The OECD Family Database provides no data on this and information from Eurostat (Eurostat 2009) is much less detailed than what OECD offers on maternal employment. Nevertheless, Table 3 shows that fathers usually work more than childless men do with differences varying between 12.1 % (Finland and Poland) and only 4.1 % (Bulgaria).

Table 3. Employment rates of men with and without children (under 15), 2006. Age group 25-49

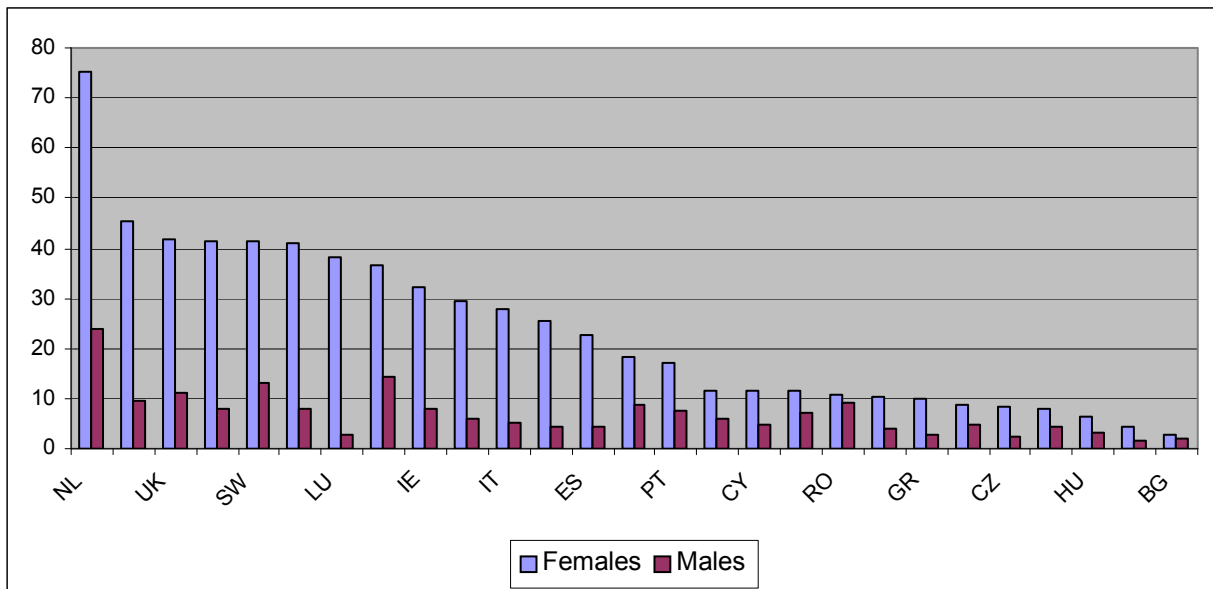
	Without children	With Children	Child-effect
EU-27	82,4	90	7,6
EU-15	82,8	91,6	8,8
BE	81,4	91,4	10
BG	77,1	81,2	4,1
CZ	87,8	93,7	5,9
DE	81,6	90,6	9
EE	83,5	93,2	9,7
EL	86,2	95,1	8,9
ES	84,1	91,3	7,2
FR	81,1	91,3	10,2
IT	82,6	91,7	9,1
CY	87,2	95,2	8
LV	78,9	87,4	8,5
LT	78	88,1	10,1
LU	90,1	94,8	4,7
HU	80,5	85,4	4,9
MT	87,6	93,2	5,6
NL	87,7	94,2	6,5
AT	88,5	93,1	4,6
PL	72,6	84,6	12
PT	82,5	91,9	9,4
RO	78,7	83,5	4,8
SI	83,1	93,2	10,1

SK	79	88,6	9,6
FI	80,4	92,5	12,1
UK	85,5	90,9	5,4

Source: Eurostat, 2009: 32. LFS data

Employment itself can have very different meanings and different consequences on family-life depending on the amount of time spent in paid work. Part-time work is often considered as an effective tool to promote better work-life balance, although if it happens in atypical hours or involves any element of involuntarily this might not be the case (e.g. Eurostat, 2009). Nevertheless, throughout Europe much more women than men work part-time, bearing both the negative and the positive consequences of this. Figure 4 indicates the share of part-time workers among men and women in the EU member states in 2008.

Figure 4. Persons employed part-time in the European Union by gender (% of total employment), 2008



Source: Eurostat online database, LFS data

There are notable differences in the occurrence of female part-time work across the countries of Europe, the range running from below 5 % in Bulgaria and Slovakia to over 40 % in Belgium, Austria, Sweden, the UK and Germany and exceeds 75 % in the Netherlands. Generally speaking, the share of part-time employment in total employment is the highest in the Nordic countries and lowest in Southern and Eastern Europe. Comparing data from 2000 and 2006 in the various countries (not shown here) suggests that in the case of women in most member states some increase in the share of part-time work was taking place, but a decrease can be seen in the UK, France, Denmark, Cyprus, Portugal, the Czech Republic and Romania (Eurostat, 2009).

The increasing level of female employment resulted in considerable changes in the family-level employment patterns over time. The dominant tendency has been the decline of the traditional male-breadwinner model: the prevalence of couple families, where only the men is involved in paid employment has been decreasing together with the growth of female employment in most European countries (see e.g. OECD LMF 8. Chart LMF8.2). The alternative model with an increasing prevalence is the two-earner model, which however might take several different forms. The most frequent is when both partners work full-time – even though as Lewis and colleagues point it out we can not speak of a convergence towards a dual full-time earner model outside the Nordic countries and Portugal (Lewis et al., 2008). From other sources, that also include families outside the labour market it can be seen that in countries with severe labour market problems (in particular Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania) there is also a significant occurrence of families where neither parent is working (OECD, 2009a).

The greatest challenge for families who follow the dual full-time earner model is childbirth. In the majority of countries the occurrence of the dual full time earner model falls back when (young) children are present and gets replaced – temporarily or permanently – by an alternative model. Whether a shift towards the traditional model is taking place or some form of the modified male breadwinner model (when man works full time and woman in reduced number of hours) will be preferred varies largely between countries and is naturally strongly interrelated with the availability of part-time jobs but also other factors. Other, but markedly less frequent settings include the woman-full time – man part time solution and also female sole breadwinner families.

International comparative statistics do not always allow to separate models with a low level of occurrence and neither tells us which of the partners is taking which option. Nevertheless they provide an overview of the main inter-country differences as far as the occurrence of the male-breadwinner model and the prevalence of the more relevant alternative forms of distribution of paid work is concerned. Furthermore, they also indicate the effect of children's presence in the household. From Table 4 it can be seen that in couple-households with no children the „both working full-time” pattern exceeds 50 % in all member states but the Netherlands. Although it is not possible to separate the male breadwinner model from the definitely much less frequent case when only the woman is working, the „one person in full-time job” remains the second most frequent alternative with shares ranging from 12 (UK) to 34 % (Greece). Variations in the prevalence of the „one full-time, one part-time” model are much greater with highest figures to be found in the Netherlands (45 %) and the lowest in Slovakia and Hungary with no more than 2-3 %.

The dynamics of individual switches between models are at least partially reflected in cross-sectional statistics. They show that when children are present, in most countries the share of „both full-time” model falls back – although to a highly varying degree, depending on a range of cultural, institutional but also individual factors, as we will see in the followings.

Table 4. Employment status of persons living in households as couples, 2006.**Age group 25-49, in relation to the presence of children in the household.**

		Both not employed	Both employed full-time	One employed, one not employed	One full-time, one part-time
AT	With children	3	24	28	44
	Without children	3	56	20	20
BE	With children	4	35	23	39
	Without children	6	50	23	20
BG	With children	8	61	27	4
	Without children	10	61	25	4
CY	With children	2	60	30	8
	Without children	4	62	26	7
CZ	With children	3	56	34	8
	Without children	3	77	16	4
DE	With children	5	19	31	45
	Without children	4	56	19	21
EE	With children	2	62	27	9
	Without children	3	69	22	5
FI	With children	3	61	26	10
	Without children	4	66	20	10
FR	With children	4	42	28	27
	Without children	4	57	24	14
GR	With children	2	50	42	6
	Without children	4	57	34	5
HU	With children	7	50	39	4
	Without children	6	71	21	2
IT	With children	3	33	43	21
	Without children	3	58	25	14

LV*	With children	3	63	23	11
	Without children				
LT	With children	4	63	27	6
	Without children	3	68	21	7
LU	With children	1	26	38	35
	Without children	1	64	20	16
MT*	With children	4	20	64	12
	Without children				
NL	With children	3	6	24	67
	Without children	2	39	14	45
PL	With children	5	52	36	7
	Without children	8	60	27	5
PT	With children	2	68	24	6
	Without children	2	72	20	6
RO	With children	7	58	30	6
	Without children	6	65	25	4
SK	With children	5	60	32	3
	Without children	7	71	18	3
SI	With children	2	78	15	6
	Without children	4	67	24	5
ES	With children	3	39	41	17
	Without children	3	61	24	12
UK	With children	5	25	27	43
	Without children	3	71	12	13

Source: Eurostat, 2009: 31, LFS data

* Data missing for couples without children

3.1.2 Key factors affecting the gender division of paid work

As it has been indicated before, choices between the possible models of employment are determined by a range of country-specific but also individual factors. In the review of

literature that follows we will focus on the major sets of such factors and try and make account of the country-variations explored.

Empirical investigations of choices at family-level – i.e. studies where the joint employment pattern of a couple is taken as a dependent variable are relatively scarce.⁴ In the followings therefore we will mostly rely on the „women’s employment literature”. This decision is partly justifiable, since men’s employment patterns show smaller variations within countries as well as between countries than women’s employment patterns do. Consequently, we can expect that variations in couple-level employment models are to a large extent attributable to the differences in women’s employment⁵.

The linkage between female employment and division of paid work between couples is obvious although there is no parity between the two. Factors identified as positively linked to women’s employment do inevitably support a shift from the traditional male-breadwinner model – although it is less clear whether they promote the modified male breadwinner or the two-full time model. In the relevant literature four main sets of factors that are closely linked to women’s employment rates and this way also to couples’ strategies can be identified. These key sets of elements can be (and indeed, often they are – e.g. Haas et al., 2005) labeled as structural, cultural, economic and individual factors.

Structural factors include all sorts of institutional arrangements that support or hinder female employment. Under this domain usually either the general welfare setting in a given country, or more specifically the impact of some public institutions, such as child-care facilities,

⁴ The two comparative papers identified within this strand of research (Haas et al., 2006. and Lewis et al., 2008) will be introduced later. They however do not include a statistical testing of the possible structural and individual factors determining the choice between models.

⁵ It has to be noted, that for a fuller understanding of employment patterns within the family more insight into the variations of male employment would be needed. This however seems to remain a research gap in the European field to which we will come back later.

parental leave system, financial support towards children etc. are considered. Less attention is however paid to labour market institutions such as availability of part-time work, flexible working time arrangements, distance work etc. Among structural factors sometimes also economic determinants, such as national income and unemployment are included. The set of **cultural factors** often appears as a set of influences competing with structural effects. Here belong individual attitudes on the micro level or social norms and traditions on the macro level are taken into account. Finally, a range of **individual characteristics** of the actor also have to be taken into consideration. Most relevant among them are number and age of children, but also other demographic and social characteristics of the individual might play a role in shaping decision on labour market activity. While structural, cultural and economic influences are often considered as factors responsible for variations between the countries, individual influences are associated more with within-country variation in the gendered employment practices. For practical reasons we will start our discussion with these.

Individual influences on women's participation in paid work

Although in cross-country comparative research most attention is given to structural and cultural factors, the importance of **individual factors** is acknowledged as well. Each micro-level study controls for a range of demographic, social and also economic characteristics of the individuals investigated. When doing so, they eventually separate the impact of composition-effect that might lead to some variation in the level of employment between countries. However, this effect on the cross-country variation in the reduction of working hours attributable to the presence of children has been found negligible for example by Uunk and his co-authors (2005).⁶

⁶ In this study the European Community Household Panel data from 1994 to 1999 in 13 EU countries has been analyzed (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, and the UK). Following women through consecutive waves, working hours 1 year before birth (t-

According to any research in the field the single most important individual characteristic of a woman that impacts upon her involvement in paid work is whether or not she has a child and also the **number and age of the children**. The relating argument is usually taken from labour supply theory. This suggests that out of the two parents the one with the higher earning potential – usually the male partner – will specialize in paid work, while the other one in unpaid labour, such as child-rearing and housework – the amount of which is usually also increasing when there are children present. As a consequence, it is usually the woman who reduces the number of hours spent on paid work. Looking at it from a different angle, children raise the value of women's time spent away from paid work and lower the effective market wages since her decision to take up paid work would imply additional costs to be paid for alternative childcare (see e.g. Gornick et al., 1997). The resulting division of paid work between genders is then also reinforced by cultural norms that also expect women, rather than men to take care of the children and men to support the family.

There is a general consensus in the literature that national variations in the extent to which a woman will reduce her involvement in paid work after childbirth is responsible for most of the cross-country variation of household employment patterns (Stier & Lewin-Epstein 2001). As Table 2. has shown, in most countries mothers withdraw from the labour market temporarily or (less frequently) permanently, or they might choose to work shorter hours – again this choice can take various lengths.

The tendency that mothers are less likely to participate in the labour market and even if they do so, they tend to work shorter hours than childless women has been also shown by a range of studies that employed multivariate analyses and this way controlled for other effects. Van

1) and two years after birth (t+2) were identified. The dependent variable was the difference between the two values, a negative value indicating a reduction in working hours expressed in hours) Multilevel (random intercept) regression models are used. The analysis is restricted to women aged between 20 and 40 and those living in partnership.

der Lippe (2001)⁷ finds that in the period between 1960 and 1994 mothers in the countries studied (also non-European countries included) with a child below 5 spent 9.6 hours per week less in paid work than other women did. The negative effect was found to be the most pronounced when children are under 3 or just slightly older by another study (Uunk et al., 2005). Kangas and Rostgaard (2007)⁸ show that taking up either a full-time or a part time job as opposed to not working at all is more prevalent among those who have no small children or only one small child rather than more. At the same time, having older children (6 years and up) was found to have no impact on choosing a part-time job but it was shown that having two or more older children significantly reduces the probability of working full time.

To a much lesser extent than child-rearing, another significant event of the life-course, namely **marriage** might also influence women's participation in the labour market. Findings in this respect however are more mixed. Research in the 1990's showed that in various countries across Europe a significant share of women choose to withdraw from the labour market when they get married (Van der Lippe & Van Dijk, 2002). No similar pattern was however found in a number of CEE countries in the early 1990's – possibly because of the economic necessity of women's work, irrespective of their marital status (Van der Lippe,

⁷ Beside several Western European countries, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia were also included in the analysis. Data on the CEE country (with the exception of Poland) relate to the post-transformation period (1993-1994). Data implied was taken from two resources: the Multinational Time Budget Archive and the „Social Stratification in Eastern Europe after 1989: General Population Survey” and they relate to various points of time during the period of 1965 to 1993. Only women aged between 20 to 59 years old were considered. As dependent variable the number hours women spend on paid was used.

⁸ This study includes Germany, the Netherlands, England, Denmark, Finland, Sweden and (outside the EU) Norway. Data from ISSP 2002 was used to find out the major determinants of the current employment situation of women (employed full-time, employed part-time, not employed). In an MLR model, individual preferences, indices of child-care (availability+cost+quality) as well as an index of the generosity of the leave care system together with a series of individual characteristics (number and age of children, education, marital status, employer in private sector or not, socio-economic position.) are included.

2001). Similarly, being married also showed no significant effect on self-reported employment status of women in a pooled sample of 19 countries in the mid 1990's (Pettit & Hook, 2005)⁹.

However, in the individual studies indicators used to for capturing marital status often do not allow for differentiation between the effect of living in a non-marital relationship or living as a single parent. Since economic constraints due to lack of a supporting partner might generate economic necessity for the women to continue working soon after the birth of their child, lone mothers are often expected to work more than those who live in a partnership. In a study of Kangas and Rostgaard (2007), single parents are indeed found to be more likely to take up full time work or not working at all than mothers in two-parent families.

Education is considered as an indicator of the level of human capital, i.e. the set of knowledge, skills and competencies accumulated over the life course. Human capital theory assumes that a high level of such assets increases productivity and earning-potential in the labour market. The higher the investment in human capital, the higher the cost of staying away from the labour market, therefore the higher the motivation to work. This assumption has been justified for most Western European countries for the decades before 1990 (Van der Lippe, 2001); for a the joint sample of a range of Western and Eastern European (but also some non-European) countries in the mid 1990's (Pettit & Hook, 2005); for Germany, Netherlands and the UK for the period 1980-2000 (Vlasblom & Schippers, 2006) and also for some other Western European countries for the early 2000's (Kangas & Rostgaard, 2007).

⁹ Data was taken from the Luxemburg Income Study (a collection of national household income surveys) of collected in the mid-1990's. Altogether 14 out of the 19 countries included in the analyses do currently belong to the European Union. These are Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Poland, Sweden, and the United Kingdom. The paper applies a method called the „slope as outcomes“. In the first step a multilevel logistic regression model is built for each country separately modeling the probability that a woman will be employed in the paid labour force as a function of individual, structural and cultural characteristics. Secondly the coefficients from the country-level models are taken as outcome measure in a regression that takes national characteristics as independent variables.

Structural influences on women's participation in paid work

In the relevant research strand it is well-established, that women's decision about employment can be and indeed it is influenced by the surrounding structural settings and institutional arrangements. In the empirical studies structural environment is either identified with the welfare regime of the country in general, or it is represented by a set of specific public institutions and market regulations by state policies such as public childcare arrangements, parental leave schemes, school-opening policies etc.

Indeed, some of the most influential theories applied to interpret national variations in the level of women's employment are in fact country-typologies based on structural differences of the different regimes. The most widely used example is the welfare-regime typology of Esping-Andersen (1990). The three categories in this typology can be described in terms of a distinct relationship between the state and the market and a range of welfare institutions typically associated with them. In the *social-democratic regime* (Sweden, Denmark, Finland and the Netherlands) emphasis is given to equal right for each citizen and this includes equal right to paid work. The extensive welfare state is committed to full-employment guarantee. In the *liberal regimes* (UK) however, the state plays a minimal role and only interferes when the market fails. Benefits are means-tested and targeted at the lower classes. In the *conservative welfare regime* (Italy, Greece, Portugal, Spain, Austria, Belgium, France) on the other hand rights are attached to social class and social status, and traditional family roles are encouraged. Family as well as religious institutions are expected to play a central role.

Esping-Andersen's typology has originally been derived from an analysis of country differences in social policies in relation to citizen rights and the organization of work in general and it was not meant to deal specifically with gender issues. Reacting to feminist critiques for not giving sufficient attention to the role of families and unpaid activities carried out within them (see Van der Lippe & Van Dijk, 2002), in his later work, Esping-Andersen (1999) turns his attention more towards the issue of gender and introduces the notions of *familialization vs. defamilialization*. These concepts are used to distinguish between systems where traditional family functions are still significant and those where much of these functions have been taken over by either the state or the market. By integrating this distinction into his original typology Esping-Andersen shows that both in liberal and in

conservative regimes family-policies are residual, although for different reasons. Only the (Scandinavian) social-democratic countries can be described as defamiliarised. This way then the original welfare-types remain largely intact even after the new aspect is being introduced.

More closely related to the issue of (gendered) employment patterns is the typology created by Gornick and her co-authors (1997). They rated countries explicitly by the level of their supportive policies towards maternal employment. Measures taken into account in their index include legislated job-protection, weeks of paid maternity leave, wage replacement rate, coverage of policy, availability of extended leave, paternity benefits and also the extent to which child-care is publicly supported etc. Based on these measures an index was created and then three categories identified with low (UK), intermediate (Germany and the Netherlands) and high level (Denmark, France, Sweden, Finland, Italy) of support towards the employment of mothers with children under age 6.

Neither Esping-Andersen's nor Gornick's typology cover the new EU member states in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE countries). Among the very few attempts towards this end the study of Szeleva and Polakowski (2008) has to be mentioned. Here 8 CEE countries¹⁰ are categorized based on their systems of child-care provision *and* their parental leave system. The emerging patterns are described as *implicit familialist*, *explicit familialist*, *comprehensive support* and *female mobilizing* systems. CEE countries are not only found to be diverse in terms of belonging to different childcare regimes but they are also shown to have produced remarkable switches between the four regimes since the political transition in the early 1990's. Unfortunately, the explanatory power of this typology has (so far) not been tested empirically on the division of paid (or unpaid) work within the household.

¹⁰ Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia

Despite the criticism against Esping-Andersen's welfare-regime typology, his clusters of welfare regimes – occasionally combined with Gornick's scale – have remained widely used in international comparative studies in the field.¹¹ Generally, it is hypothesised that out of the three types of regime, the social democratic model provides the most incentives for female employment. These include policies that accommodate women's participation in paid working, providing more state income provision to make people less dependent on the labour market (decommodification) and also operating a large public sector. At the same time in liberal regimes equal rights in the labour market do not necessarily generate equal access to paid work for men and women – because of women's extensive responsibilities in other spheres of life. In the lack of positive support women are expected to be less active in the labour market under such regimes. Finally, in the conservative states mothers are encouraged to stay at home – this setting is expected to lead to the most moderate level of female employment (e.g. Van der Lippe & Van Dijk, 2002).

¹¹ Further welfare regime typologies created with the intention to overcome some of the shortcomings of the Esping-Andersen scheme include the categorization of Bahle and Pfennig (2000); Bettio and Plantenga (2004) Jönsson and Letablier (2005). So far however few empirical studies have been made to test their accuracy in explaining division of paid (or unpaid) work. Bahle and Pfennig (2000) proposed five clusters of countries with similar family policy features; Scandinavian countries with child-oriented policies and emphasis on gender equality; the English-speaking countries with a liberal, non interventionist family policy; the Southern European countries with weak welfare states and strong kinship ties; France and Belgium as the European pioneers of family policy with a combination of traditional and progressive policy elements and Germany and Austria with less developed and more conservative family policies. Several other European research programmes have developed typologies based on information about provision of formal and informal care. Bettio and Plantenga (2004) identified five different care regimes using time budget data from European Community Household Panel (ECHP); a public care model in Scandinavia, a parental choice model in Belgium and France, a family care model in Southern Europe, a privatised part-time care model in the UK and the Netherlands and a private care model in Germany and Austria. Jönsson and Letablier (2005) also identify five different groups of childcare regimes in Europe. The Nordic childcare regime, where gender equality and childcare is seen as a responsibility of the state (e.g. Sweden); countries like France where childcare is a family policy issue, with emphasis on the collective socialization of children and demography; countries in which childcare is a private responsibility (e.g. United Kingdom) or is seen as mother's responsibility like in Germany; and the Mediterranean childcare regime, like Spain, where childcare is a family and kin issue.

These hypotheses are largely justified by the related empirical research: welfare regimes do indeed have a strong impact on women's employment and the three types of regimes relate to one another in terms of female employment as expected (Van der Lippe & Van Dijk, 2002).

However, substantial differences within the individual types of regimes have also been identified and scholars constantly search for additional factors to understand variations in female employment.

In their analysis on women's employment patterns during their life-course Stier and her colleagues (2001) use a combined version of the Esping-Andersen and the Gornick typology. When analyzing data from 6 EU and 6 non-EU countries¹² they differentiate between social democratic countries with intermediate level of support (the Netherlands), social democratic regimes with a high level of support (Sweden), conservative regimes with intermediate support (Germany and Austria), conservative regimes with high support (Italy) and liberal regimes with a low level of support (UK) towards mothers' employment. Their findings show that institutional conditions – both the type of welfare regime and the level of support towards employment – are important determinants of women's employment patterns. In particular they find that within all welfare regimes, employment continuity is highest where the state provides extensive support to working mothers and this way increases their attachment to the labour market. They conclude that employment policies do indeed have a potential to encourage or to discourage women's employment – although these potentials have their limitations. In particular – like Van der Lippe and Van Dijk (2002) – they also find the typologies applied having the lowest power of prediction in the conservative countries.

Other empirical studies, interested in structural influences in the field do not aim at using country-typologies as a priori tools to understand differences across countries. Instead they

¹² Only results relating to EU countries are discussed here.

probe the impact of a series of institutional factors, most often taken from the area of family policy. The most important elements of the various systems of family policy in this respect include the (public) childcare system, parental leave arrangements and other child-related support. These are either considered in combination or – to provide more specific results – they are measured separately so that their individual effect can be disentangled (Van der Lippe & Van Dijk, 2002).

Available and affordable child-care let it be public or private (although the former usually fits this criteria better) is expected to increase women's employment in general and employment of mothers with young children in particular. Affordable (or even free) childcare reduces the financial constraints of mothers to participate in the labour market. Furthermore, wide availability of institutional care might reflect social norms that accept mothers of young children to start working and thus encourage mothers' employment (Pettit & Hook, 2005). The existence of these positive effects have been tested and also justified in a series of empirical analysis.

Although not using a very sophisticated measure on the availability of child-care arrangements¹³, Van der Lippe for example finds support for the positive impact of day care facilities. He estimates a 9 hours weekly increase in the number of hours spent in paid work by mothers when facilities are available (Van der Lippe, 2001). In a more recent study Uunk et al. (2005) estimate that an increase of 15 percentage points in the level of public childcare (as measured with the number of public childcare places per 100 children under age 3) will increase the labour supply of mothers two years after their child is born by 4.4 hours per week on the average. The overall effect measured across 13 Western European EU member states was considerable: public childcare explained one third of the observed country-differences in child effect. Pettit and Hook (2005) also look at European data from the mid

¹³ They apply a dummy variable that equals to 1 „if ample day care facilities were available“.

1990's including also CEE countries in their analysis. Their findings not only justify earlier results by showing that childcare for children aged 0 to 3 promotes the employment of mothers with children in this age group, but they also show that the positive effect is extended to other women as well. They find that the impact is also significant in the case of married women in general and married mothers of older children in particular. The authors suggest that these latter findings might mean that *„childcare provision during early childhood enables women to maintain continuous attachment to the paid labour force that has implications on their labour market experiences later in their life”* (Pettit & Hook, 2005: 796). Kangas and Rostgaards (2007) also look at the employment patterns of women in general and not mothers only. Investigating data from 2002 and using a combined measure of availability, cost and quality of the facilities they find that daycare for the 0-2 age group has no significant effect on women working part-time (rather than not working) but it significantly increases the probability of full-time work. On the other hand, daycare for the 3 to 6 year olds tends to increase part-time employment, but – rather unexpectedly – it has a negative effect on full-time work¹⁴. The effect of public childcare provision (as measured by the proportion of GDP paid towards such services) was also found to promote women's labour supply in CEE as well as in Western European countries between 1995 and 2004 in a macro-level study by Scharle (2007)¹⁵.

Beside available childcare, another widely researched area of family policy is the impact of **parental leave schemes** on female employment patterns. Unlike childcare, parental leave schemes are argued to affect women's labour supply on a complex and possibly contradictory

¹⁴ The authors then find out that with the omission of the Netherlands (a country with a very high prevalence of part time work) the relationship turns positive (although remains insignificant.).

¹⁵ Scharle (2007) applies macro-level analysis, working with country-level data. Pooled cross-section data for 13 old member states and 8 new member states is used for ten years between 1995 and 2004. Data taken from the on-line Eurostat is supplemented in some cases with national statistics. OLS regression is estimated with the ratio of female participation over the male participation rate for the population aged 25-49 as the dependent variable.

way. On the one hand such arrangements increase women's attachment to the labour market by encouraging them to take up a job before childbirth. By providing job guarantees and wage replacement they are also expected to discourage women to exit work after the child was born. For these reasons the short-term effects of a generous leave system is generally considered to be positive. Effects in the long term are however less straightforward. Leave arrangements might also decrease female employment because a long career-break reduces their attachment to the labour market and might devalue human capital, reducing their earning potentials and therefore their labour supply. (see e.g. Gornick et al., 1997; Gupta et al., 2008; Uunk et al., 2005). This is especially likely if long and paid parental leaves are accompanied by low level of childcare-provision (Pettit & Hook, 2005).

Investigating the possible effects of parental leave arrangements implies not only theoretical but also methodological difficulties. Parental leave systems in the various member states are hard to compare. Variations show themselves not only in the existence of the various forms of support (maternal leave, parental leave or paternal leave) but also in the length of the period available, the compensation rate applied (if the leave is paid at all), and other relating regulations. Compiling standard as well as meaningful indicators for the assessment of the various dimensions of such complex systems is a very difficult job.

Nevertheless, effort has been taken by several scholars to overcome these difficulties. Considering comparative studies one of the finest measure is applied in the research of Pettit and Hook (2005). In their analysis the impact of paid maternity leave (as measured by its length) and parental leave (paid or unpaid) are considered separately. This study finds no evidence that maternal leave itself would have any significant impact on women's employment in general or on the employment of any particular subgroup. A positive association is however shown between the length of parental leave and the employment level of mothers with young children. Estimations suggest that an additional week of parental leave is associated with a 2.2 % increase of employment amount among mothers with children aged 0 to 3. However, a non-linear trend in this association is also evident, suggesting that this association declines with longer leave provisions. The turning point in the effect can be identified after around three years. In the same study long parental leave is also found to have a negative effect on the overall level of women's employment.

Other studies make no effort to identify any non-linear trends in the effect of parental leave – consequently we can not tell whether the finding from Pettit and Hook could also be justified on other data. In the study of Kangas and Rostgaard (2007) for example results on leave schemes suggest that generous (long and well-paid) parental leave decreases the probability of women in general to work part-time but increases the probability of working full-time. The finding suggests that when leave pays are generous, it is not worthwhile taking up part time employment.

Another aspect of the state-regulations that is expected to influence women's (and not only mothers') activity in the labour market is the type of **tax regime**. It is generally expected that joint-income taxation, when husbands' and wives' income are taxed together discourages women's employment. Unfortunately neither of the key European analyses reviewed in this paper include any characteristics of the taxation system. Other empirical investigations into the impact of specific tax regimes have provided no systematic conclusion in this respect (Plantenga & Hansen, 1999 cited by Van der Lippe & Van Dijk, 2002: 233). In her review of literature however Scharle (2007) refers to studies that explore a negative relationship between the existence of joint taxation and female labour supply.

Among the possible measures towards a better reconciliation of work and family life and the enhancement of female employment, comparative research typically deals with state-policies as described so far. An under-researched area in the field of potential structural influences is the impact of institutions and services provided by employers to improve reconciliation of work and family life. As Den Dulk (2001) suggests, some employers supplement public policies by providing facilities for working mothers and their impact might in fact become rather significant in shaping women's employment patterns. Such practices of employers are however rarely included in studies of women's employment and this is especially the case in international comparative studies. Even though the availability of part-time jobs or flexible timing of work are all considered as major promoters of women's employment and descriptive reports on work-life balance (see e.g. European Commission, 2005; Eurostat, 2009) are tendentially building on this assumption, the causal link is rarely probed by empirical studies. One exception is the macro-level study of Scharle (2007), which finds that availability of part-time jobs for women in the economy is associated with a reduced – rather

than an increased – level of female employment. This finding however is not robust against varying model specification.

Most authors acknowledge the importance of structural circumstances other than the characteristics of the family (or welfare) policy. Among them the most often economic wellbeing and level of unemployment are considered as potential factors that relate to women's labour market activity. Concerning economic affluence or income – measured either on the individual or on the national level – two competing arguments appear. The lack of sufficient income (measured either individually or by national indexes) might force women to take up paid employment even if it is against their preferences or if other structural constraints are present – e.g. available child-care institutions are missing. This is called the economic need hypothesis. On the other hand, more affluent countries are likely to provide more generous provisions for working mothers and therefore we might expect women in such countries to be more active in the labour market (e.g. Van der Lippe, 2001¹⁶; Uunk et al., 2005).

Available empirical evidence provides no clear conclusion on the role of economic affluence. The study of Van der Lippe (2001) is testing the two hypotheses as competing ones and finds support for the economic need theory. The study concludes that a higher level of GDP is associated with a reduced number of hours women spend on paid work. It is also shown that the lower the GDP in a country, the smaller is the difference between number of hours worked by single and married women. This also suggests that in less affluent societies women

¹⁶ Beside several old member states 5 Eastern European EU members (Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia) were also included in the analysis of Van Der Lippe (2002). Data on the CEE country (with the exception of Poland) relate to the post-transformation period (1993-1994). Data implied was taken from two resources: the Multinational Time Budget Archive and the „Social Stratification in Eastern Europe after 1989: General Population Survey” and they relate to various points of time during the period of 1965 to 1993. Only women aged between 20 to 59 years old were considered. As dependent variable the number hours women spend on paid was used.

have to work irrespective of their family status – again the theory of economic need seems to be supported here. Uunk and colleagues are using more recent data (from the mid-nineties) but they do not include CEE countries in their analysis (2005). Their approach is also different in that they also allow for the parallel existence of the two contradicting effects and they estimate the short-term consequences of childbirth on mothers' employment behaviour. They find that when economic affluence (as measured by GDP) is added to the models the explanatory power increases considerably suggesting that economic welfare does indeed have an important effect on young mothers' level of employment. The nature of this effect is twofold: on the one hand more affluent countries afford more child-care which in turn stimulates female employment, but an opposite effect is also present with women in less affluent countries being more inclined to work – despite the potentially poor provision of childcare facilities.

Concerning the possible effects of the level of **unemployment** Scharle (2007) argues that female unemployment and male unemployment require different approaches. Level of female unemployment is – by definition – negatively correlated with women's (although not necessarily mothers') participation in the labour market. On the other hand, high level of male unemployment is likely to provoke increased level of female participation – through the so-called added worker effect. This means that women with an unemployed partner are forced to take up paid work to ensure sufficient family income. Scharle's analysis supports both of these hypotheses. Moreover, the effects found are relatively large: a 1 % increase in male unemployment generates a 0.7 % increase in female employment, whereas a similar increase in female unemployment is associated with a 0.6 % drop in female employment – other factors being equal. Using overall level of unemployment in their study Pettit and Hook (2005) identify a negative relationship between unemployment and women's level of employment.

Cultural influences on women's participation in paid work

Cross-national comparisons and country-typologies that emphasize structural influences on gendered employment are labeled as structuralist and are contrasted with culturalist approaches that give foremost importance to „*social values, norms and preferences that go hand in hand with a gender-specific division of labour*” (Haas, 2005: 490). Haas is criticizing

structuralist approach on female employment for deriving practice from policy and paying little attention to effects that interfere with such a direct connection – most importantly cultural explanations.

Cultural explanations can appear either on the micro or on the macro level. In the first case a direct causality between an individual's attitudes and preferences on the one hand and her behaviour on the other is assumed and it is expected that women with more traditional gender roles are less likely to reenter the labour market after her child is born (Uunk et al., 2005). In a macro-level approach, when indicators of gender values maintained in a society are applied, it is expected that women's behaviour is influenced by the social norms and values shared in her wider social surrounding. As Uunk and colleagues point out, the idea of cultural effects on women's employment practice can both be considered either as a compositional effect (more women with traditional gender values might lead to lower level of female employment) or a contextual effect (influence of other traditional people make women less likely to be employed).

Within the cultural strand of research Hakim's theory is a marked and influential example of emphasizing the importance of gender attitudes at the micro level. In her preference-theory Hakim (2003) explicitly states that attitudinal factors, such as motivations, aspirations and preferences regarding work and family are more influential in shaping women's employment behaviour, than institutional factors. Hakim differentiates between work-centered, home-centered and adaptive women. While women belonging to one or the other extreme group give clear preference either to work or to family and let the other domain remain subordinated in her life, adaptive women – who in fact form the majority – adjust their strategies to the actual situation more flexibly. As a consequence, it is this latter group of women who can be expected to react to (changes in) public policy. Hakim has been widely criticized for underscoring the importance of structural constraints and for giving too much emphasis to the heterogeneity of female preferences. Nevertheless, her theory has remained highly influential and has been probed in several empirical studies.

An example of the macro-level culturalist approach is the theory of Pfau-Effinger which looks more at the cultural embeddedness of decisions concerning employment. Giving primary importance to social values and norms about gender roles (although not completely

neglecting structural aspects either) Pfau-Effinger's analysis of the historical paths in countries studied results in a country-typology based on the employment patterns of men and women (part-time vs. full-time), the responsibility of care and social attitudes together with values and norms about gendered division of work (Pfau-Effinger, 1998, 2000 – cited by Haas, 2005).

Weaker forms of cultural explanations do not see cultural factors as independent from the structural surroundings but instead they acknowledge the covariation between structural and cultural circumstances. As for example the correlation indices of child care provision and attitudinal data taken from the European Value Study (EVS¹⁷) show, provision of childcare tends to be less excessive in countries with more traditional gender roles and vice versa. (see Table 2. in Uunk, 2005). In the most recent cross-sectional studies reviewed in this paper structuralist and culturalist explanations tend to appear together as two competing but also complementing sets of influences that shape women's employment patterns. The direction of causality between the domains is however not clear. A stronger version of the culturalist approach would suggest that public policy is a reaction to public norms and values, since governments tend to respond to the expectations of the people and provide better support to reconcile work and childrearing if there is an explicit need for it. The other possibility would be that it is social norms and values that respond to public policies and institutional arrangements influence people's views and attitudes. (e.g. Uunk et al., 2005)

From the rare examples of European comparative studies on female employment that include a measure for the cultural climate among the explanatory variables we might conclude that cultural influences play a more substantial role on the individual than on the macro-level.

¹⁷ The European Values Study is a large-scale, cross-national and longitudinal survey of moral, religious, political and social values, with the aim to investigate the nature and inter-relationship of value systems and their stability across time. The first wave was carried out in 1981, the second in 1990 and the third in 1999/2000.

However, the number of such analyses is small and methodological problems are numerous, and therefore this we would rather leave as a working hypothesis that needs further investigation.

Uunk and his colleagues (2005) for example find that cultural norms (represented by a composite measure of individual attitudes for each country taken from EVSI) have no independent effect on either female employment or on the reduction of working hours after a child is born. Although cultural norms are positively correlated with employment practices, this association turns insignificant when the impact of childcare facilities get introduced into the models. Changes of the parameter-estimates in the child care effect suggest that gender values might have influence mothers' labour supply, but this effect is fully mediated by the institutions. Pettit and Hook (2005) use the ratio of women in the national Parliament as an indicator of cultural norms regarding gender equality and they find that this measure has no explanatory power in the models estimating the cross-country variance of female employment.

Kangas and Rostgaard (2007) on the other hand investigate the importance of individual attitudes¹⁸. Making an attempt to reproduce Hakim's preference categories from ISSP data¹⁹, they find that preferences play a role in shaping actual behaviour. They find that home-

¹⁸ In this study including Germany, the Netherlands, England, Denmark, Finland, Sweden and (outside the EU) Norway are included. Data is taken from ISSP 2002 and the current employment situation of women (employed full-time, employed part-time, not employed) analysed. In an MLR model, individual preferences, indices of child-care (availability+cost+quality) as well as an index of the generosity of the leave care system together with a series of individual characteristics (number and age of children, education, marital status, employer in private sector or not, socio-economic position.)

¹⁹ ISSP is an annual programme of cross-national collaboration on surveys covering important social topics. Three series of surveys (from the year 1988, 1994 and 2002) are focusing on the family and changing gender roles and include attitudes as well as information on behavior. European countries included in the 1988 survey are Austria, Great Britain, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands and West Germany. In the year 1994, ISSP has grown with eight additional European countries: Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, East Germany, Northern Ireland, Norway, Poland, Slovenia and Sweden. Switzerland, Spain, the Slovakian Republic, Portugal, Latvia, France, Flanders (Belgium), Finland and Cyprus joined in 2002.

centered women are significantly less likely to be employed (either part-time or full-time) than women in other categories, and this relationship holds even if we control for the structural and other individual factors. Overall their analysis suggests that structural and cultural explanations do not compete but substitute one another.

3.2 Unpaid work

Changes in the family structures and in the labour force participation described above present a serious challenge to conventional family management, domestic task allocation and the well-being of children. Women's increased labour force participation decreased their time to perform domestic work and put pressure on men to take on greater responsibilities in the household.

Initially, studies addressing gender task differentiation were concerned with differentiation in the paid workforce. Subsequently, investigation turned to the division of household labour. Trends and gender differences in the division of unpaid housework have been the focus of sociological research during the last two decades, starting with Berk (1985) and Hochschild (1989).

This part of the report provides an account of the literature on gender dimensions of allocation of domestic tasks in European households since 1990. The main focus lies on the division of the two predominant forms of unpaid work; household labour and care of children. The first section briefly summarizes main trends and cross-national similarities and differences in the division of unpaid work, including household labour and childcare tasks. The second section then describes the main sets of factors influencing gender division of unpaid work together with the relevant theories in the field.

3.2.1 Main trends and cross-national (dis)similarities in the division of unpaid work

Unlike in the field of paid work, when introducing main trends in the field of housework and childrearing we can not rely on highly standardized, univocally accepted indices and measures. Instead a range of different data-sources will be introduced and selected studies analysing the division of household labour in Europe outlined briefly. As outlined in the Methodological Section (Chapter 4) in more detail, the wide variety of measurement methods used in order to estimate time spent with domestic work and the differences in the types of couples and age groups included in the analysis limits the comparability of the results of individual studies. As we will see they are often providing very different measures and – as a consequence – also varying descriptions of trends as well as cross-country-differences

emerge. Moreover, none of the available sources offers data on each of the individual EU member states.

Despite these limitations we can conclude that the general pattern of the division of domestic and parenting work has not changed radically in the past 20 years. Despite the increased participation of women in employment, a pronounced gender division of domestic responsibilities is still apparent (e.g. Margherita, O'Dorchai, & Bosch, 2009). Women continue to do the majority of domestic and parenting work. Although there seems to be a slight change: women's participation in the paid labour market tends to reduce the amount of time spent on household affairs and contributes to a more equally shared distribution of domestic chores (Brines, 1993). Empirical studies that span the last several decades find women doing less housework whereas men are doing slightly more (Bianchi, Milkie, Sayer, & Robinson, 2000; Fuwa, 2004; Vannoy, Rimashevskaya, Cubbins, Malysheva, Meshterkina, & Pisklakova, 1999).

The division of domestic tasks

Eurostat has published several reports using data from the Harmonised European Time Use Surveys (HETUS)²⁰ database with different country compositions (Aliaga & Winqvist, 2003; Eurostat, 2003, 2004; Aliaga, 2006). Time diary results from 18 countries appear in Table 5.

²⁰ For details on HETUS see Chapter 4.

Table 5. Time spent on domestic work by women and men aged 20 to 74 in 18 countries**Hours and minutes per day**

	domestic work ^a women	domestic work ^a men	domestic work employed women	domestic work employed men	childcare women	childcare men
BE	4:32	2:38	3:52	2:15	0:35	0:19
DE	4:11	2:21	3:11	1:52	0:26	0:10
EE	5:02	2:48	4:04	2:20	0:34	0:11
ES	4:55	1:37	3:29	1:20	0:30	0:12
FR	4:30	2:22	3:40	1:53	0:28	0:09
IT	5:20	1:35	3:51	1:10	0:28	0:11
LV	3:56	1:50	3:08	1:26	0:22	0:04
LT	4:29	2:09	3:24	1:39	0:25	0:07
HU	4:58	2:40	3:54	2:09	0:35	0:15
PL	4:45	2:22	3:58	1:53	0:39	0:16
SI	4:58	2:40	4:24	2:24	0:29	0:12
FI	3:56	2:16	3:21	1:59	0:28	0:11
SE	3:42	2:29	3:32	2:23	0:29	0:16
UK	4:15	2:18	3:28	1:54	0:33	0:12
RO ^b	5:28	2:28			0:23	0:07
DK ^b	3:32	2:23			0:32	0:14
NL ^b	4:04	2:31				

Note: Data Source: National Time Use Surveys 1998-2002 (see Annex), Aliaga (2006), S 2-3, S.8.

^a Domestic work includes housework, child and adult care, gardening and pet care, construction and repairs, shopping and services, and household management.

^b For Denmark, Romania and the Netherlands, the survey methods used deviated from the European guidelines and results are not fully comparable

The data demonstrated in Table 5 originate from the national time use surveys specified in the Annex. The category of domestic labour appearing in the first four columns contains several household chores including childcare. On average, women out of the 18 European countries analyzed in the Eurostat report (Aliaga, 2006) perform 66 % of all domestic work. Women in Estonia, Italy and Romania spend the highest amount of time doing housework, around five hours per day. Women in Sweden, Finland, Denmark and Latvia spend less than four hours per day on domestic duties. The amount of housework done by women in the remaining countries lies in between that.

Women devote daily at least one hour more than men do to domestic work. This difference is over 2 hours in Estonia, France, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Poland and Slovenia and exceeds even 3 hours per day in Spain, Italy and Romania.

Although a portion of gender-differences in the amount of time spent on domestic work can be led back to gender-differences in labour market activity and employed women do less housework than housewives do, the gender-imbalance is rather marked also when employed men and employed women are compared. Typically, employed men spend around 1 hour and 40 minutes less time on domestic tasks than employed women do, but the gap is smaller in Finland, Sweden and Germany and much bigger in Slovenia, Poland and especially in Italy.

Fisher and Robinson (2009) examined the time use patterns in 13 European countries also using the HETUS database. The results differ from the figures presented in Table 5 because the default age setting of 20 to 74 was reset to the age range 18 to 64 and childcare is not included in the time devoted to domestic work.

Table 6. Time spent on housework by women and men aged 18 to 64 in 13 countries

Hours per week

	BE	BG	EE	FI	DE	IT	LV	LT	PL	SI	ES	SE
Unpaid work women	20.5	23.9	22.4	18.6	20.5	21.4	18.6	20.7	21.4	23.3	19.3	19
Unpaid work men	15.3	16.9	16.3	14.4	15.5	9.5	12.4	13.9	14.5	16.9	9.5	16

Note: Data Source: National Time Use Surveys 1998-2002 (see Annex) ,

^a Unpaid work includes cooking & related, other housework, shopping, services, housework & personal travel

As shown in Table 6 above, unpaid work hours are higher among both men and women from Estonia, Bulgaria and Slovenia than in other countries, while men from Spain and Italy and women from Finland do less unpaid household work than the average European reported hours. The results show the Northern European countries with relatively small differences in the unpaid work time of men and women, compared to the more pronounced gender gaps in Southern and Eastern European countries; this gap is highest in Italy.

The above estimates are based on time diary information. As it was said before, there are numerous ways to gather information about the division of housework. Studies have found consistently that direct-question surveys produce estimates of time that are often far higher than time diary data. Direct questions measuring housework time vary widely. Some researchers focus on who perform specific tasks, others indicate only the proportion of domestic work done by men and women.

Davis and Greenstein (2004) have compared the division of household labour in 13 countries using such proportion measures, in which respondents indicated whether the wife or husband always or usually does the housework. The data originates from the International Social Justice Project (ISJP)²¹. Based on women's reports, 61 to 88 %, based on men's reports 51 to 76 % of wives „always” or „usually” did the housework. The highest percentage (5.8 %) of households where husbands „always” or „usually” perform the housework was in the UK (on the basis of men's reports) while it heads to zero percent in the Netherlands, Slovenia, Czech Republic and East Germany (on the basis of women's reports). 22 % of wives and 30 % of husbands report that the domestic work is equally shared in the households.

Batalova and Cohen (2002) and later Fuwa²² (2004) analyzed the division of household labour in 22 countries (including 14 EU member states) using data from the 1994 International Social Survey Programme (ISSP). They show that even in the most egalitarian countries, women do far more housework than men. According to their country classification, men's contribution to household labour was low in Italy, Ireland, Austria, the Czech Republic and Northern Ireland, medium in Poland, Bulgaria, Slovenia, Netherlands, West-Germany Hungary, Slovenia, and Great Britain and high in East Germany and Sweden.

A study from Voicu, Voicu and Strapcova (2009) based on data from the European Social Survey²³ 2002 (ESS02) compares married/cohabiting men's and women's contribution to

²¹ The International Social Justice Project was an international collaborative research project among 12 nations which has explored popular beliefs and attitudes on social, economic and political justice. Two large-scale surveys were fielded in twelve countries in 1991 and in six countries in 1996.

²² The measure of the gender division of labor within couples by Batalova and Cohen (2002) and Fuwa (2004) was an index of four female task variables (laundry, caring for sick family members, shopping and planning dinner). The variables have been summed and divided by 4 resulting in a scale that ranges from 1 to 5, with higher scores reflecting greater household contributions by the husband.

²³ The European Social Survey (ESS) is a multi-country survey covering over 30 nations. The first surveys were conducted in 2002/2003, the last, which was the fourth round, in 2008/2009. The structure of the questionnaire is based on several permanent modules which remain relatively constant from round to round, and two or more additional rotating modules. Following countries took part in the first round of the survey: Austria, Belgium, the

housework²⁴ (excluding childcare) in 33 European countries. As ESS02 includes only 22 European countries, the descriptive part of the paper contains supplementary information from the European Quality of Life Survey 2003 (EQLS03²⁵), which covers 28 European societies. On average, the most egalitarian countries seem to be Bulgaria, Romania, the Baltic countries and the Nordic countries. Ireland, Portugal, Spain, Malta and Greece show the opposite; wives doing around 20 hours more housework than men. Post-communist countries seem to be more supportive for the equal sharing of the domestic work than Western ones, with the exception of Poland, being much closer to the traditional division of work within the family.

Fuwa and Cohen (2007) used data from the 2002 International Social Survey Program: Family and Changing Gender Roles III. Data was examined from 32 countries, using a sample restricted to married or cohabiting respondents aged over 18. The housework hour ratio between husbands and wives has been used to measure the gender division of labour²⁶. Women spend weekly 21.4 hours on domestic work, compared to 8.1 hours per week for men, which means that women perform 72.5 % of total housework hours. The housework hour ratio between husband and wife is most equal in Latvia and Portugal has the most traditional division of household labour. According to Fuwa's and Cohen's European country classification, husband's cooperation in domestic labour was high in Denmark, Poland, Slovakian Republic and Latvia and low in Cyprus, Portugal and Spain.

Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

²⁴ The dependent variable is the difference between the estimate of the number of hours weekly spent for housework by each of the two partners of a couple.

²⁵ The European quality of life survey (EQLS) was carried out in 2003 in 28 countries and (n= 26,000). The survey examined a various issues, such as employment, income, education, housing, family, health, work-life balance, life satisfaction and perceived quality of society.

²⁶ The relative housework time variable ranges from -1 (the husband does the all housework in the household) to 1 (the wife does all housework in the household). A score of 0 indicates an equal share of housework.

González, Jurado-Guerrero and Naldini (2009) used data from ESS 2004 for 26 countries to study micro- and macro-level factors which could increase the likelihood of men's greater contribution to household work²⁷. Considering EU countries, men's cooperation in domestic labour was high in Sweden, Denmark, Slovakia, Finland, Luxembourg and the United Kingdom. It was medium in Spain, France, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Netherlands, Hungary, Slovenia, Italy, Austria, Ireland and low in Belgium, Germany, Poland, Portugal and Greece.

The project "Family life and professional work: Conflict and synergy"(FamWork, 2005) analysed psychological aspects of balancing work and family life in dual-earner families with young children in eight European countries (Austria, Belgium, Finland, Germany, Italy, Portugal, Switzerland, The Netherlands). Using the same survey instrument, Herche (2009) provided additional results from Hungary. Concerning the division of the amount of time spent by both partners on domestic work, the results show the most equal division in Finland and the Netherlands. In contrast, the most unequal division of housework can be found in Italian, Portuguese and Hungarian families (Famwork, 2005; Herche, 2009).

The project DIALOG (2007) used national standardized surveys of the Population Policy Acceptance Study (PPAS) provided by 14 European countries collecting opinions from 34 thousand people. A good deal of women reported that they do most of the housework themselves. 74.9 % of Austrian and 70.4 % of Hungarian women said that they do the housework alone. This share is also very high in Estonia and Romania. It is consistently rare across countries for men to assume principle responsibility for the housework. Approximately 4 % of female respondents in Austria and Romania and 1 - 2 % in Estonia, Hungary and Lithuania said that their partners were largely responsible for domestic work (DIALOG, 2007).

²⁷ The dependent variable is the relative amount of housework that men perform compared to their female partners.

The above listed studies consistently find evidence for the gendered division of household labour within countries. Studies also find cross-national proof of the gender segregation of domestic tasks. Men and women do different housework tasks inside the home, with women usually doing the routine chores (cleaning, laundry, ironing, washing) that typically can not be postponed, and men more intermittent ones (cooking, childcare, car maintenance or repairs, emptying the trash) (Coltrane, 2000; Gaspar & Klinke, 2009; Eurostat 2004; Fuwa, 2004). Some studies argue that each specific task is sex-typed (Gaspar & Klinke, 2009; Work changes gender, 2007).

The Eurostat pocketbook from 2004²⁸ examines the gender segregation of domestic activities in 10 European countries in detail. For women, food preparation is the most time-consuming activity, especially in Hungary, Slovenia and Estonia. Cooking is more equally shared in Sweden, Norway and the United Kingdom than in the other countries. Dish washing is also a female-type task. Two thirds of the women surveyed wash dishes on a daily basis compared to one third of men. It is most time consuming for Hungarian, Slovenian and Estonian women, and least so in Finland and the United Kingdom. This task is most evenly shared between women and men in the United Kingdom, Sweden and Belgium. Women take care of most cleaning and laundry work in all compared countries. Ironing is an even more female dominated task. Cleaning and upkeep take the second largest amount of time among women. Cleaning the yard, heating, water supply and other household upkeep is slightly male dominated, with men doing the majority of these tasks in most countries except in the United Kingdom, Belgium and Germany. Men are very active in construction and repairs; they take the responsibility for 80 to 90 % of these tasks in the countries surveyed. Although gardening

²⁸ The Pocketbook „How Europeans spend their time - Everyday life of women and men” (Eurostat, 2004) includes data on ten European countries; Belgium, Germany, Estonia, France, Hungary, Slovenia, Finland, Sweden, the United Kingdom and Norway. These countries follow very closely the HETUS Guidelines, therefore, the results are considered to be comparable.

is not a self-evident male-type task, men spend on average more time doing it than women, with most time spent on it in Hungary and Slovenia.

A cross-national study by Gershuny (2000) analysing 20 countries finds similar results concerning the gender segregation of domestic tasks. Men are active in non-routine domestic work but devote very little time to food preparation or routine housework such as cleaning.

As can be seen from the above summary, the state of the art reveals significant shortcomings in cross-national research on the division of domestic work. An international standard is missing on how to measure domestic work in international surveys. Studies include different subsets of the European countries; researchers use varying definitions of domestic work and examine different types of couples. This could account for the major differences in country groupings and for the discrepancy in the classification of individual countries – as we will discuss it in more details in Chapter 4.

Nevertheless, there is consistent evidence across several studies for the gender division of household labour and for the gender segregation of domestic tasks. Alongside the cross-national similarities in the gender distribution of domestic tasks, there are also considerable cross-national dissimilarities. The number of hours men and women spend on housework in general and on individual tasks vary across countries. The relative size of gender inequalities in the distribution of household tasks as well as the amount of change occurred during the last decades also differs across countries. Also factors that affect the division of household labour vary across countries, as we are going to see in the sections below.

Parenting tasks

A substantial part of unpaid working hours is spent on childcare. There is a clear tendency for an increase of domestic working hours if women have children, particularly when the children are small (Aliaga & Winqvist, 2003; Eurostat, 2003). Similar to the share of domestic work in general, there are significant differences in the gender division of time spent on caring for children. According to European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS)²⁹ data, women do the lion's share of childcare tasks in all countries considered (Eurostat, 2004, 2009). The division of time spent on caring for children between men and women tends to be most equal in the Netherlands, Nordic countries (and also Switzerland), where women spend twice as much time on childcare tasks (around 16 hours per week) compared to men (7 to 8 hours per week). In all other country groups, men spend on average only 4 to 5 hours with their children. The largest gender gap in time spent on caring for children was noted in the Anglo-Saxon countries, with a difference of 10 hours per week between women's (14.2 hours) and men's (4.1 hours) time spent on childcare tasks (Eurostat, 2009). Table 2 shows the amount of time spent daily on childcare activities by women and men aged 20 to 74 in 18 European countries (Aliaga, 2006). Childcare covers active care given to a child living in the own household. Only primary activities are included and no difference is made between children in different age groups.

According to two reports published by Eurostat, the household structure and in particular the presence of children is closely linked to time use. The allocation of time between couples is most affected by the presence of children under 7 years. When the youngest child in the

²⁹ The European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS) is a cross-national survey which is conducted every five years to study working conditions in Europe. The survey has been carried out four times: in 1990/91, 1995/96, 2000 (extended to cover the ten new member states, Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey in 2001/02) and 2005 (31 countries: the EU27, Turkey, Croatia, Norway and Switzerland). The survey questionnaire has expanded from 20 questions in the first edition to nearly 100 questions and sub-questions in 2005.

household is under 7 years, women devote on average more time to domestic work than to paid work in all the countries, between 6 hours more in Hungary and just over 2 hours more in Denmark. The data used originate from the HETUS database and domestic work includes both household work and family care. The same tendency can be observed regarding the time men spend doing domestic work. It increases when they live in a household with children and even more when the children are small, in particular in Denmark, Sweden and Norway (Aliaga & Winqvist, 2003; Eurostat, 2003).

The Eurostat pocketbook from 2004 reviewed the time spent on childcare by couples with children aged up to 6 and aged 7 to 17 (see Table 7).

Table 7. Time spent on childcare by women and men aged 20 to 74 in 10 European countries

Hours and minutes per day

	BE	DE	EE	FR	HU	SI	FI	SE	UK	NO
Childcare time among parents living as couple with children aged up to 6										
Total	1:21	1:39	1:46	1:19	2:03	1:39	1:50	1:39	1:41	1:44
Women	1:54	2:18	2:39	1:57	2:56	2:23	2:34	2:10	2:22	2:17
Men	0:51	0:59	0:50	0:40	1:11	0:56	1:03	1:07	1:00	1:13
Employed women	1:40	1:44	1:40	1:41	1:58	2:16	2:02	2:08	2:08	2:11
Employed men	0:50	0:57	0:50	0:37	1:09	0:55	1:01	1:07	0:58	1:12
Childcare time among parents living as couple with children aged 7 to 17										
Total	0:24	0:22	0:19	0:20	0:30	0:13	0:14	0:32	0:20	0:19
Women	0:32	0:32	0:28	0:30	0:40	0:19	0:19	0:39	0:26	0:28
Men	0:16	0:13	0:10	0:09	0:21	0:07	0:09	0:24	0:12	0:11
Employed women	0:29	0:26	0:26	0:25	0:32	0:17	0:17	0:38	0:23	0:26
Employed men	0:16	0:14	0:10	0:09	0:20	0:07	0:09	0:25	0:12	0:11

Note: Data Source: National Time Use Surveys 1998-2002 (see Annex), Eurostat (2004), S. 66-68.

Childcare includes active care given to a child living in own household. In addition to physical care, teaching, reading, playing and talking with a child, accompanying a child to a doctor, visiting the school, and so on. Going together to the cinema, watching television with a child, and so on, are excluded. Only parents living as a couple are included. Childcare as a simultaneous activity, for example, while preparing food, is not included.

Results show that Hungarian women with children aged up to 6 spend the most time on childcare (3 hours daily), Belgian women the least (2 hours daily). The average time spent by women on childcare in the studied countries is 2 hours and 21 minutes on a daily basis. Men spend on average almost an hour (59 minutes) on childcare. Norwegian fathers spend the most time with their children (73 minutes) and French fathers the least (40 minutes). Almost every mother participates in childcare on a daily basis whereas the proportion of fathers is 55

to 80 %. According to the results, employed mothers spend twice as much time on childcare as employed fathers with small children do. Parents with the youngest child of school age (7 to 17) spend clearly less time on childcare than parents with small children do. Mothers spend an average of 30 minutes and fathers 10 to 20 minutes per day on childcare. Swedish fathers report more participation in the care of children in this age group than fathers in other surveyed countries. They seem to account for almost 40 % of all childcare time in the family, whereas the fathers' share of childcare time is around 30 % in the remaining countries (Eurostat, 2004).

Measuring the time spent on simultaneous activities is a common difficulty in time-use studies. People often do more than one thing at the same time, and it is a question whether and how to consider these secondary activities. In the case of the amount of time devoted to parenting tasks, it seems to be important to nominate both main and secondary activities, because childcare activities are seldom done in isolation. Parents regularly do housework or even paid work while keeping an eye on the children. If only the main activity is recorded, parallel activities will be under-reported which can produce misleading research results. As demonstrated in Table 5, if time spent with children covers doing things together, or just being in the same place or room as the child, the daily estimates multiply.

Table 8. Time spent on childcare by women and men aged 20 to 74 in European countries

	DE	SI	FI	SE	UK
Time spent by parents with children aged up to 9					
total	5:37	5:14	6:21	6:06	7:03
women	6:58	6:09	7:57	7:10	8:35
men	4:06	4:07	4:24	4:56	5:10
employed total	3:58	5:02	5:35	5:56	6:19
employed women	6:00	5:55	7:08	7:01	7:44
employed men	4:46	4:05	4:18	4:50	5:09

Note: Data Source: National Time Use Surveys 1998-2002 (see Annex), Eurostat (2004), S. 70.

Time spent with children aged up to nine living in the same household was measured with a separate diary column. Being together covered doing things together, or just being in the same place or room as the child. Sleeping time was excluded.

The OECD Family database also contains time use survey data from 26 countries, including 18 European countries. Time dedicated to care work among couples is obviously higher in families with more children. Parents from the United Kingdom, Germany and Sweden spend the most time on childcare. Time dedicated to childcare is low in Latvia and France (OECD, 2006).

Few studies are addressing the nature and pattern of change in the distribution of time spent with domestic work and in particular with childcare tasks in European families. Time spent by parents with children is an investment that is highly associated with children's well-being and development (Büchel & Duncan, 1998; Furstenberg, Morgan & Allison 1987). Time pressures, to which today's parents are confronted, mainly in association with increased female work participation, suggest that parents are devoting less time to their children, as compared to 20 years ago. Large-scale cross-national studies, which have systematically analysed the change in parent-child shared time over time, are relatively rare. Most of the relevant results come

from studies carried out in non-European countries with a long tradition of time-use research, like Australia and the United States, but also Britain.

In the United Kingdom, mothers spent daily 60 minutes more time with child care tasks in 1999 than in 1960, while time fathers spent on caring for their children had increased from 12 to 48 minutes per day (Fisher et al., 1999). Evidence from other countries is more limited, although some studies show the opposite trend. Gershuny (2000) finds in his cross-national study including 20 countries, that parents decreased their time devoted to childcare tasks in the two decades after 1960, but care-time increased since 1984. Klevmarken and Stafford (1999) find that time spent with small children has fallen in Sweden between 1984 and 1993.

Gauthier, Smeeding & Furstenberg (2004) examined parents' investment in children (measured by the number of hours devoted to childcare) using time-use survey data from 16 industrialized countries (including 12 EU countries: Belgium, Bulgaria, the former Czechoslovakia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the former Yugoslavia). The sum of childcare activities consisting of six different types of parenting tasks like personal care or reading and conversing or playing with children have been recorded. The analysis was restricted to primary activities. Results for all mothers (employed and non-employed) show that the increase in female work force participation has not led to an overall decrease in parental time. Employed mothers spend less time with childcare tasks than non-employed mothers, but the overall trend is positive, with considerable cross-national variations. An increase in fathers' parenting time was also observed, fathers with full-time employment spend more time with childcare activities in 2000 (approximately 1 hour) than 40 years earlier (0.4 hours per day in 1960).

3.2.2 Key factors affecting the gender division of domestic and parenting work

Individual factors

Unlike in the area of paid work and female employment, when determinants of the gender division of unpaid work are investigated theorists and also empirical analysts put a greater emphasis on individual level explanations than on macro-level ones. Although structural factors in explaining cross-country differences in the division of unpaid work are also

discussed, they are considered to express their impact not so much directly, but rather by modifying the influence of individual factors.

While no one disputes that women generally do more housework than men, there are diverging views on the reasons behind this. There are three dominating individual-level theories on the division of household labour. The time availability argument states that the partner with the most available time will participate most in housework and childcare. This argument is based on that housework allocation is rationally made in accordance with time commitments of each partner. Becker (1981) argues that spouses allocate their time to unpaid work on the basis of their relative productivity to maximize the household utility. Because women typically acquire comparative advantage in childrearing and men in market work, they will specialize in these activities. According to this perspective, the partner with more demanding occupation and higher number of paid work hours spends less time in household and on childcare tasks.

Empirical results provide mixed support for this perspective. Recent studies show the trend of increasing ***female participation in paid work***, which is in negative association with women's time spent in unpaid work. However, regardless of their rising paid work hours, women still spend more time in unpaid work than men do. According to the EWCS, 76 % of employed women out of the 31 countries analysed cook or do housework on a daily basis (Burchell et al., 2007). As for childcare, both employed and non employed mothers increased their childcare time in the last four decades (Gauthier, et al., 2004).

Analysing time use data in 15 European countries shows that working women's share of time used for paid work exceeds the time spent on domestic labour in most of the countries compared. As shown in Table 2, time spent on housework by employed women was higher in Slovenia, Estonia, Poland, Hungary and Belgium than in the other countries (Aliaga, 2006).

The trends in domestic labour and gainful work time over the 1990s show a narrowing in the gender differentials. It is mainly due to the changing behaviour of women and not of men. Women seemed to be more flexible in rescheduling their days or work in atypical ways. The proportion of women who have the main responsibility for the household is higher for part time than for full time workers (Work changes gender, 2007). However, wives' employment

status has little effect on husbands' family work time, and wives take bigger share of family responsibilities even in dual-income families (Presser, 1994).

As we have seen before, the trend of increased female employment has affected mothers as well. Data from the EWCS show that 38 % of employed women provide care for children on a daily basis (Burchell et al., 2007). This change has an influence on parent-child shared time. An analysis based on the OECD database (2006) shows that the labour market status of parents is an important determinant of time spent on care work. Women and men not in paid work spend most time on childcare. Gauthier et al. (2004) suggest that paid work doesn't appear to impinge on parental time. According to their analysis of 16 industrialized countries including 13 European countries, from 1960 to 2000 both employed and non-employed mothers have increased their time spent on childcare. Mothers with full-time employment devote 0.9 hour more per day to childcare, non-working mothers spend daily 1.2 hours additionally with childcare activities. Employed women tend to spend more time with their children even at the expense of their own leisure and sleep time. The results of Gauthier et al. (2004) show that working mothers' complete work time (10.6 hours) was about 2 hours more in the 1990s than time devoted to paid and unpaid work (housework and childcare) by non-employed mothers (8.7 hours).

As for men, domestic and paid work hours remained rather constant during the 1990s (Work changes gender, 2007). As we pointed out earlier, **employed men** devote less time to domestic work than employed women. Even if employed men work longer hours than employed women, they enjoy more free time. This is linked to less time spent by employed men on domestic work. Despite the increasing number of dual-earner families, the time use structures of women and men still reflect the carer role of women and the breadwinner role of men. Employed men in Slovenia, Sweden and Estonia do the biggest share of domestic work according to Eurostat (2004). On the other hand, unemployed men were found to increase their contribution to housework only to a minor extent both in Israel (Shamir 1986) and Hungary (Blaskó 2006).

The type of work contract is an important job-related factor which influences men's housework amount. Non-standard contracts, fixed-term or seasonal contracts have a positive effect on the equal division of domestic labour and men with a permanent job help less at

home (Ramos, 2005; Work changes gender, 2007). In contrary to the type of contract, having a full-time or part-time employment has no influence on men's contribution to domestic work (Work changes gender, 2007).

The resource-power perspective assumes that women's influence on family decision making is limited by their usual lower resources. Since individuals within the family have conflicting interests, couples try to negotiate the allocation of time within the household to make the best deal based on self-interest (Brines, 1993). The person with more income and higher status will spend less time on housework and childcare (Coltrane, 2000). This approach focuses on the type and amount of economic and social resources - educational attainments, income, age and occupational status - that each person brings to the marriage or affiliation. The partner with more resources as higher income and level of education will bargain his liberation from domestic chore responsibilities (Gaspar & Klinke, 2009) and will spend less time in housework and childcare.

Resource has been operationalised as the women's relative financial power (e.g. Brayfield, 1992; Evertsson & Neramo 2004; Fuwa, 2004) educational achievement, occupational status, age (as a factor related to relevant life experience), social stratum or as a combination of these factors. Most support comes from studies using *relative earnings* as a variable (Shelton & John, 1996). The division of household labour seems to be more equal when the gap between the relative socio-economic status of spouses narrows, because it increases women's comparative advantage in the market (Gaspar & Klinke, 2009; González et al., 2009).

Gender inequalities in earnings (the gender wage gap) set back women during the negotiations of the division of household labour when we think in terms of the resource power perspective. The results from the EWCS indicate that men contribute the larger part of the total household income in four out of five dual-earner couples. Men's earnings are higher in 81 % of dual-earner couples without children and in 84 % of dual-earner families with children (Burchell et al., 2007). The gender gap in incomes seems to be a contributing factor to the imbalance in the division of domestic labour between men and women. Research studies find that a smaller gap between wife's and husband's earnings tends to balance the performance of housework (Gaspar & Klinke, 2009). Batalova and Cohen (2002) show that men do more domestic tasks in families where wives earn more than husbands. Drobnič and

Treas (2006) found that the theory is not supported for all income ranges, indicating that factors other than relative resources must also be taken into account. Using ISSP data from 1994 and 2002, Crompton et al. (2005) show for couples from the United Kingdom, the Czech Republic and Norway that the probability of a traditional division of domestic work increases when men earn more than women. Fernandez and Sevilla-Sanz (2006) analysed Spanish Time Use Survey data and found that women's relative share of housework decreases as their relative earnings increase, but only up to a certain point. At the same time however there seems to be no relationship between the relative time spent on childcare and relative earnings. As for the share of childcare tasks, findings provide less support for the relative resources theory (Coverman, 1985).

Taking the **educational level** of men and women as a resource factor, several studies find that better educated men do more domestic work, while better educated women do less (Batalova & Cohen, 2002; Gaspar & Klinke, 2009; Pittman & Blanchard, 1996). The educational level of the husband however is not as important as that of the wife in determining the probability of more equal gender division of domestic work. The reason for this is that more educated wives spend less time doing housework, not because their husbands participate more in the domestic responsibilities (Ramos, 2005; Work changes gender, 2007).

Several studies show (Gauthier et al., 2004; Gronau, 1977; Leibowitz, 1974) that better-educated parents tend to devote more time to childcare. Gauthier et al. find (2004) that more highly educated parents devote about 40 to 50 additional minutes per day to child-related activities compared to parents with lower education, and the difference is larger for men than women. More educated parents seem to be more aware of the positive impact of parent-child shared time on children's well-being and development (Gauthier et al., 2004). Other studies find less support for the explanation power of the educational factor.

Cultural factors

An important theoretical perspective is that of the socialization and gender role attitude explanation, which suggests that husbands and wives perform household labour according to adopted values and beliefs about gender norms (Hiller, 1984; Fenstermaker & West, 2002). This theory suggests that housework allocation is a result of the symbolic differentials in gender relations (West & Zimmerman, 1987). Couples with egalitarian gender attitudes are

expected to have more equal division of labour, while traditional couples would have a more gendered division of domestic work.

According to the **gender perspective**, domestic work is „a symbolic enactment of gender relations" (Bianchi et al., 2000, p. 194), rather than a trade off between time spent in unpaid and paid labour or a rational choice due to the maximization of family utility. The doing gender approach states that the division of household labour in families involves the production and maintenance of gender itself (Berk, 1985; Ferree, 1990; West & Zimmerman, 1987). The gender-ideology theory, another variant of the gender perspective assumes that couples with more egalitarian gender role orientation have a more equal division of labour, while couples with traditional gender role values a gendered division of labour.

Many studies from the last decades have found both men's and women's gender role attitudes as a predictor of the division of domestic labour in various countries (Coltrane, 2000; Davis & Greenstein, 2004; Shelton & John, 1996). Men with less traditional gender ideologies do a greater share of the household labour. These findings are confirmed in samples from Germany (Lavee & Katz, 2002), Sweden (Nordenmark & Nyman, 2003), Great Britain (Kan, 2008) as well as in several cross-national studies (Batalova & Cohen, 2002; Davis, Greenstein & Marks, 2007; Fuwa, 2004).

A longitudinal analysis by Crompton, Brockman and Lyonette (2005) studying data from the years 1994 and 2002 in three countries; Britain, Norway and the Czech Republic, demonstrated a decreasing link between more egalitarian gender role attitudes and a less traditional division of domestic labour in all three examined countries. The relationship was no longer significant for Britain and Norway in 2002. Gender role attitudes had become more liberal in all three countries, but there has been little change in the gendered division of household work.

The project FamWork (2005) has examined differences in the gender-equity attitude of men and women in nine European countries. Portuguese and Italian samples seem to endorse gender equity attitudes to a lower degree; Belgium and Finland fall in the middle, and couples from the Netherlands, Germany, Austria and Switzerland support gender equity attitudes to a higher degree. Using the same methods for a Hungarian sample, Herche (2009) finds that Hungarian men and women hold even more traditional gender-role attitudes than couples

from Portugal and Italy. Overall, results of the FamWork project support the hypothesis that more traditional men tend to invest less time into domestic work while more traditional women spend more time doing household work.

González et al. (2009) used ESS data for 24 European countries and studied possible micro and macro-level factors which could have an influence on the division of housework between men and women. They find that the holding of very traditional values reduce the likelihood for men's cooperative behaviour. However, their results provide more support for the relative resources than for the doing gender perspective. Furthermore, macro level factors seem to contribute to cross-country differences. Other studies similarly found evidence for competing models.

Fuwa (2004) shows that macro-level political and economic gender inequalities limit the effect of individual resources – relative resources, time availability and gender ideology. As it will be outlined in the following section, the inconsistency of findings may be due to modified operation of micro-level factors - time availability, relative resources, and gender ideology - under the influence of different macro-level factors (Fuwa, 2004).

Structural factors

Recent research suggests that the division of household labour depends on many interacting factors on different levels. According to the integrative perspective, individual behaviours can't be separated from the surrounding context and treated in isolation. More complex concepts should involve psychological, interpersonal, institutional, cultural and economic aspects. The following theoretical perspectives emerged recently: gender construction; economic and exchange perspectives; institutional influences; socialist-feminist theories, morality theories; life-course factors, psychological and socialization theories (Coltrane, 2000). Despite the detailed arguments that have been presented, neither of the new concepts were strong enough to become an exclusive, determinable theory.

Nevertheless, since contextual variables shape individual behaviours, a holistic approach taking the broader socioeconomic and policy context into account, might contribute to the

explanation of the management patterns of domestic work. State policies, economic development, the level of gender equality and characteristics of the welfare regime can all influence the division of housework (Balatova & Cohen, 2002; Hook, 2006; Fuwa, 2004; Stier & Lewin-Epstein, 2007). Individuals make their choices to satisfy their preferences within the policy structure of a state. State regulations provide incentives, resources as well as restrictions and barriers for organising family life. Regulations such as parental-leave arrangements, the provision of external childcare, flexible work arrangements, monetary transfers or better infrastructural conditions might help families in balancing family and work demands. Some studies contributed to the explanation of the relationship between policy factors and the division of domestic labour in Europe.

Crompton (2006) studies five countries and finds the most egalitarian division of housework in Norway, Finland and Great Britain. British men's greater amount of household work may be a consequence of a more flexible labour market, enabling them to do more housework and of lower public support for childcare, forcing them to look after them. In the Scandinavian countries, governments have promoted policies that encourage men to share more domestic work. Such policies are lacking in Portugal, the country with the least egalitarian division of housework. The results show a similarly traditional division of domestic work in France, with social policies supporting gender equality and a generous supply of child-care services, which seem to have no influence on men's housework contribution.

Fuwa and Cohen (2007) analyse the effects of social policy on the division of household labour in 33 countries. Their results show that countries without discriminatory policies against certain types of employment, and those with longer parental leave policies have a more egalitarian gender division of housework. Further, women's full time employment and higher income have stronger effects on the gender division of housework in countries with greater equality of access policies. However, longer parental leave policy is associated with weaker effects of women's full-time employment. The findings suggest that social policies affect the dynamics of micro-level negotiations, since parental leave policies mediate between women's full time employment and the gender division of housework.

Stier and Lewin-Epstein (2007) examine the effect of work-family policies on the division of housework in 25 countries. They suggest that gender inequalities in the labour market and

the country's gender ideologies affect the level of gender equality in families by influencing negotiations about housework.

Smith and Williams (2007) created a father-friendly policy index to assess governmental leave provisions available to fathers in Western Europe. They find cross-country variation in the childcare time of fathers, which correlates with the policy index.

Using time-use surveys from 20 countries, Hook (2006) found that men's unpaid work time depends on the length of parental leave available to men and men's eligibility to take parental leave.

Besides investigating the impact of specific policy-arrangements, another possible approach also in this field is to apply existing country-classifications and find out to what extent they explain country-wise heterogeneity in the division of household labour. Fuwa (2004) examined if macro-level gender inequality as represented by the welfare regime typology of Esping-Anderssen affects the relationship between individual-level factors (time availability, relative resources, and gender ideology) and the division of housework in 22 industrialized countries using data from ISSP 1994. His findings suggest that the conservative regimes such as Austria and Italy have the most traditional division of housework, followed by the liberal regimes (such as Britain). Men's cooperation in domestic labour was highest in the social democratic regimes (Norway and Sweden) and the former socialist regimes (a category additional to Esping-Anderssen's clusters, represented by as Bulgaria and East Germany). He also finds that women's employment situation and gender ideology has less bargaining power in negotiations over housework in countries with less gender equality in the labour market and political spheres. The results suggest that changes in micro level factors may not be enough to achieve an equal division of domestic work if macro-level gender inequality remains entrenched.

Geist (2005) also used the 1994 ISSP to study ten countries (including four EU member states: Austria, Great Britain, Italy and Sweden), restricting her sample to married or cohabiting couples aged between 25 and 64 with at least one partner working. Besides analysing the effect of micro-level processes like time availability, relative resources and gender ideology on the division of domestic work, Geist also concentrates on regime differences, grouping the countries into liberal, conservative and social-democratic welfare state regimes. Her findings

show that equal sharing of housework is rare in countries with conservative regimes, independent from individual characteristics. While sharing patterns of liberal regimes are more heterogeneous, higher levels of equal sharing can be found in social democratic countries.

Boje and Ejrnæs (2008) emphasize some problematic aspects of the prevailing welfare typologies: they often create the deceptive impression of coherent welfare regimes and are mainly based on empirical data from the Northern and Western European region excluding Central and Eastern European countries. Furthermore, important welfare providers besides the state and labour market such as the community, organised civil society and the family with its internal gendered dynamic are not taken into account. They do not only provide an alternative model but they also test its capacity to give account of differences in the distribution of housework. They classify the EU Member States into five different care models. These are the following: the “Extensive Family Policy Model” including Denmark and Sweden and the two countries characterized by a pro-natalistic family policy, France and Belgium; the “Short leave, Part-time Model” in the Netherlands and the United Kingdom; the “Long-leave, Part-time Model” including Germany, Austria and Luxembourg, previously characterised with a strong breadwinner model (Esping-Andersen, 1990; Lewis, 1992); the “Family Care Model” in the Southern European countries and two Baltic countries and the “Extended Parental Leave Model” including the Central European countries Hungary, Poland and Czech Republic plus Lithuania and Finland. This classification deviates markedly from the traditional welfare typology. The most striking difference is that Finland is not clustered with other Scandinavian countries. The authors argue that in contrary to Swedish or Danish mothers, women in Finland are free to choose between caring for their children themselves due to paid leave allowances or take up gainful employment.

In this study Boje and Ejrnæs find that the different family policy regimes have a major influence on mothers care praxis and on family strategies to reconcile work and family life. Child care time allocation of mothers over the life course and care strategies of parents are affected by different care regimes. Couples from countries grouped into the extensive family policy model with the most gender egalitarian norms have the most equal division of housework. But women remain even in these countries mainly responsible for the care of

children and for domestic work; a gendered distribution of work is still largely persisting.

3 Methodological discussion

Research findings presented in the previous chapters are mostly based on statistical analyses carried out on large-scale quantitative data from national or international data collection programmes. In the different studies, key domains are defined and also measured in different ways, restricting the comparability of findings and also raising issues concerning interpretation.

Even the seemingly straightforward category of women's involvement in paid work is measured in a range of different ways. In a number of studies self-reported current employment status is looked at either using the definition of the respondent herself (working full-time, working part-time, not working) or by applying the ILO definition on her status a posteriori. In such cases „child-effect” is derived from the parameter-estimation from the relevant explanatory variable. Information on whether women on maternal or parental leave are classified as working or non-working in such studies usually remains unknown even though it might have rather significant bearing on the findings. When number of hours currently worked per week is considered (as in Van der Lippe, 2001) mothers on leave appear as not working and this might result in an increased child-effect in countries with more generous leave provisions.

As opposed to such cross-sectional information on the entire (female) population, other studies apply information on employment changes around childbirth – derived either from retrospective questions in cross-sectional surveys (such as in Stier et al., 2001) or from longitudinal studies (Uunk et al., 2005). The advantage of this approach is that it makes it possible to rule out the inverse causal association, that the presence of children itself is a consequence of changes in employment.

The definition and measurement of unpaid work is even more problematic. An international standard is missing on how to measure domestic work in international surveys – instead, researchers use varying definitions of domestic work and examine different types of couples. The definition from Shelton and John who characterise housework as „unpaid work done to maintain family members and/or home” (Shelton & John, 1996, p. 300) has been used in many studies. Still, the activities included in this task group vary across countries.

Furthermore, there is a lack of consensus whether childcare should be considered as a separate matter, mostly because it is hard to make a clear distinction between parenting responsibilities and other housework tasks. In some studies, childcare is assumed to be a part of housework, others treat it as a separate component of unpaid work, limiting the comparability of results.

Main methods of collecting information about household labour are survey questions and time diaries, but other methods such as qualitative depth interviews, direct observations and discourse analyses are also used. In the case of time use surveys based on direct question format, respondents are asked to report their time spent on household tasks on a daily or weekly basis (e.g. European Social Survey (ESS), European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS) or the International Social Survey Programme (ISSP)). Direct questions vary considerably in their wording (Coltrane, 2000). Some surveys ask respondents to estimate their usual time spent on housework in general or ask them to indicate how much time they spend on a list of domestic tasks, others, like the ISSP measure the division of household labour by the housework hour ratio between husband and wife, asking who always or usually does the housework. Low cost and high response rates are the main advantages of survey instruments.

Time diaries provide an alternative instrument to the traditional survey. Respondents are asked to log their activities throughout the day in a diary (e.g. Harmonized European Time Use Survey, Multinational Time Use Study – HETUS). Despite some drawbacks, like low response rates, and the problems of accounting for parallel activities time diary methodology provides reliable estimates of time use patterns in households. Because time-use survey (TUS) methods have not been harmonised for a long time, nationally produced data are not comparable. Eurostat started to support projects with the goal to harmonise time use statistics in the EU in the early 1990's and was mandated to develop guidelines for Harmonised European Time Use Surveys (HETUS) in order to ensure that the surveys of the Member States are comparable. The HETUS recommendations are improving continuously, the newest guidelines were published in 2009 (Eurostat, 2009). Most European national statistical institutes have taken them into account since the late 1990s. Some countries, however, differ from the recommendations to a varying degree, national time use surveys are therefore only comparable to a certain level. Currently the online HETUS database contains comparable data from 15 countries.

The few studies that compare direct-question to time-diary data find that the resulting time-estimates in the case of direct-question are considerably higher than estimates from time-diary studies. The difference is larger for activities that occur with frequency such as many child care tasks (Gershuny, 2000). The variety of ways domestic work is measured makes any assessment of the literature difficult and limits the comparability of the results of different studies.

Just like research in the field of paid work, studies of unpaid work could also benefit from applying longitudinal survey data. Such information however is rare. The only comparative research programme that makes an effort towards this end is the Generations and Gender Programme³⁰ with several EU member states producing panel survey data on demographic but also social developments – including information on the division of work. From this programme however no publication on family management is available as yet.

The great variability of methods and approaches applied puts serious restrictions also on establishing trends over time. Findings from two or more distinct studies, carried out on data from different points of time are rarely comparable and there are only a very small set of comparative studies that would attempt to explore changes over time.

Not only time-wise but also cross-country comparisons are restricted. The various studies refer to varying sets of countries at varying points of time. Some EU member states have for long been active in producing reliable quantitative data on social issues and therefore they are often included in the various comparative studies. Most of the old member states are undoubtedly in a privileged position in this respect. A few of them (such as Sweden or the UK) are considered to represent certain welfare types and therefore they are rarely left out of comparative analyses. With the new member states the situation is different, although there

³⁰ For more details visit <http://www.unece.org/pau/ggp/Welcome.html>

is a growing interest in their developments. Some of them (like the Czech Republic, Hungary or Poland) have for long been involved in international social survey programmes – a great advantage when aspiring for involvement in comparative studies. Some others however (such as the Baltic states, Malta and also Cyprus) are completely missing from the most notable comparative studies in this research strand.

4 Conclusions

Although cross-country differences are remarkable and changes are constantly on their way, some basic patterns of family management remain intact in Europe. Most importantly, the division of paid, but especially of unpaid work continues to be gendered: men spend more time on paid work and women on unpaid work, including domestic tasks as well as childrearing. The dual carer – dual earner society remains a theoretical concept in most of Europe. Instead, the dual earner-female carer setting seems to become the modality – although with significant variations, especially as far as the amount of women's paid and unpaid working hours are concerned.

Generally, women spend less time in the labour market, they are more likely to take part-time jobs and have more career breaks than men do. At the same time they still hold the main responsibility for housework as well as for child-rearing; spending on the average twice as many hours on these activities than men do. These gender-gaps in unpaid work decrease in size but do not diminish when and where partners spend a similar amount of time in the labour market.

This is important because the most marked change over the past decades in the area of work-division is the increasing level of female employment. Although the rate of growth was slowed down with the accession of the new member states, the main trend remained unchanged. Consequently, the gender-gap in the level of labour market activity is on a constant decrease in the European Union – falling from 18.6% in 1997 to 13.7% in 2008 in the EU-27 countries (Eurostat).

Increasing female employment has been coupled by a growing diversity of family management patterns in Europe and this diversity is most likely to continue increasing. The dominance of the male-breadwinner solution has diminished but no other prevailing model has emerged. Instead, a series of co-existing models are present – as far as distribution of paid work is concerned. Moreover, the distribution of unpaid work in the families only loosely correlates with the distribution of paid work and this leads to further variations in the possible family management models followed. Also families do not make their choices of model for a life-time but instead they adapt their behaviour to their actual situation in the

various phases of their life-cycle. Variations are therefore numerous not only between but also within the individual countries of the EU.

In dealing with the high level of complexity, research in the field has so far been more successful in identifying key factors that promote certain types of family management patterns than in creating typologies of countries with similar tendencies in the area. Both in the field of paid and unpaid work, three main sets of factors are discussed and tested in the relevant research strand. Among the structural factors, instruments of family policy – especially parental leave policies and the system of childcare – has been identified as having a major influence on female employment. Their capacity however is found to be limited by economic constraints, but to some extent also by cultural factors (individual attitudes and also social norms). Individual characteristics of the actor, most notably women's education and income but also her attitudes have been shown to be more important in shaping the gender division of unpaid work, while the impact of policy interventions seems to be more indirect in this area.

Research aiming at describing clusters of countries tends to return to the classic welfare regime typology of Esping-Andersen. In the lack of more recent typologies with their explanatory power tested on family management behaviour, Esping-Andersen's classification remains to be a useful reference point. It helps to interpret common elements of the family management patterns in a number of European countries but at the same time also prompts scholars to generate appropriate explanations for cases that are too distinct from their ideal-type described by Esping-Andersen. Among the *social democratic* countries Sweden, Denmark and Finland with their high level of female participation and a moderate child-effect together with a considerable male cooperation in unpaid work are in harmony with the expectations based on the typology. The only outlier within this category is the Netherlands, where the male breadwinner model as well as its modified versions are frequent. In the UK – the only *liberal* regime in Europe – child-effect on women' employment is strong and childcare remains a family issue – as expected on the basis of the theory. The most problematic cluster is the (large) group of *conservative countries*, with notable between-country variations both in the field of paid and unpaid work. In fact it is only Italy, Greece and Spain that corresponds with the ideal type of this regime, whereas in the rest of the countries within the cluster a more extensive support towards female employment (Germany, Austria, France and

Belgium), social norms that favour female employment (Portugal) or economic necessity (Portugal) lead to diversions from the purely conservative model.

CEE countries are not included in the classic typologies of welfare regimes. A widely used strategy in the empirical literature is to include CEE or post-socialist countries as a separate (fourth) cluster. Detailed analyses however point towards substantial between-country differences in the region as far as gendered behaviour patterns but also underlying structural and cultural factors are concerned. Not only have the development of the welfare regimes taken various directions in the past two decades across these countries, but economic constraints also affect the work-sharing behaviour of the families to varying extent. Unlike the division of paid work, unpaid work shows a relatively homogeneous picture across the region. This involves large number of hours partners spend on domestic work altogether, and a considerable male-participation in each of the CEE countries but Poland.

As it was mentioned before, identifying major factors that (might) shape family management across Europe remains a promising research strand in the field. However, further refinements of definitions and also measurement are needed to provide more valid and also more reliable results. In the area of unpaid work there is a serious lack of standardized and widely accepted measures of involvement and therefore findings from the various studies are far from consistent. Even in the field of paid work it would be necessary to refine measurement by controlling for the diverging definitions of the employment status of parents on parental leave. Scholars of both areas could benefit from making finer differentiations by the age of child in the family. Differentiating only between the under 7 years old and older children for example is likely to mask some crucial variations deriving from the various policies that apply to parents of under-threes in the various countries. Studies of female employment that do not make a distinction between the children according to their age in a refined way simply miss the difference between the short-term and the long-term labour market consequences of motherhood.

Further refinement of the explanatory factors included in the causal modeling would also be possible and also desirable. Most importantly, further improvement is needed to identify the specific elements of the various welfare systems that encourage (or discourage) certain types of family management. Instead of using measures of the overall generosity of the welfare

system in general or for example the parental leave system in particular, more effort is needed to disentangle the specific mechanisms that are in operation. A further step forward would be to include family-work reconciliation measures provided by the employers (rather than the state) in the models estimated.

Finally, research in the field would definitely benefit from taking the men's perspective more into account. Descriptive statistics, but also some more detailed analyses (e.g. Haas et al., 2006) show that not only women's but also men's employment is associated with the presence of a child in the household. In the lack of systematic (and preferably longitudinal) research on male employment patterns we can however not tell whether it is the presence of the child that affects male employment or the other way around. Also, the notion of housework should be reconsidered to reflect more the kinds of involvement men might have in the household-tasks. It would be interesting to see how for example inclusion of household-administration (banking, dealing with bills etc.) in the notion of housework would effect the gender gap in this field.

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6 Annex

Annex A: Data sources of Time Use Surveys

1. Belgium – National Institute of Statistics and Free University of Brussels, (fieldwork period: December 1998 – February 2000; population covered – age: 12-95; sample size: 8383 respondent),
2. Denmark – Danish National Institute of Social Research, (fieldwork period: March, April, September and October 2001, on two consecutive days; population covered – age: 16-74; sample size: 2739 respondent),
3. France – INSEE, (fieldwork period: February 1998 – February 1999, on one day; population covered – age: 15- ; sample size: 15541 respondent),
4. Netherlands – Central Bureau of Statistics, (fieldwork period: January 2001 – December 2001, one diary day, self coded activities; population covered – age: 12- ; sample size: 5717 respondent),
5. Norway – Statistics Norway (fieldwork period: February 2000 -February 2001; population covered – age: 10-79; sample size: 3211 respondent),
6. Portugal – Instituto Nacional de Estatistica, (fieldwork period: October, November, simplified survey; population covered – age: 15- ; sample size: 8133 respondent),
7. Finland – Statistics Finland, (fieldwork period: March 1999 – February 2000; population covered – age: 10- ; sample size: 5332 respondent),
8. Sweden – Statistics Sweden, (fieldwork period: March 1999 – February 2000; population covered – age: 20-84; sample size: 3996 respondent),
9. United Kingdom – Office for National Statistics, (fieldwork period: June 2000 – September 2001; population covered – age: 8- ; sample size: 10366 respondent),
10. Estonia – Statistical Office of Estonia, (fieldwork period: April 1999 – March 2000; population covered – age: 10- ; sample size: 5728 respondent),
11. Hungary – Hungarian Central Statistical Office, (fieldwork period: September 1999 – September 2000; population covered – age: 10- ; sample size: 11421 respondent),
12. Romania – National Institute of Statistics, (fieldwork period: August, September 2000; population covered – age: 10- ; sample size: 17751 respondent),
13. Slovenia – Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, (fieldwork period: April 2000 – March 2001; population covered – age: 10- ; sample size: 6190 respondent),
14. Germany – Federal Statistical Office Germany, (fieldwork period: April 2001 – April 2002; population covered – age: 10- ; sample size: 12655 respondent).
15. Spain – Instituto Nacional de Estadistica, (fieldwork period: October 2002 – September 2003, one day was surveyed; population covered – age: 10- ; sample size: 46774 respondent),

16. Italy – Istituto Nazionale di Statistica, (fieldwork period: April 2002 – March 2003; population covered – age: 3- ; sample size: 55760 respondent),

17. Latvia – Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia, (fieldwork period: February – August 2003, October, November 2003; population covered – age: 10- ; sample size: 3804 respondent),

18. Lithuania – Statistics Lithuania, (fieldwork period: January - December 2003; population covered – age: 10- ; sample size: 4768 respondent),

19. Poland –Central Statistical Office, (fieldwork period: June 2003 - May 2004; population covered – age: 15- ; sample size: 20264 respondent),

20. Bulgaria – National Statistical Institute, (fieldwork period: October 2001 - October 2002; population covered – age: 7- ; sample size: 7622 respondent),

21. Macedonia (fieldwork period: September 2004, one week respondents filled in the Individual Questionnaire; population covered – age: 10- ; sample size: 6024 respondent).

Annex B: Country Abbreviations and Country Names used in all Tables

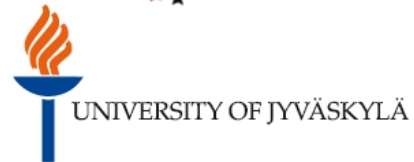
Country Abbr.	Country Name
AT	Austria
BE	Belgium
BG	Bulgaria
CY	Cyprus
CZ	Czech Republic
DE	Germany
DK	Denmark
EE	Estonia
ES	Spain
FI	Finland
FR	France
GR	Greece
HU	Hungary
IT	Italy
LT	Lithuania
LU	Luxemburg
LV	Latvia
MT	Malta
NL	Netherlands
NO	Norway
PL	Poland
PT	Portugal
RO	Romania
SE	Sweden
SI	Slovenia
SK	Slovakia
UK	United Kingdom



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