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## **BETWEEN TRADITION AND MODERNIZATION: ATTITUDES TO WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT AND GENDER ROLES IN CROATIA**

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### **Abstract**

*Despite the fact that state socialism promoted the employment of women and, at least formally, gender equality as means of societal modernization, the prevailing picture of the South-Eastern European region is the one of rather traditional, patriarchic societies. The post-communist transition was characterized by high social costs and political attempts at re-traditionalization, particularly through the increasingly public role of religion. At the same time the societies were under more universal influence of modernity processes of individualization and permissiveness. Thus, it is difficult to assess in which direction, toward modernity or traditionalism, these societies are heading. In this paper we analyze the attitudes toward gender roles and women's employment in Croatia. Using the SEESSP dataset (2003) we test several hypotheses linking respondents' attitudes with their socio-economic characteristics as well as their upbringing. Our analyses have implications for the gender policy in transitional economies burdened by consistently high unemployment rates, particularly among women, and frequent, politically motivated, attempts at re-traditionalization.*

A number of studies have analyzed variation in people's attitudes towards women's labor market participation and the division of labor among men and women in the Western world. Generally, citizens in Western countries show increasing support over time for women's labor market participation, with some differences of opinion related to age, gender, education, etc. Cross-national studies also document differences across nations, which partly can be related to differences in their welfare states. A common finding is also that people's attitudes to the domestic division of labor between men and women seem to be more traditional than the attitudes towards women's employment, but again, there are cross-national differences.

For researchers of gender role and women employment values, South-East European countries,

such as Croatia, are interesting in many ways. During the 1990s there was a major change in their political and economic systems, from the former federative socialist republic of Yugoslavia to present-day independent states of Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovenia, Macedonia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. The dissolution of Yugoslavia, accompanied by the wars in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina (and later by systematic violence in Kosovo), brought new emphasis on nationalism and re-traditionalization, mostly in the form of resurgence of religion. In Croatia, religiosity dramatically increased during the war (1991-1995). Such a turn toward the sacred is not unusual consequence of war and related destruction (Sekulic, Hodson, Massey 2002). In addition, under the nationalist government that was highly supported by Catholic Church (Partos 1997), being Croat often equaled with being Catholic. In that sense Croatia, as most ex-Yugoslav societies, differs from other post-communist societies of Eastern Europe, in spite of the fact that they all share the same experience of the post-communist transformation, and the social costs associated with this transition (Dragicevic, 2003).

This paper will explore Croatians' attitudes towards women's employment and gender roles, using data from the South East European Social Survey Program, 2003, against the background of the process of the post-communist transition, the 1991-1995 war and the politically induced re-traditionalization of family values and religion under the late president Tudjman's regime.

### **Historical background**

Both geographically and politically, the former Yugoslavia was a strategic buffer zone between the communist East and the capitalist West, which provided for some unique features of the Titoist regime. Unlike the citizens from the countries of the Warsaw bloc, Yugoslav citizens were free to travel to the West and communicate with foreigners with absolutely no restrictions. This was of particular importance for Slovenia, sharing borders with Austria and Italy, and Croatia, with a coastline frequented by Western tourists every summer. Also, before the dissolution of Yugoslavia, Croatia and Slovenia had been the most developed industrial republics with a per capita GNP which was a third higher than the Yugoslav average. Partially owing to historical reasons (unlike the other former Yugoslav republics, Croatia and Slovenia were under Habsburg and not Ottoman rule) and partially due to their economic development and proximity to the West, Croatia and Slovenia have been the most westerly oriented of the former Yugoslavian countries.

In the former Yugoslav republic full-time employment was the most common type of

employment for both men and women (UNICEF, 1999; Tomsic, 1980). The socialist state was important for women's employment possibilities, both by insisting upon a full-employment policy and by providing affordable day care for children. However, proclamations of gender equality never corresponded to social reality. Patriarchal values and structures were not eradicated (Brunnbauer, 2000); almost all women with children worked outside the home, so most of them had to carry the 'double burden' of work at home and employment. Data from former Yugoslavia suggest that the total workload of women averaged 60 to 70 hours per week, of which 20 to 30 hours were unpaid work, the so called "second shift" (UNICEF, 1999; Massey, Hahn, Sekulic, 1995). Also, the labor market was sex-segregated; most women worked in low-prestige and low-salaried jobs, such as garment industry, which were particularly affected by the transition (Brunnbauer, 2000). A major shift in political regime, such as Croatia has experienced, has had an impact on women's actual employment patterns. Since the new regime implemented a market-oriented economic policy and started a rapid, and often shady, process of privatization, these major changes created new types of jobs and shut down some older installations (like subsidized industries), thus profoundly changing the labor market conditions. Unemployment dramatically increased in the 1990s. Official data show a 3.5 fold increase in unemployment in Croatia during the 1990-1999 period (Lokin, 2000:220) and a high percentage of unemployed were women. In 1997 women constituted 52.7 percent of the unemployed (Bejakovic, 2005). Also, the level of job security decreased significantly, and women appear to be particularly vulnerable to the macroeconomic and social changes brought about by the transition, since the legal provisions securing the job during maternity leave in many cases became illusory (Brunnbauer, 2000). Together with political attempts at re-traditionalization of the family institution, the market-oriented transition, which resulted in loss of security and decreasing quality of public services, may have had an impact on people's gender attitudes and values. These processes might have strengthened the old gender role models assigning men to the public life of work and politics and women to the private life of housework and motherhood (Bracewell, 1996).

At the same time, Croatia is by no means isolated from the outside world. In the revised version of modernization theory (developed in 'Rising Tide'), Inglehart and Norris hypothesize that '...human development brings changed cultural attitudes towards gender equality in virtually any society that experiences the various forms of modernization linked with economic development', i.e. '...modernization brings systematic, predictable changes in gender roles' (Inglehart and Norris, 2003; 5). Thus, their approach hypothesizes that modernization operates in two key phases; the first phase, *industrialization*, brings women into paid work and dramatically reduces fertility

rates. The second phase, *post-industrialization*, implies a shift toward greater gender equality as women rise in management and the professions, and gain political influence within elected and appointed bodies. Most of the world societies have not entered this postindustrial phase yet (Inglehart and Norris, 2002:5), including post-communist societies.

This paper, using data from the SEESSP 2003, explores attitudes toward women's labor market participation and the gendered division of labor in Croatia bringing in the intergenerational or socialization perspective that focuses on possible effects of mother's employment on her children's attitudes. We start with a brief summary of previous research.

### **Welfare states, family and work**

The relationship between the state and the family, related to social policy, family policy, taxation policy, day care provision, employment legislation, etc., is important for women's choice between housework and employment. In comparative cross-national studies, the well established typology of welfare state regimes of Esping-Andersen (1990) has been utilized and expanded in order to cluster welfare states with reference to women's labor market behavior. The classification of liberal, social democratic, and continental-conservative welfare states is also expected to have a bearing on the gender values expressed in people's attitudes towards women's labor market participation and towards the division of labor between men and women. The expected pattern would be that the social democratic countries are the most supportive of women's labor force participation, the conservative-continental countries the least supportive, and the liberal countries somewhere in between the two clusters. Later, South European countries, with a more family oriented profile, have been assigned a separate cluster (Esping-Andersen 1999).

Nevertheless, the male breadwinner model still dominates the social policies in most OECD-countries (O'Connor 1996), although people's attitudes towards this traditional division of labor have been changing. In Europe, people are increasingly more positive to women's labor market participation (Hakim 1996), and this documented turn in people's attitudes is usually explained by the raising level of education for women, better possibilities for career development for women, and also the increasing number of families that are dependent on two incomes for their level of living (see Sundström 2000).

Recently, increased attention has been directed towards the Eastern European countries, and the question has been raised as to whether these countries – which often has a history of high levels

of female employment – differ from the western European countries, in particular in their attitudes towards mothers employment. Under socialism, employment was regarded as a civic duty and the socialist ideology also had gender equality as a political goal (Drobnic, 1997). Treas and Widmer (2000) refer a study that documented a surprisingly high degree of gender conservativeness in Hungary. The interpretation has been that this is evidence of a “public reaction against the sweeping socialist reforms that subjected women to burdensome labor in the workplace, the informal economy, and the household” (Treas and Widmer 2000:1414). They argue that the need for two household incomes, not favorable work attitudes, has fostered the high levels of female labor force participation in former socialist countries.

In a comparative study of Britain, Norway and the Czech Republic on women’s employment and gender attitudes, an East-West differentiation was found: “Compared with Norway and Britain, men and women of the Czech Republic appear to be more conservative in their attitudes in respect of both the effects of women’s employment on children and family life as well as on gender roles more generally” (Crompton and Harris 1997: 186). Blossfeld and Hakim (1997) has expanded the typology of welfare regimes identified by Esping-Andersen in 1990 by identifying two additional groups of countries: the formerly socialist states, and the south-European states. Whereas the formerly socialist countries promoted women’s full-time employment, the south European countries encouraged married women to stay at home (see also Esping-Andersen 1999). A cross-national study of 23 countries, including several eastern European countries, concluded that there are three clusters of countries, which represent three distinct patterns of attitudes towards women’s employment: the work-oriented countries, the family accommodating countries and the motherhood centered countries (Treas and Widmer 2000). The Eastern European countries that were included (Hungary, Poland, Slovenia, Bulgaria, and the Czech Republic) were grouped together with Spain and Ireland in the motherhood-centered cluster. In these countries, “comparatively strong support for mother’s full-time employment is combined with even stronger preferences that women with children stay at home” (Treas and Widmer 2000:1425). To a certain extent, this apparent ambivalence/contradiction between liberal attitudes toward women’s employment and traditional attitudes toward mothers as the primary care givers can also be found in other countries. For instance, the Scandinavian countries have a high level of female employment, including a high level of labor market participation also among mother’s of young children, yet the attitudes towards the domestic division of labor are still surprisingly traditional (Sundstrøm 2000:202).

It is important to be aware of the uncertainty involved when one tries to relate people's personal attitudes to their country's state ideology. Treas and Widmer (2000:1431) conclude their study by arguing that although the former socialist countries share some common factors, some western states – characterized by catholic heritage, traditional gender roles, and late industrial development – share the same views as the former socialist countries do. The two countries they refer to are Spain and Ireland. Thus, the impact of socialism should not be overrated and the impact of religion and economic development should not be forgotten.

Another important question concerns the transmission of attitudes toward women's employment and gendered division of labor. How important is family socialization in that respect? There are a number of studies, many North American, of the effects of mother's employment on their children and the attitudes their children later develop to gender roles and maternal employment (see Willetts-Bloom 1994 for an overview). The findings of this research are however, ambiguous: Whereas some studies find positive effects of maternal employment on their children's attitudes, in particular for the daughters, so that the daughters of working women also want to work, other studies find no significant results, and some report conflicting results. Many of these studies were undertaken in the 1970s and 1980s, when married women's increasing employment prompted raising concerns that mother's employment would have negative effects on their children.

Our aims in this paper are twofold. First we analyze differences in attitudes towards gender roles and women's employment to achieve a better insight in possible variation across different groups in their values. Although not conclusive, we will in particular explore variation in attitudes in different age-groups, since such variation might be related to changes brought by the transition. Second, we analyze the attitudes towards gender roles and women's employment by respondents who have had a working mother when they grew up. This way, we may gain some insight into possible intrafamilial reproduction of gender attitudes in a society that has been undertaking major economic and political changes. Let us proceed by first discussing our expectations to the data.

### **Hypotheses**

The definition of traditional values may vary according to the context, i.e. a country's history. Whereas married women's employment in many western countries was rather low after WWII, in other countries, such as Croatia, married women were working. Nevertheless, since the Catholic

Church as well as the government have advocated the importance of women's role as mothers of children, not as workers, we will define a traditional view on women's employment as being less supportive of women's, and in particular mothers', employment. The social costs caused by the process of the post-communist transition and the 1991-1995 war would point in the same direction. We would, nevertheless expect non-traditional attitudes to be prevailing in Croatia, caused by their history, as well as processes of modernization and individualization, and, in particular among the younger cohorts, we expect to find non-traditional values.

H1 - We expect a majority of the Croatian people to express non-traditional attitudes towards gender roles and women's employment, and we expect the younger to be more non-traditional than the older age-groups.

We know that women in general are more positive to women's labor market participation and less favorable of the traditional division of labor between men and women than men are. We therefore expect to find gender differences in attitudes towards gender roles in the Croatian context as well.

H2 – Women will espouse less traditional attitudes towards gender roles and women employment than men.

Also, educational differences are important; we would expect more educated respondents to be more liberal and less traditional compared to the less educated. The effect of education is mainly, but not exclusively, a consequence of being exposed to dominant cultural ideas about the equality of sexes and to an environment (especially in higher education institutions) in which the same rules apply to women and men. There is also possibility of the influence of traditional division of labor which is still expected to be found in particular in rural areas, yet a study of regional differences in attitudes in Britain, Norway and the Czech Republic found no significant effects (Crompton and Harris 1997). We would nevertheless like to explore the possibilities that respondents who grew up in rural areas are more traditional than those who live/grew up in the cities. Also, as a result of war related destruction and the nationalist government being highly supported by the Catholic Church, religiosity dramatically increased in Croatia during the war (1991-1995). We expect the most religious respondents to advocate traditional gender role attitudes and view the role of women primarily as mother and caregiver. To summarize our expectations:

H3 – Younger, more educated, urban and less religious respondents will be less supportive of traditional views on gender roles and women employment than older, less educated, rural citizens and more religious respondents.

People's values and attitudes are often formed during their upbringing, primarily in the context of family socialization. We expect that whether the respondent's mother was employed or not will have an impact on their attitudes towards gender roles and women employment. Using the primary socialization model (Starrels, 1992; 2000), we posit that mother's employment will have positive effect on her children's attitudes toward women's labor market participation. In addition, we expect that this effect will be stronger for daughters because of the more direct process of role modeling:

H4 – Respondents with a working mother will be more positive towards working women and espouse less traditional gender roles than respondents whose mothers never had a paid work. We expect this effect to be stronger for female than male respondents.

Furthermore, we hypothesize that respondents whose mother's occupational status was/is higher than their father's will have more positive attitudes toward maternal employment and express less traditional attitudes toward gender roles than those whose mother's occupational status was/is lower are equal as their father's. The expectation is based on a status-income argument: Women working in higher status occupations are perceived as socially successful and are financially better off; which adds to both internal (intrafamilial) and external perception of their professional accomplishment.

H5 – Respondents whose mother's occupational status was/is higher than their father's will have more positive attitudes toward women's labor market participation and less traditional attitudes toward gender roles.

Since the impact of age, education, region and whether mother worked or not could be expected to be gender specific, we will test a number of interaction effects (i.e. education means more for women than men in terms of their attitudes; similar for age and the other variables). We report only the effects that were found significant.



## **Data and measurements**

In order to test the above hypothesis we use the data from 2003 SEESSP Croatian survey. The South-East European Social Survey was carried out in December 2003 on a sample of 1250 Croatian citizens aged 20+. A two-step stratified random sample was used; the sample was based on the 2001 Census. Based on the same Census data weights were applied to this sample to replicate the distribution of respondents' education by sex for six Croatian regions. The questionnaire consisted of 374 variables, which covered a wide range of attitudes, socio-demographic characteristics, and variables related to war experiences.

## **Instruments**

In 2003 SEESP survey attitudes toward different aspects of gender roles, including attitudes toward women's employment, were assessed by 31 statements. The attitudes were assessed by a 5-point Likert scale. In order to create composite indicators of attitudes toward women's employment and gender roles we used exploratory factor analysis in the first step, followed by reliability analysis. The factor analysis extracted 8 factors explaining 67% of variance.

*Attitudes toward women's employment* were measured by aggregating responses to the following six statements that were highly saturated on a single factor: (a) "It is more natural for men to work outside the home, and women to work at home", (b) "Most housework is naturally the job of the woman", (c) "If in the marriage only one person is employed, it should be the man", (d) "A man's job is to earn money; a woman's job is to look after the home and family", (e) "A job is all right, but what most women really want is a home and children", (f) "If a factory has to lay off workers, it is better that women with husbands be let go before husbands are fired". The scores were recoded in a way that high scores indicate more negative attitudes. Reliability coefficient for the scale was .87, with .67 mean inter-item correlation.

*Gender role attitudes* were measured by aggregating responses to the following five statements that were highly saturated on a single factor: (a) "On the whole, men make better political leaders than women do", (b) "Men are better suited to be managers than women", (c) "A university education is more important for a boy than for a girl", (d) "A young woman should be ashamed to have a child without being married", (e) "Care of children is a mother's duty before it is a father's". Responses were recorded on 5-item scales and were recoded so that high scores indicate more traditional attitudes. Cronbach's alpha was .79; mean inter-item correlation was .59.

For purpose of table analysis the answers on the attitudinal questions were also divided into three categories: “*non-traditional*” if respondents answered “disagree” and “disagree strongly”, “*transitional*” if they answered “neither agree neither disagree” and “*traditional*” “agree and strongly agree”.

Respondent’s *education* was measured as the total number of years of formal education.

*Indicator of religious beliefs* was assessed by a variable indicating how often the respondent attended religious services during last year, measured in 4 categories from 1= “Never and once a year”, 2= “Few times a year”, 3 = “Few times a month” and 4 = “Every week and few times a week”.

*Place of residence* when the respondent was 14 was assessed by the following categorical variable: 1=“Village”, 2= “Town and small town”, 3=“Middle sized city” and 4= “Capital and large city” It was dichotomized into urban vs. rural place of residence by recoding the first three categories into the urban category.

*Mother’s employment* was assessed by the question on mother’s occupational status that included 16 categories, from managers to non-qualified industrial and agricultural workers. There was a special category for those whose mother’s did not work. We dichotomized the variable into 1 - working mother and 0 - non-working mother. Agricultural workers were not assigned to the working mother group, because their work does not necessarily separate them from their children and, at least equally important, it does not bring them in daily contact with previously unknown people (co-workers), nor does it entail confronting new professional challenges.

*Parents’ relative occupational status* was measured by a categorical variable with three values: -1 - “father’s occupational status is/was higher”, 0 – “mother’s and father’s occupations are equally high” and +1 – “Mother’s occupational status is/was higher”. The coding was based on the questions regarding father’s and mother’s occupation (see above).

*Female respondent’s occupation* was measured in the similar way as their mother’s; the codes are: 1 – “housewife” and 0 – “employed, retired, looking for job”.<sup>1</sup> For male respondents, the

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<sup>1</sup> This information was based on the question of respondent’s employment status last week, and it was measured in 6 categories, “full time employed”, “part time employed”, “unemployed, actively looking for

professional status of their wives was measured as 1 – “housewife” and 0 - “employed, retired, looking for job”, based on the question of spouse’s employment status last week.

### **Attitudes towards gender roles and women’s employment**

Let us first look at some cross tables, showing the overall attitudes of the Croatian people towards gender roles and women’s employment. In Table 1 we see that non-traditional attitudes are dominant among Croatians. However, in Table 2 we note that it is not the case with regard to attitudes towards women’s employment, where Croatians seem to be more traditional. This is especially the case when talking about more personal aspects of women employment, such as housework duties and the spouse’s share of responsibilities regarding children and household finance, where most of the respondents express what we would call traditional attitudes. On the other hand, the answers given to statements like “If a factory...” and “A man job is to earn money...” reveal that the respondents also feel that women should. It is probably due to necessity, since women’s paycheck in many households is a necessary contribution to the household budget. Thus, we can conclude that the Croatians express rather ambivalent views on women’s role, comprising both traditional and modern views.

Tables 1 and 2 about here

Analysis shown in Table A1, (see Appendix) reveals that, in line with our expectations, women are less traditional regarding attitudes towards gender roles and women employment.

#### *Age and attitudes*

Since ours was a cross sectional study, we are not able to analyze attitudinal changes caused by transition and the war. Although it cannot serve as the substitute for age cohort analysis, we have examined the association between age and attitudes. Our analysis among age-groups showed predictable patterns, with younger age groups less traditional than the older age groups.

Table 3 about here

The results reported in table 3 illustrate a substantial gap in gender related values. More precisely,

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work”, “unemployed, wanting a job but not actively looking for work”, “retired, pensioner” and “housewife”. We have only used the information necessary to extract ‘housewives’ from the rest.

respondents born between 1920 and 1950 proved to be much more traditional than respondents born in the seventies and eighties. The least traditional were respondent's in their twenties, exactly those who were the most affected by the 'new' moral values imposed by resurgence of religion and Tudjman's regime. The parents of the youngest age-groups were born in the postwar period, and they were part of the (baby-boomer) generation that was and still is holding much more liberal values concerning gender roles compared with the generations born before or during the war (there is 2 to 3-point gap in the gender attitudes between those generations, cfr. Table 3). For those born in the 70's and 80's it seems that their parents' attitudes and lifestyles related to gender roles together with more global process of permissiveness and 'rising tide of equality between sexes' (Inglehart and Norris, 2003) must have had greater impact than publicly imposed new forms of traditionalism.

Analyses not shown here revealed that although there is difference between males and females in all age-groups, in a way that females are more liberal, the difference is largest among the youngest respondents. It seems that youngest female respondents are becoming increasingly dissatisfied with traditional beliefs, while male counterparts very slowly follow that attitudinal shift toward modernity and greater equality.

#### *Education, urbanism, religiosity and attitudes*

Table 4 shows the bivariate relationships between education and attitudes, urbanism and attitudes, and finally religiosity and attitudes. In line with our expectations we see that more educated respondents turn out to be more liberal and egalitarian in their attitudes towards gender roles and women's employment. We also find that respondents that have been raised in more rural settings are more traditional. The respondents' religiously active also has an impact on their attitudes: The more the respondent attends religious services the more traditional gender role and women employment attitudes he/she holds.

Table 4 about here

#### *The impact of a working mother*

One of the central goals of our research was to explore the effect of working mothers on the respondents' attitudes. This effect is expected to be in a more egalitarian way when talking about those respondents whose mothers were employed. Independent Samples T-test (see Table A2) showed that respondents with working mothers differ significantly from those whose mothers are

not working in the predicted manner: Those with working mothers are more in favor of women's employment and have less traditional gender roles attitudes. It seems that having experience of employed mother proved to be influential in forming of gender attitudes in the case of Croatian respondents too. Analyses not shown here reveal that there is a significant interaction effect between sex and mother's employment, supporting our hypothesis that the working mother effect is stronger for the daughters' attitudes toward women's employment. This is, however, not the case when we look at attitudes towards gender roles, where sex and mother's employment are important predictors, but mother's employment influences attitudes toward gender roles of respondents of both sexes equally.

#### *A multivariate model of attitude formation*

To analyze correlates of gender roles attitudes and attitudes toward women's employment, two regression models were built, with gender, education, age, place of residence at the age of 14, indicator of religious beliefs and mother's employment as predictors. The first regression model regress the index of gender role attitudes on the above mentioned set of predictors, the second model regress the index of attitudes toward women's employment on the same variables (see Table 5) .

Table 5 about here

Looking at the index measuring traditional gender roles attitudes first, we see that the model explain 0.22 percent of the variance. We also note that all predictors are significant, respondent's age being strongest and size of place of residence at 14 being weakest predictor of gender attitudes. According to our model, indicators of traditional gender role attitudes are older age, lower education, and male sex, more often attendance of religious services, unemployed mother, and more rural place of residence at 14. In the model looking at attitudes toward women's employment we see that although all predictors are significant and have slightly stronger relationships with the dependent variable, the respondents' formal education proved to be the strongest predictor of attitudes toward women employment: The more educated respondents have more positive attitudes regarding women employment. Type of place of residence is the weakest predictor in the model but also significant showing that respondents from rural settlements have more negative attitudes toward women labor participation.

#### *The impact of parent's occupational status*

We also hypothesized that the respondent's whose mother's occupational status was/is higher than father's will have more positive attitudes toward maternal employment and less traditional attitudes toward gender roles, than those whose mother's occupational was lower or equally high as their father's. The results of analysis of variance on the indexes of attitudes toward women employment and traditional gender roles are presented in table 6. Differences between respondents whose mother's occupational status was/is higher and those whose mother's occupational status is equal or lower than father's are statistically significant, as we expected. The most interesting finding, however, is the one concerning respondents with both parents in equally high occupational status. These respondents are the least supportive of women's employment and have most traditional attitudes toward gender roles. This finding was unexpected, but may perhaps be explained by their parents having (had) equally low occupational status and/or if these respondents are among the less educated. First, we have to notice that 55 percent of respondents that have parents with equally high occupational status have (had) those parents working as qualified, semi-qualified and non-qualified workers and another 29% have (had) parents that are farmers. Second, analyses not shown here reveal that respondents with parents with equally high occupational status are significantly less educated (9.9 years of formal education) comparing to those with father with higher (11.3 years of formal education) or mother with higher occupational status (11.7 years of formal education). It can also be noticed that respondents whose mothers have (had) higher occupational status are at the same time the most educated in the sample.

#### *The impact of housewife status*

In order to investigate if there are some factors other than socio-demographic characteristics and socialization related factors that influence attitudes toward gender roles and women's employment, we have carried out an additional multiple regression analysis, run separately for each gender. In other words, we wanted to see if being married to a housewife influences men's attitudes, or, in the case of women, whether being a housewife predicts one's attitudes toward gender roles and women's employment. To test this, we have expanded previous regression analysis with the same set of predictors by adding wife's employment status for male respondents (coded: 1=housewife, 0= employed, retired, looking for job) and for female respondents we added their own employment status (coded: 1=housewife, 0= employed, retired, looking for job). Analyses reported in Appendix reveal that for male respondents, wife's employment status is a significant predictor for their attitudes toward women's employment: Men with working wives have less negative attitudes toward women employment and also less traditional gender role attitudes. By adding wife's' employment into the analyses, most of the other predictors that were found to be significant in our previous regression models now turn out not to have any impact,

leaving only age and wife's employment status as a significant predictor for men's attitudes towards gender roles and place of residence and wife's employment status for men's attitudes towards women's employment. Mother's employment also lost its significance; which leads us to conclude that spouse's employment is more important in shaping the attitudes of men toward the roles of genders in society in general. However, it is possible that those male respondents with working women have married (and supported in their careers) exactly those women that are compatible with their ideal of a working women, ideals that was internalized during their upbringing with a working mother (and the same with the non-working wives, of course).

Looking at our female respondents, it seems that their own labor market experience influences both their attitudes toward women's employment and gender roles in such a way that women who are actively present in labor market have more positive attitudes toward women employment and less traditional gender role attitudes. Unlike in the case of men, when adding women's employment status into the model we still find that almost all of the other predictors are significant, except mothers' employment which now is not important in the case of traditional gender roles attitudes. Our models show us that in the case of women from our sample, all the previously explored predictors share a piece of influence in shaping women's attitudes toward gender roles and women employment.

### **Summary and conclusion**

We have found that overall non-traditional attitudes toward women's employment are strong in the Croatian society today. However, in some aspects, especially related to gender roles, Croatians are more traditional. According to our age-group analyses the preference for traditional gender roles may be decreasing, yet as always with cross-sectional data, we cannot determine if the relation between age and attitudes is a life-course relation or a cohort phenomenon. Certainly, Croatia has experienced the impact of the war and the amplification of traditional values by the Catholic Church and the late president Tudjman's regime, but this does not seem to have had a major impact on the attitudes of the younger age-groups, who would be more likely to be influenced by a more global process of individualization and permissiveness.

In general, respondent's gender, education and age, together with attendance of religious services, type of residence at age 14 and mother's employment, were found important predictors of gender roles attitudes. As it was assumed, men, older and less educated respondents are less likely to hold non-traditional (or more egalitarian) views on gender roles. Religious beliefs remain an important predictor of traditionalism. Religion plays a significant role in Croatian

society, particularly; it seems, in the context of gender and sexuality.

As hypothesized, our analyses confirmed that respondents with working mothers display more support to women's employment and hold less traditional attitudes toward gender roles. Working mother effect was found stronger for daughters than for sons, but only in regard to attitudes toward women's employment. This can probably be attributed to the «double burden» that women had (and still have). By the process of role modeling, daughters have learned to have more positive attitudes toward women's (and their own) participation in the labor market, but also that house chores and family should not suffer because of that. Although presenting a good example of women's labor participation, their mothers were not necessarily holding egalitarian gender role attitudes and could have influenced their children's attitudes toward different (traditional) roles of males and females in a society in general.

We expected that respondents whose mother's occupational status was higher than their father's hold more egalitarian attitudes toward women employment and gender roles. The expectation, however, was not confirmed. The most traditional appeared to be respondents whose mother's and father's occupational status were equal. In most such families, as additional analyses demonstrated, parents worked in equally low prestigious occupations. Consequently, their children ended up less educated and holding more traditional values regarding gender.

It is not only childhood socialization that shapes people's attitudes toward gender roles. For men, we also found a significant effect of wife's employment status, and for women we found a significant effect of their own employment status. The least egalitarian attitudes were found in men whose wives are not employed and among women who identify themselves as housewives.

Our study suggests that the (post)transitional and postwar Croatian society is markedly influenced by the global process of decreasing gender inequalities, both in public and private sphere. In addition to socio-demographic factors, gender related attitudes and values were shown to be affected by women's employment, both in terms of mother's and wife's employment. Although gender role attitudes and values are mostly shaped during primary socialization, they are prone to changes during adulthood.



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Table 1: Attitudes towards gender roles. Croatia 2003.

	n	Non-traditional	Transitional	Traditional
University education is more important for boy than for a girl	1037	76,30%	11,60%	12,00%
A young woman should be ashamed to have a child without being married	1037	69,10%	15,10%	21,70%
Care of children is mother's duty before father's	1037	55,30%	15,70%	28,90%
Men are better suited to be managers than women	1037	52,20%	21,00%	26,80%
On the whole men make better political leaders than women do	1037	51,40%	19,20%	29,50%

Table 2: Attitudes towards women's employment. Croatia 2003.

	n	Non-traditional	Transitional	Traditional
Most housework is naturally the job of the women	1037	18,20%	11,70%	70,10%
If in marriage only one person is employed it should be the man	1037	23,30%	11,30%	65,40%
It is more natural for men to work outside the home, and women to work at home	1037	28,80%	14,40%	56,80%
A job is all right, but what most really want is home and children	1037	21,90%	24,30%	53,90%
If a factory has to lay off workers, it is better that women with husbands be let go before husbands are fired	1037	34,10%	26,40%	39,40%
A man's job is to earn money; a woman's job is to look after home and family	1037	41,70%	25,10%	33,20%

Table 3: Age groups and attitudes toward gender roles and women's employment

	<b>20 –25</b> (n=125)	<b>26 - 35</b> (n=150)	<b>36 - 45</b> (n=197)	<b>46-55</b> (n=188)	<b>56 –65</b> (n=159)	<b>66 &gt;</b> (n=216)	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean		
<b>Gender role attitudes</b> (higher score, more traditional attitudes)	10.09	11.17	11.89	12.25	14.20	14.49	31,303	0.000
<b>Attitudes toward women's employment</b> (higher scores, more negative attitudes)	16.52	17.54	19.42	19.88	21.70	22.68	39,030	0.000

Table 4: Education, place of residence at 14, religiosity and attitudes toward gender roles and women's employment

	<b>Gender role attitudes</b>	<b>Attitudes toward women's employment</b>
	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Mean</i>
<b>EDUCATION</b>		
<b>Elementary School or Less</b> (n=411)	14.40	22.53
<b>Secondary School</b> (n=489)	11.44	18.46
<b>University</b> (n=136)	10.83	17.20
<b>F – Ratio</b> (p<)	78,846 (0.000)	106,384 (0.000)
<b>RURAL/URBAN SETTING</b>		
<b>Village</b> (n=551)	13.35	18.43
<b>Town and small town</b> (n=251)	12.42	19.70
<b>Middle-sized city</b> (n=150)	11.09	17.64
<b>Large city or Capital</b> (n=79)	10.44	17.14
<b>F – Ratio</b> (p<)	24,363 (0.000)	42,371 (0.000)
<b>RELIGIOSITY</b>		
<b>Never or once a year</b> (n=212)	11.75	18.43
<b>Few times a year</b> (n=389)	12.41	19.70
<b>Few times a month</b> (n=171)	13.10	20.89
<b>Every week and few times a week</b> (n=213)	13.25	21.08
<b>F – Ratio</b> (p<)	5,765 (0.000)	11,768 (0.000)

Table 5: Correlates of attitudes toward women's employment and gender role attitudes

	<b>Gender roles attitudes</b>	<b>Attitudes toward women's employment</b>
	<i>Beta Coeff./ (p)</i>	<i>Beta Coeff./ (p&lt;)</i>
n = 1037		
Respondent's age	.249 (0.000)	.243 (0.000)
Respondent's sex	-.156 (0.000)	-.165 (0.000)
Respondent's education	-.170 (0.000)	-.206 (0.000)
Size of place of residence at 14	-.075 (0.021)	-.149 (0.000)
Mother's employment (0=non-working, 1=working)	-.088 (0.009)	-.133 (0.000)
Indicator of religious beliefs	.101 (0.001)	.144 (0.000)
F – Ratio	46,896	72,271
F – Sig.	0.000	0.000
R Square	.228	.313
Adjusted R Square	.223	.309



Table 6: Attitudes and respondent's parents' occupational status

	<b>Father's occupational status higher</b> (n=198)	<b>Equally high occupational status</b> (n=913)	<b>Mother's occupational status higher</b> (n=75)	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
	Mean	Mean	Mean		
<b>Gender role attitudes</b> (higher result, more traditional attitudes)	11.75	12.77	11.89	5,249	0.005
<b>Attitudes toward women's employment</b> (higher result, more negative attitudes)	18.53	20.37	18.27	12.832	0.000

APPENDIX

Table A1: Gender and attitudes towards gender roles and women's employment.

	<b>Male</b> (n=487)	<b>Female</b> (n=550)	<i>t</i>	<i>P</i>
	Mean	Mean		
<b>Gender role attitudes</b> (higher result, more traditional attitudes)	13.10	12.03	4,127	0.000
<b>Attitudes toward women's employment</b> (higher result, more negative attitudes)	20.62	19.28	4,175	0.000

Table A2: Mother's employment and attitudes toward women's employment and gender roles

	<b>Non-working mother</b> (n=574)	<b>Working mother</b> (n=441)	<i>t</i>	<i>P</i>
<b>Gender role attitudes</b> (higher result, more traditional attitudes)	13.61	11.07	12,371	0.000
<b>Attitudes toward women's employment</b> (higher result, more negative attitudes)	21.54	17.72	10,034	0.000

Table A3: Additional correlates of gender role attitudes and attitudes toward women's employment

	Gender role attitudes	Attitudes toward women's employment
	<i>Beta Coeff. / (p&lt;)</i>	<i>Beta Coeff. / (p&lt;)</i>
	Female respondents (n = 550)	
	Male respondents (n = 487)	
Respondent's age	.245 (0.000)	.251 (0.000)
	.216 (0.000)	.118 (0.043)
Respondent's education	-.154 (0.001)	-.212 (0.000)
	-.039 (0.512)	-.055 (0.346)
Size of place of residence at age 14	-.058 (0.186)	-.071 (0.074)
	-.090 (0.131)	-.201 (0.001)
Mother's employment (0=non-working, 1=working)	-.100 (0.026)	-.157 (0.000)
	-.056 (0.354)	-.056 (0.338)
Indicator of religious beliefs	.108 (0.006)	.148 (0.000)
	.078 (0.152)	.084 (0.111)
Spouse's (for male r.)/ own (for female r.) employment (0=housewife, 1=employed, retired, looking for work)	-.124 (0.002)	-.174 (0.000)
	-.142 (0.016)	-.222 (0.000)
F – Ratio	28.453	54.482
	9.222	14.236
P<	0.000	0.000
	0.000	0.000
R Square	.253	.402
	.153	.218
Adjusted R Square	.244	.395
	.137	.203