

## 9 DIVISION OF LABOUR IN THE HOUSEHOLD\*

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Describing the labour market situation of women can only be made complete if tasks outside paid work are also taken into account. Furthermore, reconciling work and private life and sharing household tasks within the family are not only important for the labour market opportunities of women but also for the decision of the family to have children, the wellbeing of family members and the development of children. Empirical research shows that in the dual-earner model, families have more children when the mother is able to reconcile the requirements of paid work, children and the household, and where the mother has better chances to find employment (see for example *Prifti–Vuri*, 2013, *Rønsen*, 2004, *Rindfuss–Brauner-Otto*, 2008). In addition to flexible worktime, sharing the housework by partners may also contribute to that consequence. In his comprehensive literature review, *Blaskó* (2010) found that for the balanced and healthy development of children, the key is not how old the child should be when the mother returns to work (preferably after the age of one) but that the return should match the expectations of the mother and that a balance between work and private life should be achieved. The amount of time spent with the father also plays an enormous role in the development of the child: for example it supports considerably the development of social skills (*Huerta et al.* 2013). Highly qualified fathers were found to recently be spending more time with their children in several countries (*Chalasaní*, 2007).

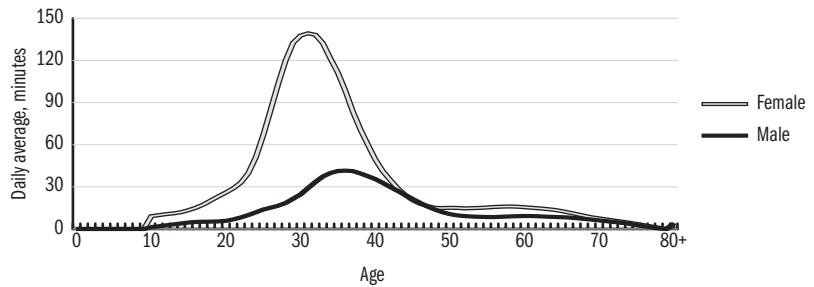
Sharing the housework within the family is strongly associated with the paid work of the wage earners of the family: they are probably interrelated (see for example *Becker*, 1965). Thus the division of work between women and men at home is highly dependent on the relative labour market position of spouses or partners. The share of the housework men undertake increases with the strength of the relative position of their wife or partner (*Rizavi–Sofer*, 2009), which is consistent with the predictions of theoretical works (*Chiappori*, 1997). Nevertheless, surveys show that the division of work is considerably influenced by traditional attitudes to roles, since the share of women in housework does not decrease further over time, even if they earn as much as, or more than, their partner (*Sevilla-Sanz et al.* 2010, *West–Zimmerman*, 1987).

*Figures 9.1–9.4*, based on the 2010 Time Use Survey of the CSO, indicate how much time women and men of a certain age spend doing various activities every week on average (for more details see *Gál et al.* 2017). The majority of childcare is carried out by women: there is a striking difference between the genders at childbearing age (between 20 and 40), which reaches a balance by the age of 45 and later on stays almost the same. It may largely contribute

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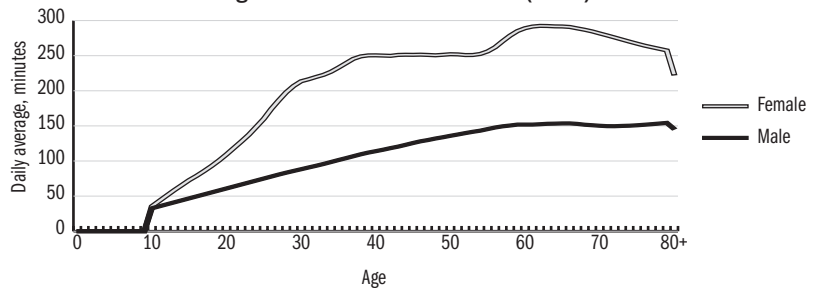
to the relatively great difference that a significant proportion of women do not return to employment until their children are three years old (*Figure 9.1*).

**Figure 9.1: Time spent with childcare broken down by age (2010)**



*Figure 9.2* shows the overall differences in housework. From the age of 10, Hungarian girls carry out increasingly more housework than boys: twice as much (about two hours a day on average) at the age of 20 as boys of the same age (one hour a day on average). The rate remains the same during the years of employment and later, in retirement. This suggests that in Hungary it is not so much the relative labour market position but rather the traditional gender roles that determine the division of housework between the genders.

**Figure 9.2: General housework (2010)**



Hungarians undertake relatively little unpaid work outside the household, a considerable proportion of which is time spent visiting children by divorced parents, mainly men (*Figure 9.3*).

**Figure 9.3: Unpaid work carried out outside the household (2010)**

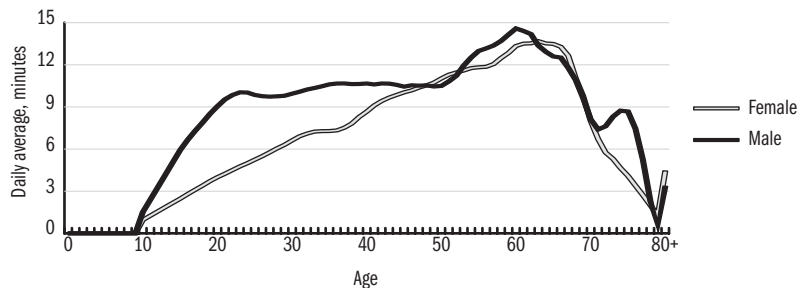


Figure 9.4 presents the time spent doing paid work during the individual life course. The greatest difference in paid work between men and women is seen around the childbearing age, typically around the age of 30, as mothers generally stay at home with children, while fathers increase their labour supply.

Figure 9.4: Time spent doing paid work during the individual life course (2010)

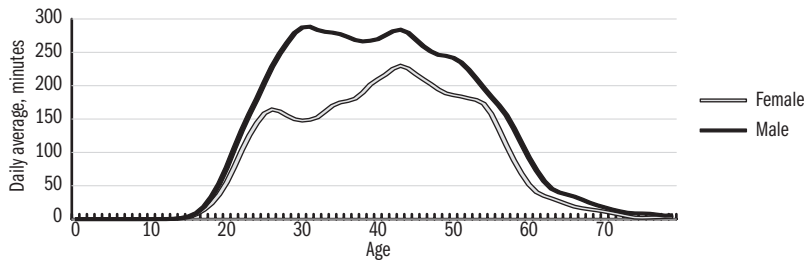
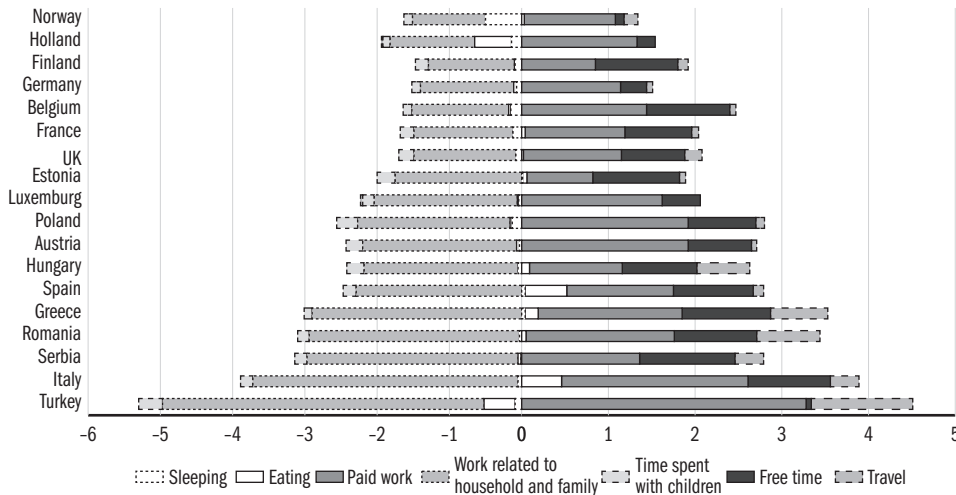


Figure 9.5 relies on data from the 2010 Time Use Survey of Eurostat.<sup>1</sup> It presents the differences in the time spent on the major groups of activities between men and women. Values to the left of zero indicate the extra time spent by women, values to the right of zero indicate the extra time spent by men. In most European countries, men work 1–3 hours more paid work per day, while the extra time of women spent on housework and childcare is similar. In the Southern and Eastern European countries, including Hungary, there is a relatively large difference: women do a total of 1–2 hours a day more paid and unpaid work on average, while in the Northern and Western countries this difference is negligible.

<sup>1</sup> Eurostat 2010. Including: Population and Social Conditions/Living conditions and Welfare/Time Use Survey (TUS).

Figure 9.5: Differences in the average time spent by men and women on certain activities per day in the European countries (2010)



Note: Negative values indicate the extra time spent by women, while positive values indicate the extra time spent by men. In the interest of clarity, categories of activities requiring little time were not included in the Figure, therefore the activities do not add up to 24 hours and the overall male-female difference does not equal zero.

Source: Eurostat, Time Use Survey, 2010.

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