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Between the Egalitarian and Neotraditional Family: Gender Attitudes and Values in Contemporary Lithuania

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Abstract. *Analyzing the data of two representative surveys of the Lithuanian population conducted in 2006, 12 semi-structured interviews with heterosexual couples and 15 semi-structured interviews with men on paternity leave, the article attempts to answer to what degree women and men's attitudes to the egalitarian family differ and how both sexes conceptualize their professional and family responsibilities. How do Lithuanian women and men justify the division of housework in the family? The article employs the concepts of egalitarian or symetrical and neotraditional families. The analyzed interviews showed that most families believed to be egalitarian. However, after looking at the division of household labor and childcare it is possible to conclude that most of them can be ascribed to the neotraditional family type. In these families, a female partner/wife carries the double burden of employment and domestic duties. The two representative surveys conducted in 2006 also confirm the conclusions drawn from the interviews: women usually had a larger share of family responsibilities. The large part of the respondents of both the surveys and interviews realize the importance of egalitarian family but the dominant gender roles contradict their ideals. It can be argued that most barriers to the achievement of new familial ideals and egalitarian family are related to cultural norms and ideologies prevalent both in work organizations and the larger society.*

Keywords: *egalitarian family, neotraditional family, gender norms, housework.*

Raktažodžiai: *egalitarinė šeima, neotradicinė šeima, lyčių normos, namų ruoša.*

Introduction: Egalitarian and Neotraditional Family

In scholarly literature, the development of different forms of family has been discussed for some time. Researchers emphasized the influence of broader social changes and the transformations of intimacy on the changes in the familial life in the late modernity (Giddens 1992; Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995). Some spoke of an "alternative" or "postmodern" family that expressed the changing norms of relationship, partnership and friendship. However, even "alternative"

families with different household arrangements still remain a space of the intensive struggle for power and gender identities (Chambers 2001, 137). In the British sociologist Anthony Giddens's view, the increase in the variety of different forms of family in the contemporary world generates the crisis of patriarchal authority and patriarchal power relations (Giddens 1999).

One of the new forms of family that contributes to the crisis of patriarchal gender relations is an egalitarian family based on the equality of adult family members. The egalitarian family, an opposition to traditional patriarchal family, is sometimes called a symmetrical family. In this family type, partners attempt to find a satisfactory balance between a professional and family life and to create harmonious egalitarian relationships. Some researchers argue that, in many cases, the egalitarian family is more an ideal type than a real family practice (Thornton and Young-DeMarco 2001).

Why hasn't the egalitarian family become a widespread family type? It is obvious that with the development of gender equality policies and measures in Europe women acquired equal opportunities in the labor market. However, it is more difficult to achieve the ideas of gender equality in the family. As researches in some European countries demonstrated, the number of egalitarian families in which partners shared their family responsibilities equally has increased in recent years but still remained rather inconsiderable. Few heterosexual couples practice this family type (Deutsch 1999). According to the research conducted in the United States of America, young educated heterosexual couples are the ones who most often attempt to create egalitarian relationships and an egalitarian family (Thornton and Young-DeMarco 2001).

Besides the egalitarian family, sociologists also mention two other types of family: traditional and neotraditional. The numbers of a traditional or patriarchal family based on the model of a father-sole breadwinner and a mother involved in all unpaid labor in the family have dramatically decreased during the last four decades.

Although in the last decades gender practices and perceptions of gender roles in the labor market has changed significantly, traditional gender differences remained surprisingly durable in the family realm (Valian 1998). These differences are reflected in a neotraditional family. According to Moen and Sweet, the neotraditional family is a family in which both heterosexual partners participate in both the labor market and childcare and housework. However, the division of tasks in these spheres remains rather uneven: men are usually involved in paid work in the labor market while women do most unpaid work in the family (Moen and Yu 2000; Moen and Sweet 2003). In the neotraditional family, a woman often works a part-time. But she carries the burden of a "second shift" in the family. In such a family, the role of a man and his contribution to the family consists of his participation in the labor market while a woman is primarily responsible for the family and home despite being involved in the paid work.

What family types and gender attitudes are prevalent in contemporary Lithuania? Is it possible to speak of the rudiments of the egalitarian family in the country? What do Lithuanians themselves think of the egalitarian family? Are there any differences between men and women's attitudes towards the division of tasks in the family and the importance of a professional life?

In answering the above questions, this article will use the data of two representative surveys of the Lithuanian population conducted in 2006,[1] 12 semi-structured interviews with heterosexual couples and 15 semi-structured interviews with men on paternity leave.

Housework as an Indicator of Egalitarianism: Some Theoretical Notes

As family research in the US demonstrated, it is difficult to evaluate egalitarianism of a family (Maume 2006). In evaluating it, scholars pay attention to the ratio between paid and unpaid work as defined by respondents, to the priorities they express in talking of the professional and family life and to the concrete division of childcare and household tasks. However, even here we encounter difficulties. First of all, egalitarianism supported by men is often unconvincing since they often resolve the conflict between work and family responsibilities in favor of the former. On the other hand, it has been noticed that men's greater involvement in a family life is also deceptive: men usually take care of children and home on weekends or holidays. It is often difficult to assess women's attitude towards the relation between the professional and family life because of the employers' preconceptions about the employment of women and men: women more often than men get unstable and poorly paid jobs. Therefore, they prioritize the family (Maume 2006).

David J. Maume argues that the best way to examine egalitarianism of a family is to compare measures which prompt people to weight family and work responsibilities and chose in favor of one or the other. Among these measures, the researcher includes cases when employees decline some assignments and consequently promotion and when they limit their working hours for the sake of their family life (Maume 2006: 861).

In my opinion, however, it is also possible to access, at least provisionally, egalitarianism of family by analyzing the division of household tasks and childcare between partners. Women and men's attitudes towards housework and childcare are an appropriate barometer of family traditionalism and

[1] The first survey on the reconciliation of family and work was conducted within the framework of the project "Modern Men in the Enlarged Europe II: Family-Friendly Work Environment." The company "RAIT" carried out it in May, 2006. The second survey "Men and Women in Lithuania" was conducted by the Center for Public Opinion and Market Research "Vilmorus" on October 5-8, 2006.

egalitarianism. It should be added here that the necessary precondition for the assessment of the division of household and childcare tasks and egalitarianism of a family is the employment of both partners/ spouses.

Housework became an important object of academic study in the last decade of the 20th century. Scholars from different disciplines started to analyze the reasons for a particular division of housework between men and women and its effects on them, children and society. Housework has been broadly defined as an unpaid work carried out in taking care of family members and home (Shelton and John 1996, 300).

In the studies of housework, researchers describe such activities as cooking, cleaning and shopping for food as "female" or "traditionally female." On the other hand, the repair of household appliances and looking after a car are considered as "male" or dominated by men. Some scholars use the term of "gender-neutral" housework: it includes driving, paying the bills, etc. (Coltrane 2000, 1211).

The research on housework demonstrated that in order to understand it, it is necessary to take into account such factors as gender, a household structure and communication in the family. The unpaid work in the family not only reflects and reproduces the cultural understandings of family, love, and personal satisfaction but also structures gender, class and race relationships. According to Scott Coltrane, the recent studies on housework proved that it was inseparable from "life-course issues, marital quality, kin relations, interpersonal power, symbolic exchange, social comparison, fairness evaluation, gender ideology and display, provider role identification, and scheduling and performance of paid labor" (Coltrane 2000, 1209). These researches also showed that the division of household labor in the family "reproduce[d] gender as a social category and reinforce[d] male and female roles, identities and attitudes" (Lewin-Epstein, Stier and Braun 2006, 1149; also see Greenstein 2000).

It is important to mention that several international studies have been conducted to learn whether the division of household labor was more egalitarian in societies with higher gender equality in the public sphere. However, studies of the Scandinavian countries which have achieved the high level of legal, political and economic gender equality showed that the division of unpaid labor in the family was not necessarily related to wider contexts of gender equality (Baxter 1997).

Thus, examining the division of household labor and childcare between men and women, the article attempts to answer to what degree women and men's attitudes to the egalitarian family differ and how both sexes conceptualize their professional and family responsibilities. How do Lithuanian women and men justify the division of housework in the family?

It is important to state, at the outset, that the surveys and semi-structured interviews used in this article do not allow me to make more definite conclusions on the influence of such variables as women and men's working hours,

income, living conditions, a number of children and age on the division of housework. The relation between these variables and the division of household labor is an objective of the future research.

Lithuanian Population on Egalitarian Family

Puzzles of the Egalitarian Family: Household Labor and Childcare

A qualitative research was carried out within the framework of the 2006 project "Modern Men in the Enlarged Europe II: Family-Friendly Policies": 6 heterosexual couples (12 informants of the different age and professional groups) were interviewed. The age of the interviewed women ranged from 23 to 37 years, and men, from 23 to 35 years. The informants' professions were also very diverse; women's professions included an accountant, administrator, dentist, secondary school teacher, telephonist and designer in a printing company; men's professions were a businessman, manager, printer, goods transporter, engineer and telecommunication consultant. It should be noted that 2 of the interviewed men had several jobs, and, besides being employed, one woman was a student at a university. All couples raised at least one child, youngest of which was 11 months and oldest, 11.5 years. During the interviews, informants were asked about their work environment (work experience, job satisfaction, work organization, etc.) and family (the division of roles at home, their satisfaction with partnership, etc.). The questions about traditional and non-traditional (egalitarian) family were also raised. The informants had to ascribe their families to either type.[2] For comparative purposes in this part of the article, I also use 15 semi-structured interviews with men on paternity leave conducted in 2004-2005. The medium age of the interviewed fathers was 30 years. The youngest informant was 23 years old, the oldest, 38 years old. All informants were quite young, thus, it was impossible to make conclusions on the relation between age and gender attitudes from these interviews. More than half of the informants indicated that they had an unfinished high school education (2), high school education (4) or special high school education (3), the rest 6 had university education. All fathers were married. The spectrum of the respondents' professional occupations were very broad: from an electrical technician to a driver, an assembler of ship electricity, a technologist of environment protection, an economist, an organizer of youth events, an university lecturer, a philologist, a doctor, a woodworker, an engineer-mechanic, a machinist, a carpenter and a welder-metalworker. In the interviews, the issues of the relation between masculinity and fatherhood received most attention.

[2] The scholars of the Center for Social Research and the M. A. students of the Department of Sociology at Vytautas Magnus University conducted the interviews in May, 2006.

However, men were also asked about the men's attitude towards household labor and the division of tasks in their families.[3] Thus, in this article, I use 21 interviews with men, and 6 interviews with women.

To what type of the family did the interviewed couples ascribe their families? Half of them thought that their families were egalitarian. The rest described their families as intermediate between the traditional and egalitarian models. As was indicated at the beginning of the article, this type of family can be called "neotraditional." In this family, a woman carried the biggest load of housework and childcare. Thirty-year-old accountant labeling her family as the latter type argued that her husband helped her at home but his help was not sufficient: "I cannot say that my husband doesn't help me at all; both of us try to solve the problems that arise. But, as I mentioned, my husband is very busy and I have to take all responsibilities more often." Her husband noted that his family helped his professional advancement because his wife took care of their children and home. His involvement in the family was minimal. According to this 30-year-old businessman, his family is an intermediate version: "[It's] in the middle. A little bit of conservativism since my wife does most housework. I help her only on weekends." This man also argued that a woman could succeed in professional life if it did not contradict her familial responsibilities. For him, paid work was more important than family. It should also be noted that although the family was the priority of this businessman's wife she wanted to spend more time at work and not at home: ". . . and because of my career and other reasons, home life gets to you. I want to do something instead of sitting at home." According to her, women and men's familial roles "have been changing but too slowly."

A 29-year-old telecommunication consultant told that he was used to helping his wife in her household chores although she did the biggest share of them including cooking, cleaning, laundry etc. She also looked after their baby. His wife, a 28-year-old teacher, thought that their family "wasn't completely egalitarian. But I wouldn't say that it is conservative. It is an intermediary version."

Differently from the neotraditional family, members of the egalitarian families shared their duties and responsibilities equally. According to the interviewed men and women, both parents looked after their children, for instance, took them to kindergarten or school. The 20-year-old designer's family attempted to enact the model of egalitarian family. The husband worked in shifts and was able to spend more time with their child than the wife. Asked whether her husband was conservative or "contemporary" in his gender views, the wife thought that he was a contemporary man. According to her, radical changes have been taking place in the Lithuanian society since men have become more involved in a family life. Her husband learned some childcare tasks earlier than she did: "I could say one thing: my husband, for instance,

[3] The researchers of the Center for Social Research at Vytautas Magnus University conducted these interviews during the period of December, 2004 – March, 2005.

learned to change diapers first. It took me a week more than for him until I learned to do it properly."

However, if we looked at the division of housework between the women and men of the interviewed couples, we could see that women were the main caretakers and household laborers in the families. This applies to both egalitarian and neotraditional families. In the words of the 28-year-old teacher who ascribed her family to egalitarian, "before the birth of our child, we tried to do household chores together but, for the most part, housework is my responsibility. But my husband helps me." According to her, in attempting to divide their household responsibilities, they have increasingly become an egalitarian family:

> Well, we try hard. Hence, practically we become a more egalitarian family. At least we try to become such a family. We try to build our relationships together because if one is involved and the other isn't, nothing will happen. We must save each other's energy for work and study. At least for now . . . .

The 29-year-old doctor, who described her family as egalitarian, not only worked but also organized household labor. Only the 23-year-old administrator and student (neotraditional family) stated that she did most of the housework before the birth of their child. Currently, it was her husband who carried out the biggest load of the housework. She characterized her family as being in-between traditional and egalitarian. The 24-year-old printer (egalitarian family) noted that he was the main household keeper because his work schedule was more flexible and he spent more time at home than his wife.

Most interviewed men understood that it was important to share household labor but because of their professional requirements and busy schedules they were unable to do it. According to the 30-year-old businessman, "I would like to spend more time [with my family] but current circumstances prevent me from doing it. I have to sacrifice my family to a certain degree." Another informant, the 24-year-old manager of a private company, said that his busy schedule did not allow him to be a good father. He thought that he put not enough effort into his family life: "Perhaps I do not try as much as I should. But I will improve."

How do men and women justify the division of labor in the family? Why do women take the unequal division of responsibilities for granted? It can be argued that in Lithuania the dominant gender ideology still defines household labor and childcare as one of the most important sources of "human capital for women" (Raley, Mattingly and Bianchi 2006, 13-15). All interviewed women prioritized family and not paid work. They felt that they had to be involved in housework as much as they could. Some adjusted their professional life to their family requirements. In the 37-year-old telephonist's words, "I decided to change my work purely because of my children; I must control them. Children grow quickly, soon they will become teenagers, and I am afraid it might be late [for their upbringing]." According to her, "I didn't like my previous job, so I

decided to change it and not let my family suffer." The 29-year-old dentist said that she put her family first:

> I always think that I don't have to pay more attention to my work than to my family. First, I must see that everything is well in my family . . . and then I think about my work. Perhaps I would stay longer hours at work if I could. But I always have to think about the family. Someone must stay there too.

However, the same informant argued that it was more pleasant for her to stay at work than to cook or do dishes.

On the contrary, the interviewed men regarded their participation in household labor as optional and elective. Therefore, their participation in the family depended on their goodwill. All informants with the exception of one put their paid work first. In the words of the 35-year-old manager in a private company, "If there was no work, there wouldn't be any family. If you didn't have any money, you could not survive." The family life did not affect significantly the men's professional careers. The 31-year-old engineer stated that his familial responsibilities did not influence his professional life: "Well, earlier I worked the same way I do now. I worked and that's it. It did not either harm or improve my career. If I stayed with my child, perhaps it would affect my work. It affected my wife's career indeed . . ." In the 29-year-old telecommunication consultant's opinion, a career was the most important thing for a man: "As much as a man tried to declare his devotion to his family, it was more important for him to realize himself. And the way to do it is, in most cases, work and career."

In summarizing the division of housework and childcare between men and women, it is possible to argue that only two interviewed couples followed egalitarian principles in sharing their family responsibilities. For the rest, the egalitarian model was the ideal to aspire and not a tangible practice.

The similar conclusions can be drawn from the interviews with men on paternity leave in 2005. Comparing both sets of the interviews, it is possible to notice that, in most cases, men's opinions on housework coincide.

During 15 interviews with men on paternity leave, they were asked whether they considered housework as a part of paternity leave and childcare and whether they shared household labor equally with their wives and partners. Did they think of housework as a female or male occupation? The interviews present a rather contradictory picture.

The fact that all 15 interviewed men used their right to paternity leave should have proved that they advocated the egalitarian family. However, analyzing the division of housework among these men and their female partners I noticed that only very few of them shared housework equally. One of the informants stated:

> I take care of home until my wife returns; when she returns, she does housework. I turn on the TV, I need my quiet. That's the way it goes. I change diapers. We leave laundry for the weekend. When I have time, I tidy rooms myself . . .

This and few other men did not see any distinction between male and female work and argued that a man who stayed at home could do any job. However, these men comprised the minority. Most men on paternity leave held a rather traditional view of household labor. They tended to carry out some tasks but assigned the biggest responsibility to their female partners. Even if a man shared housework and childcare with a woman, she was still responsible for the whole household. As the interviews demonstrated, the men often helped their partners do laundry and dishes, but both men and women had their specific tasks: for instance, men were involved in repair jobs and women did laundry or women cleaned the house and men did shopping. According to one of the fathers, "We got used to it, and everything goes naturally. Housework, cleaning and other things are my wife's responsibility. Shopping is mine . . . ." It was difficult for men to escape some tasks of house labor; however, they would leave the rest to their partners and wives. Although men were primary caretakers of children they remained rather conservative towards housework. It can be argued that their perception of traditionally male and female roles and responsibilities determined the men's attitude towards housework.

The case of the men on paternity leave disproves of the hypothesis that a partner who is the main breadwinner of a family and earns more acquires authority and has to do less housework. Even working women remained the main managers of household labor. Hence, even the women's breadwinning role did not change the imbalance in the division of housework between men and women. Furthermore, this imbalance did not arouse the dissatisfaction and injustice among the women. They accepted it as a part of their "female" role and responsibility.

As the interviews with the couples showed, although a large part of the informants described their families as egalitarian and tried to share the housework as much as possible, women still carried out the biggest load of household chores and childcare. It is natural that the fathers on paternity leave were the main child caretakers. But even in their case, women did more household labor than men.

It is obvious that, in the interviews, men's involvement in the labor market was more valued than women's. Therefore, women's primary role in housework was taken for granted. It is possible to argue that traditionalism in the family life still remains rather pervasive. However, the interviews with the fathers on paternity leave indicate that the boundary between women's work and family responsibilities is flexible enough: during the times of necessity both women and men can assume household and childcare responsibilities.

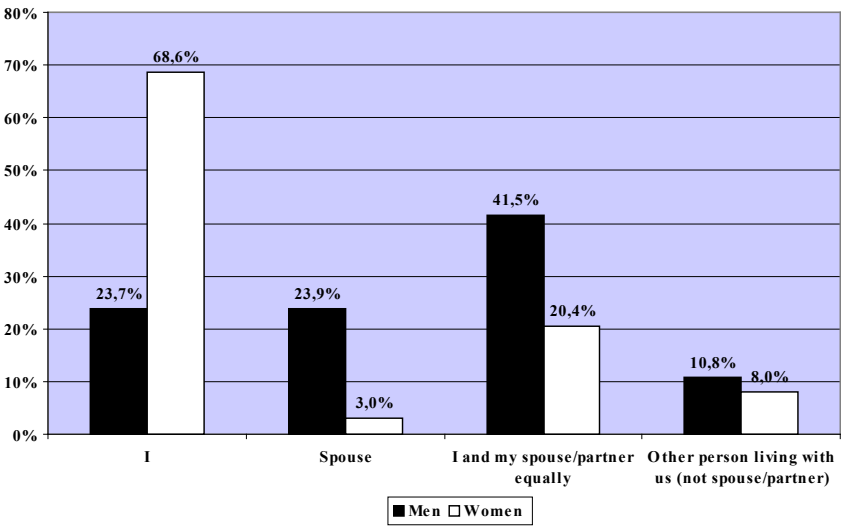
The Representative Surveys: Paradoxes and Contradictions

The representative surveys of public opinion and statistical data in Lithuania corroborate the results of the above interviews. For instance, the research on time spending conducted by the Department of Statistics to the Government of the Republic of Lithuania demonstrate that daily women spend two hours more than men doing housework and family chores (Šemeta 2004). According to the 2004 sociological research "Public Opinion about Gender Policies of the EU and Lithuania," the absolute majority of women living with their partners most frequently prepared food, did dishwashing, bought products and tidied up rooms (Maslauskaitė 2004, 44).

In this chapter, two surveys of the Lithuanian population will be analyzed. The first survey, "Men and Women in Lithuania" was conducted by the Market and Opinion Research Center "Vilmorus Ltd." on October 5-8, 2006 (hereafter survey no. 1) and the second one carried out in May, 2006, was a part of the project "Modern Men in the Enlarged Europe II: Family-Friendly Policies" (hereafter survey no. 2).

The data of the survey no. 1 show that Lithuanian women carry the biggest load of family responsibilities in their families.

According to the picture, almost 70 % of women responded that they primarily took care of their family (only 23.7 % of men thought that they contributed to the care of their families most). It should be pointed out that



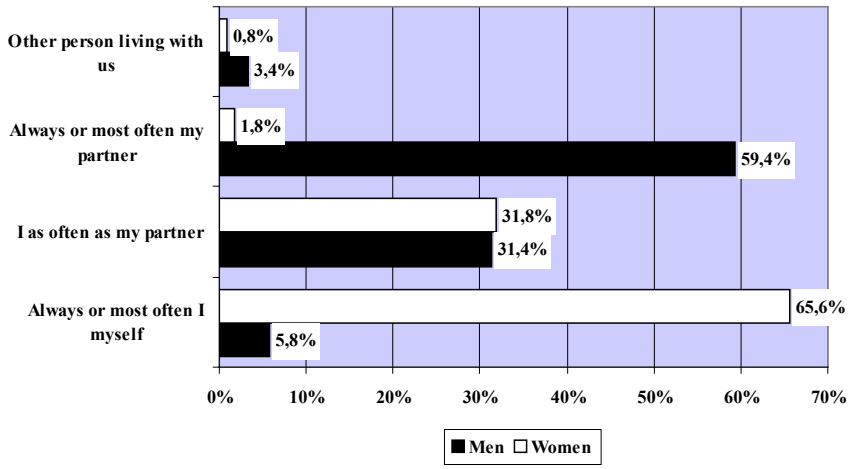
Picture 1. Who carries the biggest load of family responsibilities?

compared to women twice as many men thought that they shared household labor equally with their spouses/partners (41.5 % of men and 20.4% of women).

Although most respondents regardless of their sex agreed that spouses had to share equally household tasks, their answers to the questions about specific household jobs contradicted the assumption of equality. The data of this survey showed that women more often prepared food and did dishes. 82.7 % of women stated that they always or almost always cooked while only 21% of men did the same. Only 16.7% of the male respondents and 8.4% of the female respondents thought that they shared cooking equally. 80.9% of women and 22.4 % of men stated that they usually did dishes. 10.2% of the female respondents and 25.8% of the male respondents argued that they shared this household chore equally. Of all household tasks, the repair of household appliances was the only job in which men excelled women. 85.1% of men and 38.5% of women always or almost always repaired their household appliances. It should be noted that the gap between men and women here was not as big as in the case of cooking and dish washing. Almost the same number of women and men responded that they equally shared this job (3.2% of women and 2.9% of men). According to the female respondents, they also organized leisure activities for their families to a much larger degree than their husbands or partners. 62.4% of women and 29.3% of men argued that they always or almost always organized leisure activities. 49.4% of male respondents and 27% of female respondents thought that they shared this task equally.

The similar results have been received in the survey no. 2 conducted in May, 2006, within the framework of an international project "Modern Men in the Enlarged Europe II: Family-Friendly Policies." 78.8% of women and only 6.8% of men stated that they always or almost always prepared food. More women cleaned their home: 67.6% of them responded that they did it "always or most frequently themselves," and 66% of men said that "their spouse/partner always did it." Women most frequently went to shop for food: 50.2% did it all the time, while 44.2% of the male respondents answered that their spouses/partners always or most often did it. However, 35% of the respondents regardless of their sex thought that they shared food shopping equally. The only sphere in which men surpassed women was the repair of home appliances: 83.8% of men always repaired them; 79% of women stated that their husbands/partners most often did this job in the family. This survey also demonstrated that the Lithuanian women were the main child caretakers in their families.

However, in this survey, more men than women (81.6% of men and 58% of women respectively) would have wished for more equal sharing of childcare and housework. Yet more women than men were unhappy with the division of labor in the family: 85% of men and only 59.4% of women were happy with this division. It is clear that a large number of both men and women are used



Picture 2. Who looks after children?

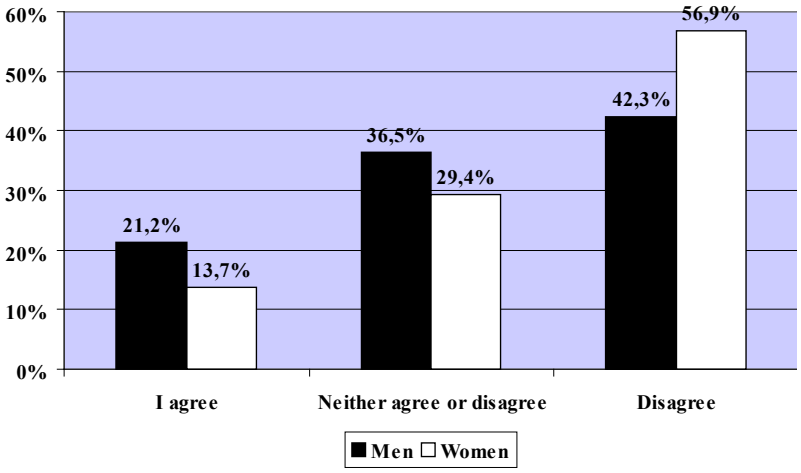
to the unequal division of housework and childcare and take it for granted. However, a number of the Lithuanian women are not satisfied with it.

Let's go back to the survey no. 1, "Men and Women in Lithuania," and examine how the Lithuanian men and women understand their roles in the family, i.e. how public opinions reflect broader assumptions of gender ideology. As we will see in the proceeding numbers, they partially correspond to the above discussed data on the division of household labor in Lithuanian families.

According to 66% of male respondents, a mother should favor children and family instead of paid work. 57% of women also agreed with this statement. 66.7% of men and 60.5% of women agreed with the following statement "It is better for a family when a man earns money and a woman looks after home and children." Only 10.1% of men and 19.8% of women disagreed with this assumption. The rest were undecided. The majority of both men and women (more than 40%) thought that only a woman uninvolved in paid work could take a good care of her family, home and children. 31 % disagreed with this statement. However, a rather high percentage of both women and men disagreed with the assumption that women had to abandon their professional careers for the sake of their family.

According to this picture, the high number of the Lithuanian men and women (36.5% and 29.4% respectively) were undecided. Only the small percentage of respondents agreed with this statement.

What conclusions can be drawn from the last picture and the discussed data? First of all, most Lithuanian inhabitants privileged the model of a dual-breadwinner family in which both a husband and wife were involved in paid



Picture 3. Woman should abandon paid work for the sake of her family

work. The survey no. 2 also confirmed this conclusion. Regardless of their sex, most respondents (75.8% of women and 72.4% of men) thought, in this survey, that the family model in which both parents had a well-paid job and equally shared household and childcare jobs was the most appropriate for the country.

On the one hand, the attitudes of the Lithuanian population towards women's professional careers were more egalitarian than their attitudes towards women's role in the family. On the other hand, it is possible to note that women's paid work was treated differently from men's involvement in the labor market. Even as a second breadwinner for the family, a woman was still associated with housework and childcare. It was argued that an unemployed woman could take care of her family better. Although Lithuanians did not think that women should abandon their careers for the sake of their families, a large number of them was undecided or did not want to answer the question. The survey data confirm that both paid work and unpaid labor are still powerfully gendered in Lithuania. This might be one of the important reasons for the unequal division of childcare and housework between males and females in the country.

The discussed survey and interview data are rather contradictory. On the one hand, both the informants from the interviews and the respondents of the survey no. 2 thought that the model of an egalitarian family was most appropriate for Lithuania. On the other hand, the surveys and interviews show that the Lithuanian women still carry out the biggest load of housework and childcare. Because of this "double" burden women more often than men experienced the

conflict between their work and family responsibilities. According to the survey no. 2, 69.8 % of women and only 30.2 % of men experienced this conflict. For instance, because of the childcare most women had to shorten their working hours, change their job or even leave it and sacrifice career possibilities.

The change in the attitude towards women's role in the labor market and professional life in the last several decades did not affect significantly assumptions about the understanding of unpaid labor at home. The familial behavior generally has not changed fundamentally in Lithuania (Stankūnienė et al. 2003). It can be argued that, in the popular imagination, household labor is still trivialized and perceived of as "female work." Housework and childcare remain the sites in which traditional gender differences and identities are most forcefully reproduced in Lithuania. Lithuanian men are still associated with the role of breadwinner and women, with the role of house keeper. The identity of women is related to nurture and care, and the identity of men, with being in the public sphere. The two research projects "Woman in the Lithuanian Society" conducted in 1994 and 2000 show that Lithuanian women still carry out most child-care chores (Stankūnienė et al. 2003, 117-118). According to the 2004 research "Public Opinion about Gender Policies of the EU and Lithuania," 62% of Lithuanians thought that women had to take care of pre-school children. The similar percentage of men and women expressed this opinion (55% of men and 49% of women). On the other hand, even 32% of Lithuanians could not decide who, men or women, had to take care of children during the first years of their lives (Maslauskaitė 2004, 44-45).[4] In this regard, it is necessary to keep in mind rather skeptical and negative attitudes of the employers and co-workers towards men on paternity leave. Such men are regarded as emasculated and lacking in masculinity (Tereškinas 2005, 28-29).

Secondly, Lithuanian men spend less time on house labor than women. However, the gender differences are materialized not only in the use of time at home but also in the division of different tasks and jobs. As the interviews with the fathers on paternity leave demonstrated, despite the negligible difference in time that men and women spend on housework, household remains the women's responsibility. The cultural perceptions of male and female gender roles in Lithuania are decisive for this arrangement. Lithuanian women are more oriented to the family than professional advancement. The male roles still remain associated with their activities in the public domain. For them, household labor is gendered: they consider a lot of household chores as "female work;" thus sharing them might threaten their masculine identities. Paid work and masculine identity are closely connected. Work and "bread-winners" role are regarded as a major basis of hegemonic masculinity and masculine identity in general. Even the hegemonic ideology of fatherhood reflects the "traditional"

[4] In her article, Aušra Maslauskaitė quotes the data from the research "Public Opinion about Gender Policies of the EU and Lithuania" conducted in July, 2004. The TNS Gallup conducted the field research: 500 respondents of 15-74 years of age were questioned. For the results of this research, see http://www.gap.lt/vnaes.

notion of the breadwinning role that defines a good father as a good provider whose wife does not have to work (Griswold 1993). A good provider has a separate role in the family and may not engage in activities associated with child care or motherhood (Wilkie 1993). According to the 2002 representative survey "The Crises of Male Roles in Lithuania," the Lithuanian women and men considered the breadwinning role as the most important feature of a "real" man (Tereškinas 2004, 17-23).

According to Jeff Hearn, paid work for men "is a source of power and resources, a central life interest, and a medium of identity. It is also a means of ordinary *everyday yet structural resistance* to gender equality" (Hearn 2001, 11). Men's paid work is closely related to domestic and family life. In Hearn's words, "the practical arenas of gender equality are thus not just the 'big questions' of 'politics'; they recur in all social life, including personal and private life" (Hearn 2001, 15). Implementing gender equality involves changing men not only at work but also at home. Therefore, in order to achieve a more balanced participation of men and women in the family and to establish, to a greater degree, the model of egalitarian family it is necessary to redefine socially and culturally the meanings of womanhood and manhood. Of course, this is not sufficient. A wide range of measures on the national and civic level is also necessary. First of all, it is crucial to develop a long-term national strategy directed at the more equal division of childcare and housework between men and women. Public awareness campaigns focusing on the role on men in the family should be carried out. Further research on the men and women's strategies to reconcile work and family and challenges they encounter in their family and professional lives is also needed.

Conclusion: Between the Egalitarian and Neotraditional Family

The analyzed interviews showed that most families believed to be egalitarian. However, after looking at the division of household labor and childcare it is possible to conclude that most of them can be ascribed to the neotraditional family type. In these families, a female partner/wife carries the double burden of employment and domestic duties. The two representative surveys conducted in 2006 also confirm the conclusions drawn from the interviews: the majority of Lithuanian women cook, clean and look after children. Although most Lithuanian citizens cite the egalitarian family as an appropriate familial model for the country, it still remains an ideal and not a reality.

Although half of the interviewed couples described their families as egalitarian, women usually had a larger share of family responsibilities. Mothers carried out significantly more domestic and childcare tasks at home than fathers. The current unequal gender distribution of family responsibilities were treated

as a given in the conducted interviews. In this regard, Lithuania does not differ much from other European countries. As Fine-Davis and Fagnani (2004, 86-87) argue,

> . . . gender roles and attitudes do not keep pace with the reality of people's lives. Paternal involvement in childcare and domestic work is still low, mothers taking its largest load. Women's ambivalence towards greater involvement of their husbands or partners in family affairs should also be emphasized. The similar gender asymmetry has been noticed in other European countries.

Even the interviewed Lithuanian fathers on paternity leave considered household labor as female responsibility. It should be emphasized that, according to the cited surveys, women's attitudes towards the division of household labor were more egalitarian that those of men. The ideal of egalitarian family was more attractive to them since it was they that suffered most from the current familial arrangements.

The interviews with the couples and the results of the survey no. 2 show that women sacrifice their careers for the family, particularly after the birth of their children. They adapt to the changing conditions while men refuse to do so. There also exists a rather clear difference between the informant's behavior and their perceptions. Thus, it is difficult to draw the direct correlation between the values they advocate and their behavior. Their support of the egalitarian values does not necessarily mean the radical change in familial behavior. However, we should not discard the hypothesis that more traditional understanding of gender roles implicates the less egalitarian behavior of men and women in the family. According to the comparative studies, traditional norms of gender and family increase the possibility of a traditional imbalance between paid and unpaid work among men and women (Nordenmark 2004).

The large part of the respondents of both the surveys and interviews realize the importance of egalitarian family but the dominant gender roles contradict their ideals. It can be argued that most barriers to the achievement of new familial ideals and egalitarian family are related to cultural norms and ideologies prevalent both in work organizations and the larger society. The male respondents felt a constant pressure to put work needs ahead of their personal or family necessities in order to advance in their careers. On the contrary, women felt a pressure to put family responsibilities first sacrificing, at least temporarily, their career possibilities. Both work culture and traditional gender roles prevalent in society did not provide men and women "with sufficient flexibility and authority to manage the tensions that [arose] at the intersection of their work and family lives" (Parasuraman and Greenhaus 1997, 233).

Men and women had different strategies for coping with the demands of their lives. Women attempted to conduct several tasks at once and adapt their professional requirements to family needs while men were rather "single-tasked," separating different life spheres, work, childcare and free time. The

interviewed men emphasized their breadwinner's role. The priority of work, although not always explicitly stated, was evident in their responses. Because of gender roles and gendered expectations men had much difficulty in imagining that they could reduce their work load. Men did more overtime work, and more women had part-time jobs. Thus, men felt a disadvantage in the family because of their work, and women experienced a disadvantage in the labor market since they had to spend more time with their children.

This article focused on gender equality from the point of view of household labor and its division in the Lithuanian families. Future research should explore the factors of social status and age and their impact on either egalitarian or traditional familiar behavior. It is important to compare the attitudes of younger and older couples towards the relation between paid work and family. In doing it, such variables as women and men's occupational character, education and income that might influence the dominance of egalitarianism or neotraditionalism should be taken into account.

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Tarp egalitarinės ir neotradicinės šeimos: keletas pastabų apie lyčių vertybes šiuolaikinėje Lietuvoje

Santrauka

Remiantis dviem reprezentatyviomis Lietuvos gyventojų apklausomis, atliktomis 2006 m., 12 pusiau struktūruotų interviu su heteroseksualiomis poromis bei 15 interviu su vyrais tėvais, šiame straipsnyje analizuojama, kaip Lietuvos vyrai ir moterys konceptualizuoja moters ir vyro profesinius bei šeiminius įsipareigojimus ir kokiu mastu skiriasi moterų ir vyrų požiūris į egalitarinę šeimą. Straipsnyje aptariamos egalitarinė ir neotradicinės šeimos formos. Pirmoji, besiremiasi suaugusių šeimos narių lygybe, yra kontrastas tradicinei patriarchalinei šeimai. Šioje šeimoje partneriai siekia rasti juos abu patenkinančią pusiausvyrą tarp profesinio ir šeiminio gyvenimo bei kurti harmoningus egalitarinius ryšius. Neotradicinė šeima – tai šeima, kurioje abu heteroseksualūs tėvai dalyvauja ir darbo rinkoje, ir vaikų bei namų priežiūroje, tačiau darbo pasidalinimas šiose abiejose sferose lieka gana netolygus: vyrai paprastai atlieka didžiumą apmokamo darbo, o moterys užsiima didžiąja dalimi neapmokamo darbo šeimoje. Tokioje šeimoje vyro vaidmenį ir jo įnašą į šeimą pirmiausia apibrėžia jo dalyvavimas darbo rinkoje, o moters – atsakomybė už šeimą ir namus, nepaisant to, kad ji dirba ir apmokamą darbą. Šeimos egalitarizmo lygmuo straipsnyje nustatomas žvelgiant į dalijimąsi buities darbais ir vaikų priežiūra šeimoje. Požiūriai į namų ruošą ir vaikų priežiūrą laikomi šeimos tradicionalizmo ir egalitarizmo barometru. Iš analizuotų interviu matyti, kad dauguma šeimų tiki, kad jos egalitarinės, tačiau pasižiūrėjus į dalijimąsi namų ruoša ir vaikų priežiūra matyti, kad jas labiau galima priskirti neotradiciniam šeimos tipui. Šiose šeimose partnerė ar žmona dažniausiai velka dvigubą – ir profesinio gyvenimo, ir vaikų priežiūros bei buities darbų – naštą. Dvi 2006 m. atliktos reprezentatyvios taip pat rodo, kad didžioji dauguma Lietuvos moterų ruošia maistą, valo, prižiūri vaikus. Nors daugumai Lietuvos piliečių priimtinas egalitarinis šeimos modelis, jis veikiau tebėra skelbiamas idealas nei įgyvendintas tikrovėje. Ir interviu, ir apklausose dalyvavę respondentai aiškiai suvokia egalitarinės šeimos svarbą, tačiau kultūrinės normos ir ideologijos bei tradiciniai lyčių vaidmenys, paplitę visuomenėje, neleidžia jiems įgyvendinti egalitarinių lyčių santykių.