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# Work and care orientations: sketching sociological portraits

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# Frame of WORKCARE project

Workpackage 4

## MAPPING ORIENTATIONS TO WORK AND CARE IN EUROPE

Cross country perspective

Gender perspective

### European Social Survey

- Round 1 (2002)
- Round 2 (2004)
- Round 3 (2006)

Look at interviews held in Portugal

Connect with quantitative data analyzed

# Why sketch sociological portraits about work and care orientations?

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Sociological inquiry capturing and understanding individuals in their trajectories in different contexts or fields of forces (work, family and gender).

Individual scale sociology analysing the social reality taking an individualized form, as it's incorporated.

We are interested in variations and differences among individuals from the same social environment.

And in differences of the same individual on different dimensions of the social life.

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<b>Portraits</b>		
1. Self-made couple.	2. Conflicting couple.	3. Precarious couple.

# Self-made couple

Lucas and Eva Lopes

## The self-made scenario

educational  
career:  
secondary

Learning english  
(improve  
business)

Small  
businessman  
(construction  
sector)

Lucas (m) 34

Eva (f) 32

Raul (m) 11

Rute ( f ) 5

Success / Work-  
oriented

Family as  
organic system +  
housekeeper

Free time and  
intimate life  
neglecting

Projects: end of  
Eva's personal  
project stand by

educational  
career: BA (after  
children)

Works for her  
husband  
company (Part-  
time).

Trying to find a  
full-time job  
according to her  
qualifications.

## Success / Work-oriented

Upwards social mobility based on two dimensions: investment on qualifications (Eva decided to go to collage and Lucas is learning English to improve business); and investment in their own small business (small construction company).

Work is a important dimension of their lives: it means economic resources, produces social mobility, and it is fundamental for their life projects and identity.

“If I didn’t work I wasn’t me. I couldn’t be at home taking care of the children (...) I really value work and want to work always. I wouldn’t be better mother or wife if I didn’t work. I would be a horrible woman. Me and my husband we are both very committed with our jobs. I believe that one mother who is with the children 24 hours a day is not a better mother than me. On the contrary, I think women should work. There’s always one way to get things balanced (...) I think there’s an invisible hand that makes the balance.”

Eva Lopes, 32

## Family as organic system + housekeeper

The family is perceived as an organic system. All members must support t each other.

Household tasks are now delegated to a contracted housekeeper. In a former period of the family life Eva was the only responsible for caring responsibilities

“Family is a system (...) we are one.”

Eva Lopes, 32

“When Rute [second child] was born my husband established his own business (...) I carried out his accountability but maintained the store (...) But family life began to get unstable, because my husband had a very hard work schedule and I was in the same situation: I had the store, two employees and two children... it was an extremely hard period (...)“

Eva Lopes, 32

“There’s a lady who makes us the household tasks, but everyday there’s something to do. And the both of us do it. “

Eva Lopes, 32

## Free time and intimate life neglecting

They don't have a leisure culture, they don't socialize very often with their friends. Intimate life of the couple is also neglected. Both agree they don't spend time alone with each other.

Eva is conscious that she has neglected her image: she didn't care for her image investing on her body presentation. The body isn't part of her core life project.

## Projects: end of Eva's personal project stand by

Now is time for Eva to invest in her self, in her projects and aims, on her own professional career.

Family, perceived as organic system, must be concentrated in accomplishing this goal. It's Eva's time. Her life isn't in stand by anymore, she is on play mode.

"I think I got a little messy. In terms of the hair, the nails, I know. But I think that, when I finish college, I'll do all that. I'll go to the hairdresser, I'll go."

Eva Lopes, 32

"But now that I'm finishing the studies, I'm looking forward to get a full time job. Because now Rute is going to school and Raul is also getting grown. I hope my husband may give up of a working hour. (...) because now I have the right... he has his own life, he's self-fulfilled and that's good, I'm glad we have our home, we have everything, but now I'm also going to fight for my self-fulfilment. There was no money in the world that I could earn in some other job which could give such a fulfilment as being studying, no matter which course. "

Eva Lopes, 32

# Conflicting Couple

António and Maria Madureira



## The conflictive scenario

educational  
career:  
secondary

Sales – shop  
assistant

nature of the  
jobs (no  
qualifications  
needed)

Non-term  
contract

António (m) 48

Maria (f) 44

D ( ? ) 11

educational  
career: BA

City hall cultural  
programmer

Non-term  
contract

Work-oriented  
(double career)

Traditional home  
and care  
orientations  
(feminization)

Conflicting free  
time and intimate  
life

Conflicting  
projects

## Traditional home and care orientations (feminization)

Family dynamics are strongly constrained by divergent and conflicting gender values.

The double career situation results on strong female overburden:

## Work-oriented (double career)

“I won't say it's the most important thing, but it's very important (...) just after he was born, that I don't think I attached any importance to work (...) I moved on to a different kind of job and it gradually became more important, but I remember that, in his first years, work was less important”

Maria

“The main one, main one [importance], it isn't, but it's still very important. Besides the financial aspect, it also occupies you, doesn't it?”

António

“My father worked and my mother was at home, she did nothing (...) But today, with life the way it is, it's rather complicated. Times have changed.”

António

“That's more her area... Look, she usually cooks and I usually eat. She usually washes things and I usually get them dirty... indeed, it's mostly like that.(...) No, it's not fair. But when I start to do anything I only make it worst. So it's better not even to think of helping.”

António

“[fairness of household tasks division]No. Of course not. It's about the most unfair possible. (...) he brought these bad habits from home, his mother never made him do anything. But, to a certain extent, I'm to blame, too (...)”

Maria

## Conflicting free time and intimate life

**“I do. I make time. I always make time. On Sunday morning nobody stops me riding my bike. I stay at home more now, on the Internet or whatever (...) After dinner I always go to the cafe for a while and before dinner, too, an hour or so, a little while, to show up there.”**

**António**

**We [couple] have very different tastes: he doesn't like the films I like and so sometimes when I go to the cinema I end up going with a friend or alone. With regard to dance performances and such things, he doesn't like to go either and so, again, I end up going with a friend or alone (...) In common, nothing.”**

**Maria**

**Intimate life**

**“It's complicated. Complicated. Complicated. It's difficult because he [son] is always there (...) Our life is a threesome”**

**António**

**“Happy, that's a different matter. But having time and working on the relationship, that's the thing.”**

**Maria**

## Conflicting projects

João erases the future by turning it into the present. The present, the day-today life, is what matters. The future becomes void and meaningless.

**“Umm... I live more from day to day. I don't like to make a lot of plans, because they go wrong (...) I'm not very ambitious”**

**António**

On the opposite, Maria has clear projects for her future. Projects concerning her professional career.

**“Possibly to begin to do other things that have more to do with that area of training. Those are my projects for the immediate future (...) In the first place, I'd move house and change the car.”**

**Maria**

# Precarious couple

João and Diana Castro

# The precarious scenario

short educational career

receptionist at a public health care service

precarious nature of the contract

nature of the jobs (no qualifications needed)

João (m) 35

Diana (f) 36

David (m) 7

Utilitarian work-oriented

Traditional modified home and care orientations

Free time and intimate life neglecting

Projects as escaping dreams

short educational career

has two jobs: shop assistant and as a receptionist

precarious nature of the contracts

nature of the jobs (no qualifications needed)

## Traditional modified home and care orientations

The male breadwinner model persists as ideal. However, due to precarious labour market situation and Diana's work the division of household tasks tends to be egalitarian. Family and child-care responsibilities' are strongly feminized.

## Utilitarian work-oriented

"My work is precisely my work, that is, what provides me with cash. Last year, my boss accused me (...) that I didn't make work a priority. But my reply was, neither today nor ever. Work will never be a priority. The purpose of work is for me to earn money (...) Work is the means, it's not the end. I don't like working."

Diana Castro, 36.

"We just value work when we don't have it".

João Castro, 35.

"(...)I normally cook; do the shopping, load the dishwasher. Why? Because I have more time available for it. She has two jobs now, she has less time at home. I couldn't be waiting for her to arrive home to make the food and wash the dishes."

João Castro, 35.

"Generally speaking, women show more tenderness, the more affectionate side, than the man. In my view. But there are always exceptions."

João Castro, 35.

"No, not the same way (...) It's different.. It's different (...) João is never going to remember to put cream on David's bottom (...)."

Diana Castro, 36.

## Free time and intimate life neglecting

Intimate life (time spent without children) is neglected in favour of the child.

The child is perceived as the main contributor for couple happiness.

Sociability and time to cultivate friendships is reduced to minimum standards.

“For friends, not so much (...) But I'm not the kind who makes lots of friends. (...) Nowadays, we have the house, we have the child and the family also takes up a lot of our time and doesn't allow us to... when you've got small children, it's very difficult to go out at night.”

João Castro, 35.

“We [couple] haven't had a lot because our boy is very small and we always insist that he's always present. When we're going out or something like that, we always want to be with him.”

João Castro, 35.

“No, in that respect we have almost no time. If I'd like it to be different? I don't know, I can't explain. It's very complicated to sit here evaluating this in so little time”

Diana Castro, 36.

## Projects as escaping dreams

“Projects... The only thing (...) To take my holidays and my wife's at the same time, in the summer and go camping (...) Other plans, no (...) I'd like to have a more permanent, more stable work situation, because I'm in a precarious situation.”

João Castro, 35.

“I'd like to be promoted at work and I'd like to change the car and get my drivers licence (...) I'd move to Palma de Majorca. I can't answer that just like that.”

Diana Castro, 36.

# Common Trends

Looking for the social in individualized form

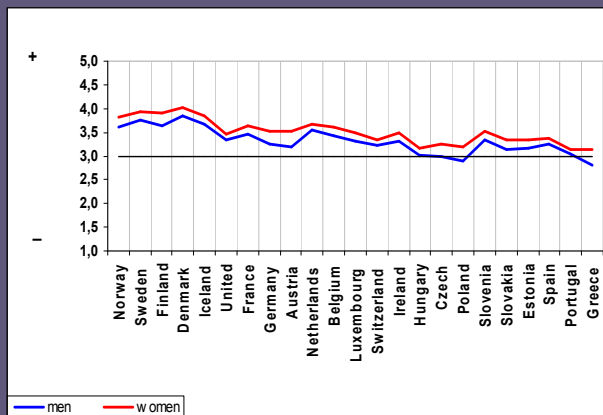
Women with longer educational careers than men.

Investing in their higher education after a stand by period (after having children).

## Daily-life paradox:

- Modern and egalitarian orientations toward professional life (double career and personal life projects work oriented).
- Traditional models of home and care responsibilities organization (feminization).

Gender Roles\* by Gender and Country



ESS (round 2) 2004

## Crossing portraits and ESS 2004

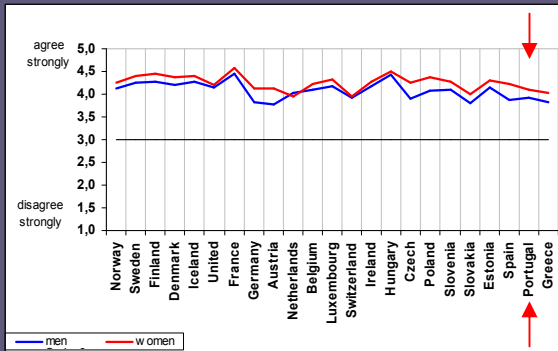
### Gender relations in the family:

Women more modern and egalitarian than men.

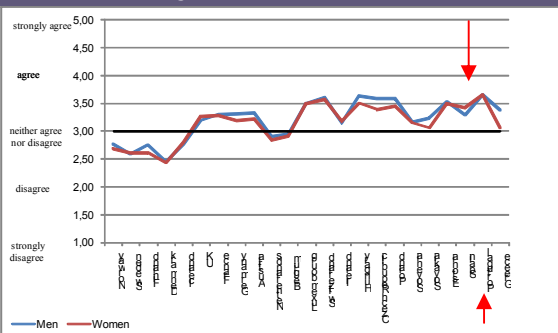
- Particular evident on conflicting couple case.
- Women overburden



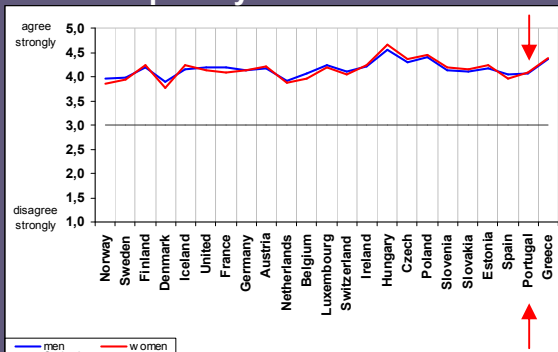
### Men should take as much responsibility as women for the home and children



### A woman should be prepared to cut down on her paid work for the sake of her family



### A person's family ought to be his or her main priority in life



ESS (round 2) 2004

A gender egalitarian stance about home and children responsibilities is still stronger at ideological level than on practical basis.

Family and child-care responsibilities' are strongly feminized.

The male breadwinner model persists as ideal, mostly on male heads.

Besides work being a important dimension of women's life is still common to find them on stand by situations.

The prioritization of family as prioritization of children and neglecting couple intimate life.

Intimate life (time spent without children) is neglected in favour of the child.

The child is perceived as the main contributor for couple happiness.

Sociability and time to cultivate friendships is reduced to minimum standards.