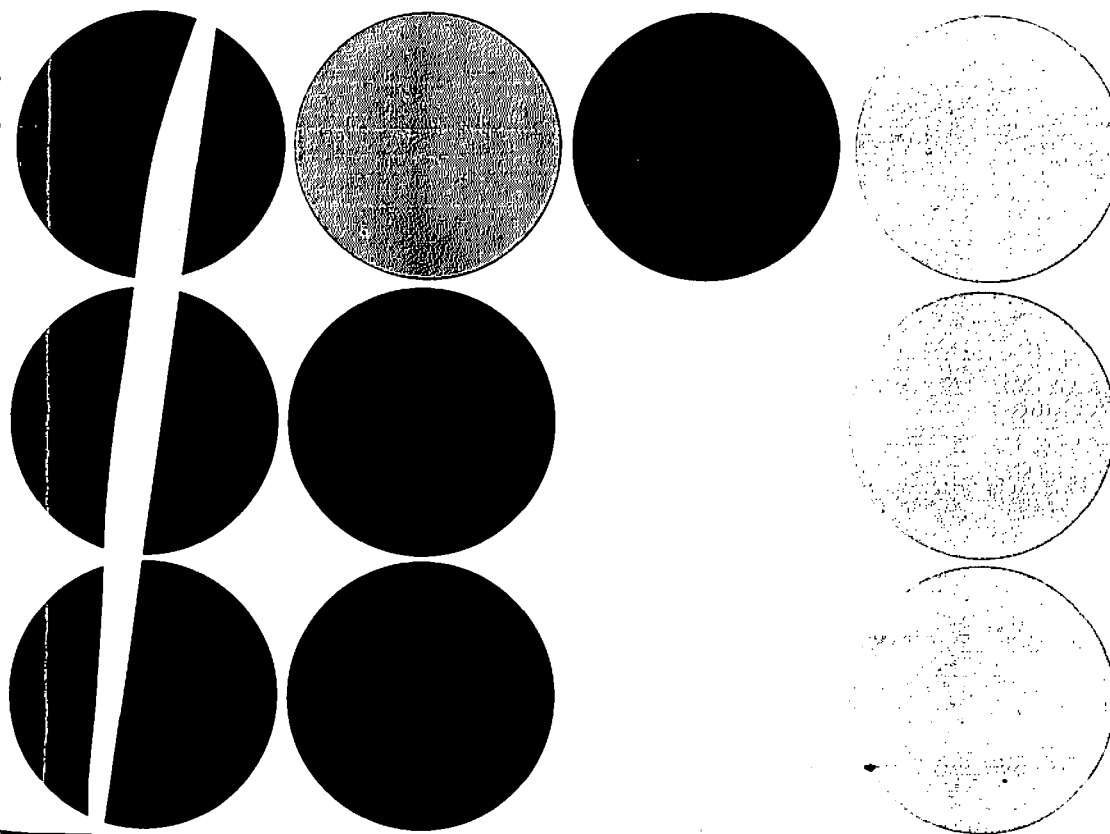


NordWel Studies in Historical Welfare State Research 6

Retrenchment or renewal?

Welfare states in times of economic crisis

EDITED BY GUDMUNDUR JÓNSSON AND KOLBEINN STEFÁNSSON



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Guðmundur Jónsson and Kolbeinn Stefánsson

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The mission of NordWel is to deepen our understanding of the development of the Nordic welfare state in order to foster the research-based discussion on Nordic societies and their future. This involves the establishment of a highly-integrated Nordic research platform within international welfare research.

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CHAPTER 11

Should men have more rights...? Gender-role-related attitudes before and during the 2008 crisis

IVETT SZALMA AND JUDIT TAKÁCS

Introduction

In different types of European welfare states there are great differences regarding women's labour market position, their fertility-related behaviour, and the division of housework.¹ In the Nordic social democratic welfare states, gender equality is the most developed in comparison to the rest of Europe: labour force participation rates of women and men are nearly the same, and the difference between time devoted to housework by women and men is the smallest. According to previous research findings in present day Europe, gender inequalities regarding labour market participation and domestic division of labour are most widespread in the postsocialist countries.² For example, in Hungary, Slovakia and the Czech Republic mothers having children under 3 have the lowest maternal employment rates in the EU (OECD 2012). Our starting point is the assumption that European countries are characterized by different gender role attitudes and that these attitudes are developed not only at the individual level but also at the level of society.

The aim of this chapter is to focus on the changes in gender role attitudes over a given period of time which partly coincides with the recent global

¹ Esping-Andersen 1990.

² Hobson & Oláh 2006; Puur, Oláh, Tazi-Preve & Dorbritz 2008; Takács 2008; Hobson & Fahlén 2009.

economic crisis. The present crisis may be affecting gender role attitudes due to several reasons. First of all, the unemployment rate has increased sharply since the first quarter of 2008 as a result of the economic crisis.³ According to American scholars, the recession that began in 2007 has affected male workers disproportionately; however, they also emphasize that the 'mancession' is not a new phenomenon, as all recessions tend to follow this pattern.⁴ When jobs are scarce men's employment tends to become a priority at the expense of women's employment, reflecting the dominance of traditional gender role attitudes.⁵ On the other hand, female labour market participation may become more important from the family's point of view, as it can help in decreasing the risks—including reduction of salaries and increased unemployment—exacerbated by the crisis, thus stimulating less traditional gender role attitudes.⁶

The current crisis followed the mancession pattern at the beginning: in many European countries the most affected sectors were those dominated by men such as the construction and automotive industries.⁷ The government reaction to the crisis was to cut the public budgets and public sector employment, thus having more negative impact on female employment rates.⁸ Besides the direct effects of the crisis, increasing unemployment rates, decreasing income levels, the indirect effects must also be taken into consideration. Among the indirect effects was a rise in fixed-term and part-time employment at the expense of permanent and full-time employment and a stronger sense of insecurity of jobs, while the competition among employees has exacerbated.

Two-earner families are more stable than single breadwinner families but the numbers of one-parent families are increasing, due to the high divorce rates and the spread of less stable partnership forms. Consequently,

³ Kiiver & Hijman 2010.

⁴ Elsbj, Hobijn & Şahin; Şahin, Song & Hobijn 2010.

⁵ Cha & Thébaud 2009; Australian and American scholars also emphasized the key role women's dependence on men can play in the formation of less egalitarian gender attitudes (Baxter & Kane 1995).

⁶ Pongrácz & Molnár 2011.

⁷ Verick 2009.

⁸ Ruggieri 2012.

women are more motivated to be employed to decrease their dependence on their partners so they are less likely to support traditional gender role attitudes in the context of a very competitive labour market.

The aim of this chapter is to reveal whether any significant changes have occurred in gender role attitudes among men and women between 2005 and 2010 as a consequence of the crisis. The chapter is structured into three sections: the first section describes the applied data, variables, and methods; the second presents our main hypotheses; and the third discusses the main results.

Data and methods

In this chapter we analyse data of the second and the fifth rounds of the European Social Survey (ESS), conducted in 2004–2005 and in 2010 respectively. The ESS is a large-scale, cross-national longitudinal survey initiated by the European Science Foundation in order to study changing social attitudes and values in Europe. Since ESS is a repeat cross-sectional survey, in each round of data collection, following each other every two years, a core module and two rotating modules are used. Rotating modules focus on specific academic and policy concerns, being repeated not in every ESS round, but only at certain intervals. The empirical base of our analyses is a rotating module which focuses on work-life balance issues and which has been included in two ESS rounds, the second and the fifth, since the first round of ESS data collection was completed in 2002. During the second ESS round conducted in 2004–2005, data was collected in 25 European countries. During the fifth ESS round in 2010, the rotating module on work-life balance issues was repeated. Thus, we are able to examine the temporal changes concerning gender-role-related attitudes as measured by the variables included in the repeated module between 2004–2005 and 2010. We examine data of only those countries, which participated in both the second and the fifth ESS rounds.⁹ These included twenty-one countries: Belgium, Czech Repub-

⁹ In the original questionnaire a score of one meant strong agreement and a score of five meant strong disagreement, but in the interest of clearer understanding we have recoded the responses. The analyses were conducted with ESS fifth round data, which was made accessible by ESS in September 2011.

lic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Slovakia Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and Ukraine. Within each country we focused only on those respondents who were aged between 20 and 55, had paid work, and lived in couple relationships. These restrictions were made to yield a homogenous sample in the countries. This sample makes it possible to focus on those who are mainly affected by the crisis on the labour market. In 2004–2005 the total sample was 11,774 (6124 men and 5650 women); in 2010 the total sample was 10,911 (5556 men and 5355 women).

Our dependent variable measured the agreement level with the statements that *men should have more right to a job than women when jobs are scarce* on a one-to-five scale, where a score of one meant strong agreement, signalling a high level of traditional gender role attitudes, while a score of five meant strong disagreement, signalling the rejection of traditional gender role attitudes.¹⁰ Figures 11.1 and 11.2 provide illustrations of the mean values of the dependent variable in 21 European societies in 2004–2005 and 2010. They clearly show that between 2005 and 2010 in most countries the level of agreement with the statements that *a woman should be prepared to cut down on her paid work for the sake of the family* and that *men should have more right to a job than women when jobs are scarce* decreased, except in Greece¹¹, where people agreed more with the first statement in 2010, and in Ukraine, where the level of agreement with the second statement increased by 2010. It is noteworthy that by 2010 the level of agreement with the second statement decreased significantly in Poland¹², one of the countries least affected by the crisis.¹³

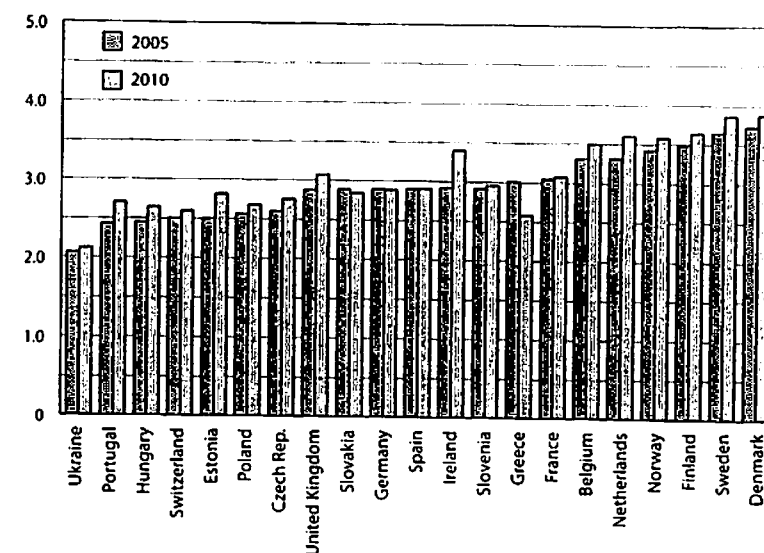
10 In the second ESS round the following five variables measured gender role attitudes: *A woman should be prepared to cut down on her paid work for the sake of her family* (G6); *Men should take as much responsibility as women for the home and children* (G7); *When jobs are scarce, men should have more right to a job than women* (G8); *When there are children in the home, parents should stay together even if they don't get along* (G9); and *A person's family ought to be his or her main priority in life* (G10). In the fifth round of the EES, however, there were only two such variables included: *A woman should be prepared to cut down on her paid work for the sake of her family* (G4), and *When jobs are scarce, men should have more right to a job than women* (G5).

11 Greece is one of the countries that was gravely affected by the crisis (Chritie, Lupu, Milea & Ailincă 2011): the unemployment rate was 12.5 per cent in 2010, while the average unemployment rate in the EU-27 was 9.7 per cent in 2010 (Eurostat 2012).

12 In Poland the unemployment rate fell by 8.1 percentage points to 9.6 per cent.

13 Chritie, Lupu, Milea & Ailincă 2011.

Figure 11.1. Agreement level with the statement 'A woman should be prepared to cut down on her paid work for the sake of the family' in 21 European countries, 2005 and 2010

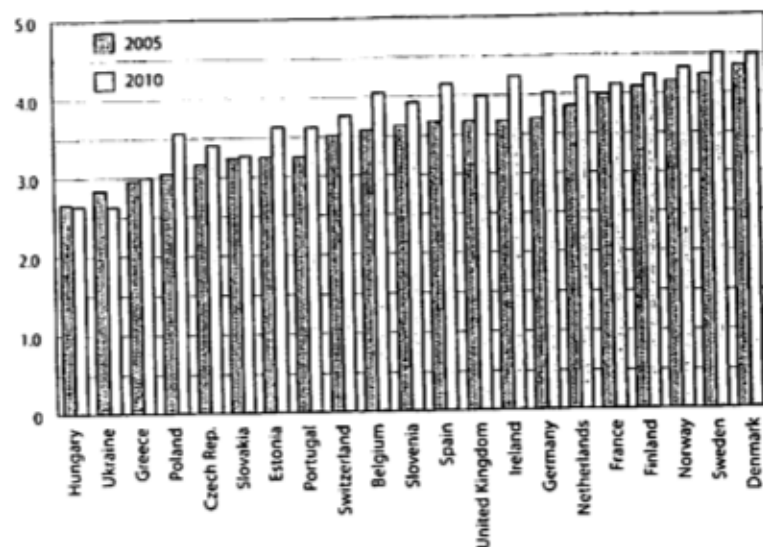


Note: 1=strong agreement; 5= strong disagreement.

For analysing our datasets, multiple methods were applied. First, we constructed explanatory models by applying multilevel mixed-effects linear regression. Our regression analyses were conducted by the STATA 11.1 statistical programme.

The statistical argument for using multilevel or hierarchical linear regression models is that citizens of a given country won't necessarily form views independently from each other according to the dimension of the dependent variable. For example, if the level of gender inequality is low in a country, it is possible that a citizen of this country will be more likely to reject traditional gender role attitudes than if he or she were living in another country that is characterized by a high level of gender inequality. In this case it cannot be guaranteed that the independence of observations, be-

Figure 11.2. Agreement level with the statement 'Men should have more right to a job than women when jobs are scarce' in 21 European countries 2005 and 2010



Note: 1=strong agreement; 5= strong disagreement.

ing a basic assumption of standard regression models, is fulfilled, and thus estimate results can become distorted. Applying multilevel models has the advantage of recognizing the partial interdependence of individuals within the same group—or citizens within the same country in our case. Multilevel models are useful for analysing data characterized by a complex variance structure in which the complexity of variance is caused by the nestedness of individual observations in groups. During data analyses the total variation in the dependent variable is decomposed into within-group variance and between-group variance, while the two sources of variation can be studied simultaneously.

Men and women were examined in separate models as we assumed that certain factors can affect the attitudes of women and men in different ways

and we wanted to be able to track these differences. Two explanatory models were constructed by applying multilevel mixed-effects linear regression. We called the first one the *labour market model* and included the following outcome variables: actual work hours measured according to the full-time work norm of the given country (whether one works less or more than the full-time work norm that is 40 hours per week in all the examined countries except in Denmark¹⁴); desired work hours¹⁵ (whether one wants to work less or more and accordingly earn less or more); partner's work hours¹⁶; experience of long-term unemployment¹⁷; subjective evaluation of financial situation¹⁸; employment security¹⁹; work autonomy and flexibility index²⁰; and, finally, the partner's actual work hours. Additionally, we introduced a new variable into the 2010 data set to see whether the crisis affected the respondents' work conditions. The crisis was measured by a Crisis Index that was constructed from four further variables in turn.²¹

14 In Denmark the full-time work norm is 36 hours, which we applied in the case of Denmark in order to calculate whether one wants to work less or more than the norm.

15 Desired work hours were measured by the following variable: *How many hours a week, if any, would you choose to work, bearing in mind that your earnings would go up or down according to how many hours you work?* (G116 in second-round questionnaire).

16 Partner's work hours was measured by the following variable: *How many hours does he/she normally work a week (in his/her main job)? Please include any paid or unpaid overtime* (F48 in second-round questionnaire of ESS and F57 in fifth-round questionnaire).

17 Measured by the following variable: *Have any of these [unemployment] periods lasted for 12 months or more?* (F28 in second-round questionnaire and F37 in fifth-round questionnaire).

18 Measured by the following variable: *Which of the descriptions on this card comes closest to how you feel about your household's income nowadays?* 1=Living comfortably on present income; 2=Coping on present income; 3=Finding it difficult on present income; 4=Finding it very difficult on present income (F33 in second-round questionnaire and F42 in fifth-round questionnaire).

19 Measured by the following variable: *My job is secure:* 1=Not at all true; 4=Very true (G66 in second-round questionnaire and G32 in fifth-round questionnaire).

20 Measured by the following two variables: *How much the management at your work allows you to decide how your own daily work is organized?* 0=I have no influence; 10=I have complete control (F18 in second-round questionnaire and F27 in fifth-round questionnaire); *How much the management at your work allows you to choose or change your pace of work?* 0=I have no influence; 10=I have complete control (F19a in second-round questionnaire and F28a in fifth-round questionnaire). The work autonomy and flexibility index was constructed in the following way: we summed the values of both variables. The maximum value of the new variable was 20, which meant employees could have complete control on their work environment, and the minimum value was 0, which meant that employees did not have any control on their work environment. The work autonomy and flexibility index was inserted into our model as a continuous variable.

21 Measured by the following four variables: *Have you had to do less interesting work?* (G58 in fifth-round questionnaire); *Have you had to take a reduction in pay?* (G59 in fifth-round questionnaire of ESS); *Have you had to work shorter hours?* (G60 in fifth-round questionnaire); *Have you had less security in your job?* (G61 in fifth-round questionnaire). The index was constructed in the following way: we counted all the positive answers, and if one respondent indicated at least one positive answer from the four variables, we regarded the respondent as being affected by the crisis.

The second explanatory model we called the *sociocultural model* as it focused on the following outcome variables that are all closely connected to socialization outcomes: political views²², self-assessed religiosity and attendance at religious services²³, and whether the mother of the respondent worked when the respondent was 14 years old.

Additionally, both models included a country-level outcome variable and four control variables: age, place of living, education level, and having (young) children were used as control variables in all of the models. As a country-level outcome variable, the Female Employment Rate²⁴ was applied in the *labour market model*. The unemployment rate of the country seems to be very relevant, but it does not reflect the situation of the labour market in gendered aspects.²⁵ For example, a low unemployment rate can mean that most men and women are employed, but it can also mean that female activity rate is very low because women are regarded as second-rate employees. In this case, women will not appear in the unemployment statistics because they are out of the labour market as a result of the functioning of traditional gender roles (raising children, nursing elderly relatives, etc.).

The Gender Inequality Index (GII)²⁶ was applied in the *sociocultural model*. This index measures those differences between men and women that imply inequality between the genders.

22 Political views were measured by the following variable: *In politics people sometimes talk of 'left' and 'right'. Using this card, where would you place yourself on this scale, where 0 means the left and 10 means the right?* (B23 in second-round questionnaire).

23 Self-assessed religiosity and attendance at religious services were measured by the following variables: *Regardless of whether you belong to a particular religion, how religious would you say you are?* 0= not at all religious; 10=very religious; *Apart from special occasions such as weddings and funerals, about how often do you attend religious services nowadays?* 1=Every day; 2=More than once a week; 3=Once a week; 4=At least once a month; 5=Only on special holy days; 6=Less often; 7=never. (C13 and C14 in second-round questionnaire).

24 OECD 2012. Statistics were calculated using the employment rate of women as a percentage of the female population (15–64).

25 Another consideration against using the unemployment rate as a country-level variable is that the unemployment statistic varies considerably from country to country.

26 Gender inequality was measured by GII values in 2005 and in 2010, respectively. GII values reflect women's disadvantage in three dimensions: reproductive health, empowerment, and the labour market. For more details see Human Development Reports. Gender Inequality Index (GII). Online. Available HTTP: <http://hdr.undp.org/en/statistics/gii/> (Last accessed: 2 August 2012).

Hypotheses

We constructed three sets of hypotheses according to our explanatory models: the first hypotheses set concentrates on issues related to labour market participation; the second set focuses on religious and political socialization outcomes as reflected in people's self-definitions, and in the effects of having (young) children; and the third set focuses on country-level effects measured by the Female Employment Rate and the values of the Gender Inequality Index.

H1. Hypotheses related to labour market participation

According to the first set of hypotheses, we assumed that the labour market position has a significant effect on attitudes regarding gender roles. Labour market position can play an especially important role among women: if they are employed full-time, they have to face work-life balance conflicts, but if they work part-time, they may feel that they are a second-rate earner within the family. Thus we formulated a *labour market position* hypothesis as follows:

H1.1. Labour market position will have an effect mainly on the attitudes of women, as they are usually the ones whose work careers are interrupted to stay at home with young children. Thus those women who work more or would like to work more are more likely to reject traditional gender role attitudes than others.

The involvement level of the partner in paid work can also influence the attitudes. Accordingly, we formulated the *partner's involvement in paid work* hypothesis as follows:

H1.2. In the case of male respondents, the actual work hours of the partners can become a determining factor. Thus men with a partner who spends more time at work than the work time norm for women in the given society will be more likely to disagree with the statement on traditional gender norm attitudes.

Besides the female labour market involvement in paid work, other 'soft factors', such as how much the employees feel that their jobs are secure and whether they have influence over their work, can affect the gender role attitudes regarding female employment behaviour. We formulated two hypotheses regarding the *subjective evaluation of one's job*:

H1.3.1. Insecure employment will increase the agreement level with traditional gender role attitudes in the case of women as well as men. Putting more emphasis on family, motherhood, household duties, and staying at home with children in a social environment characterized by insecure employment possibilities can then be interpreted as a rational solution for women in a structurally constrained situation. For example, in the early 1990s, after the political system changed in many former state socialist countries, female employment rates decreased, while traditional gender role attitudes became stronger.²⁷ In the case of men, there are two contradicting scenarios. On the one hand, it is advantageous for them if society is characterized by traditional gender role attitudes because then they do not have to compete (so much) with women in the labour market as women's duties are primarily household duties and childrearing to be done at home and not in the labour market. On the other hand, in a social environment characterized by insecure employment possibilities, it can be also seen as a rational solution if not only men but also their partners are active in the labour market. When employment is insecure couples can ease the negative effects of unexpected hardship caused by unemployment or illness by one of them staying on the labour market.²⁸

H1.3.2. Besides evaluation of the job security other characteristics of employment such as work autonomy and flexibility can also influence traditional gender role attitudes towards employment. Both factors can help in reconciling work and family. By providing a practical framework for achieving a better work-life balance, work autonomy and flexibility can increase the disagreement level with traditional gender role attitudes.

H2. Hypotheses related to religious and political socialization

Attitudes are also determined by values and norms. Most major European religions prescribe norms for men and women separately, which coincide with traditional gender related attitudes. Political views can also influence attitudes—for example, right-wing political ideologies tend to prefer male

27 Tóth 1995; Blaskó 2002.

28 Oppenheimer 1997.

breadwinner families. We formulated two hypotheses on *religiosity and political views*:

H2.1. People who define themselves as religious and those who attend religious services relatively often tend to agree with traditional gender role attitudes more than others;

H2.2. People who place themselves on the political right are more likely to agree with traditional gender role attitudes than people who place themselves on the political left.

H3. Hypotheses focusing on country-level effects

Besides the objective situation and value orientations of individuals, the cultural and economic situation of the country can also have impacts on attitudes. Thus we constructed the following two *country-level hypotheses*.

H3.1. In countries characterized by higher levels of gender equality, respondents will have a lower level of agreement with traditional gender role attitudes. A lower value of the Gender Inequality Index (GII) signals that there are no significant differences between the two genders in the following three dimensions: reproductive health (based on maternal mortality and adolescent fertility), empowerment (calculated on the basis of parliamentary representation and educational attainment), and labour market participation.²⁹ Between 2005 and 2011 in most of the 21 European societies examined, GII values decreased, the only two exceptions being Hungary and Ireland.³⁰ Thus we assume that in countries with low GII values, traditional attitudes will be rejected more than in other places.

H3.2. If the female employment rate is high in a society, then the dual-earner family model will become widespread, and respondents will have a lower level of agreement with traditional attitudes emphasizing the main breadwinning role for men. Thus our expectation is that in countries having a higher level of female employment, traditional attitudes will be rejected more than in other places.

29 Human Development Reports. Gender Inequality Index (GII). Online. Available HTTP: < <http://hdr.undp.org/en/statistics/gii/> > (Last accessed: 2 August 2012).

30 Human Development Reports. GII: Gender Inequality Index, value. Online. Available HTTP: <http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/indicators/68606.html> (Last accessed: 2 August 2012).

Empirical results: international comparison

Applying multilevel regression enabled us to examine the effects of different level outcome variables within a model. After running our empty model in order to check whether the between-country variance level is sufficient for examining the effects of country-level outcome variables at all³¹, we found that about 14–24 per cent of the total variation in the dependent variable derives from between-country variance. If we focus on the regression models including data of female respondents only, the between-country difference is responsible for 14 per cent of the total variance in 2005 and 17 per cent in 2010. If we focus on the regression models including data of male respondents only, the between-country difference is responsible for 19 per cent of the total variance in 2005 and 24 per cent in 2010. Thus it seems that the influence of country-level variables, such as Gender Inequality Index and Female Employment Rate, became stronger between 2005 and 2010 in the case of both genders, while the attitudes of men were shown to be affected more by country-level variables than the attitudes of women. Tables 11.1–11.4 provide overviews of the findings deriving from the application of the different regression models.

Labour market model

Within the labour market model, the country-level variable effects highlighted that if the female employment rate is high in a country, then both men and women are more likely to disagree with the statement that *men should have more right to a job than women when jobs are scarce*. The female employment rate had significant effects on the views of both genders in both examined years. Thus our expectations about the country-level effects of female employment rates seemed to be supported by our results.

The examination of the labour market position of our respondents revealed that in the case of men, neither actual work hours nor desired work hours had significant effects, while in the case of women those who desired to work less than the norm tended to agree more with traditional gender

³¹ Bickel 2007.

role attitudes in 2004–2005. In 2010 both women and men tended to agree with more traditional attitudes if they preferred to work less than the work time norm in the given country; in the case of men, it also had a significantly negative effect if they wanted to spend more time at work than the work time norm for men in the given country. Additionally, the experience of long-term unemployment had different effects on both genders. Women who had experience in being unemployed for a long period (at least 12 months) in 2004–2005 were more likely to disagree with the traditional attitudes than others. Among men this experience had the opposite effect in 2010.

Subjective evaluation of their financial situation had significant effects for both women and men in both 2005 and 2010: those who perceived their financial situation as being worse tended to agree more with the traditional attitudes related to female employment.

In accordance with our assumptions on the potential effects of the partners' involvement in paid work on men, perhaps not very surprisingly the partner's working time arrangement had a significant effect on traditional views of gender roles only in the case of men. In both 2004–2005 and 2010, those men whose partners worked less than the average work time norm of the given country were more likely to express traditional gender role attitudes than others.

Focusing on work autonomy and flexibility, in 2004–2005 for both women and men 'soft factors', such as employment (in)security and the feeling that they can influence their work, had significant effects: those who felt that their employment was insecure tended to agree more with traditional gender role attitudes, and those who felt that they could influence their work were more likely to disagree with traditional gender role attitudes. By 2010 the significant effect of work autonomy disappeared in the case of women, which can indicate that women felt more defenceless than men during the crisis.

Regarding our four control variables, in 2004–2005 and 2010, age, place of living, and educational level had significant effects on the views of both men and women: older people, those with a maximum of lower secondary level education, and those living in villages were more likely to express

traditional views on gender roles than others. In the case of women, having (young) children did not have significant effects either in 2004–2005 or in 2010. However, in the case of men this variable gained a significant effect by 2010: men who had children younger than 13 manifested more traditional attitudes than men not having children younger than 13.

The Crisis Index had a significant effect only in the case of women: those women who were affected by the crisis through their work situation tended to agree less with traditional attitudes. This result is comprehensible because the traditional attitudes towards gender roles can have a negative impact on female employment. In such a period of unemployment growth and rising job insecurity, those women who are already affected by the crisis are more likely to reject traditional attitudes, while those men who are affected by the crisis are less motivated to reject the attitudes which may be of advantage to them.

Sociocultural model

Within the sociocultural model, the country-level variable of gender inequality had significant effects for both genders in both years examined.

Religiosity and attendance in religious services were shown to influence the attitudes of women as well as men towards the traditional direction. Regarding political views in 2004–2005 for both genders, (not too extreme)³² left-wing orientation had a negative effect on manifesting traditional gender attitudes, while right-wing orientation had no effect at all. However, in 2010 we no longer found any significant effects of political views.

Regarding the control variables, in 2004–2005, age, place of living, and educational level had significant effects on the views of both men and women: older people, those with a maximum of lower secondary education, and living in smaller settlements were more likely to express traditional views on

³² Political orientation was measured by the following variable: *In politics people sometimes talk of 'left' and 'right'—where would you place yourself on this scale, where 0 means the left and 10 means the right?* (B23). We recoded this variable into five categories (0–2 left; 3–4 rather left; 5 neutral; 6–7 rather right; 8–10 right) and those who did not answer this question (11 per cent of the respondents; women were overrepresented) were also included as the sixth category (1–left; 2–rather left; 3 – neutral; 4 – rather right; 5–right; 6–not answering). We call 'not too extreme left wing' those respondents who belong to the rather left category.

gender roles than others. By 2010 most of these effects remained in the case of women, while in the case of men who had young children (younger than six) the variables also became significant.

As for mothers' employment, we found significant effects on both genders in 2004–2005: those respondents whose mother worked when they were 14 years old were less likely to support traditional attitudes. The effects of this variable disappeared by 2010 in the case of both genders. This may indicate that effects related to family patterns are losing importance, especially in the context of the recent considerable changes affecting the European labour markets.

Table 11.1. Women 2005

Variables		Empty model	Labour market model	Socio-cultural model
FER			0.04***	
Work hours	Normative work hours (ref.)		1	
	Works less than the norm		-0.02	
	Works more than the norm		0.06	
Desired work hours	Normative work hours (ref.)		1	
	Works less than the norm		-0.17***	
	Works more than the norm		0.01	
Insecure employment			-0.07*	
Unemployment period lasted at least 12 months			-0.12*	
Work autonomy/flexibility			0.005*	
Partners' work hours	Normative work hours (ref.)		1	
	Works less than the norm		0.06	
	Works more than the norm		-0.09	
Subjective evaluation of financial situation	Living comfortably on present income		1	
	Coping on present income		-0.12***	
	Difficult on present income		-0.16**	
	Very difficult on present income		-0.43***	
Education	Upper secondary level (ref.)		1	
	Lower secondary or less		-0.35***	-0.38***
	Tertiary level		0.17***	0.21***
Having children	Not having children younger than 13 (Ref.)		1	1
	Having children younger than 13		0.01	-0.01
	Having children younger than 6		0.02	-0.0002

Variables		Empty model	Labour market model	Socio-cultural model
Place of living	Capital city (ref.)		1	1
	City		-0.12***	-0.11**
	Village		-0.23***	-0.22***
Age			-0.01***	-0.01***
GI				-3.79**
Political view	Neutral (ref.)			1
	Not answered			-0.06
	Left-wing oriented			0.12*
	Left-wing oriented but not too much			0.1*
	Right-wing oriented but not too much			0.05
	Right-wing oriented			-0.01
Religiosity				-0.01
Attendance at religious services	More than once a week			-0.41***
	Once a week			-0.28***
	At least once a month			-0.06
	Only on special holy days			-0.07
	Less often			-0.02
	Never			1
Mother worked when respondent was 14 years old				0.07*
Constant		3.69	2.35	-3.87
Variance between countries		0.193	0.095	0.094
Variance within countries		1.168	1.086	1.109
-2Log Likelihood		16992	16562	16578
Number of observations		5650	5650	5650

Table 11.2. Men 2005

Variables		Empty model	Labour market model	Socio- cultural model
FER			0.04***	
Work hours	Normative work hours (ref.)		1	
	Works less than the norm		-0.04	
	Works more than the norm		0.02	
Desired work hours	Normative work hours (ref.)		1	
	Works less than the norm		-0.08	
	Works more than the norm		-0.04	
Insecure employment			-0.09***	
Unemployment period lasted at least 12 months			0.03	
Work autonomy/flexibility			0.02***	
Partners' work hours	Normative work hours (ref.)		1	
	Works less than the norm		-0.11*	
	Works more than the norm			
Subjective evaluation of financial situation	Living comfortably on present income		1	
	Coping on present income		-0.12***	
	Difficult on present income		-0.25***	
	Very difficult on present income		-0.4***	
Education	Upper secondary level (ref.)		1	
	Lower secondary or less		-0.24***	-0.31***
	Tertiary level		0.28***	0.31***
Having children	Not having children younger than 13 (Ref.)		1	1
	Having children younger than 13		0.001	-0.02
	Having children younger than 6		-0.03	0.01

Variables		Empty model	Labour market model	Socio- cultural model
Place of living	Capital city (ref.)		1	1
	City		-0.1**	-0.1***
	Village		-0.15***	-0.13***
Age			-0.01***	-0.01***
GII				-4.3***
Political view	Neutral (ref.)			1
	Not answered			-0.017**
	Left-wing oriented			0.001
	Left-wing oriented but not too much			0.14***
	Right-wing oriented but not too much			-0.02
	Right-wing oriented			-0.04
Religiosity				-0.02***
Attendance at religious services	More than once a week			-0.08*
	Once a week			-0.05
	At least once a month			-0.13***
	Only on special holy days			-0.24***
	Less often			-0.17
	Never			1
Mother worked when respondent was 14 years old				0.07*
Constant		3.43	1.95	4.68
Variance between countries		0.231	0.043	0.115
Variance within countries		1.122	1.046	1.047
-2Log Likelihood		18168	17706	17733
Number of observations		6124	6124	6124

Table 11.3. Women 2010

Variables	Empty model	Labour market model	Socio-cultural model
<i>FER</i>		0.04***	
<i>Work hours</i>			
<i>Normative work hours (ref.)</i>		1	
<i>Works less than the norm</i>		-0.05	
<i>Works more than the norm</i>		0.04	
<i>Desired work hours</i>			
<i>Normative work hours (ref.)</i>		1	
<i>Works less than the norm</i>		-0.15***	
<i>Works more than the norm</i>		-0.06	
<i>Unemployment period lasted at least 12 months</i>		0.03	
<i>Insecure employment</i>		-0.09**	
<i>Work autonomy/flexibility</i>		0.005	
<i>Partners' work hours</i>			
<i>Normative work hours (ref.)</i>		1	
<i>Works less than the norm</i>		-0.11	
<i>Works more than the norm</i>		0.01	
<i>Crisis</i>		0.1***	
<i>Subjective evaluation of financial situation</i>			
<i>Living comfortably on present income</i>		1	
<i>Coping on present income</i>		-0.07*	
<i>Difficult on present income</i>		-0.08	
<i>Very difficult on present income</i>		-0.31***	
<i>Education</i>			
<i>Upper secondary level (ref.)</i>		1	
<i>Lower secondary or less</i>		-0.28***	-0.27***
<i>Tertiary level</i>		0.2***	0.22***
<i>Having children</i>			
<i>Not having children younger than 13 (Ref.)</i>		1	1
<i>Having children younger than 13</i>		0.04	-0.03
<i>Having children younger than 6</i>		0.04	0.02

Variables	Empty model	Labour market model	Socio-cultural model
<i>Place of living</i>			
<i>Capital city (ref.)</i>		1	1
<i>City</i>		-0.06	-0.06**
<i>Village</i>		-0.07*	-0.05***
<i>Age</i>		-0.01***	-0.01***
<i>GII</i>			-5.37***
<i>Political view</i>			
<i>Neutral (ref.)</i>			1
<i>Not answered</i>			-0.1*
<i>Left-wing oriented</i>			0.07
<i>Left-wing oriented but not too much</i>			0.05
<i>Right-wing oriented but not too much</i>			0.06
<i>Right-wing oriented</i>			-0.01
<i>Religiosity</i>			-0.03***
<i>Attendance at religious services</i>			
<i>More than once a week</i>			-0.08
<i>Once a week</i>			-0.09
<i>At least once a month</i>			-0.1
<i>Only on special holy days</i>			-0.07
<i>Less often</i>			-0.02
<i>Never</i>			1
<i>Mother worked when respondent was 14 years old</i>			0.01
<i>Constant</i>	3.94	1.72	5.2
<i>Variance between countries</i>	0.251	0.0106	0.081
<i>Variance within countries</i>	1.027	0.962	1.961
<i>-2Log Likelihood</i>	15426	15060	15050
<i>Number of observations</i>	5355	5355	5355

Table 11.4. Men 2010

Variables		Empty model	Labour market model	Socio-cultural model
FER			0.05***	
Work hours	Normative work hours (ref.)		1	
	Works less than the norm		0.02	
	Works more than the norm		0.04	
Desired work hours	Normative work hours (ref.)		1	
	Works less than the norm		-0.09**	
	Works more than the norm		-0.13***	
Insecure employment			-0.08**	
Unemployment period lasted at least 12 months			-0.12*	
Work autonomy/flexibility			0.007**	
Partners' work hours	Normative work hours (ref.)		1	
	Works less than the norm		-0.11*	
	Works more than the norm		-0.06	
Crisis			0.03	
Subjective evaluation of financial situation	Living comfortably on present income		1	
	Coping on present income		-0.05	
	Difficult on present income		-0.17***	
	Very difficult on present income		-0.21**	
Education	Upper secondary level (ref.)		1	
	Lower secondary or less		-0.2***	-0.23***
	Tertiary level		0.19***	0.23***
Having children	Not having children younger than 13 (Ref.)		1	1
	Having children younger than 13		-0.09*	-0.06
	Having children younger than 6		-0.09*	-0.07*

Variables		Empty model	Labour market model	Socio-cultural model
Place of living	Capital city (ref.)		1	1
	City		-0.02	-0.008
	Village		-0.07*	-0.05
Age			-0.004**	-0.003
GII				-5.86***
Political view	Neutral (ref.)			1
	Not answered			-0.1
	Left-wing oriented			-0.01
	Left-wing oriented but not too much			0.05
	Right-wing oriented but not too much			-0.01
	Right-wing oriented			0.01
Religiosity				-0.03***
Attendance at religious services	More than once a week			-0.01
	Once a week			-0.01
	At least once a month			-0.01
	Only on special holy days			-0.05
	Less often			-0.01
	Never			1
Mother worked when respondent was 14 years old				0.01
Constant		3.67	1.08	5.2
Variance between countries		0.331	0.11	0.081
Variance within countries		1.009	0.961	1.961
-2Log Likelihood		15915	15610	15050
Number of observations		5556	5556	5556

Conclusion

In the context of European (post)welfare states most international research has focused on division of household labour and participation in paid work in a comparative perspective.³³ However, less attention has been paid to attitudes related to these arrangements, and yet on the basis of previous research, it can be assumed that there is a close connection between attitudes and the actual division of household labour.³⁴

Attitudes usually change slowly. However, during more significant social transformations—and the current global economic crisis can be considered as such an event—changes in attitudes, value-orientations, and norms can accelerate. In our present research on the basis of ESS data from 2004–2005 and 2010, we wanted to explore whether any such changes in gender-role-related attitudes could be registered before and during the crisis in the 21 European societies examined.

Our findings show certain changes from both a labour market and a sociocultural perspective: by 2010 those women and men whose work environment allows them to make decisions on the organization and pace of their daily work are much more likely to reject traditional gender roles. While in 2005 three control variables out of four, including age, place of living, education level, and having (young) children, had significant effects on women's attitudes, in 2010 all of the variables remained significant and having (young) children became significant for men too. Within our sociocultural model between 2005 and 2010, the significant effect of political orientation on gender attitudes disappeared, while that of religiosity and attendance at religious services remained. Within our labour market model, the desired work hour effect³⁵ remained significant in the examined period. This result seems to be in agreement with Leon Festinger's theory on cognitive dissonance (1957), stating that people tend to adjust their attitudes to conform to the realities of their everyday lives.

³³ Fuwa 2004; Hobson & Fahlén 2009; Takács 2008; González, Jurado-Guerrero & Naldini 2009.

³⁴ Stier & Levin-Epstein 2007.

³⁵ If the respondents preferred to work less than the work time norm in the given country; or only in the case of men: if they wanted to spend more time at work than the work time norm for men in the given country.

In the case of men within both models, only a few significant effects persisted between 2005 and 2010. These include the effects of religiosity and attendance at religious services within the sociocultural model, and the effect of partners' actual work hours within the labour market model.

As for the Crisis Index, we found a significant effect only for women: those women who were affected by the crisis in the last three years through their work situation—by experiencing shortened working time, decreased wages, jobs becoming more insecure, changes in work tasks—agreed less with traditional attitudes stating that men should have priority in the labour market, when jobs are scarce. However, this did not apply to men.

The crisis has had direct effects on the labour market by decreasing the number of available jobs and increasing the unemployment level. However, the crisis has also had important indirect effects: increasing employment uncertainties (when jobs are not as secure as they used to be) and employees have less control over their work than before the crisis. These indirect effects are important because such 'soft factors' can also influence the gender role attitudes among men and women. Those who feel that their jobs are not secure are more likely to accept traditional gender role attitudes, regardless of the gender of the respondent. Such a likelihood seems to be a paradox in the case of women, but it may be due to the fact that secure jobs tend to be more important for women than for men³⁶: if they feel that they can lose their jobs at any time, women prefer not to (re)enter the labour market but to exploit other options—for example, remaining at home to raise their (small) children or to nurse their elderly relatives. Similarly, when men feel that their jobs are insecure, they may be more accepting of traditional attitudes in their efforts to decrease the severe competition for jobs.

This study may point to some significant changes in gender related attitudes in the 20 examined European countries between 2004–2005 and 2010, but most of these changes may be seen as being more indirect than direct consequences of the recent economic crisis. For more refined analyses, we would most probably need more refined data, including more reliable crisis indicators.

³⁶ Szalma 2011.

However, a very clear finding of the present research is that gender inequalities play a very important role in shaping gender role attitudes, even during a time of crisis. In both the labour market approach and the socio-cultural perspective that we applied, it was true for 2004–2005 as well as for 2010 that the more pronounced gender inequalities are in society, the more traditional are gender role attitudes of men and women.

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