

Equal opportunities and gender research

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1. Introduction

There are many aspects that make the gender question a relevant subject to study. Differences in education, the labour market, lifestyle, etc. have formed the basis of numerous sociological researches. Probably, works of similar topics will be published in large numbers later on as well. A sudden increase in the popularity of gender studies in Hungary was observed in the '90s. It was the time when Hungarian researchers joined the topical trends of the international professional literature, gained unrestricted access to the western and current professional literature. Thus, with such background and knowledge basis, researchers began to study the phenomena of the Hungarian society from the point of view of gender studies. Such research topics can be easily found while analysing the Hungarian society.¹

The aim of our analysis is to create a theoretical approach to the status of women; to popularise the Hungarian trends; to extend the results of a local research. The research focuses on the districts of Hegyhát and Komló. We use two types of empirical research. Firstly, we analyse the data of the Hungarian National Assembly from the point of view of the genders (quantitative research). Secondly, on the basis of focus groups and individual interviews (conducted with women occupying senior positions) we will try to compare the similar traits of women's lives, to highlight the local peculiarities and to find out the opinion of the interviewees about the women's status in Hungary today.

Our main research problem is to analyse if the senior positions, unconventional for women in itself, results any changes in the roles and tasks in other fields of life. It is aimed to understand if alternations are present in housework or parenting. If yes, how do these changes form the family hierarchy and do they lead to conflicts? We are also interested to find out the various strategies of families and individuals; to identify if there is a pattern of their appearance linked to the background variables. The research is concerned with a situation, ambiguous at first sight, in which women in senior positions live. The relevance of our research is also supported by the overrepresentation of women in the municipalities, educational and social institutions of small settlements. Therefore, we would like to study the fact that most of these women come from lower status groups but in average perform mobility within one generation. We would like to investigate what motivated the interviewees to choose their profession, what factors made them leave their usual social background, and how would they pass their status to their children.

In the focal point of our qualitative analysis are such aspects as possible career opportunities for women, the glass ceiling phenomenon, restrictions and benefits experienced by women, and

¹ However, the studies did not discuss only the status of women and their gender role but also masculine roles as well. See more: Hadas (2011).

especially the management of family and work. We would like to find out what lifestyles emerged, out of the traditional or modern role perception.

Certainly, we are aware of the fact that our results cannot be generalised, since our interviewees come from two districts. In addition, these two districts of Baranya County are in the focal point of our analysis. However, we believe that the majority of the life situations presented by our interviewees can be compared with the results and peculiarities of other regions and counties (e.g. the peculiarities of other areas that were characterised by small settlements or industrial profile before). Moreover, we consider that the results properly reflect the phenomena of the current Hungarian society connected with gender.

Our research was conducted in the framework of the 'Pilot program for quality ageing' submitted by the municipality of Alsómocsolád to the Norwegian Financial Mechanisms in the 2009-2014 period. Even though the primary aim of the programme is to focus on the field of elderly care, it discusses also gender inequality. It is closely tied to the project, since quality ageing can only be achieved, if the challenge that women face by managing work and family gets deeper insights. Moreover, there is a considerable overlap between the target groups of the project and the women in senior positions, since, as we are going to explain further, women in senior positions are overrepresented in small settlements compared to the national proportion.

2. Theoretical frameworks and national trends

2.1 Gender roles and changes over time

In gender studies, it is crucial to differentiate between the social construction of gender and biological sex. The former presupposes roles, behavioural norms, tasks, etc. constructed by the society and later on learnt and internalised by the individual as part of the culture as a whole. Minor or major deviations from behavioural norms designed by gender may lead to role conflicts. Of vital importance is the fact that although characterised by biological aspects, the social construction of gender as a whole cannot be explained simply by biological differences.

Distinctions originating from completely different standards and expectations designed for the two genders are far more numerous. According to anthropological descriptions, gender roles in traditional or tribal societies are usually segregated (e.g. Mead 2003). There are distinct tasks for men and women to be accomplished in separate locations. There are sharp differences between the actions and tasks of the two genders (see Bourdieu's (2000) description of the Kabyle society).

The changes in gender roles that take place in different cultures and ages confirm the social but not the biological context of the term. For instance, in his typological family history, Péter Somlai (2013) by describing the traditional, class and modern family types points out the changes of the women's status as well. The tasks to be performed by women and even their expected workload in a traditional large family radically differed from those of a class family household. In addition, power relations, the decision-making power and the attitude to work all differ. It is important to note that changes of family models not only alter life conditions in man-woman relation, but also impact the children's situation in life (the less hierarchic structure of the modern family, for example, greatly affects children's situation). While analysing Péter Somlai's model, we cannot omit external contexts: the spread of the dual-earner family model, the women's policy of the socialist era or the specific involvement of women in the process of educational expansion all have an impact on gender roles. The modern family is based on a less hierarchic, more democratic and dual-earner family model.

Naturally, the national picture of gender roles is not unified. These differences can be explained by numerous sociological background variables. Generational differences are like obvious variables. In the case of the elderly, they are manifested more traditionally (what will be seen in the interviews) in the village-city differences (since the closed society of the villages is linked to the traditions much stronger, thus it is characterised by the conventions of the large family model) and the indices of the level of educational attainment.

While analysing the situation of women, we must take into consideration the relevant demographic trends. Women are having their first child later (in average at 29). Delayed childbearing is connected among other factors to the expansion of women's participation in higher education. Not only

childbearing but also marriage is delayed. In the case of women with academic degree, these events take place even later. The number of children has been declining for many generations now. The highest number of children can be observed in the poorest segments of the society. The average number per woman is far from enough for the reproduction of the society, since its rate is 1.4² (whereas the needed average for the population not to reduce is 2.1). However, most European countries are characterised by similar trends. According to the historical demographic analysis, the second part of the Hungarian demographic shift resulting in dynamic population growth did not have large outcome. Furthermore, the trend for only child began to spread from the peasant society (Andorka 2001).

For families with career-building women, the number of children and family size is a crucial issue greatly depending on the availability of help from relatives and institutions. Other changes affecting the family structure (e.g. the high rate of divorces, higher probability of the formation of one-parent- or stepfamily) form the situation of the women interviewed as well. Suffice it to say, after divorce, an earning woman is more capable of sustaining financially a single-parent household as well.

Depending on the parties' social background, we distinguish between homogeneous and heterogeneous marriages. Research on mobility connects the marriage mobility to the latter notion as well. Overall, we can say that homogenous marriages are predominant in Hungary (i.e. the spouses come from the same social background). The openness of the society is connected to the proportion of heterogeneous marriages. The mobility of the Hungarian society decreased after the millennium which has resulted in the closure of the upper middle and elite classes.³ All this has an impact on the marriage trends of women with higher status. However, it is less probable for women occupying senior positions in villages to enter a homogenous marriage. This results in a higher proportion of married couples with mixed employment structure in our sample.

It would be natural, if the spread of women's work and dual-earner family models led to more equal distribution of household chores. The higher educational level and, in the case of younger cohorts, the generational differences are more likely to present a more democratic role perception. However, Hungary is still characterised by strong traditional gender roles today. Therefore, women are loaded down (working hours, tasks to be performed etc.) twice as much, since the duration of housework in minutes indicates strong disproportions. This index is far higher than the differences measured in paid work (where men's workload is higher). The double workload results in approximately one

² <https://www.ksh.hu/docs/hun/xftp/idoszaki/mo/mo2015.pdf>

³ For instance, the fact presented by Rudolf Andorka while researching the society of the villages is connected with the openness of the '70s society. Inasmuch as most of the families had a complex employment structure. It was a *mélange* of commuting workers, workers of collective farming and local intellectuals (Andorka 1979). A restructuring of the national and local elite groups came with the end of the Communist regime in Hungary. However, the mobility opportunities became more unfavourable than in the second half of the Kádár-regime.

extra hour of free time for women, if work-like activities are to be viewed.⁴ However, the power of traditional roles is declining what results in mixed and more equal examples. All this makes changes in tasks involving childcare activities.

However, traditional role perception affects not only relationships inside families but also achievable careers. Despite the predomination of the number of women with academic degree among younger generations and a hypothesis claiming there is a “lack of men” in public and higher education (Fényes 2009), results in labour market transitions and changes remain unclear. Such data as, for example, differences in earnings are not distinct enough. However, the changes can be identified in similar positions where reasons for them are very complex. It is important to find out how much these distances depend on the motivation or destinations and on the glass ceiling that will sooner or later break women’s career. We cannot analyse women’s employment without the flexibility of the public educational institutions, availability of household support services, and the opportunity to return to work after child care allowance and child care benefit. Moreover, the glass ceiling and the external institutional and labour market contexts have not only a direct influence on career aspirations but also an indirect impact on them too. In addition, the different gender role perception of the environment can be also of preliminary and interfering factor, since the family as much as the settlement can oppose women’s plans and life goals.

2.2 Women and men in the light of statistics

One field of demographics analyses the number of men and women, their proportion in age groups. In our case, this is the first step of our analysis. The population of Hungary has been decreasing since two decades now. The current population is 9.83 Million people (as for January 2016)⁵, out of which 5.14 Million are women which is 52.3%⁶. Countries where modernisation began earlier are characterised by a higher proportion of women despite the higher birth rate of men. In many cases, the death rate of women is higher in traditional societies (most often due to birth risks), while the death rate of men is higher in developed societies. The death rate statistics of Hungarian men are relatively high. The death rate of middle-aged men is especially high compared to Western Europe. In terms of life expectancy, the advantage of women is currently 7 years (approx. 72 and 77 years). The predomination of men disappears approximately at the age group 35-40 years. The older age group is analysed, the higher is the proportion of women in it. The gender differences per cohort and the head count of the cohorts can be seen in the 2016 age structure diagram (Annex, Figure 1).

⁴ <http://www.ksh.hu/docs/hun/xftp/idoszaki/idomerleg/idomerleg0910.pdf>

⁵ Statistical data, if not mentioned, are taken from the webpage of Central Statistics Office for the 2011 period. (www.ksh.hu).

⁶ http://www.ksh.hu/apps/shop.dok?p_id=348898&p_mezo=MINTA

The higher number of widows among older women than widowers among men of the same age groups is explained by differences in expected lifespan by gender, seen in the diagram.

The educational attainment by gender is an important index. There is considerable literature on women's education and their representation in universities; however, it is not relevant in the terms of our topic. If we analyse the number of women with academic degree, according to the data of Central Statistics Office (1960-2011), and compare it with the population number of men and then of women, we can see that it increased. The educational disadvantage of women gradually disappeared so as the advantage of men. Moreover, women became overrepresented in terms of academic degrees during 2000 and 2011 (Annex, Figure 2).

The labour market status is an important indicator as well. According to the longitudinal data of the Hungarian Central Statistics Office, we can see that the employment index is lower in case of women just as the rate of unemployment. Women in the inactive category are overrepresented. Their proportion exceeds 35% (Annex, Figure 3). The labour market status corresponds with the educational attainment, i.e. the majority of people with academic degree are employed. Differences between the two genders' statistics in this category are not large (78% of men and 75% of women). However, there are more considerable changes in employment indices. Women are overrepresented among employees (81% and 87%) and less represented among employers (9.4% and 5.9%). There is one more difference in the size of the enterprise. If the enterprises led by the two genders are analysed, those led by women are usually without employees (however, the difference is not large: 70% and 73%).

Genders and employment by branch of activity are also related. Women are overrepresented in the human and health, the education and public sector (most the senior positions occupied by our interviewees belong here as well), but women predominate in the fields of trade and other services too (Annex, Figure 4).

Beáta Nagy analyses the proportion of women in senior positions in her article written after the millennium. To her mind, the index of Hungary is close to the average 35% shown by the European countries. Moreover, Hungary exceeded this index by a little after the millennium (Nagy 2005, Annex, Figure 5). According to an analysis conducted in 2015, this proportion decreased to 32%. Then again, it increased to 34% in 2016⁷. In addition to the differences in proportion of senior positions, differences in payments constitute a significant field of research. According to the data of the Hungarian Graduate Career Tracking System (GCTS), the average difference in the gross payment the genders received in 2013 was 50,000 forint (the degree of difference depended on the

⁷ <http://ado.hu/rovatok/munkaugyek/nott-a-noi-cegvezetok-aranya>

branch of activity). (Veroszta, 2015). However, payment also depends on the position occupied, agreements connected with wage bargaining and many other factors.

The issues of traditional gender roles and senior positions raise many research questions. Suffice it to mention the masculine and feminine dimensions of Hofstede's model (2008) about work. The masculine side represents competitiveness and a victory-oriented attitude, while femininity bears more social traits and is cooperation-oriented. According to the webpage connected with our research containing information on different countries, we can see that Hungary is characterised by various dimensions (e.g. long term orientation, power distance index, uncertainty avoidance, etc.), however the most peculiar one is masculinity (Annex, Figure 6). Based on the Hofstede-model, we can say that the dominant workplace culture in Hungary is characterised by competitiveness and to less extent cooperation. Thus, it is important to understand how these traits match with traditional women roles. In their work, Nagy and Vicsek (2006) show the ambivalent life situation resulting from matching senior positions with women roles, since female leadership is „softer”, more willing to compromise and more social.

One strand of our research is connected to the inequalities or equalities observed in the field of the lifestyle. For this purpose, we used the data of the Central Statistics Office for the 2009/2010 period⁸ concerning time use; moreover, we separated the statistics concerning those with academic degree. As we have already mentioned, the high level of educational attainment decreases the gender gap, increases the paid work of women and men's work-at-home period. Some blocks of the time use of degree holders are shown in Annex, Figure 7. The duration of men's overall workload is 52 minutes shorter per day than those of women's. This results a larger workload for women. Values of men's paid work are counterbalanced by time needed for housework and childcare. Men with academic degree also have more time for physiological and free-time activities. If overall workload is to be viewed from the point of levels of educational attainment, we can see that women with academic degree are in the worst situation (518 minutes per day in average, according to the data of those actually performing these tasks – Annex, Figure 8). It is important to note that the workload of genders shows non-linear relationship, if levels of educational attainment are analysed.

⁸ <http://www.ksh.hu/docs/hun/xftp/idoszaki/idomerleg/idomerleg0910.pdf>

3. Local characteristics in the perspective of the gender

The population of Baranya County was approx. 377,000 in 2013, which has been steadily declining due to emigration (this affects mainly graduates and young people), mortality and low childbirth.

Although 69% of the villages have a population of less than 500 people, the percentage distribution of population by type of settlement shows urban concentration. (39% in Pécs, 26% in smaller towns and 35% in rural settlements). The county's age structure is less favourable than the national average. 5-6 years ago, the unemployment rate was far above the national average, however, in recent years the difference decreased (10.4% in 2013). Agriculture has a more significant role in the county's profile compared to the national average, while the percentage ratio of the industry is (currently) closer to the national average (this can be explained with the transformation of the region's economic profile). In terms of GDP, recent years raised an increased leeway compared to the national average (in 2013 the value of the county made up 66% of the national average). The density of businesses is below the national values, just like the county's ability to attract foreign capital.

By analysing the demographic situation of the genders, we can see that the higher proportion of women in Baranya is above the national level (52.77%). Due to the differences in life expectancy this higher proportion of women can be seen over the age of 65 years significantly: while the proportion of the elderly men is 13.5% compared to the entire male population, for woman we can see a value of 20.4%. If we analyse the time-series data of the HCSO, and examine the proportion of graduates by gender, we will get a pattern, which is quite similar, but slightly different compared to the national trends. There were four times more graduates among men in 1960, as among women, then after a slow growth rate the proportions reversed by 2011, thanks to the participation of women in the higher educational expansion (Annex, Figure 9). The proportion of graduates is slightly over the national average – this is most likely due to the impact of the University of Pécs.

As mentioned earlier, the employment rates in the county are slightly below the national average. If we examine this in a breakdown by genders, we can see that the employment rate of the different genders shows a closer value than in the Kádár-era. The employment rate for men had been declining steadily for decades; however, only after the end of the Communist regime in Hungary became this decline drastic. The difference for women lies in an inverse curve of the longitudinal values. In 2011, approx. 32% of them were employed (Annex, Figure 10).

Borbély (2011) notes in relation to the counties and the pay gaps that the better economic indicators a county has, the larger is the distance between men and women. If we take the salary of the women in Budapest as 100%, then the national average is 78%, while Baranya County occupies only the 15

place with its 70%. At the same time, the men in Baranya fall significantly (even greater distance) behind the national average.

In the context of female leader's proportion, Baranya is in the mid-range, and the change, which was characteristic for the boost of the female leader's proportion between 2015 and 2016, was not represent in the county – in fact, the measurements showed a decline of two percent.⁹

At the end of our chapter discussing the local peculiarities, we take those points of the theoretical frameworks into account, which will in our opinion form the position of the women in leadership roles. Since our interviewees were recruited from the regions of Hegyhát and Komló, the traditional gender roles are presumably at a much higher degree represent– in particular for older interviewees living in rural settlements. Here – as we have seen in Rudolf Andorka's analysis of the rural society – we expected a greater presence of families with mixed employment rates. The former industrial and current heavily agricultural profile of the region predicts a higher number of participants in social mobility among the interviewees. New economic branches – such as education or local administration – will open for women, who live in smaller settlements and small towns. We also need to take into account that those services and possibilities, that make the coordination of the women's careers and the family more convenient, are less available in smaller settlements (e.g.: babysitter, food delivery, etc.).

In recent years these two district's settlements gave venue for our research regarding micro-settlements. Váradi's (2013) study draws a clear picture about the settlement Tormás, of the Hegyhát district. The study describes those phenomena plastically, which characterize the everyday life of the lagging region's and crisis area's micro settlements, involving the factors that generate significant labour market tensions: economic reconstruction after the regime change, the dissolution of collective farms, the proliferation of undeclared work, the lack of required resources for commuting (e.g.: a car) and the factors, that hinder the commuting. The study analyses the livelihood strategies of the households (in which the public work and various aids play important roles) and the ethnic dividing lines, and tries to create a typology based on the life situation.

Similar descriptions have been made about Baranya County's southern region Sellyei district, where a handful of micro settlements can be found. Here, the situation of the micro settlements was more difficult due to their close location to the border, inasmuch as the region lay alongside the Yugoslavian border before the end of the Communist regime in Hungary. The characteristic absence of cities, the relatively less urbanized centres, the frequency of dead-end villages, the unique ethnical relationships (Swabian and Roma minorities), the "struggle" of the cities for the leading status, the formation of services relying on multi-purpose micro-regional associations around the millennium

⁹ <http://ado.hu/rovatok/munkaugyek/nott-a-noi-cegvezetok-aranya>

presented such life situations, which can be related to our analysed research locations in many ways. Virág (2008) highlights in her study the crucial role of the educational institutions in the life of the settlements and refers to the mechanisms of segregation, which evolved because of the local schooling and the educational mobility of the surrounding settlements. The studies address the issues regarding the relationship of the Boyash population with the public schools and forms of assimilation and prejudice, which can be grasped with the taken interviews (Virág 2008, Feischmidt 2008 Szabolcska (2008) conducted a qualitative research that encompasses the range of careers accessible to women in the disadvantaged districts and their limited nature as well as the surfacing system of the disadvantages that simply cannot be analysed. In this case, in addition to the disadvantaged situation – according to the author – gender disadvantages add up, so women, who live in small settlements get into a much harder situation, than their husband's/partner's situation.¹⁰

¹⁰ Even though we did not logically meet such situations regarding women in our own research, similar aspects were present in the descriptions of women's situations in these settlements.

4. Methodical frameworks

Two basic techniques were used during our research. The research area was the issue of female equality in case of both methodical technic however; during the quantitative analysis we undertook the analysis of the 2014 parliamentary and autonomous elections. In doing so we used the database of the Hungarian National Election Office.¹¹ Our aim was to investigate the election of the women on a national level, than to focus on the received data about Baranya County, and to try to find an explanation for the various differences. Special attention was paid to the analyzation of the obtained data by the different types of settlements. The reason for this was the micro settlement structure of the area.

The other group of information gained during our research was obtained by qualitative techniques. Mainly individual and focus group interview techniques were applied, in which the rules of the semi-structured query were considered to be the most proper. The main draft points of the interviews concerned the family background, the milestones of the individual careers, the educational career, the family structure, the division of domestic work, the opinion about the female leaders, the gender based characteristics of the settlements, the generational differences and the national context of the women's role.

The interviewees were selected from the female leaders of the Hegyhát and Komló districts. We had the opportunity to ask the opinion of mayors, notaries, executives of associations, directors of institutions, and less commonly, women, who were involved in the politics in county level. Since the interviewees live in different settlements, we made mainly individual interviews, whereas in other cases, where more females in leading positions were available at the same location (e.g.: at local authorities) we recorded focus group interviews. The conversations were recorded via Skype and by phone at the end of October and in November 2016. The interviews were based on the same interview scheme, but we adapted to individual endowments (e.g.: the respondents had no children, had insight to the higher levels of politics, etc.). At the end of November the interviews were supplemented with a written questioning.

During the recording of the focus group interviews, we considered Vicsek Lilla's (2006) book titled *Fókuszcsoport* (Focus Group) as authoritative, and in case of the individual interviews the creation of normal semi-structured sociological interviews. We contacted a total of 50 people in two districts of Baranya County. (The second document of the Annex contains the list of settlements, where the interviewees are working or come from). Representativeness was not our goal; however, we believe that the obtained data can be used more widely due to the high numbers of the qualitative research. The first document of the annex contains the scheme of the individual and focus group interviews.

¹¹ <http://valasztas.hu/#>

The question blocks make up the main threads of our research. The typical or individual standpoints are demonstrated with quotations (these can be found in the document in italics with in quotation marks). Our goal during the analysis of the interviews was to compare the results with the previously outlined theoretical framework and the interpretation of the opinions and narratives in a way, which is based on theoretical foundations. In our study we tried to combine the quantitative and qualitative results and to reflect on the relations disclosed by the other technique during the use of the two methods.

5. Quantitative research results – analysis of the election results

In one of her studies, Katalin Koncz (2014) summarises the political participation of women after the end of the Communist regime in Hungary. In her study, she highlights that the change of regime resulted a greater exclusion of women from politics – not only in our country, but in all countries of the region in a similar way. The process, however, continued in the subsequent period after the change of regime, and the election of 2014 produced the lowest female proportions. “The position of women in parliament was determined by the candidate nomination practices and win rate of the winning party. Most parties preferred male candidates; a greater proportion of them were nominated in individual constituencies and the national lists as well and men were provided with better rankings in the lists – summarises the scholar the explanation for the shift in the proportions in her study (Koncz, 2014: 513). This is contrary to the processes taking place in other regions of the world – says the author. In 2014, only 9.5% of the members of the parliament were female, while this proportion was 24.6% in Bulgaria, and even Romania had a proportion of 13.5%. Figure 11 of the Annex demonstrates the percentage of the female members in the parliaments – Hungary shows different data, which are on the same level in the region as those of Ukraine, can be seen in the figure.

The causes of the phenomenon are complex: on the one hand, the political parties are less willing to designate female candidates, but on the other, all signs indicate that citizens are less willing to elect women. This can be described with the recurring statement in the interviews, that women are less willing to stand for these political functions, (for the reason behind this they mentioned the lifestyle, which the life of a politician requires, that – according to their opinion – makes the family- and childcare more difficult.) on the other hand, the “masculine” and competitive characteristics of the politics, which is further away from the traditional female (we would like to refer here to Hofstede’s masculinity category). The analyses also show that the role of women in politics cannot only be provided by examining the proportions, but by their government positions. The government formed after the elections of 2014 had no female members. We can find seven women among the state secretaries, one among the commissioners, and 20 among the deputy state secretaries, which represent 12, 3.2 and 20% respectively.¹²

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¹² Based on the calculations of vs.hu.

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In her above mentioned study, Koncz (2014) calculated the proportion of individual female candidates in parties with a national list and summarised relevant results. According to this, the party FIDESZ-KDNP had a proportion of 5.7%, Jobbik 7.5%, MSZP-Együtt-DK-PM-MLP 17% and only the party LMP had a proportion of more than 20% (21.7%). The percentages for national lists are somewhat higher, but proportions above the 30% mark cannot be found among the larger parties (FIDESZ-KDNP 18.6%, Jobbik 9.9%, MSZP-Együtt-DK-PM-MLP 21.7%, LMP 24.2%). However, according to these percentage indicators, getting into the parliament is not guaranteed, because the position on the lists of utmost importance – if women are at the end of the list, their chance to get into the parliament is much smaller.¹³ The author examined the positions filled by women among the parliamentary parties, and came to the conclusion, that it is not a coincidence, that in 2014 two out of five representatives in the party LMP are women, because the positions vary between men and women on their list (Koncz 2014). In 2010, LMP recorded in their statement, that every third position shall be filled by women.¹⁴

As a result of the election of 2014 we can only find seven female mayors in large settlements (county seats, cities with county rights and settlements with a population above 20 000). Only 3 women became part of the Municipality of Budapest (which has 33 members). Only one woman became president of a district in Budapest (Hassay Zsófia, mayor of District 6, thus also the member of the general assembly and the candidate of the FIDESZ-KDNP). If we examine the gender ratio in general assembly of the individual countries, we can find the most balanced gender indicators in Vas county, where their proportion reaches 20% (the national data remains slightly below 12%).

If we investigate the settlements with a population above 10,000 inhabitants, we can see that there are no female leaders in the cities of 11 counties – including Baranya and Somogy county, while we can find one female mayor in Tolna County (in Tolna, where the mayor is the candidate of the FIDESZ-KDNP– Annex, Figure 12).¹⁵

¹³ The study calls the women, who are „hidden” in the rear sections „quota women”

http://www.ideaintezet.hu/sites/default/files/hol_vannak_hol_lesznek_a_nok_IDEA.pdf

¹⁴ http://www.ideaintezet.hu/sites/default/files/hol_vannak_hol_lesznek_a_nok_IDEA.pdf

¹⁵ Based on the calculations of vs.hu.

The total number of the county assemblies is 418 including 48 women. Women did not get into four general assemblies (e.g.: Somogy County assembly). We can find a proportion over 20% in only two counties (In Zala and Veszprém County).¹⁶

In Baranya County, the general assembly has 19 members. Women are represented by three persons, and with this value the county is slightly above the national average. One of these three persons scored a mandate as the FIDESZ-KDNP' candidate, one as a Jobbik's, and one as an MSZP's respectively.¹⁷

Seven people ran for the mayor's position in Pécs, including a woman, who was the candidate of the FORUM-MSZP-EGYÜTT-DM (and finished on the second place with 28.02% of the votes). Dr Zsolt Páva, the candidate of the Fidesz-KDNP, became the mayor. In seven out of the city's 19 constituencies, the elections were won by a woman (all seven were candidates of FIDESZ-KDNP). In addition, the local government has two female members from other parties, so in overall, the female candidate's proportion is above 34%, which is an especially high proportion. If we compare the data with other major cities of Hungary, we can see that Pécs has the most well-balanced council among the Hungarian major cities, regarding the gender composition.¹⁸

In Sásd – the centre of the Hegyhát district – the mayoral elections were won with 41% of the votes by a woman, who ran as an independent candidate. The local government was formed by six members including one independent female candidate. The local government in Komló has 13 members including six women (who are candidates of the FIDESZ-KDNP and the MSZP-DK). Six people ran for the mayor's title (including two women), and a man became the mayor eventually, who was delegated by FIDESZ-KDNP (the women candidate as independent or with the support of the party MSZP-DK. There are no other settlements with city status in the Komló district; however in the Hegyhát district Mágocs can be mentioned. The small town with approx. 2,400 inhabitants is governed by a female mayor, and two independent candidates can be found in the six-member body. Although the results of the two settlements cannot be compared, it can be stated that women are participating in the local politics above the national average proportion, and in the smaller towns (in Sásd and Mágocs) political activity independent from political parties is more preferred.¹⁹ Our qualitative interview research confirms this political behaviour.

¹⁶ Based on the calculations of vs.hu

¹⁷ In Baranya county the, FIDESZ-KDNP's general assembly list had 13 members, including one woman. Marietta Pohl was featured on the fourth position, and got into the general assembly.

¹⁸ In Debrecen, for example, there are only three women among the 24 constituency representatives and only men were included as the representatives of the parties in the local council. Five out of 20 candidates are females in Miskolc, and the party's candidates are entirely men. Three out of 20 constituencies in Szeged are led by women, and there are no female candidates among the party representatives.

¹⁹ This cannot only be stated on the basis of the election's winners, but also on the basis of the candidates e.g.: all women in Mágocs ran as independent candidates. The same pattern can be found in Sásd.

Ilonszky (2014), analyses the proportion of female mayors, and their relationship with the scale of the settlement. It reveals from his study that the proportion of female managers increased slowly but surely until 2010, when it reached 18%. If we investigate this proportion with the help of scale of the settlements, we can see that the higher we go on the settlements hierarchy scale, the less is the proportion of the female mayors. While their proportion in settlements where the population is below 1,000 inhabitants is 21%, in case of settlements with more than 10,000 inhabitants, only 7% were governed by women. The rates after the elections of 2014 showed small improvement, but the proportion of female mayors remained still under 20%, and most of this proportion works in settlements with a population below 3000.²⁰

A greater emphasis was placed on the political participation of the women in micro settlements during our analysis. One of the main reasons for this is that our empirical research was conducted in the Koml6 and Hegyh6t districts, and this characterises both administrative units' settlement pattern. We separated the settlements with smaller population than 200 (there are 10 such settlements in the Hegyh6t district and four in the Koml6 district) and the local political leaders were analysed based on four criteria:

- is the mayor female?
- if so, was she an independent candidate or did she receive party support?
- what is the proportion of women in municipalities?
- are the women in the local assemblies independent or were they nominated with party support?

According to the results, four out of 10 settlements are governed by a woman, which indicates a 50% rate. All of these women ran for this position as independent candidates, without any connection to parties. 38% of district's government representatives in the micro settlements are female, which is a much higher proportion, than the national average. All but one woman ran as independent candidates on the elections in the Hegyh6t districts micro settlements.

Among the villages of the Koml6 district, that have a population of less than 200, the proportion of female mayors is 25% (one out of four villages is governed by a woman). However, the gender composition among the deputies is more balanced, 50% to be exact (there was an example of a settlement, where the mayor works with an all-female establishment. All but one woman ran as independent candidate in the elections in the Hegyh6t district's micro settlements.

²⁰ The calculations are based on articles of the web-portal origo.hu: <http://www.origo.hu/itthon/20141030-macsovidek-budapest.html>

There was one micro settlement in each of the two districts respectively, where there's no woman, neither among the mayors, nor among the deputies: in the Hegyhát district Vázsnok, while in the Komló district Szárász – where the population is only 25 – fell under this category.

The main results of the previous and our qualitative analysis suggests that women in the national levels of the Hungarian political life are underrepresented and their proportion in the parliament and in the peak positions of executive functions is low. The years after the regime change resulted more descending trends in this area (e.g.: there is currently no female minister in the Hungarian government). Women are demonstrably more in the rear and middle region of the party lists, so a greater parliamentary participation for women can only be expected in case of a party's overwhelming victory. LMP is the only Hungarian party, which documented in the statutes, that every third position shall be filled by a woman.

We found one female mayor in the county seat of Baranya and in the cities of the extensively examined districts (typically in the smallest settlement). However, the women's proportion in the general council. Where they run with party support, their proportion is above the nation average. By analysing the situation of the smaller villages, we get much more balanced image regarding the aspect of gender. On one hand we can see the higher proportion of the female mayors and councillors; on the other hand we can see the dominance of the independent candidates. However, this is the national context, because in smaller settlements the party politics are rather neglected, and this tendency is typical for the male politicians of the local scenes. One of our interviewees, who is also politicising on county level, and is a municipal Council, noted, that in the field of local politics party politics does not engage, so it can be sad that it is not even infiltrated the local government.

6. The results of interview-based research

The second bigger methodological unit of our study is made up of qualitative research. We used focus-group and individual interviews in this part of our work. The conversations were conducted with a set of questions, however, we also adapted to individual life circumstances, consequently; the interviewing process was not the same in each case. Five of the interviews conducted are included in the Annex in shortened versions.

6.1 Family backgrounds' investigation and the beginning of careers

As we mentioned in the theoretical part, the expansion of educational attainment and the phenomenon of social mobility are related to each other. It was in the 1970s that the completion of secondary education became general, while the 1990s can be characterised with the spreading of higher educational qualification. In many cases, people getting involved in the expansion of such qualifications did not come from a middle-class background. The level of the Kádár-era's leaders' educational attainment (both on national and local stages) increased in the last years of socialism, however, many employees; especially the senior staff from smaller settlements completed only a lower level of education. The traces of this phenomenon can also be discovered in interviewees' lives. First-generation intellectuals and individuals in whose life changes, referred to as intragenerational mobility occurred, can be found in an increased rate among people currently holding the leading position. The interviewees' parents are frequently miners, workers at agricultural cooperatives and they rarely have higher social status (for example, chemical engineers or public administration employees). Intragenerational mobility is also a frequent phenomenon; a substantial part of respondents was appointed to a leader position first and it was only after the appointment that they caught up with their position in terms of their education too (for example, unskilled teachers graduate then they are invited to hold the leading position or the graduation of employees in the local council then in the city hall). In the latter case, the final and the highest level of education is completed in part-time programmes, which requires the understanding and help of the whole family (husbands, children, parents, mothers-in-law etc.). A smaller part of the interviewees, however, do not have a diploma (evidently, we found examples for this among mayors and municipal representatives, not among employees in public education). The lifestyle of respondents highly demonstrate the signs of rural life, besides, the elements referring to the cultivation of kitchen gardens or livestock farming show up in almost all cases (e.g. the task of chopping wood in the distribution of housework). The signs referring to classical metropolitan, higher status are less perceptible (for instance, theatre-going), however, in case of certain interviewees these signs prove to be recurrent elements of life.

It is important to see that certain respondents do not define their work position as an actual leading position and this phenomenon is obviously more typical in smaller settlements. (One of the mayors emphasized that her work is not merely intellectual- when there is a lack of public works labourers, she helps mowing the lawn.)

In terms of beginning a career, two main ways evolved in the narratives. One of them is based on perseverance and commitment, and this one regards fulfilled careers as the result of work-centred lifestyle. (We asked the interviewees about the qualities to which they owe their career and they scarcely mentioned talent, intelligence, instead, the emphasis was placed on perseverance and a significant capacity for work.) Considering this way, the respondents set the desired careers as targets for themselves and seriously prepared to reach them (e.g. a headmaster coming from a blue-collar household imagined herself as a teacher already in the age of seven). The other way which evolved in narratives could be characterised by the term involvement. In this case, getting into higher positions did not depend on whether the interviewee set it as a target; instead, it depended on others' encouragement and invitation to hold the position (for example, local government representatives invite her and recommend running for the mayor's office).

The fulfilled careers often include detours and twists. Change of residence and status are common, and in many cases, blue-collar jobs or jobs in the field of services either interrupt the leading position or run in parallel with them (for example, manicurists dealing with acrylic nail building who are also local politicians at the same time, bartenders etc.). The ways of fulfilled careers are specific also in terms of the field of work the respondent managed to hold a position in. Most of the interviewees are working in public administration and education (less frequently in positions related to community culture or to tenders); only one respondent mentioned the management of a personally owned company (which is an inherited family business and not a personally founded company).²¹

“The idea of leadership comes naturally. I believe that I have always held some kind of a leading position in my whole life, in primary school, in secondary school, and actually, I loved doing it. I was interested in the association's life, I had ideas, suggestions, and when my predecessor decided to entrust me with the position, I was invited to hold it. I was invited by him and by others too. And the association decided in a completely proper election.” (head of an association)

“I was working at the micro-regional association, then, I was on maternity leave for a very long time. Then, I was unemployed, later not even that. But I decided to try it (to be a mayor). The idea came from earlier times when I used to be the vice mayor. And how did the mayor take it? Well... (laughing).” (mayor)

²¹ It must be added that the interviewee held leading position in the public sector earlier.

“I was a teacher and then came the mess about the change in regime. The headmaster had to resign and the person who would have been appointed to succeed him was somebody who we could not accept sincerely. The community invited me to hold the position as I had been working there. As everybody supported me, I accepted the request. I had to face the local politics of the time because it was held that the head of the school had to be a man. But my answer was that I would be even better.” (headmaster)

“I was born here and that is where the idea of running for the mayor’s office came from. I started community organizing as a leader of little drummers [the fellowship of Hungarian primary school students during the 1950s-60s] already in the age of 12. Then came the “KISZ” period [Hungarian Communist Youth League]. Later I was chosen to be a councillor, then in 1985 an alderman. All evolved gradually.” (mayor)

“I did not have a job at that time, I felt myself useless. I was married; our marriage lasted for 25 years. My husband was working in the construction sector and he earned more money. We had been living separately from each other for two and a half year. When our relationship came to an end, he shouted at me many times that I depended on him. And I am here partly because I wanted to prove that I am capable of leading a village as well.” (mayor)

6.2 The frames of family life (husbands, children, parents)

Typically, our interviewees had families, and were married. It was the case in almost everyone’s life at the beginning of their career, however, the tendencies that can be in connection with the altering of Hungarian family structures are also perceptible among them, since we found examples of divorces and stepfamilies, besides, in one case, there was an example of a durable partnership which did not mean common household management, however. In cases of younger interviewees, we found that some of them have not had a partnership yet (but wanted to have).

Considering the number of children, we can assert that extended family models are not typical. In most cases, the respondents did not mention but two children and it was quite rare that they had four or five children. We recorded more cases when health problems hindered the interviewees from starting a family. In such instances, we found that the respondent tried to reduce the emptiness, the incapacity of bearing a child caused, by choosing teaching career or other social or community work beyond their profession. Living their life without children, however, was not the result of a pre-determined decision in either case. One of the interviewees, who unsuccessfully tried to start a family with her husband for a long time, decided to adopt a child.

Having a child, especially a small child, makes it more difficult to fulfil the roles and tasks the leading position requires. One of the respondents regularly takes her nearly one-year-old child to the city hall and she is working under such circumstances (as a mayor). In other cases, the marked switch,

which was the result of the additional tasks coming from having a child, appeared in narratives. The logistics of everyday life, the children's home-school commute in small settlements require the joined force of the family, including the grandparents (at places where they are living at an approachable distance). Considering the family structure, it is even more typical that younger generations seek jobs abroad, while in other cases, they do not start an own family not even around the age of thirty, instead, under the heading extended period of adolescence, they are still living with their parents. Having a small child is the period with the most challenges while one is holding a leading position and rearing a child, however, the hardships decrease gradually with children's growth (in most cases, they are involved in the housework, they become self-supplying by the side of whom studying at night is possible, for example if the parent is taking part in part-time studies).

The frequency of heterogeneous marriages can also be recorded. The profession and status of husbands in certain cases are below the wives' position and income which, according to the interviewees, does not cause serious conflicts in partnerships, however, in some instances it entails some kind of compensation (e.g. the husband did extra work in order to have as much income as his wife). Homogeneous marriages are also influenced by the characteristics of smaller settlements' residents.

"My one-and-a half-year-old daughter is usually with me during the day (when I am performing my tasks as a mayor). Now, she is not here but with my mother-in-law who is, fortunately, retired. In case I have to arrange something where I cannot take her with myself, I take her to her grandmother. Here, the daily work routine does not call for passing (the child) off to someone. I wouldn't want to do so either." (mayor)

"I do not cook every day. Sometimes I bring food home from the community kitchen, because the meals are pretty good. If I learn that the lunch is going to be something delicious, I order as well. The grandparents help too. There are no advertisements either (about babysitters, cleaners etc.). We had neighbours earlier I could leave my daughter with, but they moved away from here." (mayor)

"I get up before six o'clock to prepare or to cook lunch. My working time begins at seven o'clock. I go home at noon and if I did not manage to finish preparing the lunch, I finish it then. My day at work would end at four o'clock in the afternoon but I usually finish before six o'clock or half past six. There are days when I cook while on other days I do not. I do the laundry, put out the clothes to dry and prepare dinner. I go to bed around ten o'clock or half past eleven. When the grandparents were still living, they could help a lot." (entrepreneur)

“Well, housework is carried out in an incredibly unfair way. It is what men would say because they also have to do some housework. My presence is the most negligible in the family at the moment... They can be asked to take part in cooking and cleaning (the husband and the son). I do not have to care about the laundry, except ironing and disposing clothes at the end. Yet, they must be asked to do these... Sometimes we order food. But there are cases when I cook at night; it is not unimaginable at all. When I am working on tenders it does not matter whether the broth is cooked meanwhile or not. My whole life is like a puzzle board. But for me, for example, my husband brings lunch. He goes home during lunchtime, warms up my lunch and brings it to me each day. In these cases, I am at the very bottom of the Maslow pyramid. And he helps me, takes care of me. However, it is not typical in the village... My son found it interesting in grammar school that it does not work the same way everywhere. For example, when it was his father who took part in the parent-teacher conference; teachers were the ones who found it curious and not students. But our relatives were a bit shocked too concerning these things, for instance, why my husband is cooking.” (leader of an association)

“Concerning the distribution of housework, there was not any problem because it was my task. Whether is it fair or not? Well, it does not matter whether it is fair, I did it. I grew up in an extended family where all family members had their own task... My mother became ill and someone had to do the tasks. At least, I could be someone.” (mayor)

“However, my husband is a bit angry with me because according to him our child is only a baby yet, so I should spend more time at home (the interviewee’s husband usually looks after the baby because of the wife’s job). But in case I have to go somewhere because I have things to do, then, naturally he helps me.” (leader of a civil society organisation)

“Earlier my mother and others who had time helped us (in the housework). The grandmother cooked for me too. Later, she did not do so. I did the laundry and the clean-up when I had time. I did not need too much sleep; I did very well with only a few hours of sleep too. I had to get used to it. For many years I had only 4-5 hours of sleep at night. I drank a lot of coffee then, but I had to stop doing that because it affected my heart quite badly.” (mayor)

“This can be managed only by the help of the other party. If my mother cooks on Sunday, she does so in a way we have something to eat on Monday. We have flexible working hours, we get up early and go to bed late... For example, yesterday I was writing my German homework during frying breaded cutlets... I launch a washing machine program which finishes by the time I wake up. Then, I get up and put out the clothes to dry.” (mayor)

“I get up at four o’clock. I make breakfast for my husband each day, I fry some “hurka” [Hungarian sausage-like food] or something else for him to take it to work. I set fire and pile up some firewood. I go back to sleep at six o’clock, then, I get up again at seven o’clock. I cook every day, we rarely eat left-overs.” (mayor)

6.3. The harmonisation of working and having a family

In most cases, harmonising work with family life is extremely overwhelming. This dual commitment is further complicated by intragenerational mobility²² which, in many instances, meant the attainment of newer educational qualifications. Husbands' help was inevitable during part-time study consultations which meant more days of absence, while in other instances, due to the ineffective transport system, it was the husband who carried and fetched the wife in case she had an exam. Adult education, however, proves to be an example to be followed for children and its feed-back makes interviewees feel that this was all worthwhile.

The harmonisation of family life and housework, and the distribution of tasks depend on the interpretation of gender roles basically. The question is to what extent spouses constitute these norms, and in case they do so, what impact it has in isolated communities of smaller settlements. Fundamentally, as it turns out on the basis of the interviews, there are two ways of sharing the household burdens. For the most part, we found example of traditional thinking and interpretation which is combined with a greater separation of female and male jobs and thus places heavier burden on women. By mentioning their parents' example, the respondents often referred to the fact that the distribution of housework was even more unequal a generation ago. When the interviewees had to answer the question what percentage of the housework is done by them, the answer was usually around 70%. The most interesting characteristic of the phenomenon, however, was not the unequal distribution but the attitude to this phenomenon which could be described with the following attributes: resignation, being rarely positive, besides, identifying with the additional burdens and also accepting them. When asking them about the reasons, the interviewees mainly referred to the parents' example. This is what they were born into, and although they feel that it is unbeneficial for them, they accept the system of housework distribution as it is. Women endure more, they are more persistent, as it is held, and thus, it is natural that they do more housework at home as well. In other cases, gender roles alter and burdens are distributed more evenly. In such instances, the husbands take part in works typically carried out by women like cooking, vacuum cleaning and other activities. Still, the estimated rate did not fall under 50%.

The phenomenon of dual commitment can be clearly drawn from the interviews. Cooking at dawn or late in the evening so as to serve freshly prepared lunch for the family seems to be typical. Some of the interviewees get up at four o'clock in the morning to serve freshly prepared breakfast for their husband, after that, they go back to sleep at six o'clock until seven o'clock, then, they head to work.

²² We call that phenomenon intragenerational mobility when, in his/her own career, a person manages to move between social classes.

Dual commitment is supplemented with the characteristics of the so-called “sandwich generation” too, which means the provision of parents while helping their own young but more than twenty-year-old children. One of the respondents cooks not only in her own household besides working as well, but prepares and takes warm food to her independent, more than twenty-year-old daughter.

Certain services make the harmonisation of work and family life significantly easier. A part of them is available in an institutionalised form (for example, canteen services), while the other part is functioning incorporated into black economy (for instance, babysitters, cleaners). However, the characteristics of the settlement network limit the access to these services (there are no advertisement of this kind and no canteen service in the settlement etc.), in other cases, respondents refuse to use these opportunities. Only a smaller part of the interviewees mentioned the usage of such services.

When having been questioned about the residential area they are living in, respondents referred to it as a place where traditional roles prevail and female participation in employment is also dominant. Most women in the region are working and in many cases, commuting is the only way they can solve to get to the workplace since in smaller settlements only a few employment opportunities are available. Even if they stay at home, it does not happen out of their own free will but due to the lack of working facilities. Only a smaller number of interviews show the unwillingness of women to enter the labour market, and the head of an educational institution told that soon after having brought down the school-leaving age to sixteen, a number of girls started a family intentionally in order to finish their studies as soon as possible. Those who were questioned about younger generations highlighted the spreading of more modern approaches to gender roles, however, their own viewpoint considering this approach reflected the lack of understanding to certain extent – for instance, according to one of the interviewees, her daughter is in a very convenient situation as her husband launches even the washing machine and the dishwasher instead of her. As they see, gender roles change from one generation to the next. They find the way these roles are played in big cities more democratic. One of the drawbacks of modern roles seems to be the continuous stress and workload, thus, there remains less time to spend with the family than it is desired.

Naturally, the fifty interviews we conducted demonstrate different interpretations of roles and different life circumstances too. Each has individual patterns; however, certain patterns are regularly echoed and repeated. Evidently, these do not cover all possible variations; still, they present something like the ideal types of the region’s female leaders. The types we have identified were the followings:²³

²³ In this case, we leave the differentiation between retired and still working people out of consideration.

- middle-aged or older women from small settlements possessing traditional approach to gender roles (a group, mainly consisting of lower-positioned or “quasi” leading-positioned members, which accepts the significantly overwhelmed life of women and explains it with traditions)
- a group of young villagers with modern characteristics (earlier, members could be typified by educational and settlement mobility; household tasks are distributed between the spouses)
- women, mainly holding higher positions, who have traditional approach to gender roles and also identify with them, they live in small cities and could be characterised with being rather conservative and religious
- women possessing rather modern way of thinking; in their household there are signs of the reversing of gender roles (for the most part, they hold a higher position and usually earn more money than their husband)
- a democratic group mainly consisting of older members whose life circumstances prove to be equal and who share the burdens with their husbands. In most cases, the members’ career began before the change in regime.

“I know that in one family, at least as I heard it, the husband works more (does more housework) than the wife. And I can imagine it only in one or two families that the husband helps in the housework. However, it is not so typical. I think women are resigned to this situation and to do these things. And that it is normal, however, I am not sure that it is normal.” (mayor)

“The price of the machines which help women’s work should be reduced. We purchased them quite soon. For example, the dishwasher came from a German sold out kitchen equipment that we brought home. It happened at a time when it was considered something new; nobody else had such machine in the village then. Other things in which one can help... For example, I find child day-care centres very useful. When I started to work, I could fetch my children at half past four and they had already been sitting with their coat on, with their bags on their shoulders and they looked at me (the employees) disgustedly.” (entrepreneur)

I think Hungarians do not form prejudices. It’s true that there are professions that could not be done by women. But it feels so good to see, for example, when a woman is driving a truck. Now there are also female bus drivers, we saw them in Pécs. It was rare twenty years ago but I believe that men are the ones who have problems with all this. I know a woman who works as a welder.” (mayor)

“We can start a career at whatever field we want to, only we have to fight for it. My future profession can be considered a masculine profession; I’m going to be an agricultural engineer. It was hard to accept it in my milieu but I proved that I have the necessary skills to do it. I know a female professor who is a mechanical engineer and a female politician with the same profession. So we can become what we want, but unfortunately, we have to show more proof and achieve 120%.” (representative)

“At a younger age, our opinion was rather one-sided and rigid. I could not really identify with the role I should play in starting a family and as a mother because these did not motivate me yet, instead, the roles played by men which seemed rather “ace” for me. My husband also insisted much more on the roles played by men, for example, earlier he could not really image himself to help me in the housework. Now, there are more common tasks and a bigger emphasis is placed on common interest.” (leader of an institution)²⁴

“In my family, it was my father who (told that our life had not been based on traditional way of thinking about roles). There were times when we used to work for 10-12 hours, besides, there was the work we took home and also the weekend. It made things difficult, and additionally there was the housework as well. But then he realized that it is what I like doing.” (leader of a civil society association)

“The advantage of traditional role is that women can stay at home for almost three years which is quite important in children’s upbringing so as to form early bonding with them. I cannot imagine how Western European women can continue working six weeks after giving birth to their children. The disadvantage is that the father does not have the possibility to experience infant-care and the mother’s labour market opportunities decline due to staying at home for three years.” (leader of an institution)

6.4. Female leaders – female politicians

Most of the interviewees think female and male leaders are different. They also think the main difference is that female leaders are more empathic, pay more attention to the feelings of the subordinates by seeking compromises much more than male leaders. As for workplace equipment, aesthetics is more important for them and they do not always make rational decisions. Male leaders, including mayors, prefer focusing on tenders and showy results, thus, they have other views about success. Looking back at their careers, it’s about half of the respondents that refer to affairs in which they felt to be discriminated as women. (One of the women surveyed had a great number of

²⁴ Another respondent, who does not have a child yet, told that although her approach to the roles played in the household could be described as modern at that moment, when she would have a child, her attitude would surely change to more traditional. Consequently, one’s approach concerning played roles cannot only change from traditional to modern within one’s career.

sentences received in situations like this, e.g. at career choice: „A woman should not be a farmer, that’s a male profession.” Turning to female students a male professor at the university said: „What are you doing here? You’re gonna fail, anyway. Why did you come here? You don’t have high chances.” At elections: „What is this girl doing here?”)

It’s important to stress that this opinion is not general. It’s not even general that the respondents see any difference between male and female earnings. Reason for this phenomenon may be that most of the interviewees are employed in the public sector with fixed scales and salaries resulting not from wage negotiations.

According to our quantitative analysis, there is a high rate of female mayors in small towns analysed. They do not consider it to be surprising for working as a mayor in smaller communities is much more different. It is a must to have close human relations so as to be aware of the problems of the town’s whole population. Holding the leading position in this situation is not especially about the leading position itself but about its social and cultural-related aspects. As the tasks required are of a character with specialities more compatible with female leading features, women – according to the interviewees – perform them more successfully. Most of the people surveyed think that it is what results in the over-representation of women in this area.

Reason for the high level of participation of women as leaders may be the specific ethnic make-up. The Swabian attitude – residents of Swabian settlements claim – provides more opportunities for women to build a career. Though, it may turn to a back-to-front situation, as there were many of these families – as a result of the more advanced status of women - facing the situation in which men stopped living their former, work-centred lifestyle, respondents reported.

People participated in this survey responded in different ways to the question why women are neglected in the Hungarian politics. A fraction of the interviewees think party politics is not for women. By that they mean that they do not have the necessary skills for it but they do not find it an honourable and transparent world for women to feel comfortable in. Another reason for staying away is family, as family life simply cannot be accommodated with travelling and duties going with mainstream politics. Certain references visualize a kind of glass ceiling in the parties which actually stop women. The opinion of one of the interviewees, who has been involved in politics at county level, was fundamental. She does not think to have been underprivileged as a woman yet, and her colleagues explicitly respect the achievements of women in politics, knowing that combining different tasks means a huge burden for them. Everyone in this survey agreed on one thing, if more women participated at higher level of politics, there would be considerably changes in decisions in fields like social areas, issues in connection with children and family allowances etc. More traditional

gender roles have an impact on selecting women at the same time: women do not really vote for other women, respondents say.

The interviews ended with individual plans for the future. Typically, everybody mentioned family-related elements like the birth of grandchildren, the beginning of new partnership, the upbringing and schooling of children and schooling, but they did not really refer to work-related moments. Obtaining further qualifications has been an option of fewer people (though, some want to make up for their missing secondary education, others aim at getting a university degree), but professional plans also outlined like concrete tenders, projects and important developments for towns. Other people are about to move from public administration to the private sector to make their abilities grow.

An important phenomenon emerging in many interviews has been the uncertainty in the public sector, as it appeared in almost all small town local authorities. The mayors do not see the future directions of transforming the public sector, thus, they do not know, whether they can start a new term or not. Others say that it is their age and physical state that make them unsure about the continuation. For one of our interviewees with a background in county politics further directions have emerged faintly and depended on other contexts, however, the decision is up to the party. Apart from this last exception, their plans are rather of local nature, relating to smaller towns.

“That is a Swabian village. 100 years ago nearly the whole population was Swabian. They were hard-working, willing to work and their descendants also became like that. It was what they passed on to their children. If there are women who want a lot, who are hard-working and smart as well, there are also men who settle back seeing this. I see many of them. It has the risk that women with leading positions may say these men are not good enough for them anymore. Whoever became effeminate is not attractive any more. My husband would say that it’s because he usually does much of that so as to save me from myself.” (businesswoman)

“Here the mayor and also the deputy are women at the moment and also deputy mayors women. All of them. Men have no ambitions here like that.” (mayor)

There was one year when the board of 3 heads consisted of only men. It was all over it. They had other views and perceptions which made the organisation work inappropriate. They had a good time there. It was not important that events or trainings were held. As soon as a girl got into the board, everything changed. (leader of an NGO)

When I negotiate with male leaders I often have the feeling that they consider me not as an expert, but as a pretty woman. I’ve already received some comments with purposes of trying to make me feel I’m in a lower position. (head of an institution)

I think in party politics positioning is not for women, even if they have equal qualities. It's not only the talent that counts but we should have the support of the party that is not given. Whether there ever will be a female president of the Republic or prime minister? I can say that I would vote for her but I think there will never be such an opportunity. And a part of women would not vote for her, either. If all women voted this way, there would not be any question. But as I've said, it often occurs that women in decision-making situation don't respect other women. (head of an association)

I'm on the opinion that people rather let themselves guide by female leaders. They trust her more. Female leaders are more industrious and persistent. I am a mayor, but I would not be involved in national issues. My present job satisfies me which is good enough for me. (mayor)

Female leaders are much different. There are not many of us, but it's rather the characteristics of great politics... We get better respect. I also suggest that a woman must use her femininity in a good sense. And I do so, but of course I don't take advantage of it. Why are we fewer in number in great politics? Maybe the reason for it is that most women have neither ambition nor chance for it. (politician of county level)

I see more and more women in leading positions which I'm happy with. Much more female leaders would be needed. Unfortunately, only a generational turnover may help, as I see. Too many old men hold decision-making positions with traditional way of thinking regarding gender roles. Yes, I definitely see (change in chances of women's careers). This century will be about women, there are positive changes with more and more possibilities. (head of an institution)

6.5. Possible directions of change

During the interviews we also reported that which measures in which areas could facilitate the employment of women and the harmonising of work and family at the same time. As it could be already noticed in the field of job-sharing in family and constructions of gender roles, we could not consider the answers to be equal regarding whether such measures are needed, and if the answer is affirmative, in which areas. Although interviewees could list counterproductive factors of their own life, in some cases, they could not really tell how they would find solutions for these in practice.

"Which factors are there to help women in career building? (Laughing) I don't know what factors to name at the moment. I couldn't name any." (school leader)

When classifying the answers received, we can distinguish between those thinking in broader, national context and those having conceptions rather in a local level. In the latter case, proposals

implicitly relate to local conditions (e.g. to buses running rarely in small villages which makes it impossible for women to commute, to childcare services not developed properly, to the lack of household and other services' quality and their territorial coverage. In these fields, local governments and institutions also have some influence to improve the situation. Childcare proves to be a problem especially in the summer period. We have to stress at this point that employees of educational institutions clearly know that their situation in this segment is more favourable, adding that in case they had to work in another area, they would not be able to solve childcare problems during the summer holiday.

Concerning the operation of institutions there are questions related to the opening hours as these should be somehow harmonised with the working hours. In many cases, it is not the concrete coordination that misses, but it is the more adopting behaviour of employees, like teachers or kindergarten teachers, that would help mothers.

Family day-care centres (or the lack of them) emerge many times in the texts of the interviews and by all means, small groups of nursery schools are also thought to be positive changes. Their systems have expanded recently, but these services are still not available for most of the families in the region or families are simply unable to let mothers work or carry out child custody of children under the age of three. At a local level, it is not only the public educational institutions that should take individual needs into consideration much more, but workplaces also should coincide with the rhythm of families.

There have been some interviewees with flexible, "take-away-units" of working hours, which seem to be easier to harmonise with the upbringing of children. Still, we also have to underline that this kind of fragmented lifestyle, though honoured by some interviewees, cannot be carried out at most of the workplaces. On the other hand, it is not definitely considered positive and it is common that it makes people work during the nights and at the weekends.

We can also notice that by solving these problems women mobilise all their resources and family contacts that they mostly have on some level, but in case of geographical dispersion or missing of closer family relationships, it is not an option. In some of the interviews, it was described as an almost unsolvable task or as an event that may upset the way the family works if the child is ill. In this context concrete proposals were not set out, but most of the families, especially families from broken homes are likely to have serious challenges in this situation; while others tell that young mothers are not employed due to possible diseases of the children.

Another group of the answers worded is mostly related to labour market issues, including some elements of welfare measures. In this segment, there are answers appearing with purposes to extend part-time jobs. This kind of work schedule namely enables to run the household more efficiently,

however, it must be mentioned, that it does not allow to build a serious career, which, actually, was not frequently mentioned by respondents at all. Some of the respondents think salaries are not enough to maintain a single-earner family, so a wage increase of a considerable level may lead families back to a more traditional pattern (as an interviewee said, salary for men should be increased). There are also elements of proposals on changes that concern the legal background of female employment, namely, women with babies should be prevented from being handicapped when looking for a job. Certain answers have an eye on governmental measures fostering women with small children to return to labour market as soon as possible. Still, the evaluation of mothers going back to work when their children are under two is anomalous. One of the respondents declared e.g. that the child of his/her acquaintance, having been 18 months of age, was suffering from the mother's return to work. One of the obstacles of women' entering into the labour market is that there is no way back from public works' program to real paid jobs – solving this problem would also support the employment of women.

Properly working practises, opinions and proposals on education and training are slightly connected to concrete measures. At this point, we found some references to programs aiming to support integration of disadvantaged or Roma girls into labour market by creating a financial support for their educational purposes. The respondents also spoke about several scholarships. One of the steps towards further employment is to avoid being dropped out from institutions, besides, if necessary, those who are in need have the possibility to get external aid, which may lead them back at least to the chance of obtaining a profession. The sources of these trainings and programs are mostly central ones, but local sources and decisions are needed to implement them in every single case. Raising principles about bringing up their own children, especially their daughters are highlighted by many interviewees – daughters of many of these respondents often continue their studies in higher education, mainly at the University of Pécs. They were usually forced to stand on their own feet and to be able to assume all the roles and tasks that the harmonisation of family and work means, something the interviewees have already faced. There were no respondent raising her daughter to live according to traditional gender roles, it was rather the “middle way” that has been chosen.

All in all, we can report that the proposals affect both local and broader fields. Institutions' more flexible operation better adapted to family life is an important factor, whereas, another focus of conceptions is made up of the reconstruction of the labour market and certain elements of the legal background of female employment. As for disadvantaged groups, remedial courses and scholarships could be mentioned.

7. Summary

In our analysis we undertook to have a look at the issues of genders on local scale. The surveyed places were the districts Hegyhát and Komló, but during our research we took a closer look at the data from the county and Pécs. Concerning the phenomenon, we analysed the genders, the patterns of the compatibility of work and family, and we also carried out quantitative and qualitative survey. During our quantitative survey, we also analysed the results of the parliamentary and local elections in 2014 pointing out that the rate of female mayors and local representatives in the villages of the region is high; on the other hand, their roles in local politics are mostly characterized by non-party policy frameworks.

Our quantitative research was based on interviews and focus-group interviews, in which we analysed the way women in leading positions live, their family background, the characteristics of division of labour within the family, including their views about the roles, and we also reported about female leaders and their opinions about the relation of politics and women.

The results received are mainly equivalent to the arguments declared in literature – hereby we refer to the features of leadership described by the interviewees just like they are in literature, or, besides, we also refer to the rather forced mixture of work and spare time in many cases, and the phenomenon of double commitment, which is also reflected in what the respondents said. The interviewees feel the phenomenon of transformation of gender roles, seeing its arch for example, through the circumstances of their children or comparing their own lives to the lifestyle of the parents, but the evaluation of the progress is back-to-front. They can link advantages and disadvantages both to the traditional and the modern role perceptions and based on own life circumstances, they are even able to say examples.

We hope that the techniques used have created new research results. Firstly, that is to be explained by local facilities, as the career purposes of women are highly influenced by nature of the settlement pattern of the region, by villages with no public transport facilities or by the issue of child custody or even by the barely available system of household services (e.g. babysitters or family day-care centres which is not developed in the region. Secondly, we believe that an important result of starting a career is the impulse coming from external relationship networks that often casts women back into being a leader, even if it was not planned. The texts of the interviews can shade the lifestyle and way of housework distribution in the family of interviewees who have different role perceptions, (e.g. in the case of a more traditional or more modern family), thus providing a plastic description about how individual samples emerge or hierarchies, thought to be accepted, extinct.

The most important conclusion from our analysis may be that gender roles cannot be clearly described by generation gaps as there have been younger, but more traditional-minded interviewees

among respondents, while respondents over 60 years have had democratic perceptions about genders, indeed. In most cases, we explored mixed patterns with focuses running in turn from one point to the other. It is also conspicuous that self-categorization and distribution of household chores in family e.g. cannot always be coincided with each other, while one respondent characterizes herself as being) traditional, other parts of the interview were not completely in accordance with it. It is a remarkable result that leading position in villages is assessed as only a quasi-leadership which the respondents are aware of, too.

It is also certain that further research could be based on these results. It would be appropriate by all means to extend the base of our quantitative analysis with further locations or to make data received more longitudinal. Barriers of our interview analyses are coming from locality; however, the validity of data could definitely be improved with involving other levels of municipal hierarchy or of other regions.

Summary of the research

The research area was the issue of female equality. We approached to the issue by a research focusing on the districts of Hegyhát and Komló. That make the gender question a relevant subject to study is the relatively sharp gender differences in Hungary shown in various areas of life.

The basis of our theoretical framework, on one hand, were the concepts of gender roles and expectations, but we also reported on gender differences in the labour market, education, and lifestyle. We also reported on the results of value researches, and we approached by Hofstede's masculinity and feminine preferences to these fields of Hungarian society's way of thinking. These fields have been selected because there were explored too by the main question blocs of the quality research. We summarized the national trends manly based on the results of HCSO researches, and by longitudinal data series we tried to report on the changes on the different fields of the research.

We use two types of empirical research. Firstly, we analyse the data of the Hungarian National Assembly from the point of view of the genders (quantitative research). Secondly, on the basis of focus groups and individual interviews (conducted with women occupying senior positions) we will try to compare the similar traits of women's lives, to highlight the local peculiarities and to find out the opinion of the interviewees about the women's status in Hungary today.

Our main research problem is to analyse if the senior positions, unconventional for women in itself, results any changes in the roles and tasks in other fields of life. It is aimed to understand if alternations are present in housework or parenting. If yes, how do these changes form the family hierarchy and do they lead to conflicts? We are also interested to find out the various strategies of families and individuals; to identify if there is a pattern of their appearance linked to the background variables. The research is concerned with a situation, ambiguous at first sight, in which women in senior positions live. The relevance of our research is also supported by the overrepresentation of women in the municipalities, educational and social institutions of small settlements. Therefore, we would like to study the fact that most of these women come from lower status groups but in average perform mobility within one generation. We would like to investigate what motivated the interviewees to choose their profession, what factors made them leave their usual social background, and how would they pass their status to their children.

In the focal point of our qualitative analysis are such aspects as possible career opportunities for women, the glass ceiling phenomenon, restrictions and benefits experienced by women, and especially the management of family and work. We would like to find out what lifestyles emerged, out of the traditional or modern role perception.

We started the quantity research with the review of statistics and research results on participation of Hungarian women in politics. We reported on the composition of parliament, government, county assemblies and the group of mayors by gender and we pointed out that female participation in politics is very low compared to European data. There are differences not only in proportion of males and females but in the position occupied (for example it can be discovered in the patterns of genders within candidate lists of national parties). During the interview research we tried to disclose the causes behind the phenomenon because this approach is rarely applied during statistical researches (i.e. the attitude to politics, the compatibility of leadership and female roles, the compatibility of family and politics, and the frame of latent or manifest prejudice).

During our quantitative survey, we also analysed the results of the parliamentary and local elections in 2014 pointing out that the rate of female mayors and local representatives in the villages of the region is high; on the other hand, their roles in local politics are mostly characterized by non-party policy frameworks.

Our quantitative research was based on interviews and focus-group interviews, in which we analysed the way women in leading positions live, their family background, the characteristics of division of labour within the family, including their views about the roles, and we also reported about female leaders and their opinions about the relation of politics and women.

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The most important conclusion from our analysis may be that gender roles cannot be clearly described by generation gaps as there have been younger, but more traditional-minded interviewees among respondents, while respondents over 60 years have had democratic perceptions about genders, indeed. In most cases, we explored mixed patterns with focuses running in turn from one point to the other. It is also conspicuous that self-categorization and distribution of household chores in family e.g. cannot always be coincided with each other, while one respondent characterizes herself as being) traditional, other parts of the interview were not completely in accordance with it. It is a remarkable result that leading position in villages is assessed as only a quasi-leadership which the respondents are aware of, too.

It is also certain that further research could be based on these results. It would be appropriate by all means to extend the base of our quantitative analysis with further locations or to make data received more longitudinal. Barriers of our interview analyses are coming from locality; however, the validity of data could definitely be improved with involving other levels of municipal hierarchy or of other regions.

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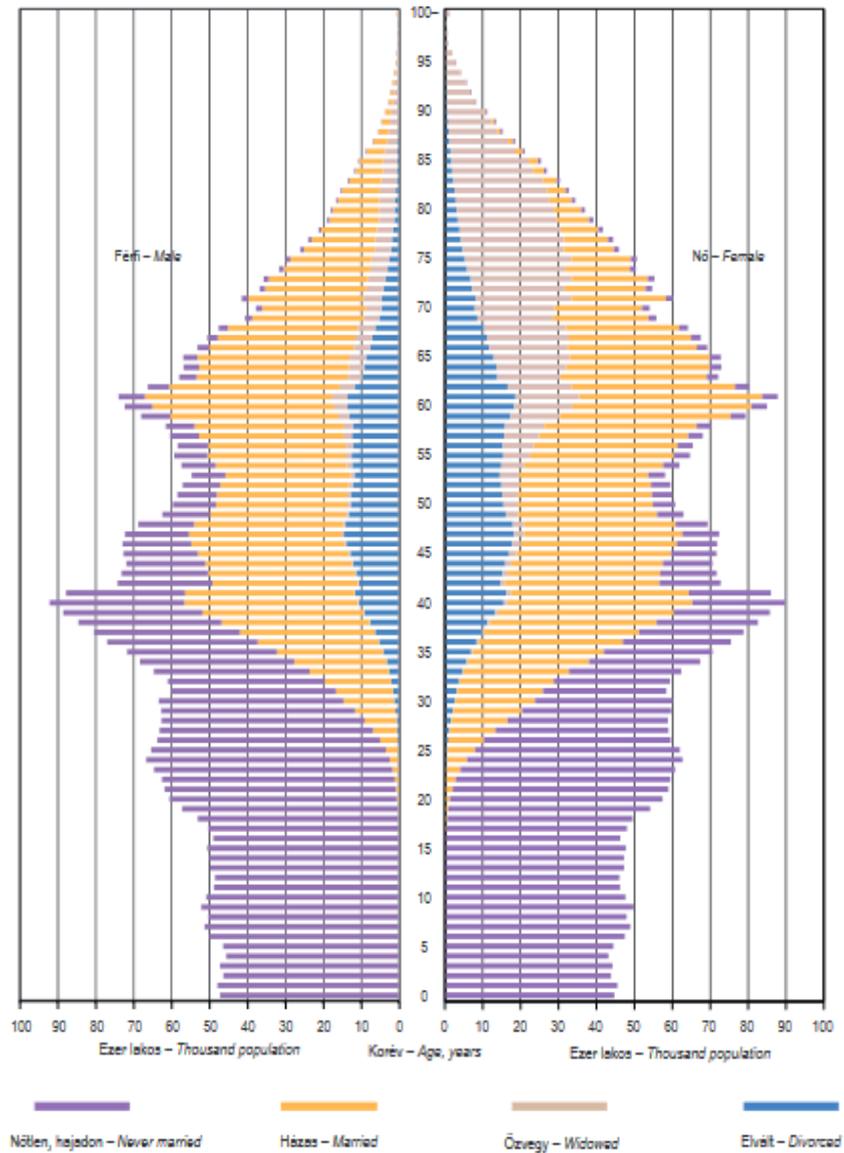
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Annex

Annex, Figure 1

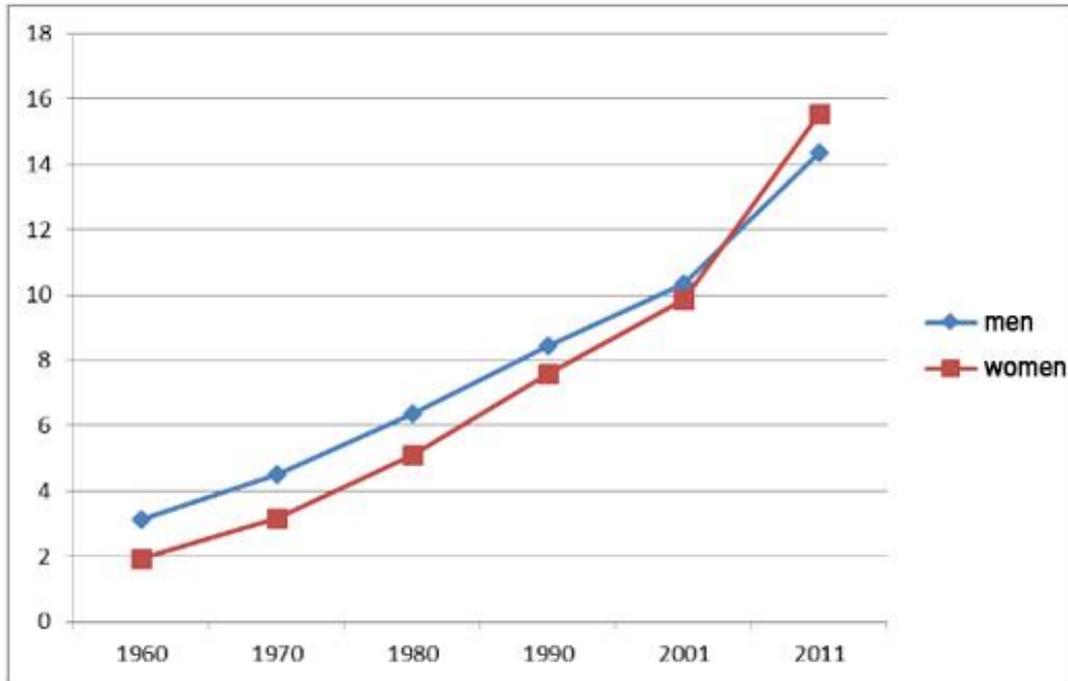
Population pyramid of Hungary in January 2016.



Source: ksh.hu/apps/shop.dok?p_id=348898&p_mezo=MINTA

Annex, Figure 2

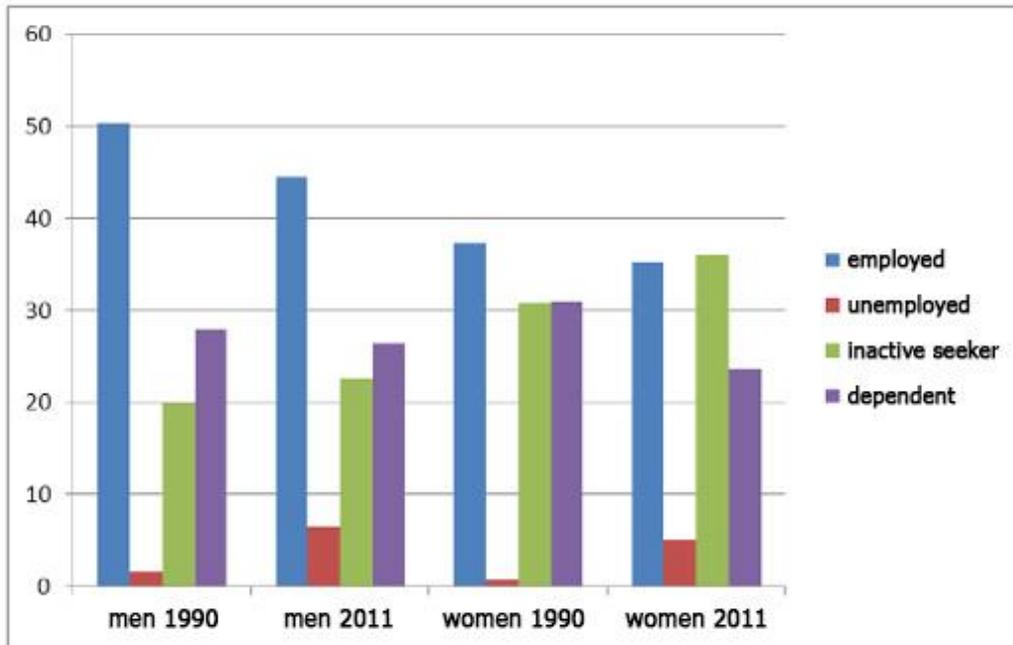
Proportion of graduates by genders in percentage between 1960 and 2011



Source: own edition based on data of Hungarian Central Bureau for Statistics

Annex, Figure 3

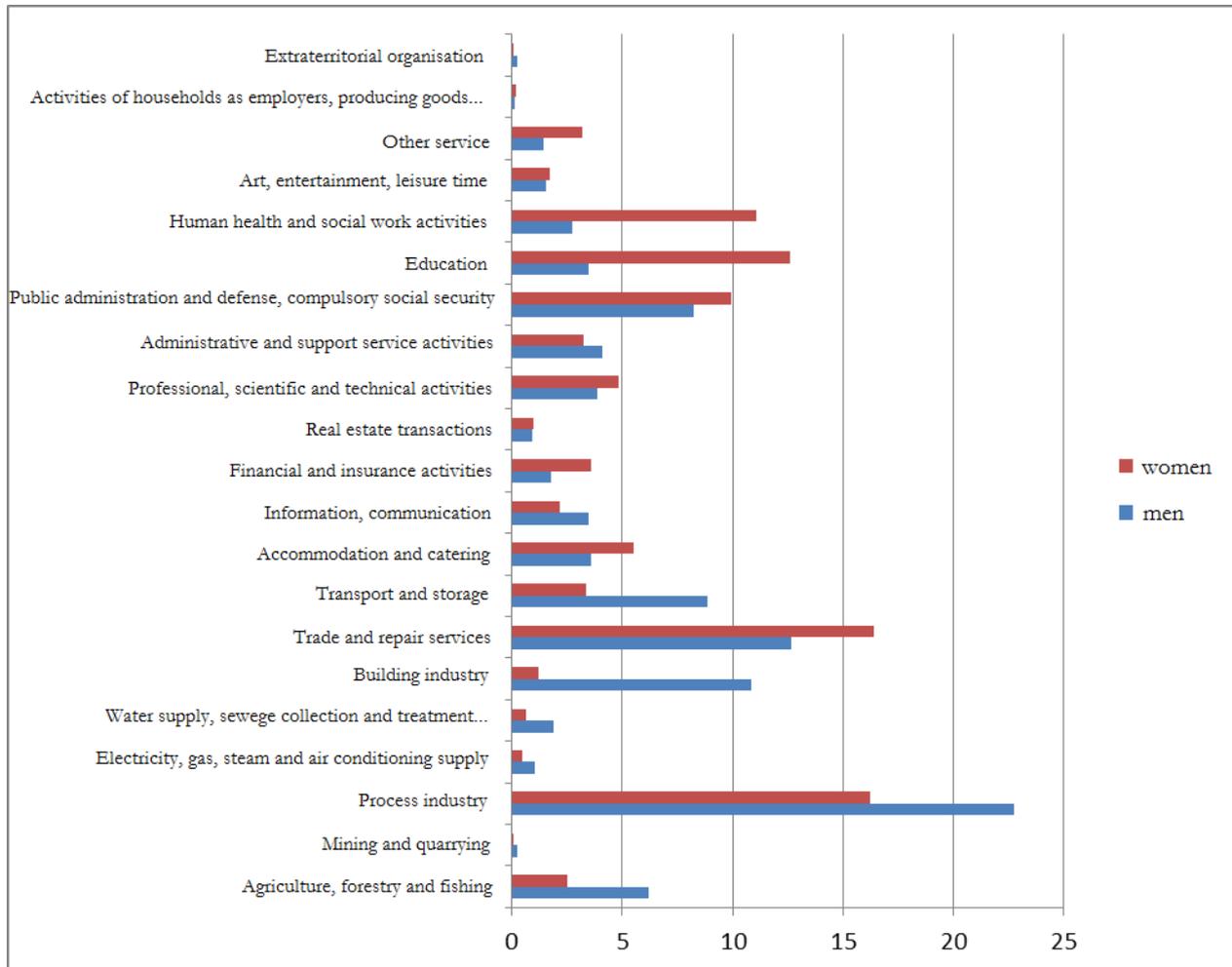
Labour status by sexes in percentage



Source: own edition based on data of Hungarian Central Bureau for Statistics

Annex, Figure 4

Percentage distribution of employment by branches of the genders



Source: own editing based on data of Central Statistics Office

Annex, Figure 5

Proportion of genders in senior positions (first column showing the proportion of women, the second of men)

Austria	29	71
Belgium	31	69
Cyprus	NDA	NDA
Denmark	19	81
Estonia	37	63
Finland	28	72
France	36	64
Germany	27	73
Greece	26	74
<i>Hungary</i>	35	65
Iceland	31	69
Ireland	28	72
Italy	20	80
Latvia	39	61
Liechtenstein	48	52
Luxemburg	22	78
Netherlands	26	74
Norway	NDA	NDA
Portugal	30	70
Romania	NDA	NDA
Slovakia	32	68
Slovenia	29	71
Spain	32	68
Sweden	31	69
United Kingdom	32	68
<i>Average</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>70</i>

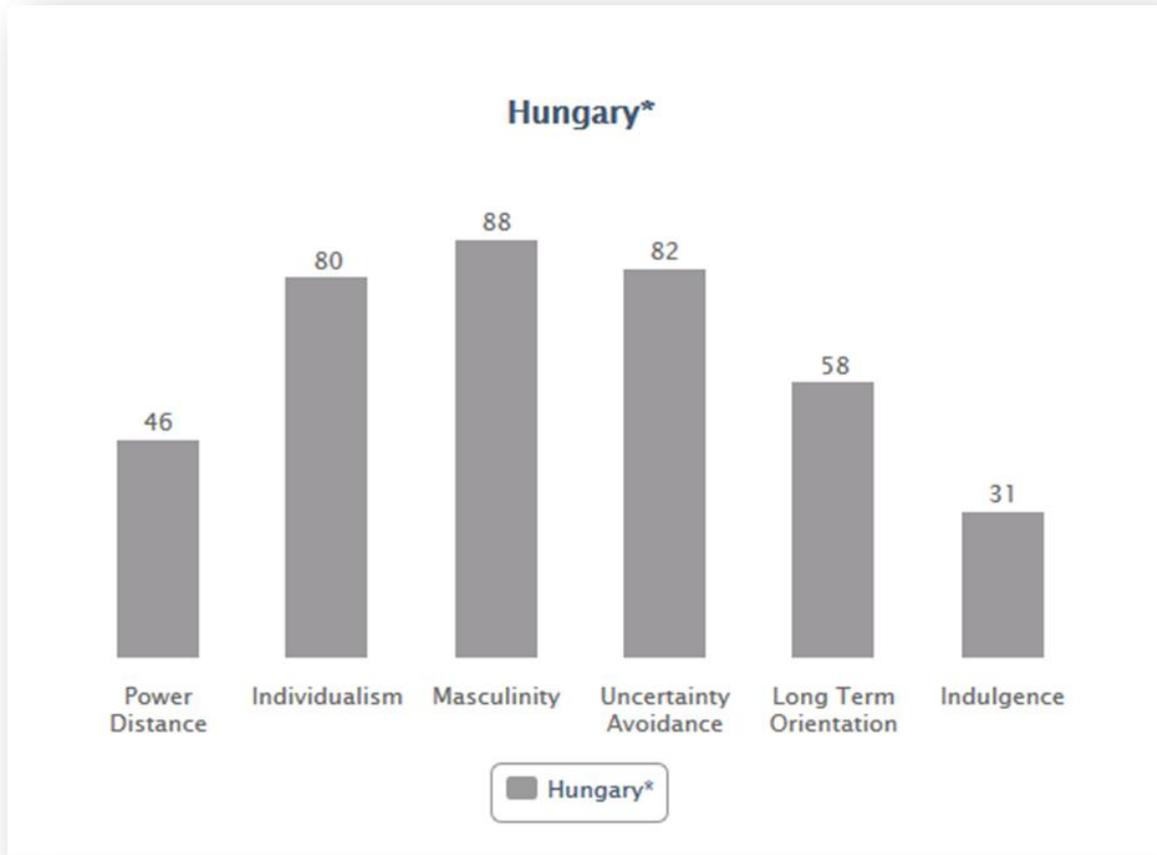
Source: EU (2004a)

NDA: no data available

Cited by: Nagy (2005)

Annex, Figure 6

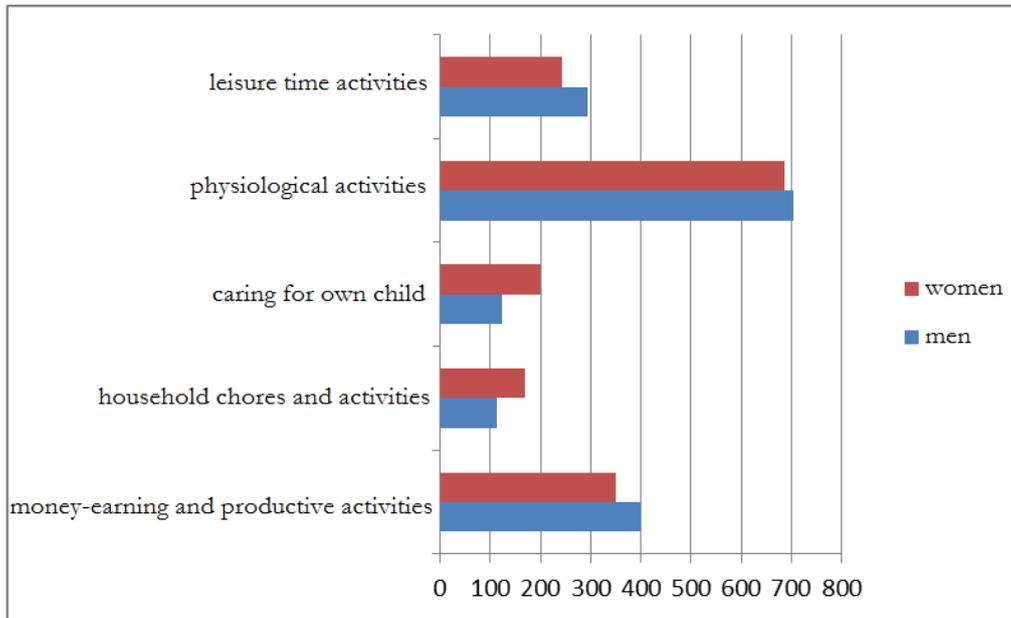
Indices of Hungary on work according to the Hofstede model



Made with the help of: www.geert-hofstede.com

Annex, Figure 7

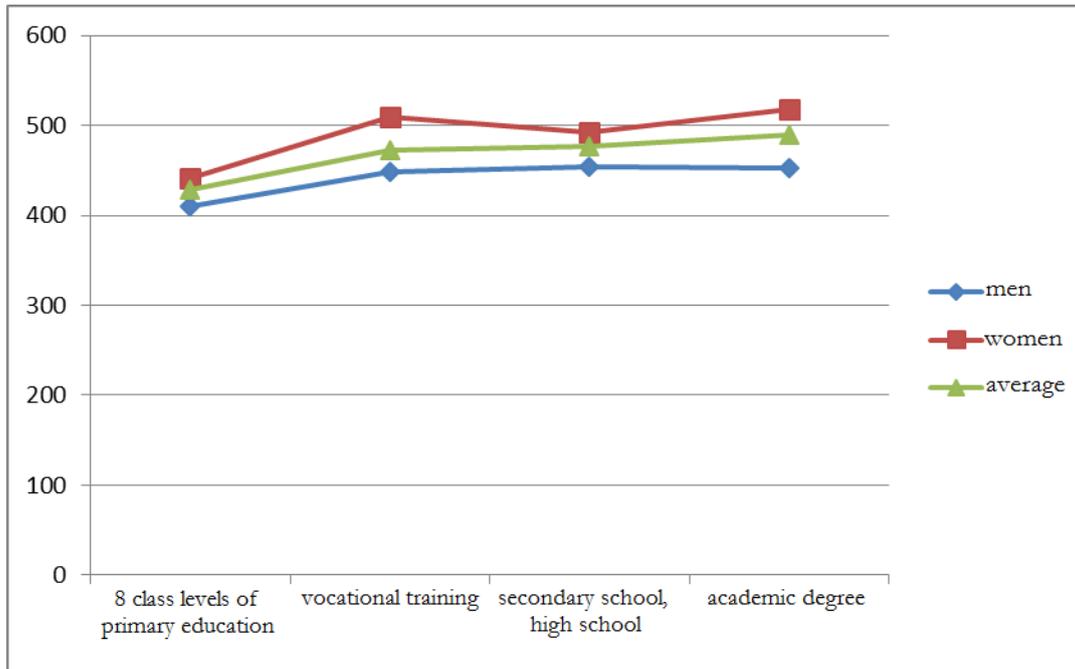
Some blocks of the time use of men and women with academic degree (values are given in minutes on the basis of data for 2009/2010. Table “C” is showing the data of those actually performing the activities)



Source: own editing based on data of Central Statistics Office

Annex, Figure 8

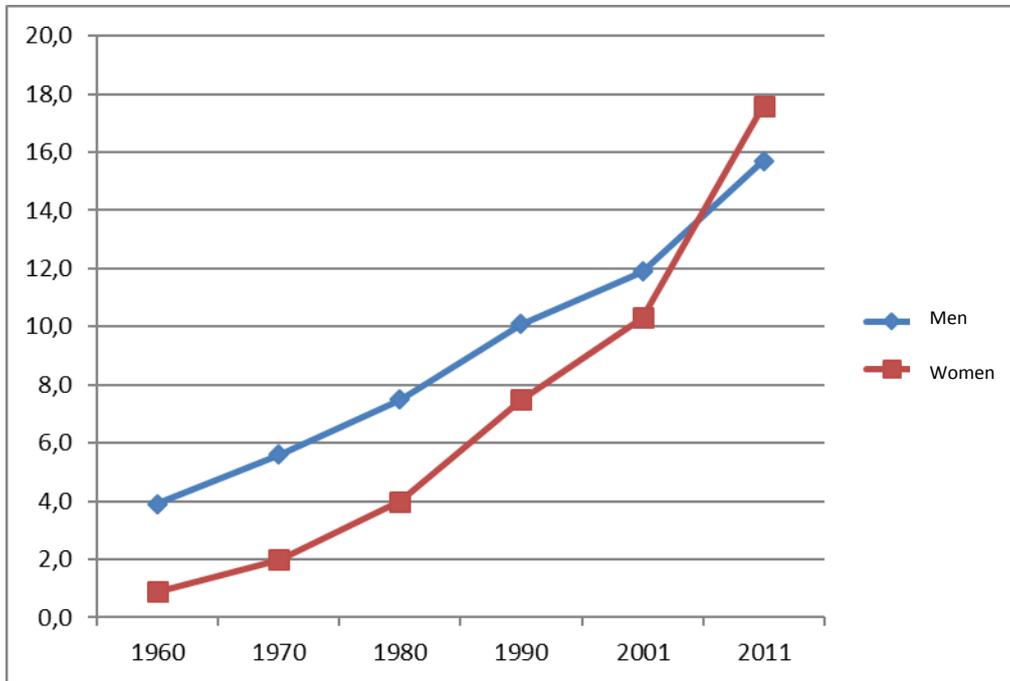
The average of overall workload in minutes per day according to educational attainment (values of table “C” on the basis of the data of Central Statistics Office for 2009/2010)



Source: own editing based on data of Central Statistics Office

Annex, Figure 9

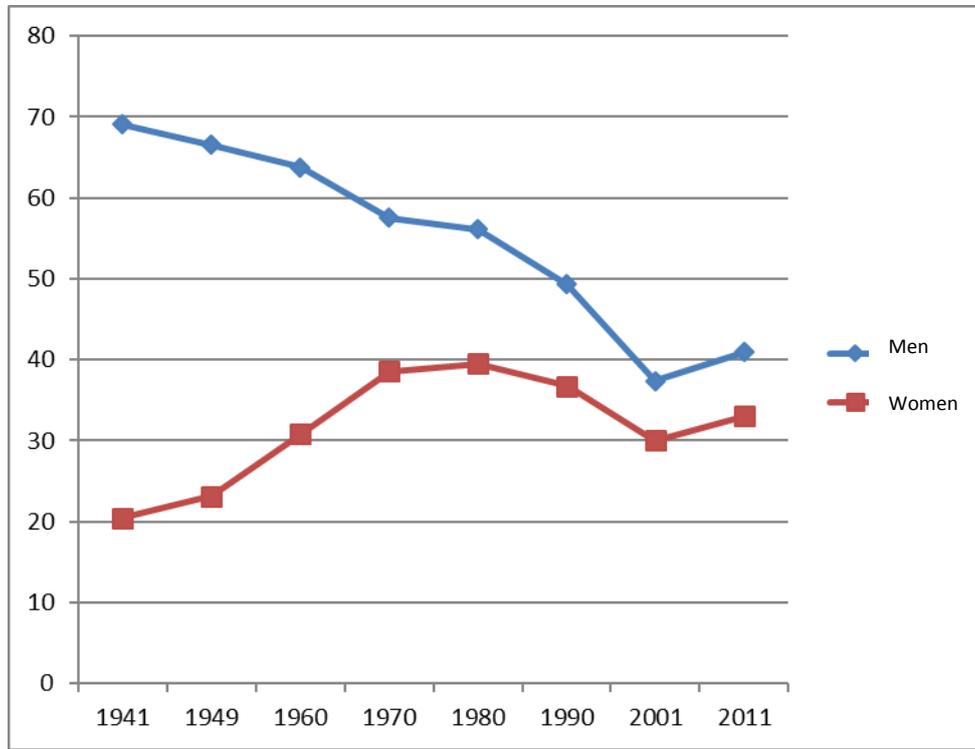
The proportion of graduates on the basis of gender in Baranya County (expressed as percentages)



Source: edited on the basis of the Hungarian Central Statistical Office's (KSH) data

Annex, Figure 10

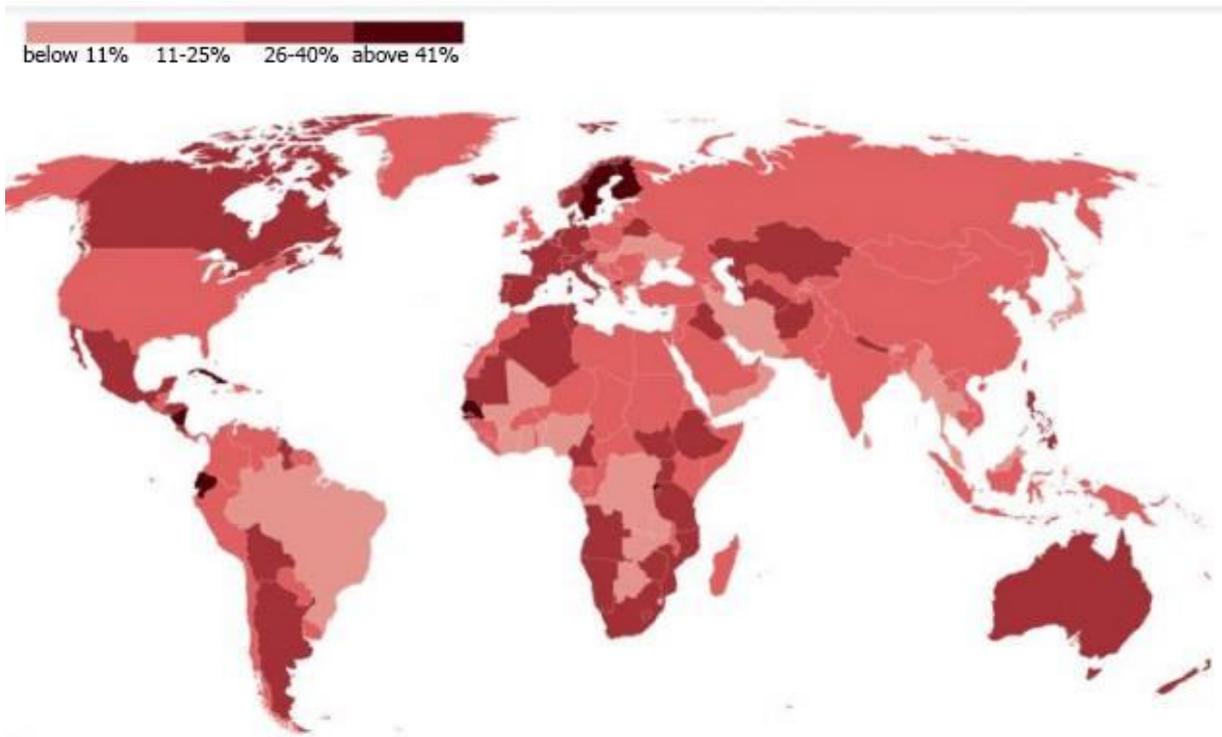
The proportion of employees on the basis of gender in Baranya County (expressed as percentages)



Source: edited on the basis of the Hungarian Central Statistical Office's (KSH) data

Annex, Figure 11

The percentage of female members in parliaments in 2014 based on vs.hu

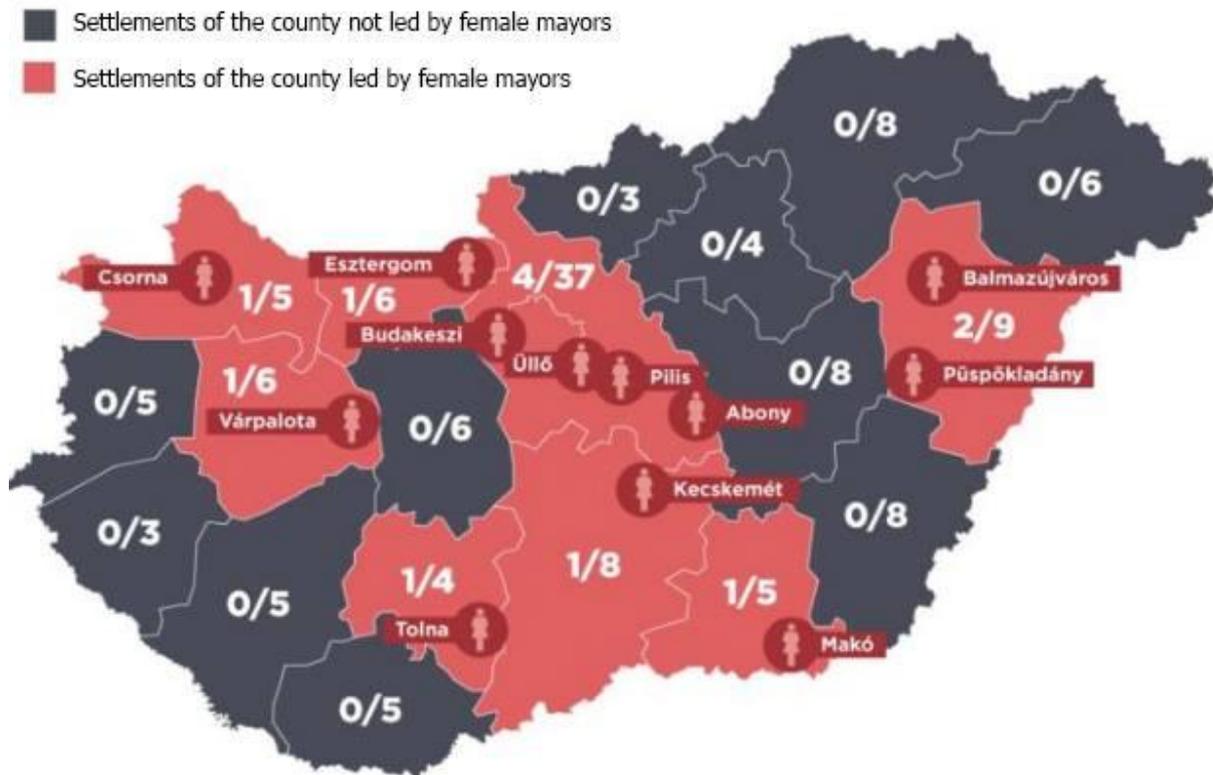


Source: <http://vs.hu/kozelet/osszes/megelozzuk-japant-de-szvazifold-lehagy-nezze-meg-hogyan-1107#!s2>

Annex, Figure 12

Female mayors in settlements with more than 10,000 residents

Female mayors in settlements with more than 10,000 residents



Data released in 2014. Source: <http://vs.hu/kozelet/osszes/megelozzuk-japant-de-szvazifold-lehagy-nezze-meg-hogyan-1107#!s2>

Annex, Figure 13

Gender composition of mayors and local governments in the settlements of Hegyhát district which have fewer than 200 residents

Name of the settlement	Led by a female mayor	Led by an independent female mayor	The percentage of women among representatives	The percentage of independent female candidates
Ág	Yes	yes	50%	100%
Baranyaszentgyörgy	No	-	25%	0%
Felsőegerszeg	Yes	yes	75%	100%
Kisbeszterce	No	-	0%	-
Meződ	No	-	75%	100%
Palé	Yes	yes	75%	100%
Szágy	No	-	75%	66,6%
Tarrós	Yes	yes	25%	100%
Tormás	Yes	yes	25%	100%
Váznok	No	-	0%	-

Source: edited on the basis of nvi.hu

Annex, Figure 14

Gender composition of mayors and local governments in the settlements of Komló district which have fewer than 200 residents

Name of the settlement	Led by a female mayor	Led by an independent female mayor	The percentage of women among representatives	The percentage of independent female candidates
Hegyhátmaróc	Yes	yes	50%	100%
Szárász	No	-	0%	-
Tótfű	No	-	100%	100%
Vékény	No	-	75%	100%

Source: edited on the basis of nvi.hu

Annex, Document Nr. 1.

Draft of the individual and focus group interviews

Introduction (age, education, position, function etc.) Parent's occupation, place of residence.

Career development process: (secondary-tertiary education, labour market steps, luck, Necessary attributes. Relationships.)

Career alongside the family

(marriage, number of children, division of work, external help, mechanisation of the household, house type, male and female roles in the household, the involvement of children in domestic work, eventual differences in salary scales of the spouses. The husband's, relative's opinion regarding the function of the family, urban-rural differences, examples among the relatives. Opinion of the parents, grandparents. Were there similar patterns in her family? Where there any examples for them?)

Characteristics of the gender roles

How do we think nationally / locally about the gender roles? Own conception. What is prescribed for women and for men, separation and change of the labour – when and how have they changed. What will they propagate to their children? What is the opinion of the children? How did our opinion change about this? What's the opinion of the husband? The advantages and disadvantages of traditional gender roles. The advantages and disadvantages of modern roles. Self-assessment – can they be characterised by traditional or modern role perception (in case if it was not clear)?

Female leaders, characterisation of the female leadership

characteristics, positive and negative attributes

Chances of the female careers

What hindering factors and contributing factors can you mention? In which areas can a woman make career? In which areas not? Why? Why are there so few women in higher positions? In the politics? Do you see any change in the chances for the women to make career? Why is the salary of the women lower? What do you see around you in the settlement? In the country? How could this be changed?

Future plans. Own, children. Further career steps.

Annex, Document Nr. 2

List of settlements, where the interviewees were contacted:

Alsómocsolád
Ág
Bikal
Egyházaskozár
Felsőegerszeg
Gödre
Komló
Liget
Mágocs
Magyarszék
Mánfa
Máza
Mecsekpölöske
Mindszentgodisa
Nagyhajmás
Palé
Pécsvárad
Sásd
Szászvár
Tarrós
Tormás
Varga
Vékény

1. An abridged version of the interview Nr. 1. The interview was made via Skype on the 14th of November 2016.

The interviewee is a middle aged woman. She is married, and has several children; she has multiple higher professional qualifications. First she gained a college degree, then, as an adult an academic degree. Her professional career started in the field of public education, later she began working in their family business, which is her current job.

According to her opinion the division of the domestic work is unequal; however, she thinks that this is not a problem. "I'm tenacious, I can hold on." – as she states. Initially she did 98% of the domestic work, while her husband did only 2%. She comes from a patriarchal family, so this is normal for her. The children were involved in the domestic work from early on. They help her with the care of the animals and with the gardening. She cooks every day, either in the morning or in the evening. There are often instances, when she comes home during the daytime to finish the cooking. She notes in connection with the cooking, that she cooks for their adult children as well, who are in their twenties and living in other settlements or are independent. Still, she has got free time. She does sport on a weekly basis and every month she goes to the theatre.

According to her, the women tend to work in the settlement. And they are more willing to accept all kinds of jobs, than men. Female leaders are both in the settlement and in the district are very common. To her opinion, the reason behind this lies in their Swabian origin, so basically they were socialised to work. The women are also diligent.

In her view, being a woman involves performing 1.5-2 times more, than a man – this has to be accepted. The reason for this lies in the fact, that even though women can sustain themselves (as they did during the war), they cannot be happy, because they need a man and a family in order to be happy.

Today's politics has such characteristics, that a woman cannot digest – This is the reason, why there are not more women in Hungarian political life. Those who are present in the politics, appear more likely as a negative example to other women.

She describes the processes, which are leading to the mixing and loosening of the gender roles as a negative phenomenon, and in her opinion this is not the right way.

2. An abridged version of the interview Nr. 2.

Date: 14th of November 2016

The interview was made via Skype

The interviewee works in a leading position in a public educational institution. She lives with her husband in one household. The coordination of the domestic work and the leadership roles did not cause, in our case, any serious challenge, because they did not have to take care of children. In addition, her husband helped her in many ways: he hoovered, cleaned up, when it was necessary. When she became a director, her salary became larger than her husband's. Albeit her marriage rested essentially on democratic role conception and the amount of the payment was never a "topic" among them, this resulted unspoken tensions. Her husband solved this problem by finding an additional job, so the salary scales became balanced.

In the interview, we mentioned the situation of the colleagues who are also mothers. The school as a workplace is essentially more family-friendly, than many other institutions (especially because of the summer and winter holidays).

Due to the traditional gender roles, domestic work in the village is distributed disproportionately. Maybe we can see in case of some younger couples a more democratic division. Many resign to their fate, because they saw this from their parents or their environment. This has a negative effect: women are exhausted, unhappy and not satisfied with their lives.

The interviewee thinks that the female leaders are more emphatic, more cautious and are thoughtful about things – only the mind, but the emotion is present in their decisions. They are approaching problems in a finer way and are more diplomatic. Female leaders are becoming more and more accepted, however, their situation is more difficult at those workplaces, where the majority of workers are men. The direction of this acceptance is not dependent on education, but it is different for each person. There are situations, where it is easier to deal with men – in case of women serious feuds and conflicts can be observed. In the "big" politics women are not getting accepted, but it is certain that fewer women would like to be part of it.

Her role interpretation lies on an overall democratic foundation, so in this case, we find no sign of generational differences (many younger women expressed a more traditional standpoint).

3. Abridged version of the interview

The interview was taken personally by Dr M3r3 Marianna on 28 October, 2016.

The interviewee is at her late twenties. She is married and has got a child. Her parents lived by the traditional gender roles, i.e. the housework was distributed among the spouses. The younger generation lives no longer according to this tradition, since there are women tasks performed by the husband and vice-versa (minor carpentry tasks). The interviewee had been involved in the housework since approx. the age of 10. Moreover, she had to decide financial questions sometimes. She does not know why, but she had been living in her family as an adult since the age of 14-15.

The way the younger generations distribute work does not bother her parents.

The interviewee would like her child to choose a golden mean in terms of housework. She does not want her child to be involved in house chores as much as she had been (“it is important for me that my child remained a child”). However, she does not want to spoil her child by serving. Her own childhood was not perfect for this precise reason: she could not enjoy either her childhood or her teenage years.

In terms of women’s career, she believes that smaller settlements are a drawback. What concerns childbearing, she would have treated this as a disadvantage too earlier. However, she considers this no longer as she has her own child and understands the situation more. There are more job opportunities in bigger cities and people say that a woman should not work. Why study so much? Why work so much? –, she has heard these questions before. Her father even wondered when she worked 10 hours a day, then took her work home and finished it in the evening or night.

She has not been discriminated against as a woman yet, but women predominate in number at her work.

4. Abridged version of the interview. The interview was recorded on Skype on 7th of November, 2016.

The respondent works for a Foundation in a small settlement. She is married.

According to her, it was flexibility and constant learning that she has needed for her carrier. Housework is distributed within her family. They have the son with them only at the weekends, as he has studied on higher education. Male members of the family do the typical men's job, however, they can be involved in women's work too, like cooking. They usually Hoover and wash. There is a week schedule for household duties they agree to, then men do it. The respondent sometimes cooks early in the morning and at night. E.g. she writes an application while cooking soup. Her life is like a puzzle board with work and housework mixing up in it. There are not any relatives in the surroundings to help. They sometimes order some food.

This attitude is not typical in the village as roles are much more traditional. The vast majority of women work in the town or commute. A fraction of them has a job in the public administration. Gender roles have transformed slowly, but signs of change have already emerged in small settlements, too. Youngsters mix gender duties even in the villages. The interviewee has the feeling of having been handicapped as a woman many times, especially in the labour market. As for selecting, women in politics are not preferred from the very beginning. Not a fraction of women would vote for women at elections.

5. Abridged version of the interview. The interview was recorded on Skype on 7th of November, 2016.

Both respondents work in public administration, they are middle-aged with children. They are on the opinion that determination, hard work and the support of family are necessary to walk a normal way of life. The support of the family is vital as for learning, it was the husbands that helped with cooking, when there was no food prepared. One of the husbands drove his wife during the exam period. Seeing their mothers study children got highly motivated, it had a good impact on them. Colleagues performed even the works they did not have time for. At this point it is about specialities of adult learning with their ease and difficulties.

In one case, division of family responsibilities follows the classic division of a village, in the other case, tasks mix a bit more as the husband washes the dishes, too. There is also a garden where it is women who rather work. Both of them estimate the proportion of houseworks to be about 70 to 30 percent, which is typical for the whole village. The housework and kitchen garden all belong to women. But it is not an issue about it as they are happy with praises they receive when the flat is clean or the food is delicious.

They have never used external assistances. In one case, the mother-in-law lived with them and helped them with cooking and taking the children. In cities it is more typical that they use services. Automatic washing machine is really important. It is a tragedy if it breaks down. Concerning the children one of the interviewees noted that his son helps much more to his wife. He does the shopping, takes care of the children, hovers, washes the dishes – which was not typical for her husband. What the reason for this is, they do not really know.

If the salary of the husband had been higher, they would have taken up a job, too. They honour themselves better this way. Their parents separated the roles much more. Their mother worked extremely much as they can call back their memories. They grew up under such circumstances which they took for granted. We are conservative yokels, they say, and they do not want to change it. Other women (mother-in-law, girls) help us, but not the husband.

We cannot answer the question, what is good in preserving traditional roles. It is not typical in settlements any more that women stay at home. The one who stays at home, is on maternity leave or unemployed. Both parties must work so that the families survive.

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