

**THE SECOND DEMOGRAPHIC TRANSITION  
FROM A GENDER PERSPECTIVE. THE CASE  
OF CATALONIA**

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## THE SECOND DEMOGRAPHIC TRANSITION FROM A GENDER PERSPECTIVE. THE CASE OF CATALONIA.

### *ABSTRACT*

In the first part of the paper I will introduce the Second Demographic Transition as it takes place in Western European countries, Spain and Catalonia. In the second part, I refer to the effects of the Second Demographic Transition on household composition. Finally, I introduce an explanatory framework of these changes emphasizing the cultural factor in the social construction of gender identities in Catalonia.

### *RESUM*

En la primera part de l'article presento la Segona Transició Demogràfica als països de l'Europa occidental, Espanya i Catalunya. En la segona part, faig referència als seus efectes en la composició de les llars i de les famílies. I finalment, introdueixo un marc explicatiu dels canvis familiars que emfatitza la importància dels aspectes culturals en la construcció de les identitats de gènere.

### *RESUMEN*

En la primera parte de este artículo, presento la Segunda Transición Demográfica en los países de la Europa occidental, España y Cataluña. En la segunda parte, analizo sus efectos en la composición de los hogares y de las familias. Finalmente, introduzco un marco explicativo de estos cambios, enfatizando la importancia del factor cultural en la construcción social de las identidades de género.

### *RESUMÉ*

La Deuxième Transition Démographique des pays de l'Europe occidentale, de l'Espagne et de la Catalogne fait l'objet de la première partie de cet article. Dans la deuxième partie, j'analyse leur effets sur le cadre explicatif de ces changements, en soulignant l'importance du facteur culturel dans la construction sociale des identités de genre.

## THE SECOND DEMOGRAPHIC TRANSITION FROM A GENDER PERSPECTIVE. THE CASE OF CATALONIA.

### 1. Introduction

The term “Second Demographic Transition” was introduced by Van de Kaa (1988) and Lesthaegue (1994) to explain demographic trends in Western countries from the 1950s to the present<sup>1</sup>. Some demographers, like Cliquet (1991), doesn't agree with the idea of talking about a “second” demographic transition, arguing that demographic changes experienced during the last decades are only a lineal continuation of changes that gave sense to a well known Demographic Transition initiated in Europe following the industrial revolution. Although they admit that during the sixties there was an acceleration in the changing trends in living arrangements and fertility, it had initiated before. Cliquet states that in such a case would be appropriate also to talk about two, three or five demographic transitions. To clarify this point he uses works done by Coale and Musham on the demographic history of human beings in which they showed the existence of several revolutions (or transitions) in different historical periods (agrarian revolution, malthusian transition and neomalthusian).

The Demographic Transition, as defined in in Ansley Coale's works (1973) should be seen as the change from a traditional society with high natality and mortality rates to an industrialised society in which natality and mortality stabilized at low levels. In the explanatory framework develop by Notestein (1953) this change is a consequence of a modernisation process of society, that consists in a deeply social and

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<sup>1</sup> Dirk Van de Kaa and Ron Lesthaegue, include in the Second Demographic Transition recent trends in mortality and mobility, but I will only refer to family dynamics.

economic change, promoted by the industrial revolution. Since then, studies on demographic trends use as independent variables macro social factors in order to measure the degree of modernisation of a specific society. From this point of view, the mortality and natality transition are explained by factors such as urbanisation, education levels, productive structure, secularisation, etc.

As it has been pointed out recently in a critical revision of the construction of the demographic knowledge done by the demographer Susan Cotts Watkins (1993)<sup>2</sup>, it's important to note that, in the context of the "first" Demographic Transition, the same factors that are relevant to explain women's reproductive behaviour also appear in mortality and mobility studies. In fact, demographic studies on reproductive behaviour changes do not take into account in which context of gender relation fertility decisions are taken. The Theory of Demographic Transition says nothing about sexuality (fertility is the result of a immaculate conception), gender roles and gender relations (couples appear as a monolithic unions without conflicts). Since then other fertility theories have been developed (Value of Children by Arnold, New Home Economics by Gary Becker or International Flows by John Caldwell), in which the economic value of children is underlined, but in all of them the couple appear as an harmonic unit, without interests in conflict. In short, power relations that influence fertility decisions and are so much relevant to explain different reproductive behaviour are left out in such frameworks.

On the contrary, the Second Demographic Transition, in its explanatory framework, considers openly changes in gender relations. For that reason, I think is useful to speak about a *second* demographic transition in order to underline the importance of changes in relations between men and women related to demographic and family changes, to stress that individual, and couples don't act according to a previous reproductive plan. Behind any decision of having or not having children,

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<sup>2</sup> Susan Cotts Watkins and Ansley Coale have broadly studied the regional geography of the fertility transition in Europe in the context of the Princeton study (see Coale & Cotts Watkins, 1986).

of getting or not getting marriage, exists a negotiation process in which personal expectations and bargaining power are very important.

It seems clear to me, then, that women's emancipation have changed its negotiation capability in these processes becoming the crucial factor of the process of deinstitutionalisation of the family<sup>3</sup>. That process is expressed in a search of an own field of experimentation of new family arrangements outside of patriarchal family<sup>4</sup>. In this context, fertility decline and changes in family forms are demographic changes that can be understood in terms of the new women's roles, build on the base of more autonomy and less dependence on men.

## **2. General Features of the Second Demographic Transition**

According to Lesthaeghe we can distinguish three phases in the Second Demographic Transition as it takes place in many Northern and Central European countries. During the initial phase, roughly between 1955 and 1970, there were three major components. Firstly, there was a considerable acceleration in the already upward divorce trend. Secondly, the baby boom came to an end. Fertility at all ages and marriage durations declined simultaneously. This coincided with the contraceptive revolution based on new hormonal contraceptives and the rediscovery of the IUD. Thirdly, the decline in ages at marriage, that had started between 1880 and 1920 in most Western countries, stopped. Instead, proportions marrying prior to the age of 25 dropped considerably. In the late 60s. several countries also experienced a temporary increase in shotgun marriages: premarital sex had been on the increase throughout the 1960s, and contraceptive protection in such relations was not yet efficient enough. In most countries this feature disappeared during the early 1970s. In others, a problem of teenage pregnancy persisted.

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<sup>3</sup> Usually in sociological literature the term "desinstitutionalization" of the family is used to refer the process of privatization of family decisions and individualization of its members.

<sup>4</sup> The term of patriarchal family is used here as a synonyms of the Modern family (as it was defined by Talcot Parsons (1955): with a clear devision of gender roles of partners, he as a breadwinner and she as a housewife) to emfasize the hierarquic dimension in gender relations.

During a second phase, roughly between 1970 and 1985, premarital cohabitation spread from Nordic countries to many others. In Europe, proportions cohabiting largely compensate for declining proportions marrying. Thereafter, procreation also starts within consensual unions, and these unions drift away from being a period of courtship to becoming more a "paperless marriage". Procreation in consensual unions results in a larger share of extramarital births among all births. But, this does not entail a rise in fertility prior to the age of 25. The opposite still holds.

A third phase occurs from the mid-1980s onward. It is characterized by a plateau in divorce rates in countries that had reached high levels. However, it should be stressed that remarriage probabilities, both for divorcees and widowed people, had declined throughout the period since the 1960s. Post-marital cohabitation and LAT-relations<sup>5</sup> emerge as new features and they replace remarriage to some extent. Moreover, there is a recuperation effect of fertility after the age of 30. In some countries the decline in fertility at young ages has stopped, largely because it reached very low levels or because of the persistent teenage fertility problem. As a consequence, the recuperation after the age of 30 pushes the period fertility rates to slightly higher levels. Not all Western nations have, however, reached this third stage. In Europe, the leads and the lags essentially follow a North-South axis, with the mediterranean countries still being in the second phase<sup>6</sup>.

### **3. Regional Patterns**

Even though there are many empirical evidences that the same changes have been taking place in Catalonia and Mediterranean Europe area, we can discuss if them are avoidable and unidirectional. On the

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<sup>5</sup> L.A.T. (living apart together) refers to a stable sentimental relation keeping independent households of residence.

<sup>6</sup> For a more detail description and explanation of the Second Demographic Transition see D. Van de Kaa (1988) and R. Lesthaeghe (1994).



other hand, in our country the democratisation of the family only could be visible, with the slow legislative changes that began with the Democratic Transition initiated after the death of the dictator Franco. (For instance, the importance of the unstability of the unions, only can be known since 1981 with the legalization of divorce in this year). Nevertheless, from my point of view, differences in the calendar of demographic and family changes as a consequence of different policy and social history do not invalidated the usefully of the Second Demographic Transition framework.

In an attempt to show the regional diversity of the demographic frame, the French demographer Louis Roussel (1992), analysed the process of desinstitutionalization of the family in Europe, to which he presents a typology based on the following indexes in 1988 for sixteen countries. Taking as a starting point he considered: average number of children per woman or total fertility rate, divorce rate, percentage of cohabitants and percentage of births outside marriage. As a result he distinguishes four great regions: 1) The Southern Region (Italy, Greece, Portugal and Spain): low fertility, divorce, cohabitation and birth outside marriage; 2) The Northern Region (Denmark and Sweden): high level of fertility, divorce and cohabitation and high or middle level of percentage of birth outside marriage; 3) The Western Region (France, Norway, Holland and the United Kingdom): low fertility, low level of cohabitation and high divorce and high percentage of births outside marriage; and 4) The Central region (Germany, Austria, Belgium, Luxemburg and Switzerland): high divorce, medium cohabitation, scarcity of births outside marriage and weak fertility.

This typology, in our case is useful only to situate Spain in the context of Mediterranean areas. The decline of *fertility* and nuptiality, marking the beginning of the Second Demographic Transition in Western and Northern European countries, in the mediterranean countries, took place later (during the seventies and the eighties) and faster because of political, economical and cultural factors acting at that specific time. Just to mention one in Spain during Franco's era, divorce, contraception and abortion were illegal. In democracy normative legalization comes very slowly: contraception in 1978, divorce in 1981 and abortion, only

in three restricted situations in 1985 (rape, risk for mothers' health and congenital malformation).

In Catalonia, like in the rest of Mediterranean Europe, all the features that define the Second Demographic Transition are more noticeable than in other Spanish regions: fertility is lower, and percentage of out of wedlock births, divorce and cohabitation higher (see Table 1). As a consequence one parent families, one person households and reconstructed families are more frequent, especially in the Metropolitan Area and Barcelona City. In the last part of the paper I will argue that these trends are associated with a higher degree of women's autonomy and independence and with a weaker degree of the patriarchal relations.

In Catalonia, the *fertility* and *nuptiality* decline began around 1975. At the beginning of the eighties the fertility decline was so accelerated that nowadays this area (Spain, Italy and Portugal) registers the lowest fertility levels in the world: Catalonia, the Basque country, Galizia and some other regions in the North of Italy (Emilia-Romanga and Liguria) are the regions with the lowest number of children per woman. Simultaneously the age at first union and the age at first birth also declined (see Table 1).

We can also appreciate an important change in the *kind of marriage celebration*, which is a good indicator of the desinstitutionalisation of the family. At the beginning of the eighties in Catalonia only a very few couples got married outside the traditional catholic ritual, but at the beginning of the nineties one of every four marriages was celebrated by the civil law (only). The average in Barcelona City is one out of three and in Spain one out of every five marriages.

During the eighties the number of *legal divorces* and *separations* tripled and birth outside marriage doubled. The ratio between the dissolution of old couples and the number of new married couples has been increasing.

At the beginning of the nineties, for every ten marriages celebrated in Catalonia, were initiated 1,5 legal separations or divorce; ten years later this relation was 10 to 4. Currently the incidence of divorce is higher in Catalonia than in Spain as a whole, but in relation to European patterns these figures are still very low. From the experience of central and northern European countries we know that the divorce rate became stable when cohabitation is broadly spread. That's to say, when cohabitation is normatively seen as a type of marriage it could be also finish in a pre-marital disruption (sometimes is used the term of "divorce of cohabitants"), contributes to reduce the number of divorces and separations that fallow a legal course. It also has an influence on fertility in lowering its rates given the loses of reproductive period caused by the lags between the pre-marital disruption and future relationship the woman will engage in.

Statistics from census show a lower number of separated and divorce males than separated and divorce females (in 1991 in Spain the relation was 7 to 10). That figures express the higher propensity of men to re-marriage after a broken union. The reason of such difference could be many. On the one hand, the incapability of men to take care of themselves increases their predisposition to began a new union. On the other hand, often, after a divorce or a separation fathers keep virtually free of family load, or better to say, with less daily responsibilities than mothers, and for that reason they are in better situation to initiated a new life in a couple with other person. Finally, men, more frequently than women ask for a separation when they already have initiated in practice a new relation.

Data from marriage registers confirm the above assumption showing a higher propensity of men to be in their second unions, especially with single women. On the contrary, second marriages between divorced women and single men are not frequent at all. The incidence of marriage with at least one of the partners divorced is higher in Catalonia than in the rest of the Spain, and them are concentrated in Barcelona City.

*Cohabitation*, including pre-marital type also, but specially after a dissolution of a first marriage have increased substantially in Catalonia during the eighties. *Births outside marriage* have increased in parallel with the father recognition (births of not married women which father is known). This fact, confirm the higher incidence of cohabitants couples. Also in this case, Catalonia and Barcelona keep far from the rest of Spanish regions, because of the highest values in both indicators.

In cohabitation we can distinguish at least, two different functions: one, as a pre-marital function, or I say bellow, as a marriage "in prove", specially for young couples, and, on the other hand, as an alternative frame to redefine gender relations in couples, frequently adults, whose have experienced a former union or marriage that have end up in a separation or divorce. In Catalonia, this second group is very important and the profile of cohabitants suggest a relational frame less conventional than marriage. The occupational category and the level of education is higher than the average of the population; in relation to married couples, to find a women older or better educated than her partner is more frequent<sup>7</sup>, and the number of children per couple is lower (see Flaquer and Solsona, 1995).

Pre-marital cohabitation and living apart together, specially for young adults, although its lower incidence in the European context, are every time more frequent. In fact, living apart together relations could play the same role as the "old courtship", as a waiting time, until the partners became economically independents. In that sense, is possible to suggest that the "independence thesis", formulated in the Gary Becker's theory of marriage doesn't work in our country. Becker states that "the gain from marriage is reduced by a rise in the earnings and labour force participation of women because a sexual division of labour becomes less advantageous". Tha's to say, greater women's independence will substantially increases the prportion of never marrying. Nevertheless, in Spain, on the contrary, self-realisation of women, and men as well, is not

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<sup>7</sup> Mead Cain (1994) have studied the realtion between the patriarchal society and demographic change in diferent contemporanean societies. One of the most important results is that exist a positive relation between the age difference among partners, the number of children and the strength of patriarchal regime.

an obstacle, but a pre condition to initiate a process of family constitution<sup>8</sup>. In that sense, the great difficulties for young women to get a job, and the existence of a welfare state that does not make easy to emancipate from parental home, neither to combine work and family, explain in a great part, such low nuptiality and fertility levels in Catalonia and in Spain.

#### 4. Household composition

Recent trends in nuptiality, divorce and in part in fertility and mortality caused important changes in family structures and in the style of family life. As a consequence of developments of the Second Demographic Transition life cycle transitions for individuals become more frequent, less strictly patterned and more complex. There is an observable decline in categories of more traditional households, meanwhile other different kinds of families become more visible: one parent families, mostly headed by women, are increasing, as well as one person households and reconstructed families. In that sense, the monolithic identity that in the past protected the family institution disappeared, and women did a lot in this direction. For that reason, some authors talk about the death of the **family** and the birth of the **families**.

*Some notes about the availability of european statistics on family structures*

Statistics, such as population censuses, which are not designed to gather information about family situation, show the changes in the

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<sup>8</sup> Valerie K. Oppenheimer (1995) criticizes the microeconomic theory formulated by Gary becker, demostrating that, in united states during the eighthies, women with higher education level, a better position in the labour market and higher income have a higher porpensity to get marriage.

constitution of the family late and fragmented. So, it is very difficult to know if out of wedlock births correspond to a one parent family or cohabiting partners. The same problem occurs with the reconstructed families, that means, small siblings living in a family created by a second marriage.

The information about family composition in Europe is limited although I must note the work done by Eurostat gathering data given by governments from their population censuses.

For the moment, Eurostat have published two documents with the results from the population censuses: *The European Union and the Family*, Social Europe 1-1994 and *Ménages et Familles dans l'Espace Economique Européen*, Statistiques en bref, Population et Conditions Sociales, 1995-5.<sup>9</sup>

To compare household structures in 1991 between European countries we will distinguish between: one person households, one parent families, one nucleus families, two or more nucleus families and non-family households of two or more people. Data is not completely comparable, because many statistical institutes don't follow United Nations recommendations to tabulate family data. For instance, some countries limit the age of children to consider them as members of family nucleus (such as Denmark, Luxemburg, Finland or Sweden, they fix the maximum age at 18, 25, 18 and 18 respectively) while the majority of the countries don't do it.

On the other hand, the definition of the family nucleus, based on partners or filiation relations, also has more than one exception. In the Portuguese case, for instance, as a consequence of migratory movements abroad, households composed by grand parents and grandchildren are frequent and also considered as nuclear family. In Denmark, Luxemburg and Great Britain, these households have the same treatment.

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<sup>9</sup> Readers who want to clarify any statistic figure or matter referring to censuses definitions of basic concepts of household and family, that are the base for tabulations on living arrangements please consult the both references above.

Another issue that doesn't receive an homogeneous consideration is cohabitation. While in some countries cohabitation is seen as similar to a marriage type, in others cohabitants are considered unrelated people, that in the case of having children are tabulated as one parent families, and if not, they are included in the category of non family household with two or more people.

Finally, just to say that 1991's data corresponds almost ever with Europe of 15, even sometimes Eurostat also gives information about Island, Norway and Liechtenstein, in which case refers to European Economic Space.

### *Family Structures at the beginning of the nineties in Europe*

At the beginning of the nineties, more than 2 out of 3 of the european households (70%) were composed by one or more family groups. The more common case is the strict nuclear family -63%, close to 66% in 1981- even the weight of different kinds of households has changed during the eighties, reducing couples with children and increasing one parent families. Extended nuclear families have decreased (4% in 1991 versus 6.5% in 1981). One person households in 1991 represented 27% compared with 23% in 1981.

In terms of the population is still more evident that the most common experience for individuals is to live in family, since the 86% of the population resident in the European Economic Space lives in a family household. Nevertheless, the eighties trends confirm the development of new family arrangements related with the own changes of the Second Demographic Transition;. They are expressed by an increasing in one parent families, one person households and reconstructed families, even though trends and evolution of the last can not be measured with precision. In fact, one of every 10 european people lives alone, one of every 10 lives in a one parent family, but 1 of 5 lives in a traditional family composed by a couple with children and only 3% of people live in non family households with 2 or more people. Then, it does not seem adequate to talk about the end of the family, instead we may explore

the new diversity of family forms, that also shows great diversity of family forms in the European space.

In relation to the importance of the *new family forms* at the beginning of the nineties, is possible to point out *forms* with great diversity in the European geography. From the distribution of households per country by type shown in the Figure 1 is easy to confirm that in the comparative analysis we are comparing different realities below the same type of household.

The *one person households* allow us to establish the following regional typology according its presence and the differential experience by sex. In the Northern countries and Germany are very frequent (30% of the total) whilst in the Mediterranean countries this percentage is near to 20% and Spain having the lowest percentage with only 13%. In the rest of the countries this percentage ranges from 25% to 30%.

The most important thing to note is that in Northern countries women and men have the same experience of living alone. In Sweden, for instance, 18,5% of the population lives alone (8,4% are men and 10,2% are women). A similar situation could be found in the rest of the Northern countries. Nevertheless, in Germany, in the Mediterranean and Central-European countries, the percentage of women living alone doubles or triples that of men.

The above information may suggests that in the Northern countries, the argument of the difference between expectation of life of men and women and the better capability of older women to take care of themselves is not sufficient to explain the presence of one person households. In those countries young and adult people have an important presence in this kind of households. They may live alone after their emancipation from parental home or in latter phases of their vital cycle, maybe as a consequence of a break up of a relationship. The development of the Welfare State and lower supportive role of the family in transitional situations of the family disruption, are the key factors to understand the different incidence of one parent households by age between the north and the rest of the European countries.



Comparing the importance of living alone of women by age considering two major groups (15-64 years and 65 years and more), we observe in the mediterranean countries, in which the more noticeable increase have been done during the eighties in relative terms, this way of living is more common between older women than in adult age brackets. Nevertheless, in the Central-European and Northern countries do not exist such important differences. In the Low Countries and Denmark (in which in both age groups registers the maximum percentage) to live alone is more frequent in the adult ages than in the later cycles of age. It should take into account, moreover, that in any country the percentage of the population living in collective households or institutions (for instance elderly people residence) gets to be only the 2%.

In the information published by Eurostat (1995) the *household without nucleus* with more than one person are included in the category of *non family households*, but in some cases they are formed by related people that do not constituted a nucleus. By the fact that they really refer to non family households allow us to speak about the importance of other living arrangements as alternative to living within a family, but that is difficult to be argued. In fact, the three countries that show the highest percentage of this type of household are the Low Countries, Finland and Ireland, every one in a different stage of the Second Demographic Transition, indeed.

*One parent households* have been increasing in all European countries during the eighties, but regional differences are difficult to explain because there does not exist the same criteria about the maximum age of children to define them. In some cases these families are a result of a decomposition of a nuclear family, and in other cases could be an old parent, for instance a widowed mother, who goes to live with one of the children already adult and economically independent. In fact, among the countries that show the higher percentage of this kind of households, only Norway has established a limit in the age of children. Ireland registers the highest percentage (10,68%) followed very close by

Island (10%). Belgium, Great Britain, Spain, Austria and Norway have percentages higher than 8%.

Even though it is clear that one parent households have been increasing in all European countries during the eighties, it's difficult to establish the genesis of this kind of household partially, because definitions in the censuses differ among countries. Sometimes the factor which originated the above type of household is the ageing process of the population and family regrouping process of elderly people with oldest relatives. In other cases it is just an expression of the fact that nuclear family has lost the monopoly of the reproduction. Therefore, it may be difficult to make generalisation about the process.

If we take into account only one parent families with at least one child less than 16 years old, then the regional typology is clearer. Denmark, Great Britain and Germany, show the highest percentage (20,8%, 16% and 15,4% of the total of the households, respectively). Greece, Italy and Spain the lowest (5,7%, 6,4% and 7,9%, respectively). In relation to the presence of lone fathers and lone mothers, as well as ten years before, we can speak about the feminization of the one parenthood, since the frequency of lone fathers is very low in all countries. The Norwegian demographer An-Magritt Jensen (1995) refers to the effects of one parenthood in the childhood: the feminization of the one parenthood brings a process of feminization of the childhood, which means that children every time keep closer to their mothers, and the contrary happens with fathers. Mothers have more responsibilities in relation to their children and a greater amount of reproductive work than before the disruption. On the other hand, one parenthood is related with a diminishing in family income for the salary missing that leads to a feminization of the poverty as well.

Denmark is the country with the highest presence of one parent families with minor children. That can be explained, in part, because it is one of the countries where equal opportunities policies have been developed formerly. These policies guarantee economic autonomy for women, as well for men, which allow decisions-making in relation to family arrangements to be taken more freely. The case of Great Britain

and Germany neither could be understood, without taking into account the availability of their public policies. Even though these have acted in another direction and from a more patriarchal ideology, in the sense that tried not put in question the legitimacy of the traditional/patriarchal nuclear family based on the sexual division of labour asymmetric and hierarchical.

In Great Britain, for instance, the State during the sixties wanted to protect lone single mothers, because from a conservative point of view it was a disgraceful situation. As such the state would "help" them economically. Now, the State has problems to give the provision to all lone mothers that have the right to receive it. In fact, as a result of the gender blind economic policy, that considers women's work just as a help, everyday there are more mothers that do not reach the minimum salary to grow up their children.

In Germany, the protectionist policy of the State, could be seen from an optimistic perspective since it allow women do not be dependent of an individual patriarch, her partner, even though lone mothers get a dependence on governments welfare payments. In many countries, as for instance Spain, where the State does not give any kind of provision in such situation, women without resources should be forced to live with their partners although their relationship has fall apart, because they can not suport economically their children and themselves as well. In this sense, the German policy have a good consideration by lone mothers who perceive economic provisions from the State, as has been shown by Madje & Neussuss (1994) in their study on in West Berlin, in front the more pessimistic assumption that emphasizes the strong relation between lone-matherhood and feminization of the pauverty.

The *simple and extended nuclear households* (consider altogether because desegregate data have not been published yet) show a regional typology north south quite clear: maximum presence in the Mediterranean countries (Portugal, Greece, and Spain with more than 70% of the total of households) and minimum in Norway (less than 50%). In Finland, Sweden, Denmark, Germany, Low Countries, Belgium and

Austria we find percentages close to Norway (from 50% to 60%). Italy and France keep very close to their Mediterranean neighbours (from 60% to 70%), as well Ireland, Great Britain, Island and Luxembourg.

Observing simple nuclear households, we are in fact referring to living arrangements with the same composition. However, we should point out that in Mediterranean countries as well as in Ireland, household with a couple without children are less frequent, relatively to the rest of the European countries. Nevertheless, it's important to mention that gender and inter-generational relations in families with couple and children, may be quite different depending on the economic and personal autonomy of their members. I should by now clarify, what I have been calling traditional or patriarchal type of household. I defined them as such based upon a division of labour as follow: he's as a breadwinner and she's as a housewife. But, when the wife or one of the children enjoy economic independence, patriarchal relations are weakened. The same comment is valid to refer to a household which is composed only by a couple without children. In such case, , gender relations are defined on the basis of the relative autonomy of their members.

In concluding with the European geography's frame of household composition, we should mention that curiously Norway shows the higher percentage of households with two or more nucleus. This is very difficult to be explained, but we assume that it is related with censuses definitions (maybe with the maximum age of children to belong to a nuclear family).

## **5. New family forms and gender relations. Explanatory framework.**

The explanatory framework of the Second Demographic Transition developed by Van de Kaa (1988) considers social processes in three dimensions: *structure* (that refers to modernisation, development of post-industrial society and Welfare State), *culture* (express with the so-

called "silent revolution") and *technology* (that includes the second contraceptive revolution and the spread of the television information). In my point of view, the second dimension, referring to culture, is very important because it includes the weakening of gender inequalities and women's dependence. The author underlines in this dimension: the increasing contest between the sexes, changes in balance of power between sexes, increased emphasis on self realisation, conflict of roles in different spheres of life, female life course more independent, search for personal life style, etc. All these processes promote the development of new living arrangements.

Women's emancipation became a key factor of the acceleration of these changes, but at the same time, as a consequence of the re definition of new sex roles, relations between them are modify and masculine gender identity begin a de-construction/ reconstruction process, with preliminary effects on marriage and reproductive behaviour. At this point, I should point out that to study gender relations changes and demographic changes is absolutely necessary to include the male's half of the population in our studies. Not only to put off women the responsibility to produce much or less children, but as well as to recognise that to get married and to have children is at least a matter of two involved people.

Some authors have included men in the study of the economic policy on fertility decisions getting very interesting results. The economist Nancy Folbre (1993), for instance, has argued that the weakening of patriarchal society is express by a reduction in the exercise of men's power in decisions on the number of children. That happens when the economic value of children is decreasing for an unbalance between intergenerational economic flows and then women can exercise control on their own body, and get more decision and bargaining power. On the other hand, there is a negative effect on the number of children desired from the co-responsibility of fathers of the reproductive work. That's to say, when fathers became aware of what means *love's work*, to use the term of Hilary Rose (1987)<sup>10</sup>, the mythical

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<sup>10</sup> For Hilary rose the *love's work* is a combination of servant work, often for long hours, repetitive and boring domestic tasks and complex emotional work with

image of a great family sit at the table in a holiday's day around the patriarch disappear.

Gender relation analysis is necessary to understand what really means an union's break up and the constitution of a one parent family. Some years ago, Cristine Delphy (1982) in a paper on the sociological meaning of marriage and divorce, have point out about the follow evidence: if the divorce marks the end of a marriage it does not mean at all the end of the marriage as an institution. Her paper "Marriage and divorce: the double predicament" focus only on the economic aspects. Her hypothesis is that marriage is the institution that let to extract free work from a category of the population, the wives-women. She argues broadly that divorce reveals some institutional features of marriage that before were kepted in a latent situation. Delphy affirms the follow paradox: "on the one hand, for women marriage is the institutional place of their exploitation and, on the other hand, as a consequence of that exploitation their potential situation (for all women, not only for married women) is so bad that, economically speaking, marriage becomes still the best carrier for them" (Delphy, 1982, p. 68).

Nevertheless, this statement has many exceptions, since many women reject to go back to a situation of patriarchal dependence. In fact, other authors have point out that in many countries as a consequence of the development of the Welfare State, as for instance the Germany case, the risk situation for people that experienced a change in the way of life could become an opportunity, if there is a social and politic infra structure that gives alternatives to women who are in that situation (Madje & Neususs, 1994).

One conclusion that could be expose easily is that the development of the Welfare State is a key factor for the development of new attitudes in front of marriage and reproduction based on a higher level of individual autonomy. When Roussel (1992) wonder why changes in living arrangements have began in the Northern Region, he concludes that was precisely in Denmark and Sweden where began the debate on

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children, husbands and elderly unable people.

the new women's image, their integration on working life, the autonomy of couples and the reconsideration of gender roles. Of course, in order to change gender roles is needed to modify gender relations.

In Spain, even though the legal reforms introduced after the Democratic Transition affect all the state, which without any doubt made easier the democratisation of family life, currently, we may find different regions in different stages of the Second Demographic Transition. The consequences of such reforms are interfering with the gender identities constructed in the past in every region. My hypothesis is that, in Catalonia these processes are quite developed, especially in Barcelona City. Not as a consequence of a broad development of the Welfare State, even though in that area have been taking place important improvements during the left wing government of the city; neither for the massive integration of women in the labour market (women's unemployment rates are very important); but for a weakening of patriarchal relations shaped throughout the century.

Women's emancipation in Catalonia is in advanced phase because the compatibility between family and salaried work have more legitimacy there than in other Spanish regions (Solsona, 1994). On the other hand, the social debate to reach the responsibility of men and women in the private sphere is more alive. Several factors have favoured this advantaged situation of Catalonia in the context of Spanish regions. There are several historical reasons, economical, political and cultural as well, that may explain partially the greater legitimacy of working mothers in Catalonia and the lower level of stigmatisation of new living arrangements "deviant" from the patriarchal family.

In fact, from the beginning of the industrial revolution, women in Catalonia have been needed as a labour force in textil industries. Even the conservative wave of catalonian nationalist movement at the beginning of the century, that aimed to give education to women to become better partners and to raise healthier children, gave greater importance to preparing girls and young women to earn a living in new professions in better conditions. The Cultural Institut founded by Francesca Bonmàison, which is one of the expressions of the force of this

contradictory conservative feminism, developed at the beginning of the century (1909-1926) that tried to form modern women in the religious values making a better housewife and a better partner, but also to promote its presence in the public space, and promoting a solidarity between women of different social classes (Macià, 1988). During this period, the first experience in Spain in coeducation at schools, took place in Catalonia with the "Escola Moderna de Ferrer Guardia" (1901-1906) and during the Second Republic (1931-38) only in Catalonia coeducation was widely implemented (Cortada, 1988).

During the Second Republic the most progressive legislation in Spain was implemented by the Catalan government to guarantee civil rights and social integration of women, that could be compared with the most advanced countries of that time. For instance, Catalonia was the second country in the world (after the Soviet Union) where abortion was legal; contraceptive information was spread; the Spanish divorce law was amplified and the legal regime of separate property of partners gives married women more autonomy and independence (Oranich, 1978).

Even during Franco's dictatorship, the catalan civil law, based on the old roman law, was more advanced and less discriminatory for women than the napoleonic Civil Code introduced after the Civil War (in 1939) in the major part of the Spanish country. That means, for instance, that during Franco's regime, a catalan woman who married a catalan man kept economic patrimonial independence within the marriage even though she didn't have juridic capacity in the eye of the courts (but if she married a non catalan man the head of the family imposed its regionality). During Franco's era equality and autonomy of partners wasn't guaranteed. At this time, married women needed permission from their husband to work outside the household but in Catalonia marriage didn't suppose, as often as in the other Spanish regions, an interruption of the salaried activity (Solsona, 1994).

At the beginning of the redemocratisation period (1976), the first public debate on radical or left feminism after 40 years of silence, as an expression of the surrendered movement during the dictatorship took



place in Barcelona. During this period, feminist movements have been given assistance and help to women in aspects such as family planning, abortion, separation, etc., before the young democracy manage the question. The first Family Planning Centre was created in Catalonia. There after, that assistance work was transferred to suitable public institutions (Women's Institute, Health Services and Welfare Assistance).

As a consequence of all that, currently, in Catalonia the des-institutionalisation of the family is a fact. The family biography is not the only possible for women, their life cycle become more independent from the family cycle. The separation between sexuality and reproduction, an old vindication of the feminist movement, is now clear. Marriage is not the only frame for sentimental and sexual relations and it has lost the monopoly of the reproduction. The right age to get marriage and to have children is questioned. Marriage takes place later or doesn't take place. Women have children later or they haven't. Cohabitants and couples without children began to be easily accepted. Gays and lesbian collectives are present in public life and claim the right to educate and adopt children. The percentage of children born outside marriage is higher in Catalonia than in the average of Spain, and the transition from cohabitation to marriage when children are born is not so frequent than in other European countries. One person households between young and adult people are more frequent in Catalonia, and are concentrated in some neighbourhoods of Barcelona City where the dwelling's prices are cheaper. A greater part of women can face up a divorce or a separation before the higher occupation rate, even though social provision for them are almost non-existence<sup>11</sup>. One parent families are increasing and have higher social acceptance.

In fact, currently, regional differences in Spain in the degree of women's emancipation and social integration are quite important. A short reference to some socio-demographic indicators could give some light on the matter. The percentage of women of 20-24 years old

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<sup>11</sup> In Catalonia, as well in other Spanish Autonomous Governments there is a minimum salary called PIRMI (Programa Interdepartamental de la Renda Mínima d'Inserció) about 37.000 pesetas plus 6.000 pesetas per child, but very few lone mothers can perceive it.

enrolled in University Studies in Catalonia almost doubles this in Andalusia, and on the contrary in this age group the percentage of those who declare themselves as housewives doubles that in Catalonia. The percentage of married women with non agrarian salaried jobs is higher in Catalonia than in any other region, so, double carrier nuclear families are more frequent. The percentage of minor children that attend everyday to school centre is also higher. The percentage of primary schools with time table from 9.00 to 5.00 including dining hall, organise not by the State but by Parents associations, making easier working activities for parents, is higher in Catalonia than in other regions.

## **6. Concluding remarks**

Recent trends and current situation in relation to the process of constitution, maintenance and dissolution of the unions and families in Catalonia have common features with the rest of the European Community Countries. Nuptiality and fertility are declining and occur at a later age, cohabitation and births outside marriage are increasing, as well as instability of unions, etc. But household composition doesn't seem to follow the northern trends. In our country for instance, the households composed of unrelated people aren't frequent, emancipation and constitution of new households by young people is strongly related to a family constitution, and in the case of divorce or separation the family plays an important supportive role. In other words, in spite of the des-institutionalisation of the family, living arrangements and mutual help are still based on family relations.

There are three main reasons that explain such differences. On the one hand I should mention the insufficient development of the welfare state in terms of care provision and financial help to people who is not economic independent. On the second hand, the incapability of the labour market to supply enough jobs in order to ensure people their economic autonomy. Finally, cultural factors related to family orientation of society explain the persistence of more complex kind of household. This family orientation goes together with and increasing in the individualisation, and in fact, family support let individuals to

choose their way with more freedom. Here there is an interesting paradox: family help reinforces the development of the individualisation process in our country, a fact which puts in sneck most of the assumptions made by family sociologists who studied Western societies in the sixties and seventies decades.

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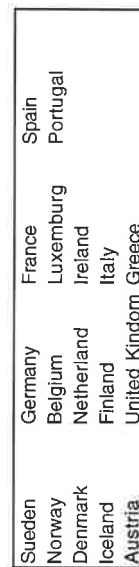
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ANNEXE

## HOUSEHOLD STRUCTURES IN EUROPE. 1991

100.00



Sueden	Germany	France	Spain
Norway	Belgium	Luxembourg	Portugal
Denmark	Netherland	Ireland	
Iceland	Finland	Italy	
Austria	United Kingdom	Greece	



Table 1.

## Basic Demographic Indicators

## INDICATORS

## AREAS

	SPA IN		CATAL ONIA		BARCEL (CITY) CNA	
	1980	1990	1980	1990	1980/81	1990/91
<b>FERTILITY</b>						
* Total Fertility Rate (Children per Woman)	2,21	1,36	1,88	1,24	1,6	1,14
* Average Age at Montherhood	28,2	28,8	27,9	29,4	28,5	30,3
* Average Age at First Child	25,05	27,18	—	27,86	—	—
<b>BIRTHS OUT OF WEDLOCK</b>						
* % of Births Out of Wedlock	3,9	9,6	6	11,1	9,9	14,1
* % of Births Out of Wedlock where the Father in Unknown	60,8	17,4	43,3	13,3	47,9	15,6
<b>NUPCIALITY AND DIVORCE</b>						
* Age at First Marriage						
Men	25,4	27,5	25,4	27,1	26,2	29
Women	23,4	25,3	23	24,9	24,1	27
* Civil Marriages as a % of the Total Number of Marriages	4,5	19,3	4,7	25,9	1,15	34
*Initiated cases of Separations and Divorces	16.363**	59.463	4.014**	13.049	-	-
* Separations & Divorces per 100 Marriages	8,1**	27	15**	40	-	-
<b>COHABITATION</b>						
* % of Cohabitants per Unions Formed between:						
1980-85	4,0		-		-	
1986-90	7,8		-		11,11	
1991-95	-		-		26,00	
* % of Cohabitants Out of the Total Number of Couples		1,6***		2,8***		4,6***

\*\* 1981 \*\*\*1991

Source: Instituto nacional de Estadística: Censos, Movimiento natural de la Población &amp; Encuesta Sociodemográfica (1991); Enquesta Metropolitana de Barcelona (1990 &amp; 1995)