Gender Inequality in the Division of Housework over the Life Course: a European Comparative Perspective

Tine Kil & Karel Neels

1. Introduction

Most Western European post-war welfare states are developed on the basic assumptions of the male breadwinner/female carer model that assumes a gendered division of paid and domestic work (Pascall & Lewis, 2004). In recent decades various societal institutions made a shift from the male breadwinner model towards the gender equity model. Gender equity means that gender is not a determinant of who is responsible for carrying out paid work, housework or childcare in a household (McDonald, 2000b). The shift has witnessed different speeds in different institutions. Gender inequity has largely disappeared from institutions such as education and employment. Over the last 50 years, female participation in higher education and the labour market significantly increased and the distribution of paid work between partners became more equal on average (Crompton, 1999). This contrasts to institutions related to family and parenting that experienced a much slower adjustment (McDonald, 2000a). The more equal distribution of paid work is partly offset by a more equal distribution of housework and childcare (Altintas, 2009; Lachance-Grzela & Bouchard, 2010). Goldscheider suggests that the revolution towards gender equality runs in two stages (Goldscheider, 2000; Goldscheider, Olah, & Puur, 2010). The first part of the gender revolution in which women enter the public sphere of education, employment and politics has been largely accomplished (Bernhardt, Noack, & Lyngstad, 2008). The second part of the revolution in which men join the private sphere and take up their part of the responsibility for housework and childcare lags behind. This incompatibility between the public and private life leads to a negative pressure on fertility and general family stability.

Working women are faced with a "double shift": paid work on the one hand and housework and childcare on the other (Hochschild & Machung, 1989). However, quantitative research in Flanders shows that there is not so much a double workload but rather a dual responsibility (Elchardus &

Glorieux, 1994; Glorieux, Koelet, Mestdag, & Minnen, 2006). Women attempt to combine the various roles to a greater extent, which can lead to role nuisance, role conflicts and more necessity of planning and time pressure. An unequal household division of labour further limits the ability of women to participate in public life and to obtain a greater role in the professional, social and political atmosphere (Poeschl in Lachance-Grzela & Bouchard, 2010). An unequal distribution of domestic work also increases the risk of dissatisfaction about it, which in turn is related to a low psychological well-being, less perceived social support and marital instability (Claffey & Manning, 2010).

The micro factors affecting the distribution of domestic work are studied extensively in recent decades. Research into the influence of national context recently emerged. Studies that specifically focus on the influence of national context on the gendered division of domestic work from a life course perspective are rather limited. With the exception of Anxo et al. (2011), but they did not distinguish between housework and childcare whereas previous research shows that these are conceptually different (Ishiikuntz & Coltrane, 1992). Furthermore the results of their study are limited to countries which were analysed separately.

The contribution of this study is to examine how gender inequality in the division of housework varies at different stages of the family life course and whether it differs depending on the institutional and social context. The gendered division of domestic work will be approached from a life course perspective. Drawing on data from Round 5 of the European Social Survey (ESS) and applying multilevel analysis we examine how the distribution of domestic work throughout the life span is affected by (1) time availability, relative resources and gender ideology, (2) the cultural and policy context (gender culture, full-time childcare, availability of parental leave for men and neutrality of the tax system) and (3) whether context variables influence the extent to which individual factors play a role.

2. Theoretical background and research questions

• Individual determinants of the division of housework

In recent decades several studies have looked into factors on the individual and household level affecting the distribution of domestic work. The available literature shows three important factors: time availability, relative resources and gender ideology.

Time availability - Becker (1981) explains the division of housework from a rational economic perspective. He argues that families seek to maximize utility by distributing tasks as efficiently as possible. Each member must therefore specialize in what he does best, paid or domestic work. Productivity depends on biological factors, different experiences and investment in human capital over the life course. This makes that men better engage in paid work and women in domestic work. A recent application of this is the perspective of time availability. The distribution of housework is dependent on time available to partners. The partner who spends less time on other activities as labour force participation will have more time available to take up a larger share of the housework.

Relative resources - The second approach emphasizes the importance of relative resources. Housework is considered an annoying task whose distribution is achieved as a result of negotiation. Negotiation takes the form of a power struggle: the partner who has the best negotiating position - based on material resources - may limit his or her share of the housework (Brines, 1993).

Gender ideology - The last perspective looks into the distribution of domestic work as the result of gender ideology. From this respect, women with attitudes in line with the male-breadwinner/female carer ideal will perform a larger share of the household chores. Gender ideology is viewed as the result of socialization in the role that is associated with the gender category to which one belongs. A variant theory is the gender construction/doing gender perspective. From this perspective, domestic work is a process through which individuals define their gender identity. West and Zimmerman (1987) view gender as a set of routines that are embedded in everyday interaction which must be constantly exercised and confirmed in interaction with others.

A review of the literature of Lachance-Grzela and Bouchard (2010) shows that the gender division of housework is a complex process that is best explained by a combination of the aforementioned factors. The **first research question** therefore looks into *the effects of time availability, relative resources and gender ideology on the gender distribution of housework.*

- ## A life course approach of the gendered division of housework

The life course will be approached from the classical idea of the 'family cycle' of Glick (in Buhlmann, Elcheroth, & Tettamanti, 2010). He argues that families go through a sequence of typical life stages on normatively defined ages. He distinguishes 'marriage', 'childbearing', 'children leaving home' and 'dissolution of the family'. Later on, categories were added that vary depending on age and institutional place of the children, ranging from 'families with preschool children' to 'empty nest families'.

The form and extent of gender inequality vary throughout the life span (Anxo, Bosch, & Rubery, 2010). Research by Anxo et al. (2011) on the household division of labour in relation to age in France, Italy, Sweden and the United States based on cross-sectional data shows that gender differences in paid work, housework, childcare and leisure are smaller at younger and older ages. At working age they are largest, especially when children are present in the family (Buhlmann et al., 2010). Grunow, Schulz, and Blossfeld (2012) show (based on longitudinal data for West-Germany) that many couples try to distribute housework evenly in the beginning of their relationship. But after this initial stage the distribution gets more traditional and a routine is created.

Research by Lundberg and Rose (1999) based on longitudinal data from the American Panel Study of Income Dynamics shows that especially parenthood is often accompanied by a specialization of gender roles in paid and unpaid work. Specialization patterns apply better to the older birth cohorts suggesting that gender roles have changed over time. Also Martinengo, Jacob, and Hill (2010) found (based on cross-sectional data) that parenting entails a more gendered division of work and family life. In their interpretation, the current generation is mainly egalitarian, but the general idea about parenting that manifests itself when becoming a parent has a greater impact than other cultural norms such as

gender egalitarianism. Studies based on longitudinal data from Australia (Baxter, Hewitt, & Haynes, 2008) and the United States (Nomaguchi & Milkie, 2003) show that every birth significantly increases the time spent on housework for women. For fathers, the birth of a first child triggers no change in the time spent on housework and the second birth even reduces the time spent on housework (Baxter et al., 2008). Similarly an American study with longitudinal data (Sanchez & Thomson, 1997) shows that the transition to a second or subsequent child is accompanied by a slight increase in the working hours of the father. These findings show that children imply more housework and mainly the mother takes up these extra tasks.

The second part of the **first research question (1b)** therefore is: *Do the effects of time availability, relative resources and gender ideology differ over the life course*?

- ## The influence of national context

Decision making on the distribution of domestic work in the family is embedded in a social context and is influenced by norms, values and the culture of a particular society (Lappegård, Kjeldstad, & Skarðhamar, 2012). Numerous studies have recently looked into the relationship between the household division of labour and macro-indicators (Batalova & Cohen, 2002; Fuwa, 2004; Fuwa & Cohen, 2007; Geist, 2005; Hook, 2010; Knudsen & Waerness, 2008; Lappegård et al., 2012; van der Lippe, de Ruijter, de Ruijter, & Raub, 2011).

Several researchers have investigated the influence of *gender equality in the public sphere*. This research is often based on the Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM) of the UN (Batalova & Cohen, 2002; Fuwa, 2004) and female labour market participation (Fuwa, 2004; Hook, 2006, 2010). The findings largely confirm that the visibility of women in positions of public authority and prestige affects the standards on gender distribution of work (Batalova & Cohen, 2002). The presence of women in the public sphere has a positive impact on gender equality in the private sphere of the family.

The impact of social *policies* on gender equality has also been considered. Geist (2005) notes that couples in conservative countries divide housework less equal than couples in social-democratic

countries. The regimes of conservative welfare states actively encourage traditional gender roles, while social democratic regimes encourage gender equality. Liberal regimes are more heterogeneous and take an intermediate position. Also family policies are taken into account. Public childcare can limit the female caregiver/homemaker role through its influence on female employment and financial independence (Hook, 2006). On the other hand it hardly affects the role of the father in the household. The state takes over some parts of the 'female' tasks, but does not encourage the man to become more involved in childcare and domestic work. Hence cross-national analysis finds no significant effects of public childcare on the division of housework (Hook, 2006, 2010). Nevertheless research by van der Lippe et al. (2011) shows that public spending on childcare is negatively related with the time spent by women on housework if children are present.

Parental leave would have the opposite effect. Since it is used predominantly by mothers, it can discourage a more egalitarian division of household labour because it reinforces the male bread winner/female homemaker model, affecting financial resources and long term employment opportunities for women. In contradiction with this hypothesis Fuwa and Cohen (2007) found a positive relationship between the length of parental leave and equality of the household division of labour. Hook (2006) nuanced this finding, suggesting that the argument would only apply in countries where fathers can take up parental leave. Parental leave available to both partners discourages specialization and the persistence of traditional gender roles. In countries where fathers are not entitled to parental leave, there exists a negative relationship between the length of parental leave and gender equality in the household division of labour.

So there is some evidence for the idea that gender and policy context have an effect on behaviour in the household but results are inconsistent and the effects are usually small (Lachance-Grzela & Bouchard, 2010). It is stated that since household tasks take place in the private sphere of family life, policy can difficultly affect them. Welfare state policy is primarily focused on the organization of care and less on the organization of housework. Therefore the effect on housework is rather indirect and caused by the relatively strong relationship between care and housework for parents of young children. But family policies also contribute to the division of housework via the normative and symbolic

construction of families. Policy measures induce the institutionalization of a dominant and normative family structure (Bourdieu, 1996). Private gender equality is therefore more common in a society where gender equity is accepted as the dominant cultural value and where institutions support it.

Buhlmann et al. (2010) suggest that the magnitude to which parenthood induces an traditional division of housework depends on the social context in which a couple resides. The birth of a child would signify a more unequal division of labour, care and housework in all countries. But the ability to return to a more equal distribution of work and care would depend on the institutional context. In countries where policy supports a dual earner model, it is easier to re-establish a more equal division of labour and care. In countries where institutions support a male breadwinner model or where family policy remains limited, the egalitarian distribution patterns are often not recovered.

The **second research question** looks into the influence of contextual elements on private gender inequality: *What is the importance of policy and culture for the gendered division of housework (**2a**) and do the effects of such contextual factors vary over the life course (**2b**)?*

To assess the interplay between social contexts, individual characteristics and housework division, the **third research question** concerns the cross-level interaction effects between micro-level and macro-level variables*: Are the effects of the individual-level variables influenced by the country-level variables in the different life course stages?*

3. Data and methods

- **Data**

The data used are from the ESS Round 5. This is a standardized, cross-sectional, repeated survey that questions the living conditions and political attitudes of European inhabitants. The interviews were conducted in 2010, 2011 and 2012. Round 5 includes a module on 'Work, Family and Wellbeing' that provides data about housework. The sample includes 24 different countries: Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden,

Switzerland and the United Kingdom. Because this research investigates gender equality within families, the sample was restricted to respondents in heterosexual couples. The total number of sampled respondents was 24045, ranging from 655 (Lithuania) to 1722 (Germany).

Table 1: Sample distribution by country and life course stage, respondents in a heterosexual couple aged 16 – 94 years

	<45y. no child	<60y. child <6y.	<60y. child 6-15y.	<60y. child 16-25y.	45-59y. no child	>59y.	**Total**	
							%	**N**
Belgium	9.1%	20.7%	15.1%	13.1%	14.0%	28.0%	100.0%	992
Bulgaria	5.0%	13.9%	16.0%	12.2%	16.9%	36.0%	100.0%	1076
Czech Republic	11.6%	18.5%	14.8%	14.2%	13.0%	27.8%	100.0%	859
Cyprus	9.4%	18.1%	13.5%	16.1%	9.9%	33.0%	100.0%	554
Switzerland	10.4%	18.2%	15.2%	14.8%	17.2%	24.3%	100.0%	1023
Germany	11.2%	15.8%	14.3%	9.4%	19.4%	29.9%	100.0%	1662
Denmark	8.5%	16.0%	19.7%	8.6%	17.3%	30.0%	100.0%	978
Estonia	6.4%	21.7%	14.7%	13.6%	14.4%	29.2%	100.0%	890
Spain	13.0%	21.6%	17.4%	15.4%	9.0%	23.6%	100.0%	1026
Finland	12.2%	20.6%	11.6%	7.6%	17.0%	30.9%	100.0%	1087
France	10.4%	22.4%	14.6%	8.0%	14.6%	29.9%	100.0%	915
United Kingdom	12.0%	22.9%	12.7%	7.3%	16.0%	29.2%	100.0%	1168
Greece	12.0%	20.0%	17.2%	11.3%	10.7%	28.8%	100.0%	1359
Hongary	8.0%	20.2%	16.8%	15.2%	14.6%	25.2%	100.0%	822
Ireland	14.7%	26.9%	14.5%	7.4%	12.0%	24.4%	100.0%	1089
Lithuania	17.8%	18.1%	10.8%	12.4%	20.0%	30.9%	100.0%	619
Netherlands	12.8%	19.4%	15.4%	8.8%	16.2%	27.4%	100.0%	1072
Norway	11.2%	24.0%	15.8%	7.6%	16.3%	25.2%	100.0%	976
Poland	10.1%	27.8%	16.1%	15.5%	11.0%	19.6%	100.0%	864
Portugal	6.4%	11.7%	15.2%	8.4%	13.2%	45.1%	100.0%	891
Russia	14.6%	20.0%	15.9%	14.3%	16.1%	19.0%	100.0%	861
Sweden	12.2%	19.8%	13.0%	8.2%	15.8%	31.0%	100.0%	882
Slovenia	6.1%	19.2%	16.0%	18.9%	9.8%	29.9%	100.0%	692
Slovakia	5.9%	14.4%	16.6%	19.1%	14.6%	29.4%	100.0%	881
Total	*10.3%*	*19.6%*	*15.2%*	*11.6%*	*14.7%*	*28.6%*	*100.0%*	*23238*

Source: ESS Round 5 (2010)

Because this study is conducted from a life course perspective, different groups are examined separately. For the classification we used a variant of the family cycle approach developed by Glick (Buhlmann et al., 2010). This typology reflects the life events and life stages of a large part of the population, such as the birth of a child, the transition to retirement, etc. (Anxo et al., 2011). We distinguished between couples who are in different life stages, based on the age of the woman, the presence of children in the household and the age of the youngest resident child. We distinguished six different groups: young couples (<45y.) without children, couples (<60y.) with young children (<6y.),

couples (<60y.) with children aged 6 to 15 years, couples (<60y.) with teenage children from 16 to 25 years, midlife "empty nest" couples (45-59y.) without resident children and older couples (>59y.).

The age of the respondents ranges from 16 to 94 years with the average age being 50 years. Looking at the sample distribution over the life stages, 28.6% of women in the sample is older than 60 years. But there are also big differences between countries. Almost half (45.1%) of Portuguese couples are in the oldest life stage (>60 y.) while this group is limited to 19.6% in the Polish sample (see **Table 1**).

- ## Dependent variable

The dependent variable is the *relative division of housework*. We look at the proportion of household tasks for which the female partner is responsible. The possible values of the indicator range from 0 to 100, where 0 refers to a distribution where the male partner performs all tasks and 100 to a distribution where the female partner performs all tasks. As housework and childcare are conceptually different (Ishiikuntz & Coltrane, 1992) and the meaning and delineation of childcare is more complex (Altintas, 2009; Pfau-Effinger, 2010), we focus on housework. In ESS Round 5 two questions are included that measure how many hours per week the respondent and his partner spend in total on housework, restricted to cooking, washing, cleaning, shopping and maintenance tasks. The first four tasks are typically female and more routine, non-discrete and time consuming while maintenance tasks are rather ‘male’, interrupted, occasionally, flexible and less time consuming. Recent studies (Batalova & Cohen, 2002; Fuwa, 2004) focused on the distribution of typically female tasks. However, this may underestimate the actual contribution of the male partner whereas it seems useful to consider both.

The measure for time spent on housework is based on answers to survey questions. Comparisons of estimates of time spent on housework by questionnaires and time diaries show that the reported hours people spend on domestic labour are much higher in questionnaires (Bianchi, Milkie, Sayer, & Robinson, 2000). This problem is especially present when household tasks are questioned separately and the time is then added up, as simultaneous activities are double counted (Coltrane, 2000). This distortion can be partially avoided by the more general question ("how many hours do you spend

weekly on housework in total?") that ESS5 uses. In addition the dependent variable is relative thus the estimation of the absolute contribution is less important.

- **Independent variables**

Micro-level variables

Time availability is operationalized as the total number of hours that the female partner on average spends on paid work per week.

Relative resources is operationalized as the proportion of household income for which the female partner is responsible. There are seven options : "none" (0), "very small" (1), "under a half" (2), "about half " (3), "over a half " (4), "very large" (5) and "all" (6).

For the operationalization of *gender ideology* two items that estimate the extent to which one agrees with the assumptions of the male breadwinner model were used. The statements are "When jobs are scarce, men should have more right to work than women" and "A women should be prepared to cut down on her paid work for the sake of her family". The responses to these items were measured using a five-point scale ranging from "agree strongly" to "disagree strongly". The correlation (Pearson) between the two items was 0.49 ($p < 0.001$). The scores on the two scales were added together and divided by two to form an indicator of gender ideology. They are coded so that 0 is equivalent to a gender ideology that corresponds to the male breadwinner model and 4 is equivalent to a gender ideology that rejects these ideas.

We also added some control variables. The *average number of working hours per week of the man* and the *household size* fit within the time availability perspective. We also controlled for the *education of both partners* and whether the couple is *married*. A higher level of education and unmarried cohabitation are usually associated with more progressive values such as gender egalitarianism. Furthermore also *age* and *sex* of the respondent were entered as control variables. We take into account gender as earlier research (Kamo, 2000; Lee & Waite, 2005) shows that men and women estimate their own and their partners time spent on housework differently.

Macro-level variables

The contextual variables reflect policies that address gender equity in family-oriented institutions (Saraceno & Keck, 2011) and gender culture. All contextual variables were standardized (see supplementary material, table 2).

The first policy variable considers the use of *full-time formal childcare*, which is operationalized as the percentage of children between 0 and 2 years old that spend more than 30 hours per week in formal childcare. Formal childcare includes all types of organized care by a public or private structure. It draws on data from Eurostat (2010).

The second indicator considers *availability of parental leave for men*, where we used the amount of months of parental leave that is exclusively reserved for the parents together or that is explicitly reserved for fathers in 2009 (Multilinks Database, 2011). In most countries, parents can decide who receives the leave and how the effective parental care period is divided between father and mother. This indicator only considers the regulation that creates additional rights when both parents share the time (Keck & Saraceno, 2011).

The third variable concerns the *fiscal support for dual earner couples* or the neutrality of the tax system. Tax systems are neutral when they do not influence the distribution of paid work between couples and create equal work incentives for both partners (OECD, 2012b). It is operationalized as the extent to which a one earner couple has to pay more or less taxes than a two earner couple with the same income (200% of the median income) and the same family form. A negative value indicates that a one-earner family pays less taxes than a similar two-earner family and a positive value indicates the reverse. We used data for 2010 from OECD (2012a).

Besides the policy variables, we used an indicator of *progressive gender culture* and support for the dual worker/dual carer model. To construct the cultural variable we used data from the 2008 European Value Study (EVS 2011). The survey consists of approximately 1500 respondents per country and contains mostly countries that also participated in ESS. The survey examines the specific support of sharing roles within the household, while ESS does not contain these claims. A factor analysis was

performed on eight items that measure the extent to which respondents agree with the male breadwinner model and a gendered division of housework and childcare. The factor we use examines the egalitarian ideas of gender roles within the family. Principal Axis Factoring with Varimax Rotation showed that following statements load the strongest on the factor: "In general, fathers are as well suited to look after their children as mothers" (0.55), "Men should take as much responsibility as women for the home and children" (0.54), "A working mother can establish just as warm and secure a relationship with her children as a mother who does not work." (0.49) and "A pre-school child is like to suffer if his or her mother works" (-0.42). The possible answers consisted of a Likert scale with four points that went from totally agree (1) to totally disagree (4). The factor scores on the scales are weighted, aggregated by person, standardized and aggregated by country. The scale is reversed so that a higher value means a more progressive gender culture.

- **Analysis**

We used multilevel analysis where individuals (level 1) are nested in countries (level 2). Multilevel regression creates the possibility to test the combined effects of individual-level variables and country-level variables. For each life course stage ten models were estimated.

(1) $$Y_{ij} = \gamma_{00} + \mu_{0j} + r_{ij}$$

In the first model only the dependent variable together with a constant of the individual-level and the country-level is included. Y_{ij} is the proportion of the housework that the female partner is responsible for in couple i in country j; γ_{00} is the intercept on the individual level; r_{ij} is the error term on the individual level en μ_{0j} is the error term on the country level (random intercept).

(2) $$Y_{ij} = \gamma_{00} + \gamma_{10}TA_{ij} + \gamma_{20}RR_{ij} + \gamma_{30}GI_{ij} + \Sigma\gamma_{k0}X_{ikj} + \mu_{0j} + r_{ij}$$

In the second model the three most important individual-level variables and the control variables are included where TA_{ij} stands for time availability; RR_{ij} for relative resources en GI_{ij} for gender ideology. X_{ikj} are the control variables. The γ_{i0}-terms refer to the slopes of the independent individual level variables. The remaining terms have the same signification as in the former model.

(3-6) $Y_{ij} = \gamma_{00} + \gamma_{10}TA_{ij} + \gamma_{20}RA_{ij} + \gamma_{30}GI_{ij} + \Sigma\gamma_{kj}X_{ikj} + \gamma_{01}Z_j + \mu_{0j} + r_{ij}$

In the third, fourth, fifth and sixth model the macro-level variables were separately added. $\gamma_{01}Z_j$ refers to the slopes of the independent macro-variables.

(7-10) $Y_{ij} = \gamma_{00} + \gamma_{10}TA_{ij} + \gamma_{20}RA_{ij} + \gamma_{30}GI_{ij} + \Sigma\gamma_{kj}X_{ikj} + \gamma_{0j}Z_j + \gamma_{1j}TA_{ij}Z_j + \gamma_{2j}RA_{ij}Z_j + \gamma_{3j}GI_{ij}Z_j + \mu_{0j} + r_{ij}$

In the seventh, eighth, ninth and tenth model the interaction effects between the three key individual level variables and national variables were separately inserted. $\gamma_{1j}TA_{ij}Z_j$, $\gamma_{2j}RA_{ij}Z_j$ and $\gamma_{3j}GI_{ij}Z_j$ refer to the slopes of the cross-level interaction effects.

The random slopes of the models have also been tested but were rarely significant. Therefore they have not been included in the above equations.

4. Results

• The null model

Table 2: The empty multilevel models for the distribution of housework in different life course stages, respondents in a heterosexual couple aged 16 – 94 years

	Life course stage					
	1	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*
Intercept	64.26***	71.40***	71.75***	72.13***	68.50***	70.17***
Variance						
Intercept	31.91***	26.31***	34.27***	31.47***	34.35***	34.71***
Residual level 1	347.09***	321.82***	33.56***	349.23***	374.53***	429.57***
ICC	8.42%	7.56%	9.32%	8.26%	8.40%	7.48%
AIC	21392.90	39794.20	30982.60	23487.10	30341.20	55944.40
N	2455	4613	3575	2695	3455	6614

***Note : Life course stages: 1** = woman <45y, no inhabiting child; **2** = woman <60y, inhabiting child <6y; **3** = woman <60y, inhabiting child 6 – 15y; **4** = woman <60y, inhabiting child 16 – 24y; **5** = woman 45 – 59y, no inhabiting child; **6** = woman >59y; **ICC** = Intra class correlation coefficient*
***Significance levels**: * p<.1, ** p <.05, *** p <.01*
Source: ESS Round 5 (2010)

In the first model (**Table 2**) the value of the intercept reflects the average division of housework in the various life stages. In the average European couple the woman is responsible for more than half of the housework, but gender inequality varies over life stages. As expected, the inequality in terms of

housework is largest when children are present. For couples with resident children, women perform 71% to 72% of the housework. The gender inequality is lowest (64%) among young couples without children. Further the variance components show that the variance at the country level varies between 7.5% (stage 6) and 9.3% (stage 3) and that the between-country variation is significant.

- **Individual-level covariates**

Table 3: Multilevel models including individual determinants of the distribution of housework in different life course stages, respondents in a heterosexual couple aged 16 – 94 years

	Life course stage					
	1	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*
Intercept	68.39***	73.67***	73.65***	64.14***	55.18***	72.64***
Time availability (work hours woman)	-0.20***	-0.21***	-0.20***	-0.22***	-0.21***	-0.21***
Relative resources (income w/m, 0 – 6)	-0.73**	-1.93***	-1.82***	-1.18***	-1.55***	-1.31***
Gender ideology (0 – 4)	-2.91***	-2.38***	-2.19***	-0.74	-2.06***	-1.88***
Work hours man	0.22***	0.230***	0.23***	0.18***	0.24***	0.14***
Educational level m	-0.06	-0.31***	-0.37***	-0.29**	-0.28**	-0.06
Educational level w	-0.77***	-0.54***	-0.49***	-0.53***	-0.37***	-0.03
Married	1.51	-0.56	0.28	2.05	1.75*	4.76***
Household members	0.72**	1.56***	0.45	0.60	2.31*	0.96***
Age woman	0.05	-0.06	0.07	0.18**	0.27***	-0.06
Sex respondent (man=0 women=1)	3.04	1.44	2.51*	3.23*	3.92**	2.05*
Sex resp. * GI	0.66	1.47***	0.82	0.14	-0.32	0.60
Variance						
Intercept	21.36***	13.62***	273.08***	15.55***	20.54***	30.92***
Residual level 1	294.38***	250.56***	17.38***	306.72***	307.69***	410.90***
ICC	6.76%	5.15%	5.98%	4.83%	6.26%	6.99 %
R^2 Level 2	31.48%	46.79%	47.51%	47.43%	38.78%	10.67%
AIC	187973.20	35130.00	27002.80	20138.20	27148.80	55833.50
N	2220	4193	3189	2346	3162	6295

***Note : Life course stages: 1** = woman <45y, no inhabiting child; **2** = woman <60y, inhabiting child <6y; **3** = woman <60y, inhabiting child 6 – 15y; **4** = woman <60y, inhabiting child 16 – 24y; **5** = woman 45 – 59y, no inhabiting child; **6** = woman >59y; **ICC** = Intra class correlation coefficient*
***Significance levels**: * p<.1, ** p <.05, *** p <.01*
Source: ESS Round 5 (2010)

In **Table 3** the individual-level variables are added. Time availability (the average number of working hours per week of the female partner), relative resources (the proportion of household income that the woman is responsible for) and gender ideology (the extent to which progressive values regarding gendered roles are supported) are negatively related to the proportion of the housework that the

woman is responsible for. The effects are significant at every life stage. Only for couples with children between 16 and 24 years old a progressive gender ideology has no significant effect.

Standardization of the effects (**Table 8**, supplementary material) indicates that the average number of working hours of women and men is most strongly related to the division of housework in each life stage. If the average number of hours a woman spends on paid work increases with one standard deviation, the average proportion of the housework that the woman is responsible for decreases with approximately 0.20 standard deviations. Only for retired couples the effect of time availability is less strong (-0.11), but this is probably due to the fact that these people simply spend less time on paid work.

The effects of relative resources and gender ideology are smaller than those of time availability but differ strongly across life stages. The effect of relative resources is relatively small for young couples without children, but almost three times as high among couples with young children. The older the youngest child, the smaller this effect. This is probably due to the risk that the combination of young children and economic dependence implies. The financially dependent spouse has in this case twice as much to lose at the event of separation. As a result their relative income power plays a larger role in the negotiation of the division of housework.

Gender ideology appears to have a big impact for young and older couples without children. Especially when children are present the effect of gender ideology is relatively weak. The practical need for domestic work associated with children and the cultural meaning of parenthood seems to partially outweigh the effect of gender ideology.

Furthermore it is striking that for the elderly couples less variance is explained than in the other groups. This is probably due to the physical capabilities which account for a large fraction of the distribution of domestic work and/or the fact that housework habits are formed in previous life stages and persist in later life stages.

- **Contextual factors**

Table 4: Multilevel models of the macro determinants for the distribution of housework for different life course stages, controlling for the individual determinants, respondents in a heterosexual couple aged 16 – 94 years

	Life course stage					
	1	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*
Intercept	68.66***	73.63***	73.45***	63.66***	55.10***	72.66***
Gender culture	-8.46**	-7.17***	-4.75	-6.16**	-7.45**	-2.88
Variance						
Intercept	14.93***	9.49***	16.10***	13.04***	16.50***	31.58***
Residual level 1	294.49***	250.56***	273.09***	306.73***	307.68***	410.91***
ICC	4.82%	3.65%	5.57%	4.08%	5.09%	7.14%
R^2 Level 2	49.83%	61.61%	51.03%	54.77%	49.76%	8.83%
AIC	18962.40	35118.20	26996.30	20130.00	27139.20	55828.40
N	2220	4193	3189	2346	3162	6295
Intercept	68.80***	73.63***	74.02***	63.57***	52.97***	71.24***
Full time childcare	-0.91	-1.23	-0.32	-0.85	-0.63	1.01
Variance						
Intercept	22.43***	12.40***	18.21***	15.70***	21.92***	30.19***
Residual level 1	291.63***	246.12***	269.76***	301.83***	306.18***	408.86***
ICC	7.14%	4.79%	6.32%	4.94%	6.68%	6.80%
R^2 Level 2	28.49%	51.24%	45.29%	47.11%	35.05%	13.82%
AIC	17550.70	332521.60	25702.60	19027.30	25724.50	53848.10
N	2056	4010	3040	2221	2998	6075
Intercept	68.69***	73.71***	74.08***	65.13***	52.74***	72.29***
Parental leave men	0.99	0.23	1.18	0.05	1.02	2.41**
Variance						
Intercept	23.38***	15.11***	17.06***	17.66***	21.624***	27.59***
Residual level 1	291.50***	250.88***	270.02***	299.22***	302.43***	406.99***
ICC	7.42%	5.68%	5.94%	5.57%	6.67%	6.35%
R^2 Level 2	25.77%	41.44%	48.44%	41.46%	35.91%	19.94%
AIC	17610.40	33543.00	25619.70	18873.60	25816.20	53181.10
N	2063	4003	3030	2205	3013	6003
Intercept	68.35***	73.15***	73.98***	63.76***	53.20***	72.08***
Neutrality tax system	-0.37	-0.69	0.15	0.61	0.28	1.79
Variance						
Intercept	14.33***	11.92***	18.00***	16.47***	20.02***	26.98***
Residual level 1	294.65***	254.42***	267.22***	298.61***	306.18***	401.56***
ICC	7.30%	4.63%	6.31%	5.23%	6.14%	6.30%
R^2 Level 2	28.46%	52.96%	45.90%	44.94%	40.20%	21.65%
AIC	17151.10	32923.70	25183.10	18379.30	25292.90	52205.80
N	2014	3940	2982	2148	2948	5902

Note: *The coefficients for the micro variables are not shown.*
The macro-data for some countries are missing, so these countries are not included in the analysis. Full time childcare: Russia, Parental leave men: Czech Republic, Neutrality tax system: Switzerland and Russia.
Life course stages: ***1*** *= woman <45y, no inhabiting child;* ***2*** *= woman <60y, inhabiting child <6y;* ***3*** *= woman <60y, inhabiting child 6 – 15y;* ***4*** *= woman <60y, inhabiting child 16 – 24y;* ***5*** *= woman 45 – 59y, no inhabiting child;* ***6*** *= woman >59y;* ***ICC*** *= Intra class correlation coefficient*
Significance levels*: * p<.1, ** p <.05, *** p <.01*
Sources: ESS Round 5 (2010)**,** EVS2008, Multilinks database 2009, Eurostat 2008, OECD family database 2010

In **table 4** the four macro-level variables are included in turn. The effects of the individual variables are not shown, since they hardly change when adding the macro-level variables.

For almost all couples (except among life stages 3 and 6) the progressivity of the overall gender culture has a significant positive effect on gender equality in the division of housework. For young couples without children, for each standard deviation that the progressivity of national gender culture increases, the share of the housework that the woman is responsible for decreases by 8.46%. The variance components show that the gender culture explains 18.35% of the variance at country level. In the other life stages gender culture still explains about 10% of the variance at the country level. This is quite small, since the variance at the country level was not higher than 10% in the null model (**Table 2**).

The three policy variables show no significant effects and only explain a small proportion of the variance. Only for older couples (stage 6) the availability of parental leave for men has a significant negative effect on gender equality.

- **Cross-level interactions**

Tabel 5: Multi level models of the most important individual determinants, macro determinants and cross level interactions for the distribution of housework in different life course stages, controlling for other individual determinants, respondents in a heterosexual couple aged 16 – 94 years

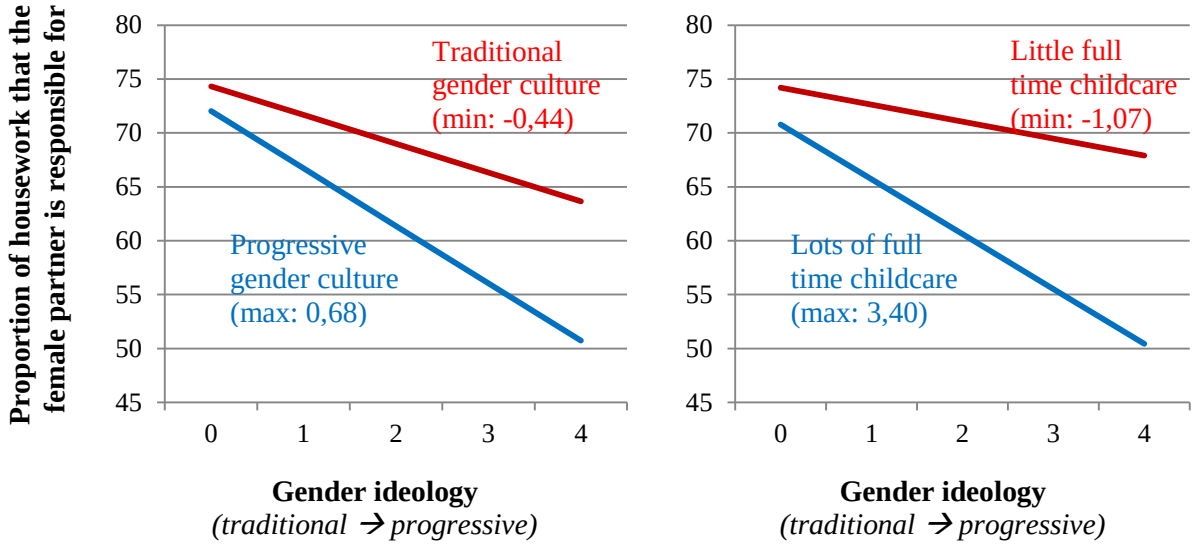
	Life course stage					
	1	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*
Intercept	68.718***	73.474***	73.584***	64.313***	55.455***	72.640***
Time Availability	-0.204***	-0.203***	-0.199***	-0.219***	-0.211***	-0.187***
* *GC*	0.076	0.004	-0.60	-0.086	0.006	-0.312***
Relative resources	-0.701**	-1.932***	-1.850***	-1.175***	-1.591***	-1.304***
* *GC*	0.427	0.544	-0.312	0.320	-2.299**	-0.184
Gender Ideology	-2.739***	-3.657***	-2.171***	-0.690	-2.001***	-1.850**
* *GC*	0.914	-2.459**	-1.592	-2.459	0.259	1.335
GC	-13.933**	-2.140	1.923	2.085	-2.892	-3.224
AIC	18959.00+	35112.70+	26992.10+	20124.20-	27132.20+	55805.10+
Intercept	68.867***	73.374***	74.233***	64.472***	53.143***	71.128***
Time Availability	-0.208***	-0.206***	-0.197***	-0.215***	-0.213***	-0.188***
* *FTCC*	0.042*	-0.020	-0.010	-0.020	-0.006	-0.075***
Relative resources	-0.713**	-1.706***	-1.684***	-1.210***	-1.505***	-1.222***
* *FTCC*	-0.015	0.976***	0.226	-0.106	0.044	0.153
Gender Ideology	-2.916***	-2.416***	-2.442***	-0.772	-2.115***	-1.834***
* *FTCC*	0.146	-0.786**	-0.739**	-0.797*	-0.365	0.176
FTCC	-2.376	-0.761	1.484	1.909	-0.423	0.650
AIC	17552.40-	33508.40+	25704.60-	19028.00-	25730.50-	53841.00+
Intercept	68.585***	73.744***	74.233***	65.574***	52.384***	72.695***
Time Availability	-0.201***	-0.202***	-0.197***	-0.211***	-0.212***	-0.196***
* *APLM*	0.021	-0.011	-0.010	-0.025	-0.043	-0.051**
Relative resources	-0.796**	-1.757***	-1.684***	-1.116***	-1.518***	-1.242***
* *APLM*	0.012	0.081	0.226	1.073***	-0.235	0.036
Gender Ideology	-2.934***	-2.432***	-2.442***	-1.085*	-2.062***	-1.845***
* *APLM*	-0.348	-0.404	-0.739**	-0.972**	-0.518	-0.453
APLM	1.367	1.361	1.484	0.981	4.037**	3.745**
AIC	17615.00-	33548.60-	25623.50-	18866.20+	25810.60+	53178.10+
Intercept	68.567***	73.129***	74.038***	63.754***	53.532***	72.378***
Time Availability	-0.216***	-0.204***	-0.196***	-0.205***	-0.213***	-0.209***
* *NTS*	0.043**	-0.013	0.014	-0.004	0.006	-0.056***
Relative resources	-0.564*	-1.942***	-1.805***	-1.334***	-1.611***	-1.404***
* *NTS*	-0.462	0.022	-0.036	0.351	-0.288	0.077
Gender Ideology	-2.985***	-2.402***	-2.315***	-0.962*	-2.229***	-1.914***
* *NTS*	0.070	-0.652**	-0.525	0.094	-0.853**	-0.454
NTS	-0.592	1.116	1.111	-0.264	2.801*	2.812*
AIC	17152.60-	32925.50-	25187.90-	18383.90-	25292.30+	52203.70+

Note : *The coefficients for the micro variables are not shown.*
The macro-data for some countries are missing, so these countries aren't included in the analysis. Full time childcare: Russia, Parental leave men: Czech Republic, Neutrality tax system: Switzerland and Russia.
Life course stages: 1 *= woman <45y, no inhabiting child;* ***2*** *= woman <60y, inhabiting child <6y;* ***3*** *= woman <60y, inhabiting child 6 – 15y;* ***4*** *= woman <60y, inhabiting child 16 – 24y;* ***5*** *= woman 45 – 59y, no inhabiting child;* ***6*** *= woman >59y;*
Contextual variables: GC *= gender culture;* ***FTCC*** *= % 0-2 year olds in childcare (>30h/week);* ***APLM*** *= quotes parental leave for men;* ***NTS*** *= neutrality tax system.*
AIC*: + AIC is smaller than in former model (improvement) - AIC is bigger than in the former model (detoriation)*
Significance levels*: * p<.1, ** p <.05, *** p <.01*
Sources: ESS Round 5 (2010)**,** EVS2008, Multilinks database 2009, Eurostat 2008, OECD family database 2010

Table 5 examines the interaction effects between the three main micro-level variables and the four macro-level variables. Especially for couples with young children it shows some interesting results.

For *young couples without children* (life stage 1) there are no significant interaction effects between gender culture and the micro-level variables. But it is notable that the main effect of gender culture has increased. In families where the woman does not work, does not contribute to the household income and traditional gender values are present, the gender culture at country level has a stronger effect (b=-13.933). The other interaction terms do not contribute to the model fit.

Figure 1: The effect of gender ideology on the division of housework, conditional on gender culture and the usage of full time childcare for young couples (<60y.) with young children (<6y.)



***Note**: The values for the division of housework are calculated based on the highest and lowest value for the macro variables. The effects of the other micro-variables are held constant on the value of zero.*

Sources: ESS Round 5 (2010)**,** EVS2008, Eurostat 2008

For *couples with young children* (life stage 2) gender culture and full-time childcare do have an effect in their interaction with gender ideology. **Figure 1** gives a visual representation of this effect. A more progressive national gender culture and a higher full-time use of childcare are significantly related to a greater negative effect of gender ideology on the proportion of housework that the woman performs. For couples with a strong traditional gender ideology (0) the national gender context hardly plays a role in the division of housework, while it does for couples with progressive gender values (4).

Table 3 showed that gender values at the individual level play a less important role for couples with children, but now it appears that the effects of progressive gender values are larger in countries with a gender egalitarian culture and policy context. The national gender context therefore seems of great importance in avoiding traditional gender roles to come into place after the transition to parenthood. In an environment that confirms gender egalitarian ideas it is easier to convert these ideas effectively into behaviour.

For *couples with children between 6 and 15 years* (life stage 3) and *couples with children between 16 and 24 years* (life stage 4) we see that the most models with the interaction effects do not improve the model fit.

For *couples between 45 and 59 years old without children* (life stage 5) gender culture has a significant effect in its interaction with relative resources, the negative effect is enlarged. We also see that the availability of parental leave for fathers and the neutrality of the tax system have a slightly positive effect on gender inequality for couples where the woman does not work and contributes no income and the respondent has a traditional gender ideology.

For *older couples* (life stage 6) the macro-level variables have a strong effect in their interaction with time availability. In countries with a progressive gender culture, a high fulltime use of childcare, where parental leave is available for fathers and tax systems are rather neutral, time availability has a significantly greater negative impact. A deeper look into the distribution of the respondents shows that about 85% of women over 60 in the sample does not work whereas couples who do work are rather exceptional. It is not useful to draw conclusions around this cases. The gendered division of domestic work is probably more difficult to grasp in these households as they have less contact with childcare and parental leave and their habits on the division of housework are formed much earlier in the life course.

5. Discussion and conclusion

The aim of this study was to examine how individual and contextual characteristics affect the gendered division of domestic work through different stages over the life course. This approach is innovative as it looks into the influence of contextual variables on private gender equality from a life course perspective. The results showed that on average women are responsible for the bulk of the housework in all countries and in all life stages. However, the gender disparity is lowest among young couples without children and greatest among couples with children, confirming results of longitudinal studies (Baxter et al., 2008; Lundberg & Rose, 1999; Nomaguchi & Milkie, 2003; Sanchez & Thomson, 1997).

At all phases of the life course, gender equality is higher as working hours of women rise, as the proportion of household income for which a woman is responsible is larger and as the progressivity of the gender values is stronger. Across the phases of the life course the impact of time availability seems to be rather similar. The relative proportion of time spent on unpaid work is most strongly related to the proportion of time spent on paid work compared to the other variables[1]. The effect of relative resources on gender inequality is smallest among young couples without children and largest among couples with young children.

The effect of gender ideology is again strongest among young couples without children and smaller among couples with children living at home. Ideas about gender roles have a relatively large impact on the division of housework in the childless life stages. Gender egalitarian ideas are thus more easily translated into reality when couples are in life stages without children. It seems to be that when couples get children the effect of gender values is partly outweighed by the culturally dominant ideas related to parenting. This interpretation supports the argument of Martinengo et al. (2010) that cultural ideas about parenting are stronger than cultural ideas about gender equality.

In general national gender culture plays a significant role in the distribution of domestic work (except for households with children between 6 and 15 years and older couples). A more progressive national

[1] But this relationship is not exogenous as the relationship between time spent on housework and time spent on paid work is simultaneous. They are sort of each other's complements, what relativizes the observation.

gender culture is significantly related to a larger private gender equality. The decision on the division of housework in the family is thus embedded in a cultural context and gender culture has an influence on the behaviour of individuals, regardless of personal beliefs.

For couples with young children and progressive gender values, the gender culture also matters in a different way. They are a lot better in converting egalitarian values into reality in a country with a progressive gender culture and where childcare is frequently used full-time. For couples with a progressive gender ideology in this key moment of the life course the national gender context is of great importance. Although gender values play a relatively minor role in couples with young children, the effects of progressive gender values on the individual level are greater in countries where the childcare policy and cultural context support gender equality. A progressive gender context in terms of culture and formal childcare seems to be crucial for these couples to convert progressive ideas and values into reality. Possibly, this effect is even underestimated as people adjust their ideas to their behaviour to resolve cognitive dissonance (Buhlmann et al., 2010).

A similar conclusion was made by Buhlmann et al. (2010) about value-practice configurations in gender equality in paid work. Context has an effect on the extent to which gender values can be translated into reality in paid and unpaid work. Couples seem to divide work quite equal in the beginning of their relationship but the extent to which they can keep up this equal division after childbirth depends on support of the context. Young families therefore benefit from a progressive value context and policies encouraging spouses to divide work more equal and averting the domination of emerging parenting practices and ideas over gender ideology.

While the effect of gender culture was clear and reasonably strong, the effects of the policy variables and their interactions were not. The uncertainty about the effects of policy can be the result of different elements. Policy on gender equality often has to be present some time before it can affect the ideals and actual behaviour of individuals (Bernhardt et al., 2008) and there may be discrepancies between cultural ideas and policy measure that lead to unwanted or unexpected effects (Pfau-Effinger, 2005). Furthermore, the policy context is often complex and it is difficult to isolate the effect of a policy

measure since in many countries the policy package is not homogeneous and inconsistent in certain areas (Anxo et al., 2010).

This study was conducted using data from ESS Round 5 (2010) for 24 European countries. The data are therefore relatively recent and another advantage is that for certain sections of the questionnaire characteristics of both the respondent and his or her partner were available. However, there are limitations associated with the use of survey data. First, the sample is limited (an average 1002 people per country), especially since the sample was further divided into 6 life stage categories. Furthermore, the survey was designed to determine only the total time spent on a whole set of household chores per week. It was therefore not possible to make a distinction between typically male and typically female tasks. However, this also has advantages since the overestimation of the time spent by duplication of tasks was reduced and the unequal distribution of domestic work is not overrated (what do occurs when one ignores typically male jobs). A third potential problem is that the data are cross-sectional. The different life stages therefore also relate to different generations, it is not possible to distinguish between age, period and cohort effects. To determine how the division of labour varies throughout the life span longitudinal data with a longitudinal measurement of the division of labour are required.

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7. Supplementary material

Table 6: The mean values of the dependent variable and the most important independent variables at the individual level by country, respondents in a heterosexual couple aged 16 – 94 years

	N	*Dependent var.*	*Independent var.*			
		% housework per week women	*Work hours per week woman*	*Work hours per week man*	*Income woman /man (0-6)*	*Gender ideology (0-4)*
Sweden	889	62.34	24.66	29.57	2.48	2.96
Finland	1093	62.95	21.48	26.38	2.43	2.78
Lithuania	655	63.22	17.94	21.26	2.65	1.57
Slovakia	978	63.73	17.52	22.37	2.38	1.92
Estonia	912	64.17	21.01	29.62	2.43	2.11
Denmark	983	65.08	22.58	28.65	2.53	3.07
Norway	982	66.08	23.42	30.20	2.40	2.86
Russia	889	67.89	20.66	31.46	2.16	1.41
Poland	892	68.40	20.77	32.50	2.15	1.97
United Kingdom	1190	69.45	17.13	28.19	2.12	2.34
Slovenia	751	70.06	21.25	25.28	2.62	2.29
Netherlands	1076	70.25	16.31	29.19	1.89	2.70
France	931	70.68	20.08	25.71	2.25	2.33
Switzerland	1066	71.14	23.28	31.95	2.13	1.92
Ireland	1113	71.25	13.29	25.81	1.94	2.59
Germany	1722	71.77	16.98	28.67	2.03	2.32
Hungary	863	71.85	19.54	25.55	2.40	1.54
Belgium	1023	71.91	18.92	27.03	2.04	2.78
Bulgaria	1143	72.63	17.95	20.62	2.38	1.94
Czech Republic	875	74.09	17.43	33.75	1.86	2.03
Spain	1065	74.94	16.45	28.27	1.64	2.29
Cyprus	584	79.41	17.02	25.17	1.97	1.42
Portugal	923	80.45	13.67	18.84	2.02	2.01
Greece	1447	83.37	12.31	25.13	1.55	1.54
Totaal	*24045*	*70.56*	*18.60*	*27.29*	*2.16*	*2.21*

Source: ESS Round 5 (2010)

Table 7: The values and standardized values of the macro-level variables by country

	Gender culture	***Full time childcare***		***Parental leave men***		***Neutrality tax system***	
	stand.		*stand.*		*stand.*		*stand.*
Belgium	0.27	19.00	0.18	3.00	0.29	9.20	-0.24
Bulgaria	-0.06	7.00	-0.61	0.00	-0.61	0.00	-0.83
Czech Republic	-0.11	5.00	-0.74			8.40	-0.29
Cyprus	-0.31	14.00	-0.15	3.30	0.38		
Switzerland	-0.25	0.00	-1.07	0.00	-0.61	0.00	-0.83
Germany	-0.16	13.00	-0.22	2.00	-.01	-16.20	-1.89
Denmark	0.48	69.00	3.40	0.00	-0.61	14.30	0.10
Estonia	-0.17	19.00	0.18	0.00	-0.61	0.00	-0.83
Spain	0.04	18.00	0.11	0.00	-0.61	16.50	0.24
Finland	0.57	20.00	0.24	0.50	-0.46	27.00	0.92
France	0.36	26.00	0.64	0.00	-0.61	-2.90	-1.02
United Kingdom	-0.07	4.00	-0.81	0.00	-0.61	21.90	0.59
Greece	-0.40	5.00	-0.74	6.50	1.34	30.50	1.15
Hungary	0.01	8.00	-0.55	0.00	-0.61	31.10	1.19
Ireland	0.09	8.00	-0.55	3.20	0.35	39.70	1.75
Lithuania	-0.22	11.00	-0.35	0.00	-0.61	1.40	-0.74
Netherlands	-0.17	6.00	-0.68	6.00	1.19	22.90	0.65
Norway	0.68	37.00	1.36	14.50	3.75	21.20	0.54
Poland	-0.22	2.00	-0.94	0.00	-0.61	1.50	-0.74
Portugal	-0.37	32.00	1.03	3.00	0.29	12.30	-0.04
Russia	0.02			0.00	-0.61		
Sweden	0.43	33.00	1.10	2.00	-0.01	40.30	1.79
Slovenia	0.05	33.00	1.10	0.00	-0.61	9.30	-0.23
Slovakia	-0.00	3.00	-0.88	0.00	-0.61	-0.70	-0.88
Total	0.02	16.32	0.00	2.04	0.00	12.85	0.00

Sources: ESS Round 5 (2010)**,** EVS2008, Multilinks database 2009, Eurostat 2008, OECD family database 2010

Table 8: Standardized values for the effects of the individual variables on the distribution of housework (table 2) for different life course stages for cohabiting couples of the opposite sex (16 – 94 years old)

	Life course stage					
	1	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*
Distribution of housework	(19.50)	(18.64)	(19.11)	(19.58)	(20.19)	(21.66)
Time availability	-0.20	-0.21	-0.20	-0.22	-0.21	-0.11
	(19.22)	(19.28)	(19.03)	(19.74)	(19.74)	(11.93)
Relative resources	-0.05	-0.15	-0.13	-0.09	-0.11	-0.08
	(1.39)	(1.40)	(1.41)	(1.42)	(1.39)	(1.27)
Gender ideology	-0.13	-0.09	-0.10	-0.03	-0.11	-0.07
	(1.01)	(1.02)	(1.05)	(1.03)	(1.02)	(1.01)
Work hours man	0.20	0.22	0.22	0.19	0.27	0.10
	(18.11)	(17.57)	(18.26)	(20.42)	(22.48)	(15.51)
Educational level man	-0.01	-0.04	-0.05	-0.04	-0.04	-0.01
	(3.26)	(2.40)	(2.52)	(3.03)	(2.72)	(3.55)
Educational level woman	-0.10	-0.07	-0.07	-0.06	-0.05	0.00
	(2.40)	(2.60)	(2.79)	(2.17)	(2.81)	(3.38)
Married	0.04	-0.01	0.01	0.03	0.03	0.05
	(0.49)	(0.43)	(0.35)	(0.27)	(0.34)	(0.22)
Household members	0.03	0.09	0.02	0.02	0.03	0.03
	(0.71)	(1.08)	(0.90)	(0.80)	(0.29)	(0.73)
Age woman	0.02	-0.02	0.02	0.05	0.05	-0.02
	(6.93)	(6.71)	(5.97)	(5.44)	(3.99)	(6.49)
Sex respondent	0.12	0.13	0.11	0.09	0.08	0.07
(man=0 women=1)	(0.50)	(0.50)	(0.50)	(0.50)	(0.50)	(0.50)
Sex resp. * GI	0.02	0.04	0.02	0.00	-0.01	0.01
	(0.50)	(0.51)	(0.52)	(0.51)	(0.51)	(0.51)

Note : *The standard errors are presented between the parentheses.*

Life course stages: 1 *= woman <45y, no inhabiting child;* ***2*** *= woman <60y, inhabiting child <6y;* ***3*** *= woman <60y, inhabiting child 6 – 15y;* ***4*** *= woman <60y, inhabiting child 16 – 24y;* ***5*** *= woman 45 – 59y, no inhabiting child;* ***6*** *= woman >59y;* ***ICC*** *= Intra class correlation coefficient*

Significance levels*: * p<.1, ** p <.05, *** p <.01*

Source: ESS Round 5