

## **Parenthood and time allocation in the countries of the European Union**

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This article reports on research into the division of paid and unpaid work between men and women in the EU. The research was carried out in the framework of a relevant European Network initiated and coordinated by Tilburg University where all the countries of the European Union have participated. However fieldwork research was carried out in Finland, France, Germany, Greece, the Netherlands and Portugal, while Belgium, Finland, Spain, U.K. and the Netherlands carried out “Delphi studies” only.

The theoretical framework adopted for the research was based on Bourdieu’s Theory of Practice. Analysis of the data, which focused on couples with at least one child under the age of 7, shows that in these countries traditional gender roles still largely persist. Men continue to be the main breadwinners, while they spend on average about half the time women do on childcare and even less time on household chores. Moreover, a discrepancy is observed between men’s positive attitudes towards sharing housework in theory and the non-division of housework in practice, while public policies have little or no effect on this situation.

Gender inequalities are larger in the household field than in the field of childcare. The division of tasks as a ‘rhetoric’ rather than a ‘real-time phenomenon’. ‘Doing-gender’ seems to be still an important determinant factor of the non-division of household and childcare tasks.