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# Career Paths in Spain: Gendered division of Labour and Informal Employment

## Introduction

- 1 Employment models have been used to make a comprehensive and comparative approach to work and employment in Europe, based on an institutionalist view that broadens the usual analyses of the labour market. Employment models are defined by the interrelation between labour market, State and family (Bosch et al., 2009). One question arising from these approaches is the role played by the gendered division of labour in shaping employment models. The aim of this paper is to contribute to this discussion.
- 2 In order to analyse the relationship between the gendered division of labour and the employment model, this paper shows the strategies that actors have developed to enter and remain in the labour market. More specifically, it analyses the importance of the labour market, the gendered division of labour, and employment and family policies in defining the career paths of men and women in Spain. A qualitative approach was used to study these paths, taking into account the impact of structural factors (gender, age, qualification and ethnicity)<sup>1</sup> and socio-cultural traditions. This analysis was performed as part of a wider study of changes in the Spanish employment model.<sup>2</sup>
- 3 The results indicate that the gendered division of labour persists and affects the career paths of both men and women, which are marked by various types of informal employment. Informal employment is a multidimensional phenomenon that can be understood in terms of economics, regulation, qualification and working conditions. It depends on gender, social class and ethnicity—features that characterize both continuity and change in the Spanish employment model. This article shows how informal employment has become a widely accepted social norm, and points out that the distinction between formal and informal employment is probably a false dichotomy, especially in the paths of women and young people, and even in skilled jobs. This situation has been reinforced by the recession that began in 2007, transforming the relationship and location of the various social groups affected. In Spain, this situation seems to have created a continuum with several gradations between formal and informal employment.
- 4 The results of this study improve knowledge of the employment model and of how it is affected by the gendered division of labour. They are also intended as a contribution to the debate on informal employment, which is one of the current concerns of politicians and scholars in Europe as elsewhere. According to the Eurobarometer (European Commission, 2007b), the Spanish employment model corresponds to that of southern European countries, in which informal employment is one of the alternatives for relating to employment. Spain has a far higher temporary employment rate (in weeks and hours) than other countries, particularly the Nordic ones. The Europe 2020 Strategy<sup>3</sup> includes an explicit commitment to “fight undeclared work” as a strategy for creating jobs. Scholars analyse the effects of the crisis on informal employment and its social significance in an attempt to answer the following questions: Does the economic crisis lead to a quantitative increase in informal employment? Is informal employment only precarious employment or does it somehow contribute to social cohesion? (Pfau-Effinger et al., 2009; Williams, 2009).

## Theoretical Discussion and Hypotheses

### The Employment Model and the Gender Perspective

- 5 The employment model is composed of a triangle with three vertices: the labour market, the gendered division of labour, and public policies related to these areas. Two European-wide studies show the analytical potential of this concept (Bosch et al., 2009; Miguélez and Recio, 2010), pointing to the need to extend the conventional approach based on labour market supply and demand to include the family dimension and social and occupational policies. Doing

so reveals that care work done by female family members is a key factor for analysing the employment model. At present this model must be placed in a context of change marked by high immigration, an increased presence of women in the labour market, and an aging population.

6 Though the gender perspective has been widely used to analyse welfare regimes (Sainsbury, 1999; Daly and Lewis, 2000; Bettio and Plantenga, 2004; Simonazzi, 2009), this has not been the case in employment models. Gardiner (2000) was one of the first authors to do so by taking care work into account. His proposal suggests that in analysing the employment model one must include the private sphere in addition to the labour market and labour policies. The family, and more specifically women, will emerge as the main actors in this private sphere, in which care work meets the everyday needs. It should also be noted that, according to Saraceno (1995, 1996), the family is far from behaving as a harmonious unit of cohabitation. On the contrary, it is a place of gendered division of labour that controls the availability of men and women to enter and remain in the labour market. The control varies according to the welfare systems established in European countries.

7 Other authors complement this theoretical proposal, integrating the conflict of class, generation and ethnicity in the analysis of the gendered division of labour in order to avoid giving a simplistic and distorted image of the employment model. Crompton (2006) notes that the material and symbolic dimension of the production/reproduction system is determined by the social structure. An example of this is the fact that many middle-class women working in the productive sphere follow male patterns and organize care work (the reproductive sphere) through outsourcing in order to gain professional availability. Working-class women, on the other hand, balance the two areas through internal family resources (Banyuls et al., 2009). They base their integration in employment on the search for synchronization between the productive and reproductive spheres, to the detriment of their working conditions.

8 Thus, taking into account the gender perspective in the analysis of the employment model fills some of the gaps in the most habitual analyses of work. Such an approach allows one to consider the social organization of the total workload and not just that of the job (Glucksmann, 2006), going beyond the “male breadwinner/female housekeeper” model, which fails to question the “breadwinner” concept (Warren, 2007). This approach defends the adult worker model thesis, which holds that social policy is increasingly treating women and men as individual workers. Daly (2011) states that some authors argue that individual agency is valued, assumed and promoted in the labour market. In this case, women are treated as actors with free choice between family and work. From a critical viewpoint, Lewis (2001) speaks about the gap between the theoretical adult worker model and the characterization of real life. After this theoretical criticism, Daly (2011) shows how this model is a partial characterization of what is happening in real life. Certainly, there is a greater recognition of female agency but there is also increased support by the state for familial roles based on gender. A good example is the work-life balance policy. For this reason, Daly (2011) defends as more appropriate a dual earner, gender-specialized model in which the state promotes family arrangement. The present study wishes to determine the importance of the adult worker model in the Spanish employment model. In other words, it analyzes the relationship between gendered division of labour and labour market. The hypothesis is that the adult worker model does not characterize the Spanish employment model because the division of labour persists with different career paths for men and women.

## The Employment Model and Informal Employment

9 As stated above, informal employment is a characteristic feature of the economies of southern Europe, including Spain (Miguélez, 1989). Informal employment is usually understood as employment that is not subject to labour law and tax law (European Commission, 1998; ILO, 2002).<sup>4</sup> It is often considered as synonymous with the underground economy, although the boundaries between different forms of employment are not always clear (Pahl, 1988; Gershuny, 1979; Mingione, 1983). Informal employment can affect any country or sector, but it varies greatly according to sectors and countries. In southern European countries it is very

common in domestic service and in hotels and catering, whereas in the Nordic and central European countries it is most common in the construction sector (European Commission, 2007a; Williams, 2009). Informal employment involves a legal problem of concealment of business and failure to comply with tax obligations, which is tolerated to different degrees according to context: for example, it is widely accepted in Spain, Italy and the whole of Latin America (Richter, 2010).

10 Informal employment involves “concealing” employment, so the officially recorded employment is less than the “real” employment. Therefore, the good living conditions and the relative “social peace” of Spain in these times of recession, high unemployment and temporary contracts result not only from the support provided by family networks, but also from this hidden employment. This finding confirms the thesis of Pfau-Effinger (2009) on the contribution of informal employment to social cohesion.

11 Informal employment is also seen as a means of avoiding regulation of employment. From this viewpoint it is equated with “illegal employment” or “underground employment”, which remains partly or wholly outside the official regulations. The workers are deprived of part or all of their rights because they carry out an illegal business activity. In such cases, informal employment is related to the idea of instability and precariousness. In Spain, informal employment is helping to establish precariousness as a social norm (Cano, 2007).

### Qualifications, Professionalism and Informal Employment

12 Studies of informal employment in Spain usually associate it with unskilled jobs (Jodar and Lope, 1985; Alos et al., 1988a, 1988b; Banyuls, 2003; Pla, 2004; Castillo, 2005). However, some experts warn that it is currently spreading to skilled jobs, in the form of permanent work placement or recurring job instability. This situation affects young people in particular, forcing them to compete for highly qualified jobs with no semblance of stability (Marsden, 2009). Nevertheless, most scholars relate informal employment with a lack of professionalism or “non-professional” activities. They consider that because this work is not subject to the obligations of a normal wage relationship (contract, salary, working hours), it can be performed without specific competencies.

13 This understanding of informal employment will be used in the analysis of the gendered division of labour within the employment model that is advocated herein. This analysis stresses that care work in the family (Simonazzi, 2009; Flaquer and Escobedo, 2009), predominantly done by women, unpaid and “non-professionalized”, is a key factor of the gendered division of labour, making it difficult for women to obtain the benefits of a formal employment relationship even when this type of work is done within the labour market (Rubery and Urwin, 2011). Though care work is undeclared and often not considered as work, it involves the same obligations of continuity and availability in the provision of the service. Ultimately, care work is present in the daily lives of most women throughout their life cycle (Torns, 2008).

14 Although there is no consensus about a theoretical definition of informal work, this paper understands this concept in a wide sense. It defines informal employment as the set of jobs or tasks that have one or more of the following features: unregulated, undeclared, unskilled and low-paid.

### Career Path, Gender and Informal Employment

15 The contributions made from a gender perspective have supported the view that the relationship between informal employment and life trajectories should be addressed. On this point, Saraceno (2001) suggested that the life course was a more appropriate concept than the life cycle. Whereas the life cycle tends to be linked to the labour market, highlighting only the time of entry and exit, the life course is a broader and more flexible term. These features may provide greater heuristic potential for understanding multiple entries to and exits from the labour market, which are not necessarily ordered or sequenced, reflecting the multiple crossings of people’s work cycle and life cycle.

16 By introducing the life course as a dimension of analysis, one can distinguish different degrees and periods of informal and precarious employment and identify career paths that are composed exclusively of this type of employment (Carrasquer; 2001, 2008). Various

combinations of informal, precarious and formal employment and unemployment are quite common in the life cycles of women in Spain (Candela and Piñón, 2005; Camarero, 2006). The emphasis on rural women in some studies seems to imply that the mixture of formal and informal employment in their career paths is proper to socio-economic situations with a low level of industrialization. Castel (2002), however, in his reflection on the origins of industrial wage labour, shows that this type of career path can also be identified in urban areas with an industrial tradition.

17 Considering the life course dimension from a gender perspective also has a double added value for analysing career paths and life trajectories. First, it shows the limits of a social standard of employment that only includes adult male workers. Second, it shows that, far from being invisible, domestic and care work interferes with the career paths of both sexes. A gender perspective therefore allows one to analyse how the sexual division of labour affects availability for employment according to sex. Domestic and care work, which is variable but always present throughout the life course, determines the career path of women. On the other hand, male availability for work is invariable, because domestic and care work is invisible or non-existent for them. These features form the core of hegemonic masculinity (Connell, 2005) and one of the main reasons why the gendered division of labour remains firmly unchanged (Burchell and Fagan, 2004; Crompton et al., 2005), despite the equality policies introduced in Spain and the European Union.

18 In conclusion, the issue of informal employment has become a subject of interest because of the increase in non-standard forms of employment such as temporary work and precarious work in the “advanced capitalism” of southern Europe. When the informal employment is analysed from a gender viewpoint, two main questions arise. The first one is whether the different forms of informal employment affect certain moments in working life—particularly the time of integration into the labour market—or the entire working life. The second question is whether informal employment affects the whole working population or mainly groups employed in the secondary labour market (Torns, 2000). In order to answer these questions, this paper defends the following hypothesis related to the Spanish case: the combination of gender, generation and life course determine entries into and exits from the labour market. The career path of women comes to depend on their domestic and care responsibilities. The generational difference is that care responsibility represents an exit for older women, whereas it is a parenthesis for younger women.

## Methodology

19 As stated above, this article presents a comparative analysis of the career paths of men and women in order to study the gendered division of labour in the Spanish employment model. More specifically, it analyses the importance of the labour market, the gendered division of labour, employment and the family policies in defining the career paths of men and women in Spain. To perform this analysis, we chose a qualitative approach based on 21 biographical interviews done during the 2010 in the context of the current economical crisis. This approach allowed us to:

1. Gather the social practices and imaginaries that underlie the concepts of work, employment and gendered division of labour.
2. Identify the relationships between formal and informal employment during the life course of persons.
3. Determine how expectations, projects and demands regarding work and employment differ during the life course of men and women.

20 This qualitative approach takes into account the impact of structural factors (gender, age, qualification and ethnicity) and socio-cultural traditions. For this reason, the informants were selected using both a quantitative and a qualitative approach. The quantitative approach identified the patterns of sample distribution of the most significant occupational biographies and thus defined the first type of informant. This first statistical exploration was performed by consulting three sources of official statistics: the Survey of the Active Population (*Encuesta de*

*la Población Activa*, EPA) for 2010, the Time Use Survey (*Encuesta de Empleo del Tiempo*, ETT) for 2002-2003 and 2009-2010, and the Survey of Living and Working Conditions (*Encuesta de Condiciones de Vida y Trabajo*, ECVT) for 2008, all drawn up by the Spanish National Statistics Institute).

21 Data from these three surveys were used to draw up a typology of career paths that is reinforced by other qualitative studies (Torns et al, 2004; Torns and Moreno, 2008). In the sample selection criteria we used four basic dimensions: gender, social class, generation and ethnicity. Gender was considered a key factor for explaining the different conditions of entering and remaining in the labour market and the employment conditions. It is also a differentiator of the presence and absence of men and women in domestic and care work. Social class, defined by occupation and educational level, was used to show the advantages and disadvantages associated with employment conditions and job stability. Generation, defined according to the changes that have taken place in the Spanish labour market since the 1980s, highlighted the differences between the job security enjoyed by the generation that is now aged 50 years and older and the instability of younger generations. Finally, we took into account place of origin because of the importance of the migration project in career paths and the role played by the immigrant population in the Spanish labour market in the last few decades (Torns et al., 2012; Borrás et al., 2012).

22 We used the snowball sampling method to find people for each profile. We carried out 21 biographical interviews with 7 sociological profiles,<sup>5</sup> including middle class and working class men and women of the two generational groups. We did three interviews for each sociological profile, which was sufficient to reach the saturation point of the information. The information obtained was subjected to content analysis using the Atlas.ti software. The data were coded according to the fields of labour market and domestic and care work. Finally, a transverse discourse analysis was performed on these two fields.

## Results

23 The discourse of the interviewees revealed three main points about our hypothesis. The first one is that the gendered division of labour is still very present in the career path of most women. This presence is internalized by them and affects their availability for work.

“Well, I always say that if I’d been working in my speciality when I was pregnant, I wouldn’t have given it up, but because I wasn’t. . . we decided I’d leave the job I had, so I didn’t think about looking for another one while the children were small. . . (Woman, Middle Class, Older)”

24 The second point is that the analysis of interviews shows how domestic and care work is a recurring absence in the career paths of men, or is seen as proper to women:

“Look, my wife is good-natured, and we’ve had problems, you see, but I haven’t provided too much support, you know? And then, you see I was always . . . I don’t know how much I worked, because when I was at home I was always on the computer, do you understand? So on Sunday afternoon I was always...” (Man, Middle Class, Older)”

25 The third point is that the narratives of the people interviewed revealed that informal employment is the most common way into the labour market. They also showed that informal employment is the norm for different social groups and is determined by the gendered division of labour, social class, gender and generation. These trends show the existence of a continuum between formal and informal employment that governs the career paths analysed. At this point, three main paths can be identified in the Spanish employment model:

1. Career paths of male hegemony characteristic of older males, whose lives have been governed by formal employment, often accompanied by informal employment. In these paths the continuum is mild or residual.
2. Career paths of female hegemony with a twofold presence characteristic of older women with family responsibilities throughout the life cycle, who have used informal employment as an (always unsuccessful) strategy for achieving work-life balance or for achieving extra income. In these paths the continuum is moderate or transient.
3. Career paths of strong or compulsory continuum in which informal employment ceases to be just a way into the labour market and becomes the norm. In general, this path is

followed by young people of both sexes, including the most qualified ones. Because of the current situation of unemployment, industry and business management, young people are unable to reproduce the employment pattern of earlier generations, especially those of men.

## A Continuum Between Formal and Informal Employment

26 The above findings confirm the influence of the gendered division of labour in the Spanish employment model. However, we also wish to stress the existence of a work culture that tends to normalize informal employment. The respondents seem to be resigned to precariousness, or at least to the fact that their career paths follow what we venture to call a *continuum* between formal and informal employment. This situation seems to have originated in Spain in the pre-industrial tradition of the 1950s and in the weak industrialization that followed. These factors led to a poor dissemination of the Fordist-Taylorist industrial philosophy; an entrepreneurial culture with a low level of innovation based on immediate profits; and a work culture in which the combination of different forms of formal and informal employment is considered normal. This situation is the background to career paths that mostly started with informal employment, which was widely consented and normalized. The respondents told us that they had started to work at an early age with the help and blessing of the family as an example of a career path of male hegemony:

“And because my mother’s brother had a workshop, at the age of 8 or 9 I went to help on Saturdays. Then, in the holidays I always worked as a casual farm labourer... At the age of 12 I went to do the grape harvest in France!” (Man, middle class and older generation)

27 The generation aged 50 years and older was able to move in a few years from informal jobs to formal ones, with a stable contract throughout their career paths. However, these stable jobs were often combined with informal jobs to supplement their income. They therefore did long working hours, overtime in industry, or other second jobs, which became a ruling factor in male career paths. Indeed, those who did not have second jobs were forced to explain why not.

28 The career paths of women are no exception in this continuum. Like men, they often enter the labour market through informal employment. Later, they also alternate stages of informal and formal employment throughout their career paths. However, in women of the older generation the border between formal and informal employment is not so clear as in men. They have a career path of female hegemony. For these women, it is important to have a job only if they can combine it with care work: “And combining it with the kids was difficult. I wanted a job like the one I had before, from 8 to 3... And I worked for three years but I only paid contributions for six months.”(Woman, working class and older generation)

29 Again, the continuum emerges as a female reality that is more pronounced in the younger group, especially in the working class. Women adapt to the requirements of the labour market with resignation. They see the situation of unemployment and precarious employment as unchangeable and feel unable to influence it. In fact, the persistence of a social imagery of women as housewives is still one of the reasons for the social tolerance toward this employment situation. The discourse of the women interviewed was built around their family responsibilities, which led them to accept more precarious working conditions and more informal employment than men.

30 This uncritical acceptance of the gendered division of labour normalizes career paths of male hegemony and the twofold presence of women. However, young middle-class women who take on a male style of life project have a different attitude. Their higher career expectations explain their greater frustration at work and their lower tolerance of precariousness in comparison with their mothers: “...I admit I chose the profession I liked. I’ve been very happy in it and that makes a difference. There are jobs everywhere...” (Woman, middle class and young generation)

31 Informal work was a way into the labour market for men and women of the oldest generation who represent male and female hegemony cases. However, it now continues throughout the career path although a generational change is observed especially among men. The career paths of men of the younger generation show a greater number of changes between formal

and informal employment. They are the example of a career path of strong continuum. Labour mobility often involves having to take jobs without a contract. The younger generation also shows greater acceptance of precariousness, temporary employment and flexibility in all sectors and at all career levels. Career expectations are constructed so as to allow job uncertainty and informal employment to form part of life projects. Workers accept these conditions as a toll that they pay for getting a job commensurate with their qualifications or for maintaining their status: “I was working as a teacher. I had a contract as a freelancer. I didn’t have a salary. I was given the money in an envelope and that’s it.” (Man, middle class and younger generation)

32 At present, in addition to informal jobs on entry into the labour market, the career paths of the young respondents include a set of employment practices far removed from the ideal of a regular job, good working conditions and fair pay. In this generation, we see many strategies and ways to continue working and ensure an income: unemployment plus informal employment, employment contracts with overtime, employment contracts plus undeclared work, self-employment plus informal employment, etc.

33 The trade union culture also shows a clear generational change. Older men in industrial jobs tend to have better knowledge of their rights, and claim to have participated in trade union struggles to improve their working conditions. By contrast, younger respondents accept their employment situation with resignation and seek individual strategies to improve it outside the unions. Individualized labour relations and acceptance of job instability are becoming constant underlying factors in the career paths of young people.

34 These paths form the core of what we call the continuum between formal and informal employment. They exist regardless of training and qualifications: “It’s over, once again. “Could you come into my office?” And you’re in the street! In one day they dismissed the whole creative team. There were five of us and only one was left.”(Man, middle class and younger generation)

35 In summary, it can be concluded that gender and generation show significant differences in the social perception of the continuum between formal and informal employment. Informal employment is better tolerated among women and young people than among men and older people. The gendered division of labour and the generation change are key for explaining this phenomenon. The labour market gives priority to formal employment for older men. The younger generation is forced to accept informal employment as part of their career. If they do not, they will fail to be present and active in the professional world. This situation reinforces male hegemony and prevents or hinders a change in the gendered division of labour.

## The Reasons for the Continuum of Formal and Informal Employment

36 To understand the links between career paths, the persistence of the gendered division of labour and the continuum between formal and informal employment, one must consider the factors that allow a work culture to tolerate informal employment. In other words, how does informal employment affect perceptions and social and labour strategies of individuals throughout their life course? Southern European countries have tried to regulate or eradicate this type of employment and thus increase income for the welfare state, which is now in crisis. Several attempts to do so have been made in Spain.<sup>6</sup>

37 One of the problems of eradicating informal employment is that it offers competitive advantages. Competing through low labour costs is a very common approach in Spanish business strategies (Recio, 1986; Ybarra, 2000). However, despite the advantages for employers of not paying taxes and social security contributions, undeclared work involves undeniable disadvantages for workers (ILO, 2002).

38 It should also be taken into account that the familistic nature of welfare regimes in southern Europe, with limited funding of care services, explains the failure of the formal labour market in this sector (Simonazzi, 2009). Furthermore, the long tradition of the informal economy in these countries is particularly noticeable in care work. When such work is converted into jobs on the labour market, it tends to be delegated to immigrant women, giving rise to the phenomenon called the “care drain”(Bettio and Plantenga, 2004).



- 39 This tolerance towards informal care work is possible because familistic welfare regimes have been built on a narrow concept of citizenship. Welfare policies are based on assistance rather than rights and duties and do not seem capable of regulating the public sphere in terms of social responsibility. In other words, there is no offer of services and benefits in exchange for contributions from citizens. This post-Fordist “crisis of labour citizenship” (Alonso, 2007) has been further eroded by a view of citizenship that is not even based on redistribution, let alone recognition of rights. This view is shown by European Commission (2008) figures on public confidence in national and European institutions in the context of crisis, which associate a low awareness of citizenship with certain welfare models. With regard to their ability to overcome the crisis, the Nordic countries show more confidence in their national governments than in European institutions, Germany and the UK show the same level of confidence in both institutions, and the remaining countries show more confidence in European institutions.
- 40 Finally, an added element in the Spanish case is the fact that the work culture is built on the limited industrialization developed under the Franco regime. This regime probably hindered the development of an industrial culture and labour relations similar to those observed in other European countries during the period of Fordism. Instead, it fostered a work culture strongly based on the gendered division of labour and the presence of women in domestic work. In this culture women tended to have informal, illegal, precarious and discontinuous jobs, whereas men at almost all levels of qualification often held multiple jobs. These two features are widely tolerated and accepted in the Spanish work culture (Carrasquer and Torns, 2007).
- 41 In addition to the work culture and the persistence of the gendered division of labour, the respondents’ perception of public policy also helps to explain the existence of the continuum. The results suggest that the impact of employment or welfare policies on career paths is small. They also suggest an awareness of citizenship that involves reluctance to perform duties and belligerence in claiming rights. This awareness of citizenship acts as an explicit or implicit framework for tolerance and uncritical acceptance of the continuum of informal and formal employment. One of the most frequent reasons for justifying this situation is the discrediting of the tax system and the idea that access to public services is not beneficial or useful. The social class of the respondents affects the discourse on taxation and public services. The widespread position of the middle-class people interviewed is that: “For some things you’re too poor and for some things you’re too rich” (Man, middle class and older generation). This discourse is often used to justify living conditions characterized by home ownership, private health insurance and private schooling.
- 42 Working-class people also seem to share this discourse on the low use of public services. However, in this case, the reasons stem from a distrust of assistance-based welfare policies. With the exception of education and health, they only accept public services if they perceive a strictly utilitarian capacity of agency in the short term. However, the interviews showed that it is not unusual for workers to accept unemployment as a strategy for taking advantage of unemployment benefit as if it were paid leave or early retirement. Such practices appear to be fairly entrenched, and some people facing situations of instability regret not having taken advantage of past opportunities. This perception is reinforced by the fact that companies include this practice in their business strategies: “In fact it’s not bad. It could have lasted longer, receiving unemployment benefit and working on the side’s okay. You always earn a little extra”. (Man, working class and young generation)

## Conclusions and Discussion

- 43 The analysis of career paths allowed us to study the relationship between the gendered division of labour and the employment model. It allowed us to obtain a broader and more rigorous view of employment, revealing another reality that is less visible from other perspectives. In relation to the first hypothesis, it can be concluded that in the Spanish employment model there is a persistent gendered division of labour, expressed as the recurring presence of domestic and care work in women’s career paths and its recurring absence in men’s career paths. The career paths analysed show a strong internalization of an employment model in which the gendered division of labour is a key factor. It also shows that the gendered division of labour

still has enormous symbolic importance in the social contract between genders. Spain is far from witnessing the decline of the male breadwinner/female housewife model that has been reported by Lewis (2001). As this author warned, Spain is another example of the gap between the adult worker model that social policies take into account and the real life of citizens. In fact, the Spanish employment model is close to the dual-earner, gender-specialized, family model reported by Daly (2011).

44 In relation to the second hypothesis, it can be concluded that gender and generation show significant differences in the social perception of the continuum between formal and informal employment. Informal employment is better tolerated among women and young people than among men and older people. The gendered division of labour and the generation change are key for explaining this phenomenon. The labour market gives priority to formal employment for older men, whereas the younger generation are forced to accept informal employment as part of their career expectations. If they do not, they will fail to be present and active in the professional world. This situation reinforces male hegemony and prevents or hinders a change in the gendered division of labour.

45 In addition, it can be added that the increase in informal employment during the economic crisis is now affecting even the most qualified young people, most of whom are offspring of middle class. However, the interviews reveal the existence of a strongly internalized work culture that explains the normalization of long working hours, the acceptance of overtime and second jobs among older males, and the social tolerance of unemployment and informal employment among women and young people. In addition, a clear new feature that was not sufficiently appreciated beforehand is that informal employment is the way into the labour market. For the older generation this strategy was temporary for men and typical for older women with dependents. For the younger generation, however, it seems to have become the norm. The continuum between formal and informal employment materializes in different ways, depending on the situation of each social type. The existence and acceptance of the continuum differs significantly by gender, class, generation, and the moment in the life cycle reflected in the discourse.

46 Further research should be devoted to exploring this model and its effects according to class and gender, with particular attention to the effect of the prolonged recession on qualified young people. It seems unlikely that employment and business strategies will remedy this situation, which is part of the startling level of youth employment in Spain. Despite the changes that have occurred in employment in Spain, its employment model still has distinctive features that set it aside from its European neighbours and other countries.

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## Notes

- 1 This article does not refer to the results related to ethnicity, which will be dealt with in a forthcoming article.
- 2 “Changes in the Spanish employment model”, research funded by the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation (R+D National Programme - Ref. CSO2008-01321).
- 3 The Europe 2020 Strategy is contained in the communication of the European Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions of 23 November 2010 under the title: “An Agenda for New Skills and Jobs: A European Contribution to Full Employment”.
- 4 A recent study (Arrazola et al., 2011) estimated that the underground economy in Spain represented 17.4% of the total economy, accounting for 4 million jobs in 2008.
- 5 Of these profiles one corresponded to immigrants and, as stated above, is not analyzed in this article.
- 6 See the General Guidelines for the General Tax Control Plan (*Directrices Generales del Plan General de Control Tributario*) of 2011, published in the Spanish Official State Gazette on February 7, 2011.

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## Résumés

L'article présente une analyse comparative des trajectoires professionnelles masculines et féminines visant à étudier le rôle que joue la division sexuelle du travail dans le modèle de l'emploi espagnol. Les résultats montrent la persistance de la division sexuelle du travail et sa contribution à l'élaboration des trajectoires professionnelles, où le secteur informel apparaît comme l'un de ses traits distinctifs. Une réalité qui, bien que présente partout en Europe, diffère selon le contexte socioculturel et productif de chaque pays. Dans le cas espagnol, celle-ci devient réalité en temps de crise et met en évidence l'existence d'un continuum entre l'emploi formel et le travail informel, que nous avons observé à travers les trajectoires analysées. Nos résultats illustrent les différences entre les hommes et les femmes et confirment que la division sexuelle du travail persiste.

This article presents a comparative analysis of the career paths of men and women in order to study the gendered division of labour in the Spanish employment model. A qualitative approach was used to study these paths, taking into account the impact of structural factors and socio-cultural traditions. The results show that the gendered division of labour persists and helps to consolidate informal employment as a distinctive feature of career paths. Though this situation is found throughout Europe, the socio-cultural context and the labour market in Spain shows particular features and in times of crisis career paths involve a continuum of formal and informal employment. This situation shows continuing inequalities between men and women.

***Entrées d'index***

***Mots-clés*** : division sexuelle du travail, genre, modèle d'emploi, trajectoires professionnelles, travail informel

***Keywords*** : career paths, employment model, gender, informal employment, sexual division of labour