



# Intra-household Gendered Power Relations in Serbia

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# Introduction

- ▶ Gender relations within the household are grounded in the specific distribution of power which is shaped by the broader, macro-level gender regimes, but also by micro factors, such as specific composition of the household, value orientation and attitudes of couples or other household members, specific ideologies which define desirable or acceptable roles and behaviors of household members based on their gender, age, kinship or other characteristics.
- ▶ Sources of evidence:
  - ▶ 2 surveys of the Institute for Sociological Research of the Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade on socio-economic strategies of households (2003, 2007)
  - ▶ 3 surveys of SeConS: rural women in the status of family helpers (2008), women entrepreneurs (2011), domestic violence against women in Central Serbia (2010).

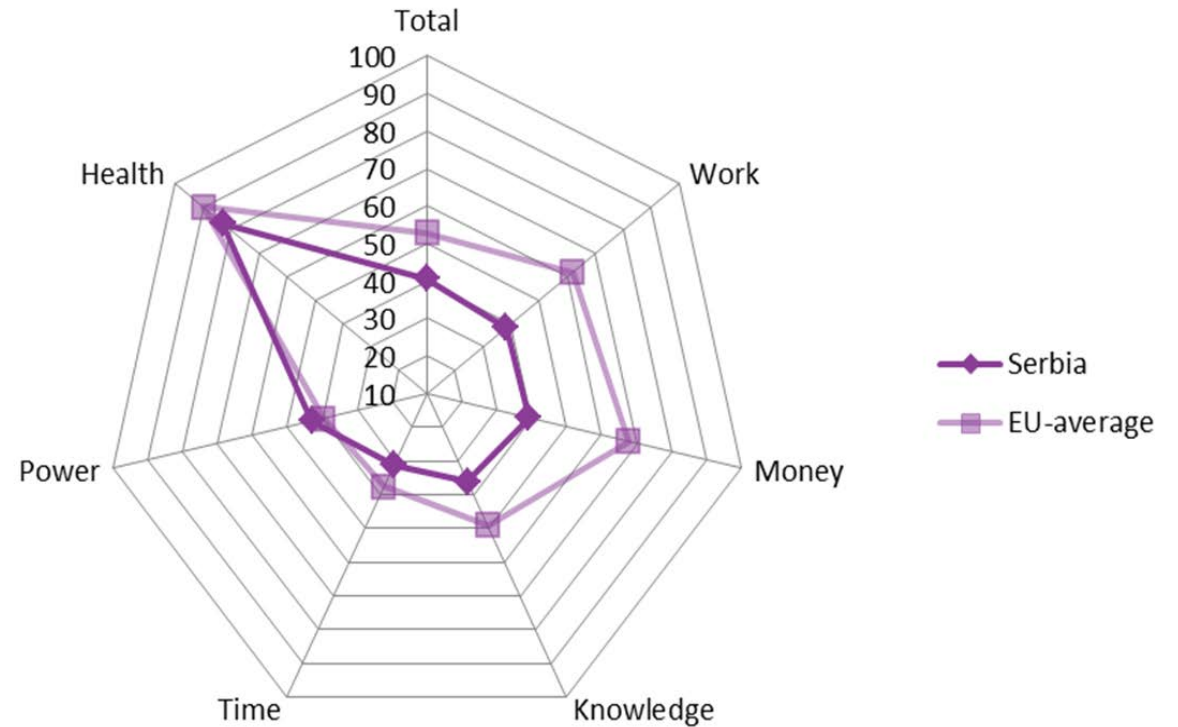


# Theoretical/conceptual approaches

- Gender regimes:
  - Walby (2004) - complex social constructs occurring at four different levels of abstraction at the level of general social system, at the level of differentiation between private and public sphere, in different domains (economic, political, civil society), as series of social practices.
  - Blagojevic (2002) - 'relatively structured relationships between men and women, masculinity and femininity, in an institutional and non-institutional environment, at level of discourse and at level of practice'.
- Theory of lagged adaptation (Gersheny et al, 1994, Horell et al, 1994): in general there is a steady increase in male involvement in home affairs, it is still insufficient to compensate for the greater involvement of women in paid work, so married employed women carry a disproportionately larger, double burden of paid and unpaid labor.
- Decision-making on household budgets (Vogler, 1994, 1998, Vogler and Pahl, 1993, 1994): the way in which couples organize money within the household are grounded in the power relations, over and above the resources each person contributes. More recent trends – similar to market models of exchange based on reward proportional to inputs.

# Context in Serbia

- ▶ Gender regimes during socialism – inconsistency between public and private sphere.
- ▶ During post-socialist blocked transformation 1990s: withdrawal to private sphere
- ▶ During reform period after 2000 – slow progress in gender equality.
- ▶ Recent findings from Gender Equality Index: Serbia in comparison to EU shows worst performance in the domain of work and money.



# Division of household work and care

- Data on the gender division of household work during 2003-2007 indicate still strong presence of a patriarchal model in which most of household work is performed by female members of the household. Comparative data for 2003-2007 indicate relatively minor changes that are manifested by the increased involvement of men in household work.

Chores	2003.			2007.		
	Women	Men	Together	Women	Men	Together
Cooking	90.3	3.0	6.7	85.4	9.0	5.6
Laundry	89.1	3.1	7.8	82.8	8.5	8.7
Cleaning	85.3	3.8	10.9	79.0	8.8	12.2
Ironing	90.6	2.9	6.5	84.6	8.5	6.9
Care for little children	75.7	2.7	21.6	75.0	9.2	15.7
Care for school tasks of children	75.5	9.7	14.8	74.4	15.3	10.3

Source: Babovic 2009

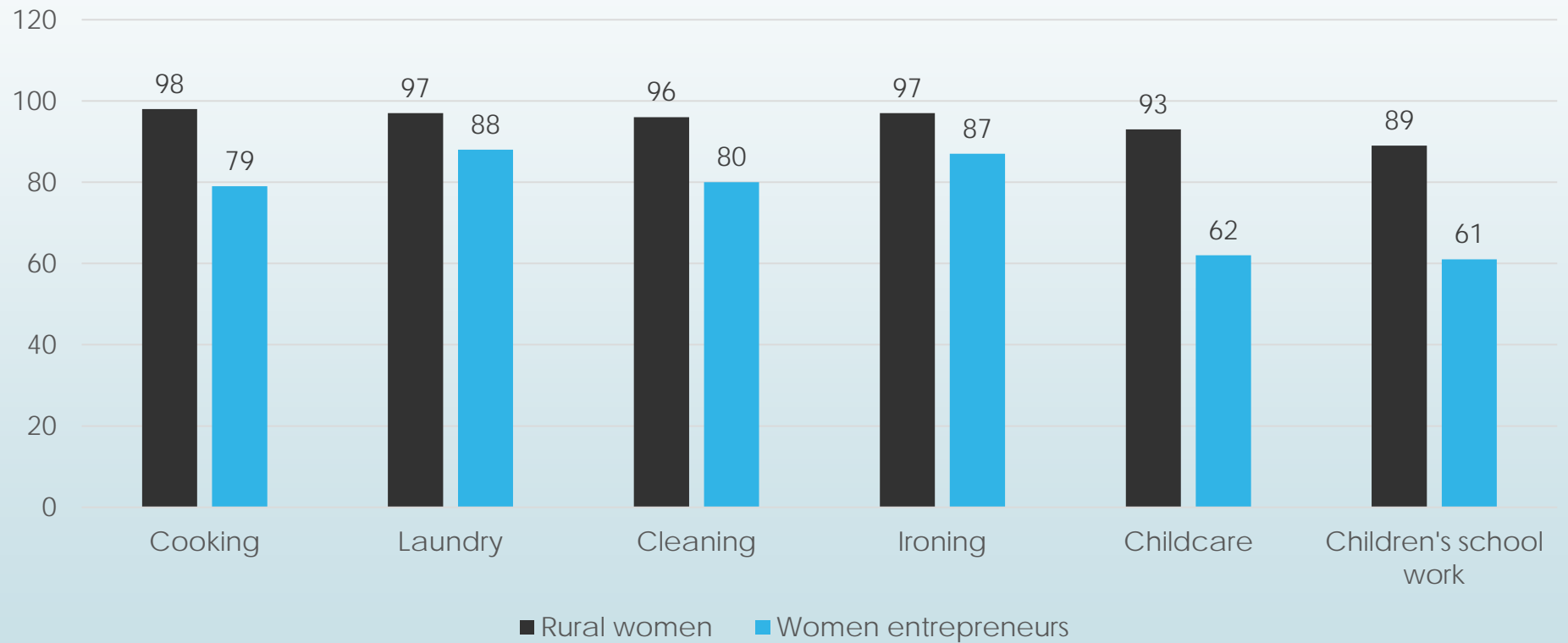
# Employment status and attitudes as factors

- The analysis indicated that employment of women in division of household responsibilities is not so important factor. As more important factor appeared employment status of men and attitudes towards gender roles. Only in households in which women are employed and men unemployed, there was significantly higher engagement of men in household chores.

Household chores	Couples with employe woman and unemployed man			Couples with both partners employed		
	Women	Men	Together	Women	Men	Together
Cooking	75.5	11.5	12.9	86.8	7.6	5.7
Laundry	72.1	11.0	16.9	84.4	6.7	8.9
Cleaning	69.8	10.9	19.4	76.4	7.0	16.6
Ironing	77.5	9.3	13.2	86.9	6.1	6.9

Source: Babovic 2009

# Rural women in the status of family helpers and women entrepreneurs



Source: Babović, Vukovic, 2008, Babovic, 2012.

# Money decision-making

## ► Types of household budgets

Type of household budget	% of households	
	2003	2007
Centralized	79.8	70.8
Partly joint pooling system	10.8	14.9
Independent	9.5	14.3
Total	100	100

Source: Babovic 2009



# Executive role in allocating household budget, Serbia, 2003-2007

Who distributes money for everyday consumption	% households	
	2003	2007
Women	46.2	50.0
Men	35.8	34.1
Other	18.0	15.9
Total	100	100

Source: Babovic 2009

## Strategic role in allocating household budget, Serbia, 2003-2007

Who makes strategic decisions on household budget	% households	
	2003.	2007.
Women	26.9	32.7
Men	49.6	44.8
Other	23.5	22.5
Total	<b>100</b>	100

Source: Babovic 2009

The regression analysis indicated that important factors influencing type of money management system in the household are employment of women and men, presence of patriarchal values and patterns of household work division. When only men is employed in the household and when men and women are affiliated with patriarchal attitudes in regard to gender roles, there are higher chances that strategic decisions on household budgets will be in hands of men (Babovic, 2010).



# Rural women in the status of family helpers and women entrepreneurs

- ▶ Particularly disadvantaged position of rural women in terms of access to household money. In only 17.7% households women have strategic power in allocating household money, while men have strategic power in 64.4% of households.
- ▶ In the households of women entrepreneurs, strategic decisions on finances are in almost half of cases (46%) jointly made by women and their partners. Among households of women entrepreneurs were only one person has main strategic decision-making role, more frequently women have main strategic role than their partners (25% vs. 17%)



# Conclusions



- ▶ During period 2003-2007 there were slight changes in the division of household work and the management of household finances.
- ▶ Changes have been noted in the increased inclusion of men in certain types of household maintenance activities, as well as greater representation of households in which women man
- ▶ Value patterns have emerged as key determinants of different forms of work sharing and power relationships recorded through decision-making on household finances, while employment patterns for men and women have proved less important.
- ▶ Both approaches (lagged adaptation and money management in the household) proved as valid and fruitful.



Thank you for your attention



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