

WORK–FAMILY ATTITUDES AND  
FEMALE LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION

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The paper studies the association between the work-family orientation and women's labour market participation of women, comparatively in nine European countries. The results indicate a considerable diversity both in women's practiced and preferred labour market statuses related to the work-family orientation. Differences are manifested in all countries included in the analysis, regardless of the type of welfare regime, the existing patterns of female workforce participation, and a diversity in the shares of women with different work-family attitudes. Results of logistic models show the persistence of the effects of the work-family orientation after adjustments for control variables. It lends support to the hypothesis that the work-family orientation does not represent a simple reflection of socio-economic characteristics or a life-cycle stage. Instead, it seems to be a relatively independent dimension, with discernible repercussions in the labour market as well as fertility behaviours. The recognition of diverse preferences for combination of family and work could lead to policies that account better for needs of various sub-groups of the population and would contribute to a more efficient reconciliation between work and the family.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Changing patterns of the female workforce participation and a status of women in modern societies have attracted a substantial attention in research and policy debates. For several decades, statistics have documented a considerable increase in women's participation in the labour force throughout the European continent [Rubery, Smith, Fagan 1999; EC 2005]. As a result, female employment rates have moved noticeably closer to the levels observed among the male population. In the Central and Eastern Europe, the trends have been influenced by the societal transformation which in the first half of the 1990s brought along some reduction in the formerly very high levels of female employment in many countries of the region.

As regards the future, the observed upward trend is likely to continue. In order to achieve the goals set at Lisbon in 2000, of becoming the world's most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy by the end of the present decade, the European Union must step up the efforts to tap its human resources. To underpin a sustainable economic growth with a greater social cohesion, the Employment Strategy of the EU emphasises, in particular, a need to increase the integration of women, besides youth and older people, in the labour force. The stated aim is to increase the employment rate for women to more than 60 percent by year 2010<sup>1</sup>.

The increasing female labour force participation appears to be an irreversible phenomenon that requires profound adaptations of economic and societal structures. It brings to the fore the questions about reconciliation between work and family, and gender equality. Reconciliation of paid work and family has become a major challenge to be faced by contemporary societies. The involvement of women in the labour market, on the one side, and concerns about low fertility, resulting in the accelerated population ageing and workforce shrinking, on the other side, lend relevance to the issue. In that context, a smoother reconciliation between work and family life is recognised as an issue that should be given a higher priority in shaping the social policy of the EU [Vignon 2005].

Strategies for reconciliation between employment and family, applied by individuals and couples, can be conceptualised in terms of work-family models that concern the allocation of responsibilities, specialisation of roles and the division of labour between partners. To capture the essential features of such strategies under the changing labour market participation of women, researchers distinguish between three major models - the male breadwinner model, the modernised male breadwinner model and the dual-earner model [Duncan, Pfau-Effinger 2000; Leira 2002; Kotowska *et al* 2005]. As defined by the authors, the male breadwinner model presumes a complete separation of the roles in the family, with a woman as a homemaker-carer and a man as an economic provider. The modernised male breadwinner model represents a compromise arrangement, in which a woman does some paid work as a secondary earner, for example working part-time. Apart from the latter two, the dual earner model refers to the symmetrical roles of partners in the labour market, sharing the responsibility for providing income. However, the dual-earner model refers to two different arrangements with respect to sharing the family responsibilities. On the one side, it includes the dual-earner-dual carer model, which is yet not often practiced. On the other side, it involves the female double burden model with

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<sup>1</sup> In addition to the Lisbon targets 2010, the Stockholm European Council of 2001 set intermediate targets for employment rates of 67 percent for overall working age (15-64) population and 57 percent for women in the EU in 2005. The weak labour market performance over recent years makes the overall employment rate remained far below the intermediate target (-6.7 percentage points), while the female employment rate fell short only 1.3 percentage points (2004).

women responsible for both providing income and caring for the family, which make combination of family and work more difficult. Labour market statistics do not allow to distinguish between both types of the model and it is necessary to recognise that here.

Assuming that these three types of work-family models can be reflected by the women's employment status (to be out of the labour market, working part-time and working full-time, the change in female employment can be viewed in terms of work-family models. Increasing women's employment has been paralleled by the transformation in the ways of how paid employment and family responsibilities are combined. The prevailing trend, simply put, has implied a gradual shift away from the male breadwinner models towards the dual earner and/or modernised breadwinner model<sup>2</sup>. Labour market statistics reveal that the development along this direction can be traced universally, however, at the same time a considerable diversity across countries can still be observed. Among the member states of the European Union in 2004, the percentage of the non-employed, including the housewives, in the working-age female population ranged from less than 30 percent in Denmark and Sweden to more than 50 percent in Greece, Italy, Malta, Poland and Spain. Among employed women, the share of part-time work varied from 75 percent in the Netherlands on one extreme, to less than 10 percent in the Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary and the Slovak Republic on the other extreme. When focusing on the age groups 25-44, in which the reconciliation of work and family is the most acute, these differences in the patterns become even more pronounced. It should be added, however, that a diversity in employment patterns of women is strongly affected by a different availability of part-time jobs.

From the analytical point of view, the progress in the women's participation in the labour market and the development of reconciliation strategies relates to two broad sets of factors. On the one side, possibilities to combine employment and family result from the institutional setting, defined by the general labour market structure, various programmes and regulations related to training and employment, arrangements for parental leave and other provisions for working parents, the availability of child-care services, subsidies and benefits, family allowances, taxation, etc. The analyses of the institutional setting have underlined the essential contribution of modern welfare state and its instruments towards developing the legal and economic framework for reconciling work and family — well-defined and integrated social policies appear to alleviate the incompatibility between labour force participation and family life [Houston 2005; Leira 2002; Sainsbury 2005]. As regards the DIALOG countries, the relevant information on employment and family policies is discussed in detail by Fux (2004) and Kontula and Miettinen (2005).

The institutional setting is responsible for the structural incompatibility between work and family. Another source of differences in women's labour market participation relates to the culture, which includes broad ideologies, values, beliefs, norms and preferences [Hofstede 1998; 2001]. In practice, values and norms are used to define the appropriate way of living, and exclude some forms that are less appropriate, preferences guide the choice between alternative options. With respect to reconciliation between employment and family life, this refers primarily to the perception of men's and women's roles in the labour market and the household, arrangements for the care of children etc. Moreover, the more successful the welfare state is in reducing structural constraints and

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<sup>2</sup> In the context of these contemporary developments, the male breadwinner model is sometimes labeled 'traditional', as opposed to the 'modern' dual-earner family. Research in family models has pointed to the fact that the development towards symmetrical roles can be regarded, to an important extent, as a return to pre-industrial model. In the historical perspective, the single (male) breadwinner family is a recent invention and it remained popular for a relatively short period in the 19th and 20th century [Davis 1984; Bott-Puter 1993].

enhancing the scope of choice for its citizens through implementation of family-friendly policies, the more likely attitudes and preferences are growing in their relative importance. A recognition of an independent status and an explanatory potential of the “cultural factor” is reflected in the studies on work-family nexus and gender equity, explicitly incorporating the respective dimension [Duncan, Pfau-Effinger 2000; Jansweijer 1992; Liefbroer and Corijn 1999; Sackmann 2000; Riolli-Saltzmann 2003].

The present paper follows the general reasoning of the latter studies. More specifically, it aims to find out to what extent the employment patterns, considered both in terms of practice and preference, are influenced by the attitudes concerning the reconciliation of work and parenthood. The main assumption behind the following analyses can briefly be summarised as follows: in addition to the institutional framework, decisions and preferences for the different work-family models are influenced by relevant attitudes towards work and family. The study focuses on women because in contemporary societies women are primarily confronted with the reconciliation issue and face real choices between alternative work-family models, while men only rarely give up life-long and full-time employment.

From the theoretical point of view, there is nothing particularly novel about this claim. While it is widely assumed that culture makes a distinction, nevertheless, judging upon the inventory of relevant research in Europe for the 1990s commissioned by the EC Directorate-General for Employment, Industrial Relations and Social Affairs, evidence concerning the relationship of attitudes and labour market behaviour remains relatively scarce and scattered [EC 1999]. In the Population and Policy Acceptance Survey, carried out in 1990s, the interest centred around the preferred models, leaving aside an influence of attitudes on practiced modalities of reconciliation between work and family [Dorbritz 1998; Fux 1998; Nebenführ 1998]. Regarding more recent research, a British study by Catherine Hakim revealed persistent differences in the labour market behaviour between lifestyle preferences that cut across the levels of income and social classes [Hakim 2000; 2003; 2005].

The research question ‘how much the attitudes matter for practiced and preferred work-family arrangements’ is set within the framework of the Population Policy Acceptance Study (PPAS). The value added to the present study also stems from the comparative perspective offered by the PPAS, through assembling the new data on population-related attitudes and behaviours from 14 nations, representing different welfare regimes and regions of Europe, the PPAS offers a particularly favourable basis for pursuing the proposed type of research. While the other major data sources relevant for the topic, for example the labour force survey, provide a definitely more refined account of labour market behaviours, they typically neglect, partly or wholly, the attitudinal items.

The paper is structured in six sections. Following the introduction, the second section explains the analytical approach applied, the specification of dependent and independent variables in logistic models. The third and fourth sections present the main findings, obtained by means of both descriptive and multivariate techniques, respectively. In the fifth section attitudes towards combination of work and family are confronted with fertility levels. The concluding section summarises the results and discusses policy implications that may be drawn from the findings.

## 2. DATA AND METHODS

The data used come from several modules of the International Population Policy Acceptance Study database (IPPAS database).

Dependent variables describe women's participation in the labour market. The information about women's practised attachment to the labour market is derived from the general characteristics module (the questionnaire item CQ14). It distinguishes between three labour market statuses: full-time employment, part-time employment and non-employment<sup>3</sup>. In terms of combining work and family, one can assume that these statuses approximate the dual-earner, the modernised male breadwinner and the male breadwinner models, respectively. The prevalence of the latter model tends to be somewhat overstated among practised labour market statuses as the database does not support a detailed distinction between reasons for non-employment (homemaking, unemployment, education, health-related reasons, etc.). The preferred participation in the labour market is derived from the questions concerning the desired combination of pursuing a job for oneself and raising children (H3A) (with the distinction of full-time employment, part-time employment and non-employment).

The patterns of the labour market attachment are operationalised by means of employment rate. This indicator reflects the proportion of the population who have a job, and is also desegregated into the full-time and part-time employment<sup>4</sup>. The information for the independent variable comes from the gender module, which includes two specialised sets of questions about attitudes towards sharing paid employment and household activities between women and men. Several items of the two sets have been repeatedly used in other social surveys (e.g. World Value Survey/European Value Survey, International Social Survey Program). A general discussion of the gender module is available from Philipov (2005). For the purposes of the present study, the following questionnaire items were applied<sup>5</sup>:

G1b. A preschool child is likely to suffer if his or her mother works

G1d. A job is all right, but what most women really want is a home and children

G1e. Being a housewife is just as fulfilling as working for pay

G1h. In their job women are less ambitious than men.

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<sup>3</sup> Casual employment that appeared as a separate category in relatively small numbers in Cyprian, Hungarian and Rumanian data was included in part-time employment. To assess the validity of the data concerning the labour market status, the authors compared employment rates derived from the IPPAS with those reported by the EU labour force survey. For the majority of countries, the match between the two sources was fairly good. It indicates that the IPPAS has performed well against the elaborate measurement framework of the labour force survey, with a carefully defined time reference and guidelines for numerous borderline situations.

<sup>4</sup> Rubery, Smith and Fagan (1999) have pointed out that from the measurement point of view the employment rate has several advantages over the widely used economic activity rate, which records the proportion of individuals who are either in employment or looking for a job. Generally, the employment rate is considered a better indicator for the performance of economy, given the relatively high unemployment rates in many countries. Among others, this capacity is also reflected in the fact that the Lisbon and Stockholm targets are formulated in terms of employment rate. Regarding women, the boundary between inactivity and job seeking is sometimes blurred, especially in the settings where women's ascribed role is to a great extent as wives and mothers, which makes the inferences drawn from activity rates open to greater uncertainty compared to men. Literature also provides examples of limitations of employment rate, for example, the neglect of the variation in the number of hours worked, unpaid household work, partly inconsistent practices of recording the absence from work, for example parental leave, etc [Jonung and Persson 1993; Drew 2000].

<sup>5</sup> Since the information on gender roles is not uniformly available for all IPPAS countries, the questions selected reflect a compromise between the coverage of countries and different attitudes relevant to the women's labour market participation we have attempted to reach.

The first statement refers to perceived negative consequences of mother's employment for the development of children. The second statement denotes an attitude related to an ultimate value through the phrasing "what women really want". It is, therefore, considered as reflecting a gender ideology. The similar interpretation can be given to the third statement that addresses opportunities for women's self-fulfilment associated with a homemaker role as opposed to a working woman. The fourth statement compares an image of women and men in terms of their professional career orientation.

For each item, respondents were asked to express their acceptance or non-acceptance. The answers were recorded on the five-grade Lickert's scale, where 1 stands for a strong agreement and 5 corresponds to a strong disagreement with a statement. In terms of combining work and family, the statements were presented so that lower values consistently represented a greater support for a separation of women's and men's roles under the breadwinner-homemaker model, as opposed to the modernised breadwinner and the dual-earner models with a more symmetrical sharing of income provision and household responsibilities. Also, it should be noted that these statements have a general, impersonal character. Being general, they are to a smaller extent influenced by personal behaviours and a diversity of life situations, which allows for better comparability across population groups. Also, it can be assumed that the general attitudes are to a less extent subjected to a social desirability bias as compared to personal attitudes [Turner and Martin 1984; Hakim 2005].

To construct a dependent variable that would allow to generalise the women's work-family orientation, the responses for the above-mentioned items have been summarised into a composite index. The minimal value of the index stands for 4 points and means that respondents have expressed their strong agreement with a separation of women's and men's roles in all statements. The maximal value of the index is 20 points, which corresponds to a strong disagreement with the breadwinner-homemaker model in all statements.

The IPPAS database allows to construct the work-family orientation index for Austria, Estonia, Germany, Hungary, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania and Cyprus. These nine countries were included in our analyses<sup>6</sup>. Due to a noticeable within-country variation, Eastern and Western Germany were treated as two separate units. The analyses focused on the age range 20-49, in which the problems of reconciliation of employment and family responsibilities primarily occur. Considering the country coverage and age limitation, a sub-sample of respondents was formed comprising 7,131 women and 6,645 men. Most of the analyses that follow pertain to the female part of the sub-sample (based on weighted data)

Figure 1 presents the frequency distribution of the index of work-family orientation, for all the countries combined. The index has been adjusted to exclude a small fraction of respondents not responding to one or more of its four components<sup>7</sup>.

The index of the work-family orientation reveals a fairly symmetrical spread of attitudes that resembles the normal distribution. In other words, the constructed index captures a considerable variation in the attitudes of the population towards gender roles and the reconciliation between employment and family in both directions. For the analytical purpose, on the basis of accumulated agreement or disagreement with alternative

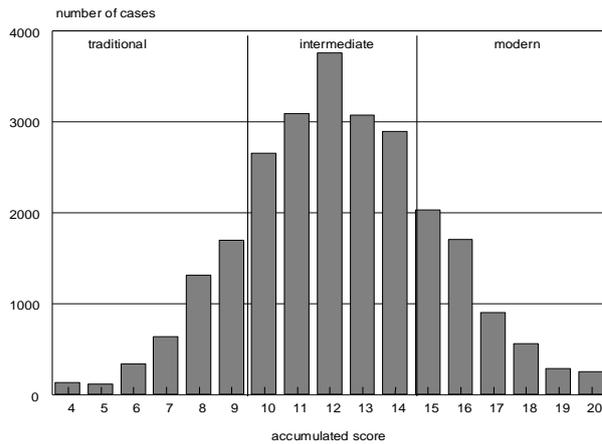
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<sup>6</sup> The exception is the preferred labour market status not available for Austria and Hungary.

<sup>7</sup> On average, the proportion of values missing for a such reason is limited to 3.2 percent with a salient diversity across countries. From less than one percent in Estonia, Germany and Lithuania, the percentage of excluded responses amounts to 8.9 percent in the Hungarian and to 11.6 percent in the Dutch survey.

models, three basic categories of work-family orientation are distinguished. On the one side, the predominant acceptance of the breadwinner-homemaker model is classified as a *traditional* orientation. On the other side, the prevailing non-acceptance of a strong segregation between men's and women's roles is classified as a *modern* orientation towards a combination of paid work and family responsibilities. The attitudes, which were neither strongly for a separation of men's and women's roles nor strongly against it, were classified in the residual category of an *intermediate* work-family orientation.

Figure 1. WORK-FAMILY ORIENTATION INDEX FOR NINE COUNTRIES\*



\* index is based on gender related items (G1b, d, e, g)

orientation varies from 38.3 percent in the Netherlands to 9.4 percent in Lithuania.

Applying the cut-off levels shown in the figure, on average 15.7 percent of women aged 20-49 were classified as supporting the traditional work-family orientation in the countries studied, 28.4 percent were classified as representing the modern work-family family, and 55.9 percent were left in the intermediate category. Not surprisingly, the proportions of the three groups are not similar across countries (Table 1). The prevalence of the traditional work-family orientation ranges from 12.8 percent in Germany to 37.3 percent in Hungary. The prevalence of the modern work-family

Table 1. WORK-FAMILY ORIENTATION INDEX Females 20-49\*

Country	Traditional	Inter-mediate	Modern
Austria	18.1	47.5	34.4
Estonia	20.4	67.2	12.4
Germany	12.8	51.9	35.3
Eastern	4.7	38.2	57.1
Germany	14.5	55.1	30.3
Western			
Hungary	37.3	48.1	14.6
Lithuania	24.7	65.9	9.4
Netherlands	15.8	45.8	38.3
Poland	14.9	67.0	18.0
Romania	14.8	59.2	26.0
All countries	15.7	55.9	28.4

\* Index is based on gender related items (G1b, d, e, g)  
Source: the IPPAS data.

The focus of the present study, however, is not on the examination of variation in the attitudes on work-family nexus and gender roles, the main attention is on the influence that the work-family orientation exerts on women's participation in the labour market and the corresponding work-family models.

The analysis of an influence of work-family orientation on the employment status of women, practised and preferred, is structured in two parts. In the first part, the relationship between women's practised and preferred labour market status is examined by means of descriptive methods. In the second

section, multivariate regression models are applied to look at that relationship by controlling the effects of other major factors (age, human capital, family composition, etc.), which are known as relevant for the women's workforce participation.

To reveal a diversity of impacts in terms of their direction and strength across different institutional settings, the analysis is country-specific throughout but the results are presented for the IPPAS countries combined.

### **3. WORK-FAMILY ORIENTATION AND LABOUR MARKET PARTICIPATION: RESULTS OF DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSES**

#### **3.1. Women's labour market participation in the PPAS countries**

The presentation of the findings starts from the descriptive analysis of women's practised and preferred labour market participation, dependent on the work-family orientation.

In the IPPAS countries, on average, the employment rate for women aged 20-49 stands at 63.3 percent.<sup>8</sup> As discussed in detail by Kotowska *et al* (2005), there exists a considerable variation in female employment experience across countries. The highest rate of employment — 96.9 percent of women 20-49 reportedly employed — is featured by Cyprus.<sup>9</sup> Relatively high levels of female employment (above 70 percent) can be observed for Belgium, Finland, the Netherlands and Slovenia, with Cyprus, Finland and the Netherlands having already reached the 2010 Lisbon target for women's employment. Among the countries concerned, women in Italy demonstrate the lowest level of the labour market attachment (53.3 percent), the female employment rate is somewhat below an average also in the Czech Republic, Lithuania, Romania, and more so in Poland.

The distinction between part- and full-time work reveals an even greater diversity. Among the IPPAS countries, full-time employment rates range from 21.4 percent in the Netherlands to 70.1 percent in Slovenia. The Netherlands are in the forefront of part-time employment and it is the only country where women hold part-time jobs more frequently than full-time positions. It is followed by Austria, Belgium (Flanders) and Germany, part-time employment rate in these countries are clustered at the levels of 27-29 percent. In Germany, however, the prevalence of part-time jobs differs significantly between the Western and Eastern parts of the country, with nearly 30 percent versus 17 percent respectively. In this respect, the pattern of female employment in East Germany rather resembles the model observed in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe with a fairly low prevalence of part-time jobs. Among the latter, Slovenia features the lowest part-time employment rate (2.5 percent), followed shortly by the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland (5-6 percent). In Estonia and Lithuania, around one tenth of women aged 20-49 are engaged in part-time jobs. Also in Finland, the female part-time employment appears not very popular, which has been regarded as the result of a relatively rapid transformation from the agrarian family model with the norm of women as full-time workers [Pfau-Effinger 2000].<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> The data used throughout this paper are weighted to account for the specificity of sampling schemes applied in national surveys. In the case of aggregates for the IPPAS countries combined, the weighting for size of country populations is added.

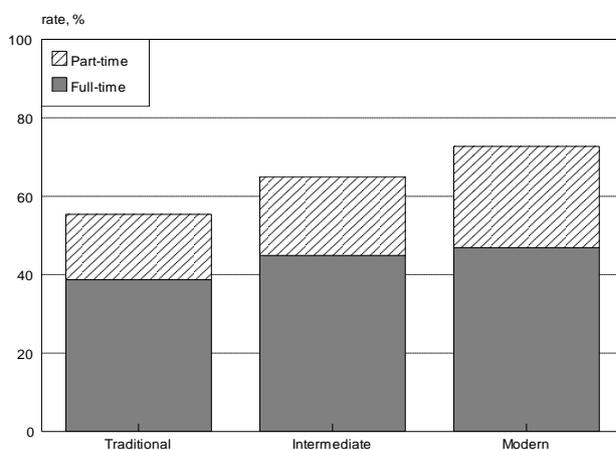
<sup>9</sup> The female employment level for Cyprian women evidently involves an upward bias due to the inclusion of casual employment. The EU labour force survey reveals the female employment rate for comparable age group slightly above 70 percent [EC 2005].

<sup>10</sup> To account for the varying proportion between full- and part-time work, labour statisticians have introduced the concept of full-time equivalent employment rate, which considers the hours actually worked. This measure, regularly reported by Eurostat for working age (15-64) men and women, offers a modified ranking of the IPPAS countries. According to recent statistics, the highest female FTE employment rate is featured by Finland (61.3 per cent), Estonia (58.5) and Slovenia (58.3), while the lowest levels are reported for Italy (40.2), the Netherlands (41.5) and Poland (44.2).

### 3.2. Practised employment-family models

Turning to the association between work-family orientation and women's labour market participation, one can expect that the acceptance of the distinct specialisation within the family (a breadwinner husband and a home-maker wife), would be translated into lower levels of female employment, whereas the non-acceptance of that model would relate to a comparatively stronger commitment to the labour market. The analysis revealed a rather extensive contrast in the women's employment rate according to the work-family orientation that followed the expected direction (Figure 2). The description of the Y axis: the employment rate i.e. the percentage of employed (full-and part-time) among the women with a given work-family orientation

Figure 2. PRACTISED FEMALE EMPLOYMENT PATTERN BY WORK-FAMILY ORIENTATION  
All countries combined



In the nine countries under study, on average, 55.4 percent of women, who accepted the traditional work-family model, were working (Table 2). A non-acceptance of the latter and a support to the modern symmetrical arrangement of paid work, was associated with the employment rate of 72.7 percent. Women classified in the middle category of the work-family orientation, who neither strongly approved nor disapproved the two alternative models, featured an intermediate level of employment (65 percent). In bringing about this pattern the full-time and part-time work made

a roughly equal contribution. The difference in full-time employment rate between women with the traditional and modern work-family orientations amounted to 8.2 percentage points, a respective difference in part-time employment was somewhat greater with 9.1 percentage points.

From the methodological point of view, the results showed that the four questions on attitudes were sufficient to identify and differentiate between women with the traditional and modern work-family orientations. The resulting taxonomy performed well, displaying systematic differences in the labour market behaviour. A comparison with men indicates that the association between the work-family orientation and the labour market participation attachment appears highly gender specific - apart from women, the attitudes make only a slight difference for the practised employment pattern among men. On average, the difference in employment rate is less than three percentage points. This result corresponds with the general notion that men are continuously expected to provide for the family, and there are relatively few alternatives for (full-time) employment for them.

To examine relationships between the practised labour market participation and the work-family orientation across countries, women with traditional and modern attitudes are compared. Table 2 reveals a highly consistent pattern- the differences in the labour market participation of women classified according to their work-family orientation are manifested in all countries, notwithstanding the welfare regime, the existing pattern of female workforce participation, or other contextual specific components.

The differences in the employment rates related to the traditional and modern work-family orientations appear quite extensive. The strongest association between the women's labour market status and work-family attitudes were found in Austria where the acceptance of the traditional family model was translated into the more than 30 percentage points lower female employment rate. Also, the strength of the relationship exceeded the average in Eastern Germany, Romania and Hungary, with the difference in employment rates amounting to 20 and more percentage points. In Cyprus, Estonia and Lithuania the work-family orientation exerted a somewhat lesser influence on the women's practised participation in the labour market, however, the differences in employment levels are clearly discernible and statistically significant in these countries as well.

Table 2. PRACTISED EMPLOYMENT PATTERNS BY WORK-FAMILY ORIENTATION  
Females 20-49\*

Country	Employed			Employed			Employed			Employed		
	Tradi- tional	Inter- mediate	Modern									
Austria	40.5	66.9	71.2	19.0	39.7	42.8	21.4	27.2	28.4	59.5	33.1	28.8
Estonia	62.8	68.0	72.4	50.0	57.0	60.3	12.8	11.0	12.1	37.2	32.0	27.6
Germany	59.3	69.0	71.6	33.5	41.9	44.2	25.8	27.5	27.4	40.7	30.7	28.4
Eastern Germany	41.9	65.6	65.1	25.8	45.6	50.1	16.6	20.0	14.9	58.1	34.4	34.9
Western Germany	60.4	69.9	74.5	34.0	41.3	41.8	26.4	28.6	32.7	39.6	30.1	25.5
Hungary	54.8	67.2	74.0	49.4	62.2	69.9	5.4	5.0	4.1	45.2	32.8	26.6
Lithuania	59.1	63.7	70.5	49.6	54.6	61.4	9.6	9.2	9.1	40.9	36.3	29.5
Netherlands	67.9	65.0	84.1	22.6	17.3	25.9	45.2	47.7	58.2	32.1	35.0	15.9
Poland	50.2	59.3	66.6	47.0	52.6	59.2	3.2	6.7	7.4	49.8	40.7	33.4
Romania	50.0	62.2	73.1	42.4	44.2	57.1	7.6	18.0	16.0	50.0	37.8	26.9
Cyprus	94.1	96.9	99.2	53.9	60.1	77.5	40.2	36.9	21.7	5.9	3.1	0.8
All countries	55.4	65.0	72.7	38.7	44.9	46.9	16.7	20.1	25.8	44.6	35.0	27.3

\* Percentage of employed (non-employed) among the women with a given work-family orientation  
Source: the IPPAS data

With the exception of the Netherlands, the significantly lower labour market participation of the women, who favoured the traditional sharing of earner's and homemaker's roles, was primarily due to differences in full-time employment (Table 2). Understandably, the greater contribution of full-time jobs reflects their prevailing position in the structure of female employment in the IPPAS countries, particularly in the CEE countries.

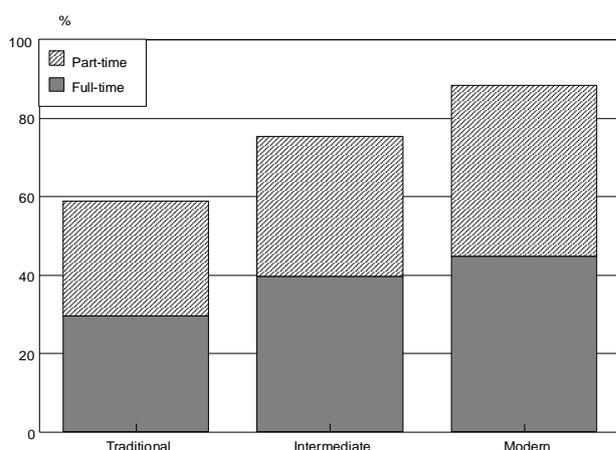
Apart from full-time employment, the contribution of part-time employment is mixed. In the countries where part-time jobs are more available, also for reconciliation between work and family, i.e. in Austria, Western Germany and the Netherlands the association runs in the expected direction but is less pronounced than in the case of full-time employment.

The expected pattern is also displayed in Poland and Romania. In Estonia, Hungary, Lithuania the direction of the interrelationship appears slightly reversed for part-time employment. The same is true for Eastern Germany. Evidently, this finding reflects the less established position of part-time employment in the CEE countries [McRae 1995; EC 2005]. As a relatively recent invention in these countries, practised on a rather limited scale, part-time employment attracts women with the traditional as well as modern work-family orientations. Although the motives and circumstances for opting for a part-time job may be different, part-time employment rates for both groups are not particularly different.

### 3.3. Preferred employment-family models

In this section the three alternatives discussed above i.e. full-time and part-time employment and non-employment are analysed from the viewpoint of preferences. In this context, the preferred employment-family model refers to the combination of paid work and family responsibilities, which appeared the most apt to the personal needs and aspirations of the respondents.

Figure 3. PREFERENCES FOR FEMALE EMPLOYMENT BY WORK-FAMILY ORIENTATION  
All countries combined



The interrelationship between the preferred employment pattern and the work-family orientation is expectedly more pronounced than for practised employment patterns, as preferences are less determined by opportunities and constraints of the existing labour market structure (Figure 3). Among the women who accepted the breadwinner-homemaker model, 58.7 percent on average preferred to be employed while 41.3 percent considered to be a housewife only as the most suitable option for themselves.<sup>11</sup> The disapproval of the traditional work-family model was associated with a markedly higher

preference for employment: nearly nine out of ten (88.4 percent) women, who supported the modern orientation toward work and family, preferred to have a job.<sup>12</sup> With respect to the preference between employment and non-employment, the intermediate category held a position in the middle, with the 75.2 percent of those who preferred to be employed, somewhat closer to the percentage of women who supported the dual-earner model.

The decomposition between full and part-time employment revealed that both patterns of the women's labour market status made an approximately equal contribution to an increase in preferences for employment. In other words, the preferences for full and part-time employment rose more or less parallelly when moving from the traditional to modern work-family orientations. Interestingly, despite the considerable difference in the share of those who opted for employment, the proportions of those who preferred full and part-time work remained essentially unaltered across the three groups of work-family orientations. Among the women of the traditional work-family orientation, on average, 29.5 percent gave their preference to full-time employment while 29.3 percent preferred part-time jobs. The support for the dual earner family model was associated with a higher popularity of full-time work (44.7 percent), but the share of those women who preferred part-time employment increased virtually to the same level (44.3 percent).

<sup>11</sup> Apart from the practised employment, the data on preferred employment model are not available for Austria and Hungary [BIB 2004].

<sup>12</sup> Among women with the modern work-family orientation, 11.6 percent gave a preference for the homemaker role for themselves. This apparent discrepancy points to the difference between general attitudes and preferences with respect to the personal situation - despite a substantial congruity, the two dimensions do not fully overlap [Bohner and Wänke 2004].

Table 3. PREFERRED EMPLOYMENT PATTERNS BY WORK-FAMILY ORIENTATION  
Females 20-49\*

Country	Employed			Full-time			Part-time			Non-employed		
	Tradi- tional	Inter- mediate	Modern									
Estonia	57.1	68.3	82.5	26.4	28.8	50.9	30.8	40.1	31.6	42.9	31.7	17.5
Germany	49.7	75.0	88.0	16.6	25.0	36.1	33.1	50.0	51.9	50.3	25.0	12.0
Eastern Germany	74.1	86.9	93.7	51.9	45.9	55.3	22.2	41.0	38.4	25.9	13.1	6.3
Western Germany	47.7	73.1	85.6	13.6	21.5	28.2	34.1	51.6	57.4	52.3	26.9	14.4
Lithuania	47.4	51.7	70.5	14.0	16.8	40.9	33.3	34.9	29.5	52.6	48.3	29.5
Netherlands	54.8	51.7	82.6	11.9	7.4	10.0	42.9	44.2	72.6	45.2	48.3	17.4
Poland	59.6	75.1	89.8	37.1	50.6	67.1	22.5	24.6	22.7	40.4	24.9	10.2
Romania	88.1	93.4	95.7	69.5	78.8	90.5	18.6	14.7	5.2	11.9	6.6	4.3
Cyprus	63.8	78.2	91.5	27.7	38.8	58.5	36.2	39.4	33.1	36.2	21.8	8.5
All countries	58.7	75.2	88.4	29.5	39.4	44.7	29.3	35.8	43.6	41.3	24.8	11.6

\* Percentage of women with a given work-family orientation who preferred to be employed (full- or part-time) and non-employed  
Source: the IPPAS data

Similarly to practised employment, the relationship between the preferred labour market status and the work-family orientation follows a closely consistent pattern across the countries. Without an exception, the acceptance of the traditional work-family model is associated with the lower employment rate, and conversely, the support for the more modern arrangement is translated into the noticeably higher level of female employment. In Western Germany and Poland, the differences related to women's orientation go beyond 30 percentage points. In Cyprus, Estonia, Lithuania and the Netherlands they range between 20-30 percentage points. Only in Romania the work-family orientation makes a smaller difference between the labour market statuses of women (7.6 percentage points).

To this end it is worth noting that in several countries the breadwinner-homemaker model enjoys a continuously high popularity among the population. In the countries for which the data are available, on average, 23 percent of women aged 20-49 preferred non-employment over full or part-time work. The corresponding proportion appears the highest in Lithuania where 47.6 percent of stated the preference towards the breadwinner-homemaker model, followed by the Netherlands and Estonia, with 36 and 32.1 percent respectively. Also, in Italy, Western Germany and Poland the preference for homemaker's status was above the average of the IPPAS countries. As seen from Table 3, among women with traditional, and in some cases intermediate, work-family orientation, the respective percentages reach the levels as high as 40-50 percent.

Evidently, these results offer a reason for contemplation over the policy objectives and measures in the work-family domain. The mainstream policies in the family sector are prevalently geared to facilitate the combination of paid employment and parenthood [OECD 2001; Meulders, Gustafsson 2003]. Without questioning this aim to any extent, it seems, however, that it has relatively little to offer to individuals who lean toward the family rather than toward paid work as their main priority. The evidence from the IPPAS could inspire policy-makers to recognise that there are several alternative work-family models, equally valid, productive and eligible for societal support. At present, according to Hakim (2005), a focus of social and family policies has swung so far towards the working mother that there is a risk of bias against non-working mothers in most modern societies.

#### **4. WORK-FAMILY ORIENTATION AND LABOUR MARKET PARTICIPATION: FINDINGS FROM THE MULTIVARIATE ANALYSES**

Having discussed the bivariate association between the work-family orientation and the women's labour market status, it is important to check if the relationship could be spurious, i.e. whether the observed association could be ascribed to some factors that exert a simultaneous influence on both the attitudes and labour market behaviours. It is not difficult to assume that the effect of attitudes are overstated in cross-tabulations, for example, because the women with higher educational attainment favour full-time work and at the same time, they are more likely employed.

To address that issue, a binomial logistic regression was applied. Consistent with the analyses presented in the previous section, our dependent variables were the women's practised and preferred labour market status. The dependent variable was set to 1 if the respondent was or preferred to be employed, and the 0 if the opposite was the case. Due to mixed results obtained across countries on the full/part-time distinction no attempt is made to model the choice between these alternative employment arrangements.

The main independent variable was the work-family orientation, operationalised as a categorical covariate with three levels (traditional, intermediate and modern). The control variables included a set of socio-economic and demographic characteristics, which are commonly known to influence women's participation in the labour market, namely age, educational attainment, number of children, and age of the youngest child. Several authors have drawn attention to the importance of religiosity as a factor shaping the attitudes toward gender roles and women's employment as well as related behaviours, therefore religiosity was included in the regression models [Inglehart, Pippa 2003; Fux 1998; Nebenführ 1998].

The working sample was limited to women aged 20-49. In addition, the multivariate analysis was limited to women who were reportedly living with a partner (either married, cohabiting or in the LAT relationship). This additional selection criterion aims at getting a greater homogeneity of the sample in terms of labour market decisions - single women, especially single mothers, are thought to have much more restricted choices in terms of labour market positions than their counterparts living in partnership<sup>13</sup>.

The modelling strategy applied in this section is straightforward. For both dependent variables i.e. the practised and preferred labour market statuses three sets of logistic models were estimated. The purpose of the first was to produce non-adjusted estimates for each of the covariates including them in a model one at a time. The purpose of the second set of models was to produce the estimates that were adjusted for the effects of all other covariates. The first and second sets of models were estimated for all countries combined. The relevant differences in the institutional framework and other contextual factors were operationalised by means of dummy variables for each country. The third set of models was run for each country separately to check for differences in impacts of the work-family orientations across different settings.

Estimates for the first and second sets of models, together with the applied coding schemes of covariates and the reference categories, are presented systematically in the tables that follow. Results of the third set of models are discussed where relevant. In the tables, modelling results are given in terms of odds ratios with significance levels associated with them.

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<sup>13</sup> In the stage of the exploratory analysis, the models were fitted also without imposing the constraint on the partnership status. In comparison to the latter, focusing on the women currently in partnership did not alter the results but made them simply more pronounced.

#### 4.1. Practised employment-family models

The model estimates for women's practised employment are presented in Table 4. Compared to the reference category of the modern work-family orientation, with the support to the dual-earner family, the model reveals significant differences in the labour market participation among women with the traditional and intermediate orientations.

Table 4. WOMEN'S 'PRACTISED LABOUR MARKET PARTICIPATION  
Estimates of logistic models, all countries combined

Covariate	Category	Non-adjusted Odds ratio	Adjusted Odds ratio
Work-family orientation	Traditional	0.31**	0.38**
	Intermediate	0.59**	0.67**
	Modern	1.00	1.00
Age group	20-29	0.50**	0.99**
	30-39	0.83**	1.41**
	40-49	1.00	1.00
Education	Primary or lower secondary	0.67**	0.62**
	Upper secondary	1.00	1.00
	Post-secondary	2.14**	1.91**
Number of children	0	4.56**	2.98**
	1	1.13	0.90
	2	1.00	1.00
	3+	0.79**	1.10**
Age of youngest child	0-2	0.17**	0.17**
	3-6	0.57**	0.58**
	7-14	1.00	1.00
	15+	0.90	1.20
Religion	Religious	0.72**	0.80**
	Non-religious	1.00	1.00
Country	Austria	0.71*	0.91*
	Estonia	1.09	1.19
	Eastern	1.02	0.73
	Germany		
	Western	1.00	1.00
	Germany		
	Hungary	0.78*	1.22*
	Lithuania	0.74	0.96
	Netherlands	1.12**	0.38**
Poland	0.76**	0.67**	

\*\* significant at the 0.01 level, \* significant at the 0.05 level  
Source: the IPPAS data.

According to the non-adjusted model, both the traditional and intermediate work-family orientations appear to be related to the lower likelihood of the respondent being employed. For women with the traditional orientation, the odds of being employed are around 69.3 percentage points lower than for the modern orientation – the reference category. Concerning women in the intermediate category, the reduction in the odds ratio is, expectedly, smaller (41.2 percentage points). The influence of the work-family orientation variable is significant.

The introduction of controls for other covariates in the model leads to a certain decrease in the regression coefficients, however, the effect of work-family attitudes does not disappear. The estimates from adjusted model reveal that there is still a rather extensive and statistically significant reduction in women's labour market attachment associated with the traditional as well as intermediate work-family orientations.

The acceptance of the family with a woman regarded as a homemaker-carer and a man as an economic provider is related to the likelihood of female employment by 61.7 percentage points lower than for the reference category. As regards to the intermediate category, the decrease in odds ratio accounts for 33.3 percent.

The main conclusion to be drawn from the comparison of adjusted and non-adjusted models is that the relationship

between the work-family orientation and women's practised labour market participation is to a significant extent resistant to controlling for education, the family life cycle stage and religiosity. The persistence of the effects after adjustments for control variables lends a support to the hypothesis that the work-family orientation does not represent a simple reflection of women's demographic and social characteristics. Instead, our independent variable seems to capture a relatively autonomous attitudinal dimension, which has discernible repercussions in labour market behaviours.

The estimated regression models for individual countries confirm the general validity of the results obtained by means of descriptive methods<sup>14</sup> (Table 5). Although the strength of the association varies, in all the countries included in the analysis the relationship between attitudes and women's practiced labour market attachment follows the expected direction – the traditional and intermediate work-family orientations are related to the lower likelihood of female employment as compared to the reference category i.e. to the modern orientation. In other words, the multivariate analysis did not invalidate our finding that the influence of the work-family orientation is relevant irrespectively on different welfare regimes and mixture of employment-family models.

Table 5. WOMEN'S PRACTISED LABOUR MARKET PARTICIPATION  
Estimates of logistic models by countries

Country	Traditional Odds ratio	Intermediate Odds ratio	Modern
Austria	0.17**	0.48**	1.00
Estonia	0.36	0.44	1.00
Germany Eastern	0.43**	0.76*	1.00
Germany Western	0.68	1.11	1.00
Hungary	0.33**	0.61*	1.00
Lithuania	0.47	0.72	1.00
Netherlands	0.48	0.50	1.00
Poland	0.16**	0.46**	1.00
Romania	0.48**	0.75**	1.00
All countries	0.56	0.71	1.00
	0.38**	0.67**	1.00

\*\* significant at the 0.01 level, \* significant at the 0.05 level  
Source: the IPPAS data.

Moreover, the association is relatively strong statistically significant for the majority of countries under study. With respect to the traditional work-family orientation, estimates reveal the strongest influence of work-family orientation on the labour market behaviours in Austria and the Netherlands. Controlling for the effects of other variables, in these countries the acceptance of the breadwinner-homemaker model reduces the odds of female employment by more than 80 percentage points. In Estonia and Western Germany, the corresponding reduction amounts to 64-66 percentage points while in Hungary, Lithuania and Poland it ranges between 52-53 percentage points. Only in Romania and Eastern Germany, the decrease in the odds of female employment associated with the traditional work-family orientation, is less than 50 percent.

The effects of control variables follow the patterns usually observed in the studies of female workforce participation, however, the discussion of these effects would go beyond the aims of this article.

<sup>14</sup> The applied selection criteria resulted in no cases left for Cyprus, and as a result, the country was dropped from the multivariate analysis. With respect to Romania, the information was not available on the number of children, however, it was decided to include the country in the regression models.

## 4.2. Preferred employment-family models

Model estimates for the women's preferred labour market status are presented in Table 6. Estimates reveal a high coherence with the results of the descriptive analysis - women with the traditional and intermediate orientations would prefer employment less frequently than their counterparts who supported the dual-earner family.

Table 6. WOMEN'S PREFERRED LABOUR MARKET PARTICIPATION  
Estimates of logistic models for all countries combined

Covariate	Category	Non-adjusted odds ratio	Adjusted odds ratio
Work-family orientation	traditional	0.15**	0.18**
	intermediate	0.39**	0.40**
	modern	1.00	1.00
Age group	20-29	0.87	0.96
	30-39	0.98	1.04
	40-49	1.00	1.00**
Education	Primary or lower secondary	0.62**	0.77*
	Upper secondary	1.00	1.00
	Post-secondary	2.81**	2.66**
Number of children	0	2.01**	2.06**
	1	1.91**	1.74**
	2	1.00	1.00
Age of youngest child	3+	0.65**	0.74**
	0-2	0.67**	0.84
	3-6	0.89	1.08
Religion	7-14	1.00	1.00
	15+	1.10	1.08
	religious	0.76**	0.80*
Country	non-religious	1.00	1.00
	Estonia	0.76	0.91
	Eastern Germany	4.53**	3.02**
Country	Western Germany	1.00	1.00
	Lithuania	0.50**	0.59**
	Netherlands	0.66**	0.57**
	Poland	1.19**	1.87**

\*\* significant at the 0.01 level, \* significant at the 0.05 level  
Source: the IPPAS data.

Also in the multivariate framework, the differences associated with the women's work-family orientation come into view as more pronounced in the preferred rather than practised labour market status. Judging upon the non-adjusted model for all countries combined, the likelihood of preferring employment is almost 85 percentage points lower for the women with the prevailingly traditional work-family orientation than for the modern orientation (the reference category). Belonging to the intermediate group also implies an extensive reduction (61.5 percentage points) in the odds of preferences for employment. Not surprisingly, both differences are statistically significant.

Apart from the practised labour market participation, adjustment for the effects of control variables brings along only a marginal change in odds ratios. In respect to women who are inclined towards the traditional work-family orientation, the reduction in the likelihood of preferring employment is limited to 3 percentage points. Among women belonging to the intermediate group the change in model estimates is even smaller. This result is consistent with our expectations and underscores the fact that the attitudes underlying the taxonomy of the women's work-family orientation are relatively independent from the family life

cycle stage, education and the social status.

The models estimated for individual countries validate the consistency of the relationship across different institutional settings (Table 7). In all countries under study, the work-family orientation affects women's preferences for the labour market status in line with the hypothesised pattern - belonging to the groups with the traditional and intermediate stances implies a considerable decrease in the likelihood that women would prefer employment to homemaking as compared to women of the modern orientation.

Table 7. WOMEN'S PREFERRED LABOUR MARKET STATUS  
Estimates of logistic models by countries

Country	Traditional Odds ratio	Intermediate Odds ratio	Modern
Estonia	0.34	0.61	1.00
Germany	0.18**	0.49**	1.00
Eastern	0.21	0.46	1.00
Germany			
Western	0.17**	0.52**	1.00
Germany			
Lithuania	0.58	0.67	1.00
Netherlands	0.08**	0.24**	1.00
Poland	0.19**	0.35**	1.00
Romania	0.45	0.91	1.00
All countries	0.18**	0.40**	1.00

\*\* significant at the 0.01 level, \* significant at the 0.05 level  
Source: the IPPAS data.

The women's work-family orientation makes the greatest difference in the Netherlands where the traditional orientation reduces the odds that women would prefer employment by more than 90 percentage points, compared to the modern work-family orientation (the reference category). A very strong influence of the work-family attitudes on women's labour market preferences is observed also in Germany, irrespectively on the eastern and western parts of the country, and Poland with the difference in odds ratios beyond 80 percentage points. On the other end,

Lithuania should be mentioned with the smallest difference of 42.1 percentage points.

## 5. WORK-FAMILY ORIENTATION AND FERTILITY

The analysis undertaken in this article would be incomplete without taking notice of the differences in fertility related to women's work-family orientations. This perspective is particularly important against the background of modern demographic trends, which have pushed fertility to low or very low levels in virtually all countries of Europe. It has been generally accepted that over a longer run, the persistence of current patterns will bring the population ageing to unprecedented levels and threaten the sustainability of societies.

Table 8 offers a simple comparison of fertility levels between women aged 20-49 with the traditional, intermediate and modern work-family orientations. The table presents the mean number of children, including step-children and adopted children but excluding deceased biological children<sup>15</sup>. Although this measure is not perfect from the viewpoint of fertility analysis, it highlights significant differences that exist across the different work-family orientations.

In the countries studied, a support for the breadwinner-homemaker model translates into 1.69 children per woman, on average. Among women inclined toward the modern work-family orientation the mean number of children is limited to 1.14. Expectedly, the fertility of the intermediate group of women is positioned in the middle between fertility of women with the traditional and modern work-family orientations. In relative terms, women with the traditional orientation display an almost 50 percent higher fertility. This finding is

<sup>15</sup> The data are derived from the IPPAS questionnaire item CQ9a.

repeated across all the countries included in the analysis, although with some variations. Countrywise, the Netherlands and Germany feature somewhat smaller difference, with excess number of children ranging from 12.1 percent in Eastern Germany to 22 percent in Western Germany. In Austria, Estonia, Hungary, Poland, Romania and Cyprus, the women's orientation and fertility appears to be much stronger associated - the traditional attitudes toward the work-family model is related to 55-76 percent higher number of children.

Table 8. AVERAGE NUMBER OF CHILDREN BY WORK-FAMILY ORIENTATION

Country	Children born			Children born and expected		
	Tradi- tional	Inter- mediate	Modern	Tradi- tional	Inter- mediate	Modern
Austria	1.84	1.55	1.19	2.24	1.89	1.59
Estonia	1.79	1.50	1.09	2.44	2.35	2.15
Germany	1.23	1.13	1.06	2.17	1.70	1.68
Eastern Germany	1.35	1.28	1.20	1.75	1.81	1.74
Western Germany	1.22	1.11	1.00	2.20	1.68	1.65
Hungary	2.04	1.43	1.32	2.47	2.05	1.97
Lithuania	1.82	1.55	1.11	2.22	2.06	2.00
Netherlands	1.40	1.34	1.17	2.34	2.10	1.95
Poland	2.21	1.77	1.34	2.76	2.35	2.00
Cyprus	1.79	1.67	1.02	2.98	2.96	2.47
All countries	1.69	1.41	1.14	2.41	2.01	1.79

Note: number of children born refers to item CQ9a and number of children born and expected refers to item RCCQ9TE in the IPPAS database

Source: the IPPAS data.

pattern remained virtually unchanged. From the viewpoint of fertility developments it is interesting to note that in the majority of countries the expected fertility of women with the traditional work-family orientation reached the replacement level, whereas the modern orientation was associated with below-replacement fertility.

Despite the evidence about the rather strong relationship between the work-family orientation on the one side, and the women's labour market participation and the fertility behaviour on the other side, it is important to note that the results presented do not allow a conclusion about the causal links. As the statuses and attitudes of the respondents all refer to the same time point in the IPPAS dataset, it is not possible to distinguish between the extent to which the attitudinal orientations might have a true predictive power for women's labour market behaviours, and how much their orientations might reflect *a posteriori* rationalisation of earlier life choices [Lesthaeghe, Moors 2000; Lesthaeghe 2002]. Despite this methodological restriction, the results add to a need to incorporate value orientations and attitudes in studies on demographic and social processes.

## 6. SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

The findings reported indicate that despite a long record of a rising female employment and the relatively high levels reached in many countries at the turn of the 21st century,

Aside of dissimilarities in the levels of fertility in terms of the quantum, the observed differences are presumably related to the tempo of childbearing. Numerous studies have shown that women who are oriented towards a professional activity postpone childbearing to a greater extent to establish a solid position in the labour market and to secure a career advancement. To account for potential differences in the tempo of childbearing, we repeated the comparative analyses merging the number of children already born with those ultimately expected. As a result, the excess fertility associated with the traditional work-family orientation was reduced from 48 to 35 percent on average, however, the general

there is a considerable diversity in the women's labour market participation by work-family orientation. The four questions on gender roles, used to define the work-family attitudes, identified properly women with the traditional and modern work-family orientations. The resulting taxonomy performed well, displaying systematic differences in the labour market behaviours.

The acceptance of segregated gender roles between men and women proved to be related to the lower female workforce participation and the greater prevalence of the traditional breadwinner model. The support for more symmetrical roles of men and women was reflected in the stronger attachment of women to the labour force and the higher frequency of the dual-earner or modernised breadwinner models. The described relationship holds both for the practised and preferred work-family models, with a somewhat more pronounced effect on the latter.

It is perhaps even more noteworthy that the differences in the labour market participation of women by work-family orientation are manifested in all the countries under study, regardless of the type of welfare regime, the existing pattern of female workforce participation, and the patterns of attitudes expressed in terms of shares of women with modern and traditional orientations. The differences in employment rates related to the traditional and modern orientations are quite extensive, exceeding 20 percentage points in several countries. Regarding preferences for employment, the difference goes beyond that level in almost each country studied.

The multivariate analysis by use of logistic models with socio-demographic variables (age, educational attainment, number of children, age of the youngest child, and religion) and the work-family orientation variable supports the hypothesis that the work-family orientation does not represent a simple reflection of the socio-economic position, educational level and the family life-cycle stage. Instead, it seems to be a relatively independent attitudinal dimension, with discernible repercussions in labour market behaviours. Also, regressions run by individual countries confirm impacts of the work-family orientation on the women's labour market participation.

Although the construction of the work-family attitudes index has followed a different scheme, the results allow for parallels with Catherine Hakim's recent research on Britain, conducted within the framework of the preference theory (2003; 2005). Similar to the present study, Hakim describes the relative independence of attitudes, related to gender roles and the work-family balance. The British and earlier American findings suggest that core attitudes, conceptualised in terms of lifestyle preferences, have substantial implications on the labour market as well as family behaviours [Rexroat, Shehan 1984; Shaw, Shapiro 1987; Spitze, Waite 1980]. These influences cut across levels of education, income and social classes, and in terms of strength are comparable to human capital and economic position.

Hakim took one step further to causal inferences and made the claim about the prevailing direction of the influence (2002). The cross-sectional character of the IPPAS dataset, however, does not allow for exploration of that avenue as the statuses and attitudes of the respondents all refer to the same time point. Therefore, it is not possible here to attempt at a distinction between selection and adaptation processes, i.e. to investigate to what extent attitudinal orientations might have a true predictive power for women's labour market and family behaviours, and how much orientations might reflect the post hoc affirmation and rationalisation of the life choices already made [Lesthaeghe, Moors 2000; Lesthaeghe 2002]. The associations measured in the cross-sectional framework obviously capture the whole of this recursive process with no chance to decompose the observed statistical associations into causal constituents. Despite these limitations, the findings

presented unequivocally contribute to the call for firmly incorporation of culture, value orientations and attitudes in studies on demographic and social processes [Avramov, Cliquet 2005].

The observed association between the work-family orientation and women's labour market behaviour offers a matter for contemplation also in terms of policy implications. Most importantly, it recapitulates a noticeable diversity of populations with respect to references and expectations related to work and family nexus, in virtually all European countries. This conclusion is supported by recent cross-cultural studies, which indicate that although there is a major and irreversible transformation of values and attitudes as societies transform from agrarian through industrial to modern post-industrial one, the complete or near-complete homogeneity of views on reconciliation between work and family has not yet become a reality [Inglehart, Pippa 2003]. And developments towards a greater individualisation of choices and lifestyles, characteristic of the post-modern age, leave it somewhat open whether it is reasonable to expect such convergence.

The differences in the work-family orientations lead to a question of how well the existing policies, aimed at reconciling work and family, consider the heterogeneity of attitudes and preferences. Although there is a sufficient room for improvement, a noticeable progress has been achieved during the recent decades in prohibiting discrimination, reducing gender-specific barriers to achievement in the labour market and promoting the equality between men and women [Heide 2004; Loufti 2001; Rosilli 2000]. The critics have remarked, however, that in many countries the measures promoted and exercised nowadays with respect to reconciliation of work and family tend to neglect a diversity of preferences among the target population. More specifically, it has been noted that the mainstream policy agenda is paving the way towards unisex employment and family roles for everyone, based on the misleading assumption that women form a basically homogeneous group with a single set of aspirations [Crittenden 2001; Hakim 2005].

In practice, the policies that are designed for people who are inclined towards the uninterrupted, continuous combination of employment and family offer little or no support to those who would prefer a different model with the separation of breadwinner and carer roles at least for a certain stage of life. If based on the genuine choice of the individuals, the alternative models should not be prioritised against each other but rather regarded as complementary pathways towards reconciliation strategies over the life course. The recognition of diversity in the preferences and aspirations should lead to policies that are more neutral between different work-family orientations, and enhance the scope of self-fulfillment for the entire population.

In the context of rising concerns about the sustainability of the current demographic trends over the long run, it needs to be reminded that women oriented towards the male breadwinner model tend to have the highest fertility rates, and, perhaps, can be therefore most easily persuaded to push fertility closer to the replacement level. The evidence supportive of this argument was provided also by the IPPAS - on average, the difference in the number of children between three work-family orientations amounted to 40 percent, with even larger differences countrywise.

To conclude the discussion of policy implications, it is difficult not to agree with the deliverance of Paul Demeny who underscored the necessity for a serious rethinking of policies potentially affecting parental willingness to have children, including reconciliation between work and parenthood, if low fertility is recognised as a social problem and a challenge to Europe's future (2003). The contribution of the IPPAS to the knowledge base

of this effort stands, to a great extent, in highlighting the increasing role of culture and a significance of an attitudinal dimension.

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