

Even though for many people taking care of children is one of the most important and gratifying tasks, it is often connected to feelings of frustration. In extreme cases this may lead to emotional exhaustion and self-doubt regarding one's role as a parent, which are characteristics of parental burnout. On top of catering to the child's needs, a parent has to juggle gendered societal expectations and work obligations. Thus, reconciliation of work and family life is an issue relevant to many, especially after COVID-19-influenced change in working arrangements, when more people worked from home, and childcare facilities were often closed. In this project we aim to shed light on how paid and unpaid work are balanced in the light of access to flexible working arrangements. We will also consider how such arrangements impact wellbeing and parental satisfaction, with particular interest in parental burnout.

First, we will investigate the relationship between division of labour in the household, gender beliefs, and working-time flexibility. Here, we distinguish between the ideal division of labour in the household, i.e. labour division in the household according to one's preferences and beliefs in an ideal world, and the real-life division of labour in the household, i.e. the way that it is actually organized. So far, the research has concentrated on partners' bargaining power and education as necessary to introducing egalitarian division of labour in the household (in accordance with one's gender beliefs). To the best of our knowledge, the influence of working-time flexibility on the division of labour in the household has not yet been investigated.

Then, we will follow up on how the discrepancy between the ideal and real-life labour division in the household relates to parental burnout, and check whether working time flexibility lowers the risk of experiencing parental burnout. In a recent study, out of 42 countries Polish parents have been found to experience the highest mean level of parental burnout. At the same time, Poland is one of the countries with the lowest level of support to working parents. Moreover, parenthood effects differ according to gender: in Poland, fathers work and earn more, while mothers work and earn less, compared to childless men and women. Thus, we will investigate whether working conditions, in particular access to working-time flexibility affects parental burnout. We will also investigate the gender dimension in both aforementioned research threads.