

STRATEGIES AND VALUES TOWARDS CO-RESPONSIBILITY
IN CARE IN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES*

*ESTRATEGIAS Y VALORES HACIA LA CORRESPONSABILIDAD
EN LOS CUIDADOS EN PAÍSES EUROPEOS*

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ABSTRACT

Work-life balance policies are one of the most influential factors in the equal sharing of care between women and men. However, for far-reaching changes to take place in the gender-based division of work in societies, a new framework of social values must accompany those policies, so that care tasks cease to be associated with families and with women.

The goal of this study is twofold. First, to establish relationships between work-life models and gender equality in the labor market. Second, to link work-life balance models in European countries with predominant social values in regard to gender equality in care and employment. The sources of information used are previous studies on work-life balance plus data from the OECD, Eurostat and the European Values Study.

The main conclusion is that in some countries there is great coherence between work-life models and values held concerning gender equality. These are the countries with advanced models (the Nordics) and some countries with traditional models (part of those that were socialist). In other countries, despite the existence of values favorable to gender equality, traditional work-life models persist. In many cases, part-time employment among women guarantees care management.

Keywords: Care, co-responsibility, values, gender, Europe.

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RESUMEN

Las políticas de conciliación de la vida laboral y familiar son uno de los factores más influyentes en el reparto equitativo de los cuidados entre mujeres y hombres. Sin embargo, para que se produzcan cambios profundos en la división sexual del trabajo en las sociedades, es necesario que estas políticas vengan acompañadas de un nuevo marco de valores sociales, de modo que las tareas de cuidado dejen de estar asociadas a las familias y a las mujeres.

El objetivo de este estudio es doble. En primer lugar, establecer relaciones entre los modelos de conciliación de la vida laboral y familiar y la igualdad de género en el mercado laboral. En segundo lugar, vincular los modelos de conciliación de los países europeos con los valores sociales predominantes en lo que respecta a la igualdad de género en el cuidado y el empleo. Las fuentes de información utilizadas son estudios previos sobre conciliación de la vida laboral y personal y los datos de la OCDE, de Eurostat y del Estudio Europeo de Valores (European Values Study).

La principal conclusión es que en algunos países existe una gran coherencia entre los modelos de conciliación de vida laboral y familiar y los valores predominantes sobre la igualdad de género. Se trata de los países con modelos avanzados (los nórdicos) y de algunos países con modelos tradicionales (parte de los que eran socialistas). En otros países, a pesar de la existencia de valores favorables a la igualdad de género, persisten modelos tradicionales de conciliación. En muchos casos, el trabajo a tiempo parcial entre las mujeres garantiza la gestión del cuidado.

Palabras clave: cuidado, coresponsabilidad, valore, genero, Europa.

JEL Classification/ Clasificación JEL: B54, H53, I38.

1. INTRODUCTION

Child-raising and care for dependents in general are structured through networks that determine how the various actors (families, the market, the state and the not-for-profit sector) interact in terms of designing, funding and actually providing care. These institutional agreements for assuring welfare in society are referred to by various names, including welfare regimes, welfare architecture, the welfare diamond and the care diamond (Razavi, 2007). The term “care networks” is also used to describe networks comprising individuals who provide care, those who receive it, institutional actors, regulatory frameworks, rules and market and community involvement (Rodríguez Enríquez, 2015).

It must be emphasised that the role of the state is qualitatively different from that of the other actors: on the one hand, it sets the general regulatory and redistributive framework. Legislation, the labour relations framework and social policies make up a systematic intervention on the part of the state to address the welfare of the population. In all cases, policies are based on certain principles and assumptions which, explicitly or implicitly, establish a rationale for the provision of services and the way in which the state responds to what decision-makers define as the “necessities” of the population (Esquivel et al., 2012:27). On the other hand, the state is not only a service provider but also a decision-maker in determining the rights and responsibilities of other actors and institutions in regard to care.

For far-reaching changes to take place in the gender-based division of labour in societies, changes in regulations, institutions, etc. need to be accompanied by a new framework of social values in which care-work ceases to be associated with families and with women.

Section 2 of this paper looks at how theoretical approaches to the provision of care, from the most restrictive to the most ambitious, have evolved over time. Section 3 contains the hypotheses, the methodology, the indicators and the data sources. Section 4 outlines the characteristics of childcare frameworks and work-life balance models in Western societies and ranks European countries accordingly. Previous studies on this topic are taken into account, as are changes made in parental leaves for childcare by EU countries in the wake of Directive 2019/1158.

In section 5 we go on to look at the values and opinions held by the population in regard to gender roles in care work and employment. The information used is drawn from the European Values Study (2017), and more

specifically from the five questions within it which are concerned with this matter. Section 6 discusses our findings and seeks to establish links between work-life balance models and the values and opinions of the public concerning gender equality in employment and care work.

Regarding the objectives of the study, first of all, we will relate the work-life models with equality between men and women in the labor market. Our second goal is to gauge the degree of consistency between these values and the design and development of work-life balance models. Finally, we consider the potential for progress in work-life balance policies within the framework of the European Union.

The research reported here adds to the existing body of work in two ways. First, it establishes links between the two main policies for supporting child raising (maternity, paternity and parental leaves and public childcare services) and gender inequalities in employment (looking at gender gaps in employment and the extent of part-time work among women). Accordingly, it is fed by and adds to previous research such as Sikirić (2021), which links the impact of childcare services with female employment, and Bacheron (2021), which studies the impact of paternity leave on employment among mothers. Second, we establish links between the work-life balance models in various European countries and the values and opinions of the population in regard to gender equality in employment and in responsibility for care-work.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYSING HOW CARE IS ORGANISED IN SOCIETY

In recent years, it has become clear that our societies need to solve what has become known as the “care crisis”. Our socio-economic systems are clearly unable to guarantee adequate standards of welfare for broad sectors of the population. The main causes are an increasingly elderly society, less availability of women to carry out unpaid work and the inability of our economic and political systems to meet care-growing demand (Ezquerro, 2010; Pérez Orozco, 2014).

“Care” is a highly complex notion, but numerous efforts have recently been made to define its determining factors and characteristics. The dual nature of care-work is stressed, given that it involves work at home and at the same time emotions and love. Various publications have extended the notion to activities related to and provided by the public sector outside the home, which are characterised by different codes and remuneration systems (Graham, 1983 & 1991)

This has led to a wide range of approaches in regard to how care should be provided in our societies. Early work done in the 1970s looked at the work-life balance in terms of the possibility of care being provided by families while men and women remained in work. This has been widely criticised on the grounds of bias in its proposals, which often merely served to perpetuate the idea of women being the main caregivers. More recently, this approach has evolved towards co-responsibility, where attention is still largely focused on families

and on the idea that responsibility for providing care lies with all members of the household. The focus of attention is sometimes broadened to include co-responsibility on the part of families, the state and businesses, but interest continues to be centred mainly on families.

In any event, the fact that public-sector policies exist is no guarantee of progress in gender equality. Indeed, without consistent planning, the measures set up to increase the provision of care services may end up reinforcing traditional gender-based divisions of labour. To make progress towards gender equality it is essential to analyse the gender frameworks and values that predominate in society and to implement measures and plans accordingly (Castro, 2018).

In most Western countries, a new form of gender-based division of labour has emerged that supersedes the traditional, exclusive dedication of women to reproductive labour. In the new scenario men devote themselves to paid work, while women undertake paid work in a subordinate fashion while they continue to bear most of the burden of care work. To overcome this situation and move towards a society where the division of labour is not gender-based, various requirements must be met: i) men must engage in care work at the same level as women; ii) there must be a sufficient, high-quality system of public services for educating children and caring for dependents; and iii) there must be stable work with rational working hours and full rights for everyone. This would help to produce a society made up of supporting, caring individuals on equal terms (Pazos, 2018).

However, there is strong resistance to change, due to the persistence of the privileges attributed to men. This maintains a “gender-based order” over time, so that it is assumed that care needs will be dealt within the family, mainly by women. Seeing the provision of care as a public responsibility brings to light the links between markets, institutions, activities, times and social subjects. There is a need to transform social awareness into a process based on the reallocation of the time dedicated to different types of work by men and women (Castro, 2018).

In this context, a particularly valuable contribution is that of Nancy Fraser (2015), who states that there is a need to set up interlinked policies in the following three areas, aimed at fostering co-responsibility and changing gender roles: i) redistribution of resources in the broadest sense (material, economic, time, etc.), of opportunities and of responsibilities; ii) recognition of the work done by women, with particular emphasis on care-work and domestic chores; and iii) representation policies that come true equal participation in social, economic and political life.

The 1990s saw the development of the concept of “social care”, which was a major step forward in providing theoretical content for the analysis of care (Carrasquer, 2013). Among other things, this concept links care with studies on the welfare state, so that it ceases to be seen as a private matter and finds a significant niche in the world of theory and policy (Tobío et al., 2010). From this viewpoint, care must be addressed in an integrated fashion, so that all the

actions and relationships involved in meeting the needs of dependent persons are factored in, and the legislative, economic and social context in which care takes place is also taken into account as a whole (Daly & Lewis, 2000).

Studies in this regard initially focused on the link between the state, families and the market in providing the necessary care. However, one highly significant implication of the concept is that the community can be incorporated as a fourth level of care provision (Razavi, 2007). This highlights the roles played by a wide variety of actors who are often not formally organised but nevertheless occupy an essential place in the provision of care on a more or less informal basis, particularly in those areas where the presence of the state and/or the market is weakest. “Care networks” are thus set up (Pérez Orozco, 2006). These are formed by all the actors involved in providing care, including the community framework which is often left out of analyses of care-work based on the welfare state. This approach is of particular interest because it enables the provision of care to be reviewed on two interlinked scales: on the “macro” scale to learn what contribution each of the four areas involved makes; and on the “micro” scale to look at how responsibility for care is distributed among individuals (Castro, 2015). In short, the various ways in which care is organised in a society make up what are known as “care regimes”, which extend not only to how social policies on care are organised but also to the type of values that underlie the distribution of paid and unpaid work in a society (Roostgard, 2003; Bettio & Plantenga, 2004; Gálvez, Rodríguez & Domínguez, 2011).

More recent publications on the matter stress the limitations of approaches that continue to treat care as a more or less specific part of the welfare system. In order to address future challenges, we must consider the need to organise a “caring society” (Glenn, 2010) where the changes needed to create a society in which care is valued can take place. That requires a transformation in how we see ourselves, our relationships with others, our families, civil society, the state and the political economy. Similar arguments are given by those authors who propose a more ambitious line of reflection and action in the form of “sustainable living”. This concept seeks to set out the priority interests of society, and prioritises the living conditions of individuals. It is defined as follows: “*a historical process of social reproduction; a complex, dynamic, multi-dimensional process of meeting the continually changing needs of individual identities and social relationships; a process that must be continually rebuilt, that requires material resources but also contexts and relationships based on care and affection, with the latter being provided largely through unpaid work in the home*” (Carrasco 2001, Addabbo & Picchio, 2009; Picchio, 2005).

3. HYPOTHESIS, METHODOLOGY, INDICATORS AND DATA SOURCES

The method used here involves reviewing previous studies on the characteristics and development of work-life balance models in European countries. As our jumping off point, we take the studies by Janta & Stewart (2018); Matysiak & Węziak-Białowolska (2016); Escobedo & Wall (2015);

McColgan (2015); and Ciccia & Verloo (2012), but we also update their information based on changes in regulations introduced in some European countries as a result of EU Directive 1158/2019. These changes concern the extension of paternity leave and the reservation of weeks for fathers in parental leave¹.

Below, we specify the indicators used to classify the countries as well as the data sources:

- Maternity, paternity and parental leave: duration, wage replacement levels and the existence of non-transferability requirements between parents are considered, taking the data from the OECD Family Database (2021) as reference.
- Care services available: the data show the percentage of children aged less than 3 years in formal childcare and the percentage of children between 3 years and compulsory school in formal childcare, as this is the main indicator for monitoring the provision of childcare services² (data from Eurostat for 2020³).
- Gender equality/inequality at employment: this is quantified by examining the gap between the employment rates for women and men and the percentage of women in part-time work (data from Eurostat 2021).

Data from the European Values Study (EVS) are also analysed. The EVS is a large-scale, cross-national, repeated cross-sectional survey research programme on basic human values. It provides insights into the ideas, beliefs, preferences, attitudes, values and opinions of citizens all over Europe. It covers a wide range of human values. The main topics concern family, work, environment, perceptions of life, politics and society, religion and morality and national identity. We use data from the fifth wave of the European Values Study (2017). Specifically, we focus on the replies to the following questions, all of which are linked to values concerning gender roles in care and employment:

Q1. Percentage of people who agree or strongly agree with the statement that a man's job is to earn money and a woman's job is to look after the home and family.

Q2. Percentage of people who agree or strongly agree with the statement that when jobs are scarce men have more right to a job than women.

Q3. Percentage of people who agree or strongly agree with the statement that a job is allright but what most women really want is a home and children.

Q4. Percentage of people who agree or strongly agree with the statement that family life suffers when the woman has a full-time job.

1 The changes in some countries stand out. In 2021, France increased paternity leave from 14 to 28 days, though with only 7 days being compulsory for the father. In the same year, Switzerland introduced its first compulsory paternity leave of up to 14 days (within 6 months as from the birth) or 10 days (if taken in odd days). In Spain, paternity leave has been repeatedly extended, and as from 2021 it has been matched to maternity leave at 16 weeks. It is also non-transferable.

2 The reference study to select the indicator is Plantenga & Remery (2013).

3 For Italy, Iceland and UK the data is from 2018.

Q5. Percentage of people who agree or strongly agree with the statement that school-age children probably suffer when their mother works.

Questions 1, 2 and 3 show if people agree with the traditional distribution of gender roles, i.e. men doing paid work and women dedicating themselves to home and care-work. Questions 4 and 5 refer to the negative consequences (in the opinion of respondents) of female employment on family life and children.

The research hypotheses put forward are the following:

Hypothesis 1: The opinion concerning gender equality in paid work and in care work is highly consistent with the work-life balance model in place.

Hypothesis 2. The belief that female employment is not harmful to family life or to children is related with values favourable to gender equality in care and with the work-life balance model.

For the study of hypothesis 1, a scatter diagram was constructed to identify the relation between questions Q1 and Q3 and their adoption in the different work-life balance models identified. For the study of the second hypothesis, a scatter diagram has been developed to identify the relation between the belief that female employment makes children suffer (Q5) and the values that support gender equality in care work and their adoption in the different work-life balance model.

4. ANALYSIS OF WORK-LIFE BALANCE MODELS IN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

4.1. CONFIGURATION OF CHILD CARE POLICIES

Here we focus on childcare, so we refer to childcare services and maternity/paternity/parental leave. We chose this area because we believe that maternity impacts the careers of women at a time when those careers should be taking off, and gender inequalities in the distribution of household tasks also increase at that time (Yavorsky et al., 2015).

It must be noted that the level of development and the configuration of work-life balance policies on childcare vary from one European country to another, to the extent that they can be seen as different models. The most advanced models are usually associated with higher levels of participation of women in employment and narrower gender gaps in terms of employment rates. This is achieved on the basis of the extensive development of childcare services and maternity/paternity/parental leave. Such leave makes it possible for children to be cared for by their families during their first year of life. It also supports the equal distribution of care time between men and women. At the other end of the scale are more traditional models, which are characterised by low levels of employment among women and wide gender gaps in terms of employment rates. Mothers are encouraged to take on care-work by giving them long parental leaves. There is also a wide range of intermediate models. In these countries low levels of care services, short parental leave periods and low income compensation rates condition the participation of women in employment. In some cases, the gender gap in employment rates is moderate

because many women work part-time. In other countries, there is less part-time work among women but the gender gaps in employment rates are wider.

In this regard, EU Directive 2019/1158⁴ seeks to guarantee gender equality in employment opportunities and treatment at work throughout EU territory, and to make it easier for workers who are parents or carers to reconcile their work and family lives. Accordingly, it sets minimum requirements for parental leaves on family grounds and flexible working systems. EU Member States can opt to introduce these systems or maintain more favourable regulations for workers.

In regard to paternity leave, the Directive establishes:

- Fathers and equivalent second parents have the right to paternity leave of 10 working days to be taken on the occasion of the birth of a child.
- Paternity leave is to be paid for at the level of national sick pay.

In regard to parental leave it has this to say:

- Each worker has an individual right to parental leave of four months, two months of which may not be transferred from one parent to the other.
- A suitable level of payment must be set for at least two months of parental leave for each parent.

4.2. CLASSIFICATION OF EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

In this section we sort European countries into various groups depending on their work-life balance models. They are arrangements that stem from combinations of public services and parental leaves for childcare, presence/absence of women in employment and the percentage of women who work part-time. We distinguish between models on the basis of how and to what extent they provide support in each of these factors. In some cases, parental leaves are long but there is no incentive for them to be shared between couples. As a result, it is almost always women who take up such leaves, so their participation in employment ends up being far lower than that of men. In other cases the periods of leave are shorter, which encourages women to enter employment. But the absence of men in child raising and/or low levels of care services result in a high percentage of part-time work among women. Other models feature shorter periods of leave, foster their equal distribution between parents and also offer broad coverage for care services. This results in high levels of employment among women and moderate levels of part-time work.

In drawing up this classification, we take as a starting point the conclusions of comparative analyses already conducted on matters of co-responsibility, work-life balance and participation in employment in the context of Europe. Four groups of countries with similar characteristics have been generated in terms of women's employment models, child care services and parental leaves. For this, the classification made by Ciccia and Verloo (2012) has been taken

4 Directive (EU) 2019/1158 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 June 2019 on work-life balance for parents and carers.

as a reference, but with some modifications⁵. Specifically, this classification grouped the countries into six ideal types, but in this work we have been grouped the countries into four models in order to simplify the issue and be able to draw conclusions. We use the classification established in those analyses, but also factor in the changes in parental leaves that have taken place in recent years. Those changes are concerned mostly with two points: firstly, numerous research papers have concluded that the structure of parental leaves is unsuitable for child raising, in the sense that it does not encourage men to take greater co-responsibility for these tasks. Secondly, there is EU Directive 2019/1158.

The most advanced work-life balance models (Model 1) are those of the Nordic countries (Table 1). Their aim is for both men and women to take part in employment. The idea is that individuals should be out of employment for the shortest possible time. Care for dependents is outsourced to public services, which are seen as a social investment and are well funded. Parental leaves are long (except in Iceland) and it is possible take up part-time parental leaves up to 3 years. These are taken up mainly by women. Thus, the percentage of women who work part-time is significant (around 30% in general and 20% in Finland). The result is a high level of gender equality in access to employment. Work-life balance arrangements combine the widespread use of services with relatively long, well-paid parental leaves.

The group ranked second (Table 2) contains a number of countries with models that can be seen as intermediate (somewhere between “advanced” and “traditional”, Model 2). Some of them (intermediate models with support for work-life balance) strive to provide equal rights for women in terms of participating in employment. They do so by providing well-funded care services and parental leaves which are well paid but not very long (except in Switzerland). Denmark’s model is the best example of this type. Parental leaves there were extended when women were already highly integrated into employment, so the idea was to keep things that way rather than to involve fathers more in care-work. In countries with lower levels of services, such as Switzerland, work-life balance also leans heavily on part-time work among women.

The third group (Table 3) comprises countries where there are intermediate models (Model 3) without support. In these countries, the limited support available is aimed mainly at protecting the health of mothers and children. Parental leaves are very low-paid. In the Netherlands and Belgium care services

5 The article by Ciccia and Verloo establishes a series of scores for each country in 6 ideal types of care systems. One of these types is called “full universal caregiver”. The article points out that the full universal caregiver model does not yet empirically exist. None of the countries considered conforms to this ideal type. For this reason, this ideal type has not been taken into account.

In addition, the “caregiver parity” type has also been removed. The caregiver parity model comprises three Central Eastern European countries: Bulgaria, Lithuania and Romania. These countries’ policies appear similar to those of the «male breadwinner or traditional» model, but here maternal care is compensated by generous benefits. For this reason this type has been merged with the traditional one.

are relatively abundant. Part-time work among women is also very frequent. These two factors result in high levels of women in employment. By contrast, in Italy, Malta, Cyprus and Greece care services and levels of part-time work among women are lower. As a result, there are far fewer women in employment.

Finally, the traditional model (Model 4) with the man as the breadwinner and the woman as responsible for caring and domestic work is the most frequent model in Europe (Table 4). In this model, women are expected to act as carers, so parental leaves are long and, in some cases, very well paid. The countries of the former socialist bloc, where care work reverted to families after the transition to capitalism, are cases in point. Care services there were reduced and replaced by long, generously paid parental leaves. Such leave is almost always taken up by women, so female employment rates and part-time work among women are low (Rumania, Bulgaria, Slovakia, Czech Republic).

By contrast in Germany, Austria and the UK, where levels of services are also low and parental leaves are shorter, part-time work among women is the main tool for work-life balance. And in countries where the level of services is somewhat higher, such as France and Spain, the proportion of part-time work is lower.

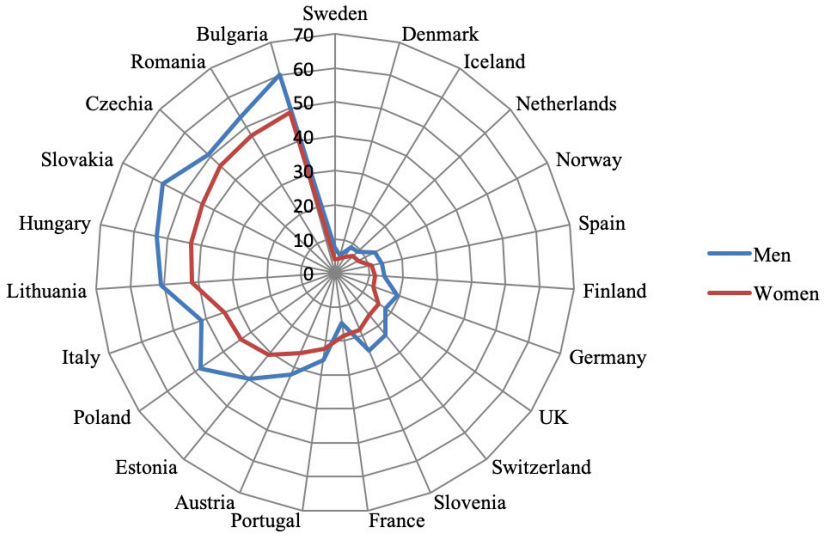
5. VALUES AND OPINIONS CONCERNING GENDER ROLES IN CARE AND EMPLOYMENT

This section outlines the values and opinions of the population in regard to the roles of women and men in caring and in employment. It draws on the results of the latest European Values Study (2017), and more specifically on the answers to the five questions listed above.

Those answers indicate that the Nordic countries make up a group in which the ideas that “a man’s job is to earn money and a woman’s job is to look after the home and family” (Chart 1) and “what most women really want is a home and children” (Chart 3) receive little support. Similarly, only a small percentage of the population believe that families and children suffer if women work outside the home (Chart 4 and Chart 5). These are countries where opinion is predominantly favourable to gender equality in employment and in childcare. In practically all cases, the opinions given by women are more favourable to these ideas. In the graphs shown, Sweden, Norway, Finland, Denmark and Iceland are almost always in the first quadrant.

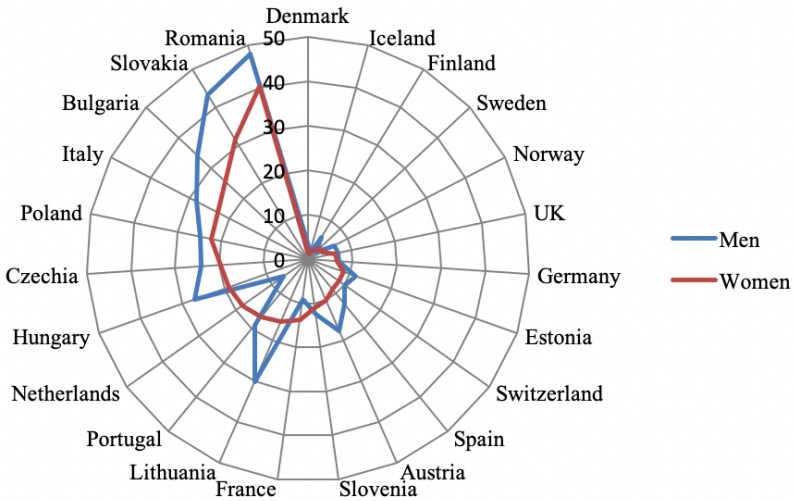
At the other extreme there is a group of countries where people support traditional roles in regard to the incorporation of women into employment and their devotion to care work, assigning them a subsidiary role in the former (Chart 2) and a core role in the latter in the belief that this is what they want (Chart 3) and also what is necessary for the family to work properly (Chart 4 and Chart 5). Stand-out members of the group include some of the former socialist bloc countries, such as Lithuania, Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Romania and Slovakia, but also some Mediterranean countries such as Italy. Another point observed is that in this group the differences between the opinions of men and women are less significant (in questions 3, 4 and 5).

CHART 1. PERCENTAGE OF PEOPLE WHO AGREE OR STRONGLY AGREE WITH THE STATEMENT THAT A MAN'S JOB IS TO EARN MONEY AND A WOMAN'S JOB IS TO LOOK AFTER THE HOME AND FAMILY.



Source: Atlas of European Values (2017).

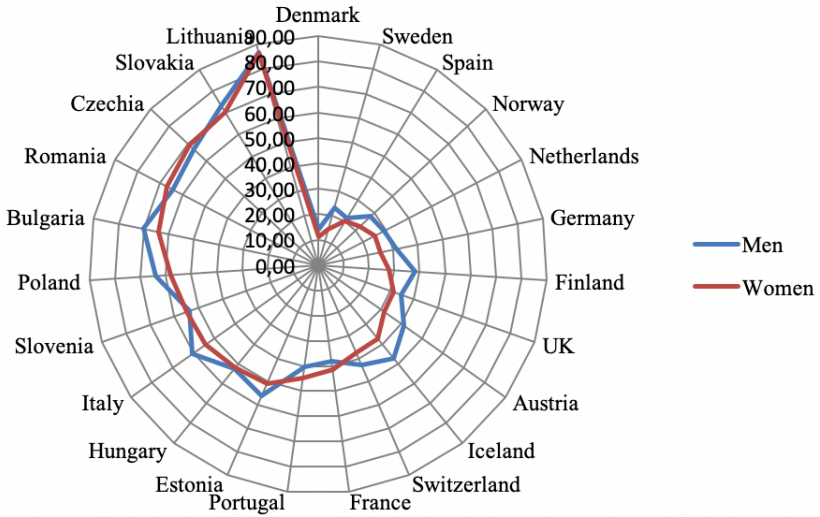
CHART 2. PERCENTAGE OF PEOPLE WHO AGREE OR STRONGLY AGREE WITH THE STATEMENT THAT WHEN JOBS ARE SCARCE MEN HAVE MORE RIGHT TO A JOB THAN WOMEN.



Source: Atlas of European Values (2017).

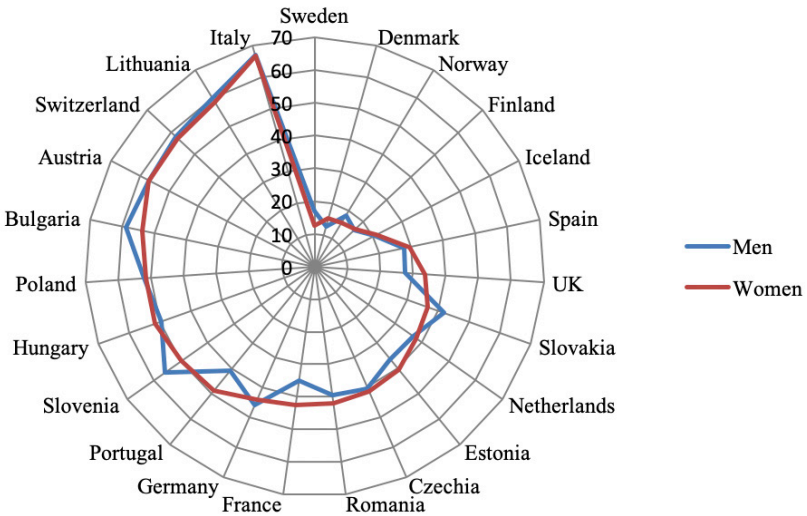


CHART 3. PERCENTAGE OF PEOPLE WHO AGREE OR STRONGLY AGREE WITH THE STATEMENT THAT A JOB IS ALRIGHT BUT WHAT MOST WOMEN REALLY WANT IS A HOME AND CHILDREN.



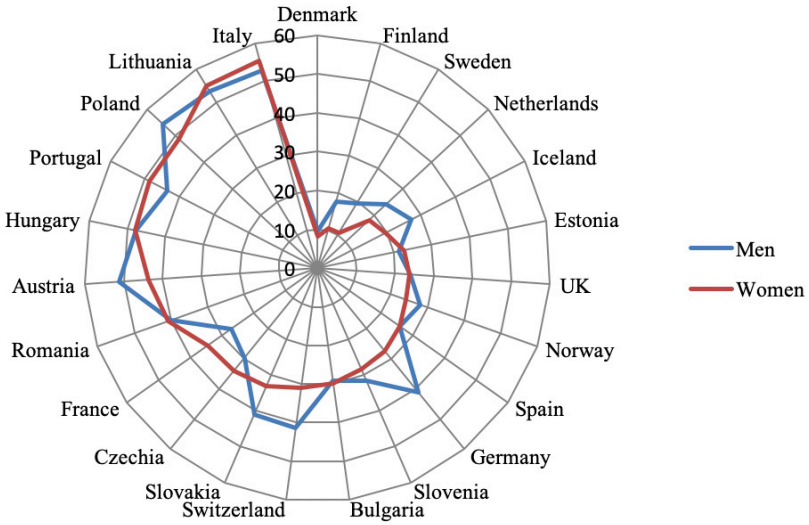
Source: Atlas of European Values (2017).

CHART 4. PERCENTAGE OF PEOPLE WHO AGREE OR STRONGLY AGREE WITH THE STATEMENT THAT FAMILY LIFE SUFFERS WHEN THE WOMAN HAS A FULL-TIME JOB.



Source: Atlas of European Values (2017).

CHART 5. PERCENTAGE OF PEOPLE WHO AGREE OR STRONGLY AGREE WITH THE STATEMENT THAT SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN PROBABLY SUFFER WHEN THEIR MOTHER WORKS.



Source: Atlas of European Values (2017).

Between the two extremes there is a large group of intermediate countries. They include a number of countries which lie between the first and second quadrants on the chart of responses, including the UK, Germany and Spain. This means that there is a fairly high level of agreement concerning equality between women and men in care work and employment.

There is another subgroup of countries that lie between the second and third quadrants, indicating a lower level of agreement concerning the values of equality. They include France, Switzerland, Austria, Estonia, Portugal and Slovenia.

6. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

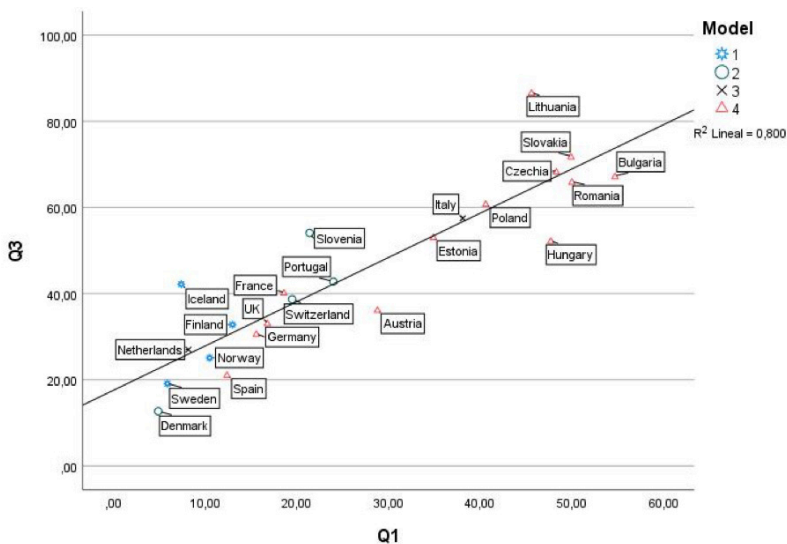
For the study of hypothesis 1, a scatter diagram was constructed to identify the relationship between the opinion concerning gender equality in paid work and in care work and the work-life balance model in place (Chart 6).

This graph identifies the high correlation in the responses to questions 1 and 3. It also shows how the different countries align with these values. Most of the countries represented in the Model 4 (traditional models) show greater adherence to traditional values related to gender roles. At the opposite end, countries with more advanced models (Model 1) show less adherence to these values.

For the study of the second hypothesis, a scatter diagram has been developed to identify the correlation between questions 1 and 5. The way in which countries align with these values has also been graphically represented (Chart 7).



CHART 6: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE OPINION CONCERNING GENDER EQUALITY IN PAID WORK AND IN CARE WORK AND THE WORK-LIFE BALANCE MODEL IN PLACE



Source: Own work based on Atlas of European Values (2017) and Ciccia y Verloo (2012).

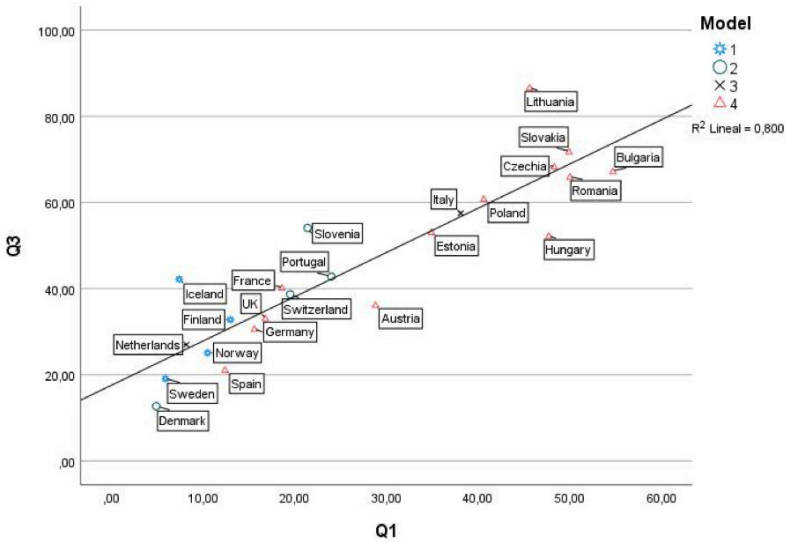
Countries with an advanced work-life model (Model 1) aligne with a low adherence to the belief that female employment makes children suffer. And consistently, most countries with more traditional models (Model 4) show a significant degree of adherence to these values.

Additionally, there is a group of countries with traditional models (Model 4), but in them there is little agreement with traditional values. In other words, the majority of the population thinks that the fact that women are employed does not harm their children. They would be Spain, the United Kingdom and, to a lesser extent, France. In these cases, it is the female labor insertion model (with fairly wide gender gaps in the employment rate and a high percentage of part-time employment among women) that resolves the issue of care. This would be particularly true in the case of the United Kingdom, where childcare services are more scarce.

The analysis above shows that in a large number of countries there is a high level of consistency between the type of work-life balance model in place and the values held by the population in regard to gender roles in care. In the Nordic countries, the prevalence of opinions favouring the equality of women and men in employment and in care is reflected in advanced work-life balance models. There is widespread agreement that men should not have priority when jobs are scarce.

There is a second group of countries which also show high levels of consistency between the values held and the work-life balance model in place,

CHART 7. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE OPINION ABOUT THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN CARE AND THE CHILDREN WELL-BEING, AND THE WORK-LIFE BALANCE MODEL IN PLACE



Source: Own work based on Atlas of European Values (2017) and Ciccia y Verloo (2012).

but in the opposite sense. This group includes some of the former socialist bloc countries, such as Lithuania, Romania, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and Poland. The prevailing opinion concerning female employment and the role of women as carers is consistent with the traditional work-life balance model.-

By contrast, in some countries with traditional models, such as Germany, the UK, Spain and France, opinions in regard to female employment and the role of women in care are clearly favourable to gender equality. These scenarios are susceptible to shifts towards advanced work-life balance models.

In some countries with intermediate models, such as Denmark and the Netherlands, the prevailing opinion can be said to be favourable to a work-life balance model that leans less towards women being responsible for care. By contrast, the same cannot be said of Switzerland and Slovenia. The prevailing conditions do not seem conducive to policies that foster the incorporation of women into employment, e.g. by increasing publicly run childcare services.

In view of the foregoing, hypothesis H1 can be considered as confirmed only in part, in those countries where opinion is strongly in favour of gender equality and in those where it is strongly against it. At both extremes, the work-life balance models in place are consistent with the prevailing values in regard to gender equality. However, there are numerous intermediate cases where opinions in favour of gender equality in employment and care are not reflected in the corresponding work-life balance models.



As for H2, the results indicate only a moderate level of consistency between opinions on gender roles in employment and care, and the effects of female employment on children, on the one hand, and the work-life model, on the other. In countries with advanced models, there is little support for the idea that “children can suffer when the woman has a full-time job” or that “man’s job is to earn money and a woman’s job is to look after the home and family”. However, there are also countries in which values in line with gender equality predominate, but that have traditional work-life models. In these cases, the care issue is resolved because an important percentage of women work part-time.

7. CONCLUSIONS

As we have seen, the life-work model responds, even partially, to the values and opinions of the population regarding gender roles in care. In fact, it is precisely those countries where the population is most in favor of gender equality that have launched the most ambitious policies. Likewise, in countries where traditional values predominate, the reconciliation model places the responsibility for care on women. Despite this, it should be noted that there are countries in which the work-life model does not match with the values in terms of gender equality in care. These are countries in which there are values favorable to co-responsibility between women and men in care work, but in which the traditional work-life model persists. Care work continues to be the responsibility of women and reconciliation is achieved through part-time employment between them.

The policies promoted by the EU can favor changes towards societies in which care work is distributed more equitably. But social values are what determine how private life is organized, the distribution of different tasks between women and men (and between different population groups in line with age, place of origin, race, etc.) and the value attributed to those tasks by society. EU policies that favor co-responsibility are necessary but are not sufficient *per se* to bring about a more equal distribution of care-work society.

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ANNEX

TABLE 1. COUNTRIES WITH ADVANCED WORK-LIFE BALANCE MODELS (MODEL 1)

	Gender gap in Employment rate	Female part-time employment	Children aged less than 3 years in formal childcare	Children between 3 years and compulsory school age in formal childcare	Maternity leave	Paternity leave	Paid Parental leave ⁶	WCR ⁷
	%	%	%	%	Weeks	Weeks	Weeks	%
Finland	1,9	23,2	39,6	85,3	17,5	3,0	143,5	18,4
Sweden	4,1	29,7	54,1	96,0	12,9	1,4	42,9	57,2
Norway	3,9	35,4	62,1	77,8	18,0	0,0	68,0	32,1
Iceland	5,7	34,6	61,3	98,1	26,0	0,0	6,0	71,3

WCR = Wage Compensation Rate.

Source: Own work based on data from Eurostat and Janta & Stewart (2018); Matysiak & Węziak-Białowska (2016); Escobedo & Wall (2015); McColgan (2015); Ciccia & Verloo (2012).

TABLE 2. COUNTRIES WITH INTERMEDIATE MODELS WITH SUPPORT (MODEL 2)

	Gender gap in Employment rate	Female part-time employment	Children aged less than 3 years in formal childcare	Children between 3 years and compulsory school age in formal childcare	Maternity leave	Paternity leave	Paid Parental leave	WCR
	%	%	%	%	Weeks	Weeks	Weeks	%
Denmark	5,8	33,5	67,7	92,1	18,0	2,0	32,0	50,7
Portugal	5,0	9,1	53	88,2	6,0	5,0	24,1	59,6
Slovenia	6,4	12,8	44,3	95,8	15,0	4,3	37,1	100
Switzerland	7,7	60,9	31,4	61,2	14,0	2,0	0,0	0,0

WCR = Wage Compensation Rate.

Source: Own work based on the Eurostat database and Janta & Stewart (2018); Matysiak & Węziak-Białowska (2016); Escobedo & Wall (2015); McColgan (2015); Ciccia & Verloo (2012).

6 Weeks of parental leave available to mothers.

7 Wage Compensation Rate for mothers. In Finland, Norway and Sweden the WCM of the fathers is greater than that of the mothers. There are cases in which the WCR of the fathers is lower than that of the mothers (Austria, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Latvia, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Poland, Lithuania, Portugal). In the rest of the countries it is equal.

TABLE 3. COUNTRIES WITH INTERMEDIATE MODELS WITHOUT SUPPORT (MODEL 3)

	Gender gap in Employment rate	Female part-time employment	Children aged less than 3 years in formal childcare	Children between 3 years and compulsory school age in formal childcare	Maternity leave	Paternity leave	Paid Parental leave	WCR
	%	%	%	%	Weeks	Weeks	Weeks	%
Belgium	6,9	39,5	54,6	96,9	15,0	3,0	17,3	19,6
Netherlands	7,0	65,0	67,6	93,2	18,0	6,0	0,0	0,0
Ireland	8,8	29,6	22,9	92,7	26,0	2,0	5,0	25,2
Italy	17,7	31,5	25,7	93,2	15,0	2,0	26,0	30,0
Malta	15,4	19,2	29,7	80,7	20,0	0,2	0	0,0
Cyprus	11,4	12,7	20,7	76,3	18,0	2,0	0,0	0,0
Greece	18,2	12,5	21,5	86,1	43,0	0,4	0,0	0,0

WCR = Wage Compensation Rate.

Source: Own work based on the Eurostat database and Janta & Stewart (2018); Matysiak & Węziak-Białowolska (2016); Escobedo & Wall (2015); McColgan (2015); Ciccia & Verloo (2012).

TABLE 4. COUNTRIES WITH TRADITIONAL MODELS (MODEL 4)

	Gender gap in Employment rate	Female part-time employment	Children aged less than 3 years in formal childcare	Children between 3 years and compulsory school age in formal childcare	Maternity leave	Paternity leave	Paid Parental leave	WCR
	%	%	%	%	Weeks	Weeks	Weeks	%
Bulgaria	7,8	1,8	15	93,5	58,6	2,1	51,9	27,5
Slovakia	7,7	4,6	4,8	86,8	34,0	0,0	130,0	32,2
Croatia	9,6	5,8	20,4	54,4	30,0	0,0	26,0	62,0
Czechia	14,2	9,6	4,8	78,2	28,0	1,0	45,8	78,3
Hungary	9,7	6,7	10,5	89,5	24,0	1,0	136,0	34,7
Poland	13,0	7,6	11,2	58,1	20,0	2,0	32,0	67,5
Estonia	3,2	16,9	26,7	93,5	20,0	4,3	62,0	100
Latvia	3,9	10,0	26,3	78,6	21,7	1,4	78,8	46,3
Lithuania	1,0	7,6	16,2	87,1	16,0	4,0	44,0	77,6
Austria	8,6	49,2	21,1	87,4	16,0	4,3	44,0	71,2
Germany	7,1	47,4	16,4	47,7	14,0	0,0	44,0	65,0
UK	8,1	39,4	38,6	70,5	39,0	2,0	0,0	0,0
France	5,6	27,4	57,2	96,7	16,0	4,0	26,0	14,2
Spain	9,6	22,3	45,5	97,9	16,0	16,0	0,0	0,0

WCR = Wage Compensation Rate.

Source: Own work based on the Eurostat database and Janta & Stewart (2018); Matysiak & Węziak-Białowolska (2016); Escobedo & Wall (2015); McColgan (2015); Ciccia & Verloo (2012).

