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**What do women and men really want?**
Research results contradicting stereotypes.

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1) Differences and similarities of opinions and practices between men and women. Are women and men different on their value priorities? And what about inequalities?

2) Based on a theoretical framework I will discuss research results about family, work and gender relations.

3) European trends in family and gender relations: secularization, relation between women’s activity fertility rate, hours worked by mothers and fathers, mothers working in part-time, division of paid and unpaid work.

4) New meanings of the family – differences among European countries.

5) Concluding and raising questions for debate.

Based on research program carried out since the 90s combining qualitative and quantitative methods (ESS 2002, 2004, 2006, 2008) around work, family, gender relations and social policies.
Although research has already shown that the differences within the sexes are much more important than those between them, the truth is that the latter are frequently inflated in a manner that tends to essentialize the biological differences between women and men. (Connell, 1987, 2002; Kimmel, 2000; Inglehart, Norris e Welzel, 2003; Torres e Brites, 2008)

In fact, in contrast to the common view close study of the differences between the two allow us to conclude, with some surprise, that as Connell states:

“(…) the main finding, from about eighty years of research, is a massive psychological similarity between women and men in the population studied by psychologists. Clear-cut block differences are few, and confined to restricted topics”.


Even when comparing characteristics such as the distribution of attributes connected with masculinity and femininity, it can be seen that, despite the differences in averages, the overlapping of characteristics is much greater than the distance and difference between them.
“In fact, in virtually all the research that has been done on the attributes associated with masculinity or femininity, the differences among women and men are far greater than the mean differences between women and men” (Kimmel, 2000: 15).
Data from “European Social Survey”

- Media exposure
- Social and political trust
- Distance from politics
- Political self-positioning
- Political satisfaction
- Attitudes towards economy, the role of the state and the trade unions
- Importance of family, work, friends, leisure, politics, religion and voluntary organizations
- Human values of the Europeans
- Education
About social and political trust men and women are completely similar in the 21 countries.

Social and political trust is higher in Scandinavian countries.

Taking all countries together we observe that police is the institution deserving the greatest confidence and politicians the least, the late ones never surpassing the centre of the scale.
The differences between sexes show that women - in a regular trend and in all the countries - have a higher distance from politics than men.
Women position themselves always slightly to the left in relation to men in the majority of the countries, except in Luxembourg, Poland and Southern Europe, where they are slightly to the right.
Political self-positioning

These results are convergent with others about political self-positioning. Since the 80s, women tend to position themselves more to the left than men, even in voting (Inglehart e Norris: Rising Tide. Gender Equality and Cultural Change Around the World, 2003).

This tendency as been designated as a change from a traditional gender gap to a modern gender gap.

The left-wing parties tend to be more compromised with the Welfare State, the public services of care for children and the family, with education, with reproductive rights and have more ecological concerns, all of those being issues that seem more relevant for women.
Contradicting stereotypes:
1. individuals value family and emotional dimensions.
2. Common values in Europe shared by the majority of the countries.
The importance of family and work in Europe

ESS (Round 1), 2002
Work attachment for men and women (%)

- The work I do is an important part of my life (Men)
- The work I do is an important part of my life (Women)
- I would continue working even if I did not need the money anymore (Men)
- I would continue working even if I did not need the money anymore (Women)

EB-60.3 and CCEB 2003
How much of the time do you find your job interesting and stressful

ESS (round 3) 2006

Country:
- Job interesting: $F(18, 19024) = 30.275; p < 0.000, \eta^2 = 0.028$
- Gender: $F(1, 19028) = 4.209; p = 0.04, \eta^2 = 0.000$
- Job stressful: $F(18, 19016) = 66.05; p < 0.000, \eta^2 = 0.059$
- Gender: $F(1, 19021) = 14.248; p < 0.000, \eta^2 = 0.001$

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How much of the time spent with your immediate family is enjoyable and stressful

ESS (round 3) 2006

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

Family stressful
Country: $F(18, 33612) = 111,964; p < 0,000, ETA^2 = 0,057$
Gender: $F(1, 33609) = 101,26; p < 0,000, ETA^2 = 0,002$
Contradicting stereotypes, women tend to attribute the same importance to work as men do. Work is a value in itself, making part of a feminine social identity.

The discrepancies between the sexes are far narrower than the differences between countries.

Equal patterns of satisfaction and stress in work between men and women.

Both for men and women work time is always perceived as more interesting than stressful.

- Work as main sphere of investment both for men and women.

Both for men and women time spent with family is more enjoyable than stressful
As great groups...

- **Differences**
  - Men read more newspapers
  - Women are more distant from politics (specially in terms of interest and participation);
  - Women are more for the left, more religious, more self-transcendent and more for conservation.

- **Similarities**
  - Watching TV
  - Social Trust
  - Political Trust
  - Political Satisfaction
  - Well being and Satisfaction with life
  - Importance given to Family, to Work and Friends
  - Positions towards immigration

And differences within men and women are greater then the differences between them...
• Differences are reduced. When they appear they are relevant and can reveal exactly the problems of inequality. The *modern gender gap* can represent women’s living conditions and difficulties.

• The necessity of being aware of the reproduction of stereotypes and the differences between them and individuals real perceptions for themselves.

• Gender equality is continually at stake
• Family, work and gender relations
### Previous Research Projects

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#### Quantitative Data
- ESS 2002
- ESS 2004
- ESS 2006
- ESS 2008
- EB 2003

#### Qualitative Data
- Interviews held in Portugal in different regional and social contexts (2007-2008);
- Interviews in Austria, UK, Italy, Denmark, Hungary, Portugal, Poland (2008, 2009)

- Workpackage 4: “Orientations to Work and Care”
- Workpackage 5: “Qualitative interviews with households”


#### First European Quality of Life Survey: Time use and work-life options over the life course (2006)
(Dublin Foundation)

#### Men and Women between Family and Work in Portugal (2000; 2004); Marital Life and Work (2004); International research project


#### Research Program on Family, Gender and Intimacy with PhD and Pos-Doc students since 2006
- Focusing on Family; Gender; Marriage; Life Course; Family, Care and Work; Parenthood; Relations between Private and Public Life; Social Relations and Emotions through the Internet; Youth and Family Transitions; Sexuality; Family, Siblings and Drug Consumption; Adoption and Children’s protection;
- Changes in family patterns over the 20th century, and especially since the 60s, explained by several structural, economical and cultural changes; with deep impact in everyday life on political and public sphere (Segalen, 84; Saraceno, 1988; Beck-Gernsheim, 2002; Therborn, 2004; Torres, Mendes e Lapa, 2008).

- Goran Therborn (2004) talks about the decline of “the law of father “and of the “law of the husband” over the 20th century.

- Torres (2001) has been talking about the transformation of the idea of a woman-nature into a woman individual, a process still on going with relevant impact on family and work relations.
What do men and women want?

- Some authors claim that, regarding work and family, women choose a life style according to their preferences (Hakim’s theory);

- Others (Crompton et al) have shown that structural, institutional and cultural constraints shape “preferences”. Choices are than constrained.

- Questions about work life balance are never raised in the same way to men. Do men want to have a job? Do men want to have children? Why are women’s preferences different than men’s? Are they “constrained” in a different way?
Social and sexual division of labour:
- Class Structure
- Gender relations
- Culture, Ideology, values

Government policies:
- Welfare-State Extended
- Welfare-State Restricted
- Welfare-State Disadvantaged

Gender and family division of paid and unpaid work

Labour market

Domestic work, Chilcare
Analytical strategies…

• To understand differences between countries regarding work-family issues we must account for **structural**, **institutional**, **cultural** but also the **dynamics** of change in a specific country.

• To understand trends and configurations in each, and in all countries, we must mix methods and account for **methodological issues** (formulation of questions, effects of the research contexts).

• To understand work-family balance we must perceive work and family as two fundamental dimensions in a process of constitution of **personal life projects**.
European trends in family and gender relations

- Secularization
- Individualization
- Women's search for autonomy and gender equality
- Valuing feelings and emotions as top priority in private life

Diversity in Europe, same pathways from different starting points and dynamics, specific configurations.

To understand those differences between countries we need to account for:
1. Structural, institutional, cultural contexts;
2. Dynamics of change in specific countries.
Let us look now at some data about practises and perhaps also data that tends also to contradict stereotypes.
Europeans who claim no religious affiliation - % (ESS, 2008)
Secularization...

- 38% say that they don’t have any religion.

- In six countries the majority do not have a religion: Sweden, UK, France, Belgium, Holland, Czech Republic.
Total fertility rate and working mothers (2008)

ESS, 2008
Mothers and fathers of children under 10 who carried out paid work in the preceding 7 days (%), 2008
Average hours of work of mothers and fathers with children under 10, 2008
Full time/Part-time working mothers children under 3 (%)

ESS, 2008
5. Domestic tasks

People saying that they spend more than a half of the total time spent by the household in the domestic tasks*

* In a normal week day. Couples which both members work  

ESS 2004
Coming back to opinions again
Great consensus in the ideological plan: Europeans tend to adopt an equalitarian perspective and reject a traditional vision of men’s and women’s roles in the family.
Gender Roles Indicators
Hierarchical Cluster Analysis (Ward Method) by Gender relations in the family

ESS (round 2) 2004
The transformations of the family in Europe follows the same patterns but with calendar differences and cultural variants.

Each region have particular configurations and combinations between the old and the new. It still makes sense, analytically, to differentiate between the northern and the southern European countries (although there are also internal differences within the groups of countries).

- Long term structural dynamics in each country. But also conjuncture effects, changes in politics and policies, the strength of feminist movements.
  - Portugal. The effect of Colonial War.
  - Eastern countries, differences in social protection, job security and childcare facilities
  - Germany. Doing it all differently from the East
  - U. Kingdom. Changes from 1997 on.
  - Spain and Finland. Both with high young people unemployment rate but with different fertility rates and policies.
Concluding remarks

Work as a dimension of social identity for all. Women tend to “prefer” to work professionally.

New meanings of the family. Valuing family on a more modern, open and egalitarian mode. Clear desire of more involvement of men in the family.

Labour market participation of working mothers. Though men have more hours of work, women are very close. Real part-time jobs (with half of the hours) are the exception in Europe: Netherlands, UK and Switzerland. And they seemed to be not desired as a good combination between work and family (you have to do the same in less hours….)
Men do not do the majority of the housework, nor care. The difference between men’s and women’s hours of work – accounting for paid and unpaid work – is unfavourable for women.

Women want to invest in both fronts, family and work. But in the majority of the countries they have to pay a price for maintaining both investments. Overload, not having a career, guilty feelings, unfulfilled identities.

Policies do have effects as the growth of fertility rate in some countries has shown. Private matters impact on policy issues and vice versa.
The old breadwinner model for the middle class – women at home men at work – is no longer sustained. Different models but a predominance of a dual-earner model, with women as carers at the same time.

Equality as a perspective but …

- Men tend to assume more “professional” responsibilities” for themselves (masculinity hegemony).

- Women do the symmetrical thing about the family. In spite of the end of the parsonian division we still feel the signs of the incorporation of that model.

- It is not, however, out of “preferences”. In Europe, in the big majority of the countries, men and women, but more women than men, tend to “prefer” equality. They seem constrained in their practises.

- Differences among European countries but the same general trend.
References in [www.analiatorres.net](http://www.analiatorres.net) in articles and other publications