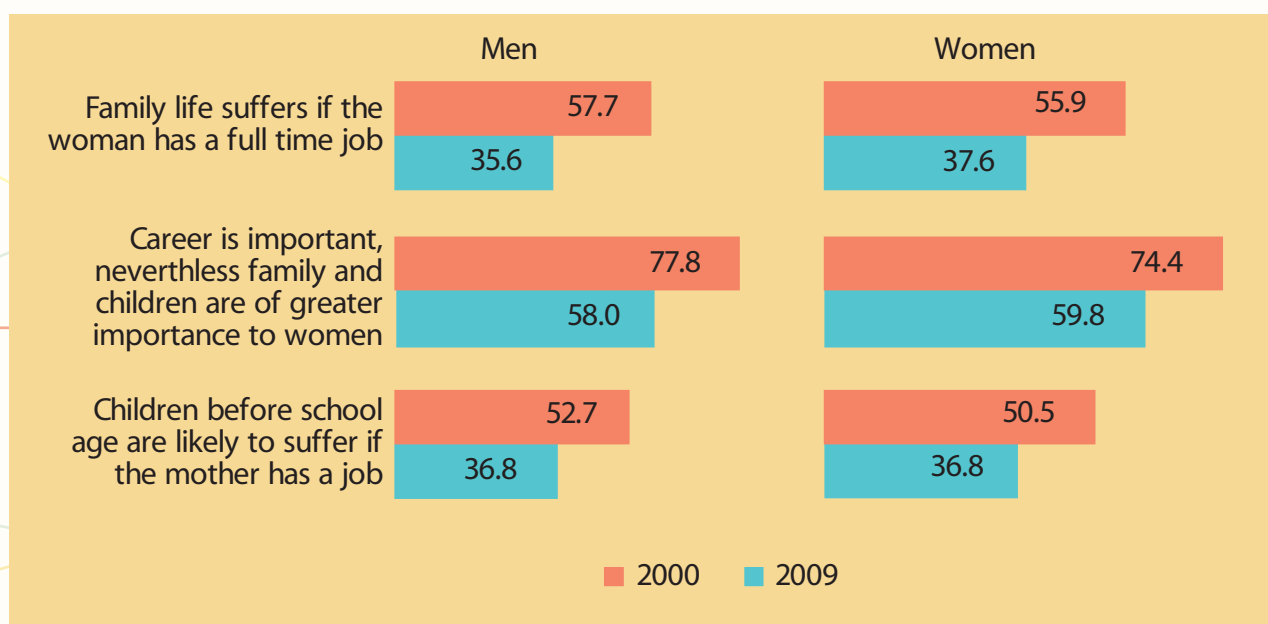


Changing gender roles

The **value system** of Hungarian society is basically traditional. The tendency to follow and accept traditions also applies to opinions about the tasks and role of men and women in families and society. A series of empirical surveys that have been conducted in the Demographic Research Institute since the 1970s prove that public opinion regards fulfilling the function of the mother and the wife as the most important tasks of a woman, while it is primarily the husband who is held responsible for providing the financial resources of the family. However, profound changes have taken place lately concerning gender role expectations. Our survey, which was conducted in 2009 on a sample of the 18–50 year old population (N=1500), shows that family- and child-centred mentality has somewhat declined while work has gained in importance.

Changes in opinions about gender roles among women and men 2000, 2009 (rate of respondents who agree with the statements, %)



Data indicate that maternal role and gainful employment have become more important, opinions about gender roles have become moderner and traditional values have weakened.

We can conclude from the data that the value system of individuals has become more modern and more work-oriented, and unequivocal family- and child-centeredness have lost ground to some extent. It has become more accepted that if the mother is employed it does not necessarily have a negative effect on family life and the development of the child; moreover, the double earner family model is indispensable for the financial security of the family. The other important conclusion is that opinions have become more homogeneous. The previously experienced strong differences by demographic characteristics (sex, education, number of children) have weakened or completely disappeared, viewpoints have become more uniform. This result implies that a widely-held positive social view about working mothers has started to emerge, and this opinion more and more coincides with the goals that the state has formulated regarding its family and employment policies.