



# MUPYME

Employment and Women  
on the 21st Century in  
Europe



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Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union



*Ethnomethodological agenda for the  
study of the phenomenon of working  
at home.*





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## **MUPYME Project**

**Employment and Women on the 21st century in Europe: From Household economy to SME economy (Small and Medium enterprises)**

# **Ethnomethodological agenda for the study of the Phenomenon of working at Home**

**THE HOUSEHOLD ECONOMY: The household work under observation. Outcome and Hypothesis of the field research.**

**Intellectual Output O1.-** Complex research according to the ethnomethodological pattern by applying professiography to the target group of housewives.

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## 1. Summary

The report that the reader has in his hands is the compiling of the Intellectual Output 1, the first of those committed into **MUPYME Project.- Employment and Women on the 21st century in Europe: From Household economy to SME economy (Small and Medium enterprises)**, supported by the European Commission with the Erasmus+ Program approved in 2015. The project goal is to prepare a training plan that allows the housewives having experience in the domestic economy to go from this field to the economic field outside the household, especially to the one related to the SMEs management.

Our hypothesis is that housewives, who are used to make important decision inside the household sphere, are therefore potential managers of production units or SMEs, although they don't even know it.

We pursue a double goal, which is that the housewives become aware of their potential so that we can facilitate their transit between both organization models: from the household to the SMEs.

Given that this effort requires much more responsibility than what can be first thought, we have launched a research process in order to clarify and explain all the details of the work inside the household economy. The first action, which results in the intellectual output we are summing up right now, is a research process about the housewife job.

More than 35 women from 7 countries of the EU have participated in the research or analysis of the work models within the household mainly performed by women. We have done this research by following a methodology that we, the MUPYME partners, analyst and technicians, have created and that can be consulted in the document entitled [\*\*GUIDELINES FOR THE PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION RECORD OF THE HOUSEHOLD WORK.\*\*](#)

The design of the analysis methodology and the research field development have fulfil the first of our goals, that is to create a analysts' group supported by these techniques in order to plan the training program for their respective institutions in the future. In the Work Space of the MUPYME Project website you can consult and follow the observations records on the household work. You only have to visit our website [www.mupymeproject.eu](http://www.mupymeproject.eu) to have a complete idea of what this research implies. Hereafter we show the most characteristic facts.

1. The creation of this methodology, that was validated in the first meeting with the MUPYME partners that took place in January 2016 in Madrid, opens the start of the field

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research that has been carried from February to June 2016. A total of 39 women have participated in the observation process as study subjects, and 10 training technicians have been practicing job analysis techniques.

2. The first fact we want to highlight in this research is that the household is plural and differentiated unit according socio-spatial unit coordinates, and that is shows some differences when comparing the different places where they are located. However the household work is very homogeneous. That means that almost all the housewives we have observed could perform their work in any of the other household we have analysed. Therefore, they may do it in any household. This is a very important fact from the labour economy point of view, because it equates the household work to other professional activities in which women can develop their potential skills regardless of the space where they are. As engineers or sales representatives, the housewives can act in different production fields.
3. The job that we have named “housewife job” is not present in the job classification created by the ISCO-08, but many of the tasks performed by the housewives appear as content in different jobs in this professional classification. The household work analysis leads to the creation of a new category, which is flexible and autonomous. This is very similar to the managerial and directive jobs of the SMEs, especially to the Jobs performed in the small enterprises. The decision making, which is the most distinctive characteristic of the managerial and directive jobs, is a fact present in the daily activities of the housewives, who have to make decisions on little and irrelevant things but also on very critical and essential topics. Its coexistence with the decision-making process is not a widespread skill within the recognized jobs, and this, together with the habit and the expertise in the decision-making process, bring the housewives and the SMEs managers together.
4. The performance of any job involves performing tasks and sets of tasks we have set out in this report, which is the result of the observations that we have carried out. Besides the techniques specified in the tasks execution, the performer of any kind of job brings into play a set of skills that are essentially required for the job performance and if we don't take them into consideration, the job description would be deficient, and the same would happen with the training aimed to approach the mentioned job. The inherent requirements of the housewife job let us see that these women need medium-high intellectual capabilities. The demands on certain personality traits are not so demanding, but it seems essential to have consensus and dialogue skills, together with



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conflict management skills, which are linked to the leadership characteristic needed in the SMEs management.

5. The working environment is not as aseptic or risks lacking as it may seem at a first glance. The household is a risky space, and the housewife job is exposed to lot of efforts and to a medium stress. This, which is not frequent in the managerial or directive jobs, is one of the main characteristics we can find in manual production jobs, like those related to the craftwork. The housewife job shares with the craftworks the craft skills and the use of risky tools and equipment; but also the creativity, the autonomy and the sovereignty over the work process.
6. There is another feature of the housewife job which relates it to the craftworks' category. It is the sharing knowledge process. In the craftworks the master-learner model is the best way of transferring the knowledge and the skills. In the housewife job something similar occurs, but the grandparents, parents and other family members, and not the masters, are the ones who play the role of tutor or teachers in the housewives training. Even though we are aware that it meets a social mechanism of roles, we also want to point out that this model is also used for the special or very sophisticated knowledge transfer within the enterprise sphere, although now it is called "coaching".

We start from the assumption that the household work brings the housewives closer to the SMEs management in a much more comprehensive way than is generally accepted. The most decisive characteristic of the managerial and directive job is to make decision affecting the business and its progress. We have observed that this is what the housewives do everyday in the domestic economy sphere. This fact brings both spheres virtually closer. Maybe it is only necessary a little boost, and we hope that the MUPYME action can achieve it

## 2. Introduction

This report is the central element of the **Intellectual Output O1.- Complex research according to the ethnomethodological pattern by applying professionography to the target group of housewives**. This is the first of the *Intellectual Outputs* committed to the development of **MUPYME Project: Employment and Women on the 21st century in Europe: From Household economy to SME economy (Small and Medium enterprises)**.

The report shall be drafted upon the completion of the field research by following the observation guideline, which has been described in the Methodology section and has played a central role within the project ([GUIDELINES FOR THE PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION RECORD OF THE HOUSEHOLD WORK](#)).

**A total of 39 housewives participated in this experiment.** They belong to the different countries participating in MUPYME Project as partners. Hereafter we will go into details related to the socio-demographic characteristics of the target women's group. What matters now is to stand out the women's positive response to our initiative, their willingness to collaborate, the effort they made and the courage they had for participating in an analytical process that is not without inconveniences. We want to thank all of them because it could not have been possible to launch this initiative without their willpower. With this first reflection we launch the first hypothesis: **The housewives has a greater collaboration sense than other groups**, something that does them credit and provides them with capacities that can be used in the economy activity outside the household. The collaborative energy is one of the outstanding features of these new ways of developing economic processes inside and outside the household. This is a very important characteristic to participate in the regular economy.





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The main target of MUPYME Project is the group of women and their underused skills, which can be used outside the household. Therefore, we want to highlight it from the beginning of our reflections and conclusions.

This main goal that is to demand the women's powerful skills, entails a set of operational objectives that shape the MUPYME Project. One of these, which are important to mention in this introduction, is the one related to the **strengthening of the technical skills**. The household work observation has been carried out by a group of **8 organizations linked to the adults training with a particular penchant for gender-biased education**. The women's world is very close to us, but to deal with it from a scientific view –similar to the analysis of other social phenomena embedded to the economy– is less familiar to us. In order to compensate our weak points we have gotten involved in an action and training process that let us develop ethnomethodological observation technics, which are well suited for the goal we have set ourselves for this project.

This report, in which our findings and work hypothesis are expressed, must show from the beginning the satisfaction of having **created a social and economic research team that has a wide range of tools and has been trained in the field research**, that it did not exist before and now MUPYME partners constitute it.

### 3. Overview Background

The Popular Universities and their Federation (FEUP) have stated in different forums that promoting employability, especially employability based on the development of Basic Skills, which is the main purpose of an authentic school of life. It is also boosts culture and development in peripheral and rural areas that work by means of local economy.

We wanted to highlight this aspect from the start since it is closely related to the present proposal, which is basically an action aimed to introducing women into local economic activities of their towns, preferably. The Popular Universities have a long experience in presenting and implementing `projects designed to support women, especially when it comes to socializing the necessary skills to get involved in the labour market. Therefore, we are committed to work for employability and training as social goals. Each and every MUPYME partner shares these goals.

The goals (in a broad sense) we pursue by means of the action comprised in this document have a double objective. On the one hand, we intend to close a gap regarding local economy by promoting the decision-making process in SME and, therefore, enhancing the local economic network. On the other hand, the most important aspect for the people involved in this proposal

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is introducing women into local economy by boosting the skills they have previously acquired in other contexts.

It is more than simply developing basic skills; it involves discovering new ways and contexts in which they could be implemented. The present proposal aims to identify women's skills in a clear way, particularly those women experienced in household economy management. Once their skills have been identified, we strive to set the required steps to go from household economy to management in small and micro-enterprises.

This is our challenge. We are aware of the similarities between household skills and those required in other management settings. Therefore, our purpose is to make the shift easier. We need to generate a process to raise awareness within the female collective –awareness regarding their role as managers of complex economic units. They might not know it yet, but their success in household economy qualifies them for management in economic context out of the household, like SME.

Regarding the double objective of our proposal, we believe we are engaging in activities that go hand in hand with our social action reference guidelines.

Training for Women's Social Integration:

- Basic skills and active social role.
- Employability.
- Life-long training promotion and enhancement.

The trend in the educational institutions involved in MUPYME shows a great number of actions aimed to improve and spread women's employability by generating training programmes so as to enhance their basic skills and those skills linked to their immersion in the labour market. That set of experiences allows for the identification of deficiencies and help us establish the challenges we need to face regarding women and their immersion in the labour market. Thus, we present a programme that is someone different from traditional approaches to the matter, since we have chosen an approach that enhances women's preliminary skills, which have not been acquired through financial activities, but can be broadly implemented in them. That is the reason behind the name of our project: From Household economy to SME economy.

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## 4. Objectives of Intellectual Output

The first matter regarding MUPYME will be identifying the initial qualification, the one acquired within the household.

It implies a research process that consists in establishing the professional qualification associated with housework that could be implemented in a SME working environment. By implementing terminology regarding work recognition, we are trying to create a faithful image of housework, in a way that the objectives of the activities carried out within the household are clear, as well as the skills and knowledge required in order to perform them. Thus, we would establish the professional experiences found in this context that have a qualification potential for other production and economic situations.

Work science should not only define and highlight the specific professional profile of housewives, but it should also establish the qualification equivalence within a SME context.





The Professiography, in addition to defining and highlighting the own profile of the performer or worker in the domestic sphere, must establish the equivalence of competence in the environment of the company.

## 5. Research Methodology

### ¿Why do we use this research model?

To discover the abilities acquired in the household, which can be transferred to the SMEs, is a challenge that can be approached from different analytical proposals by means of several tools and methodologies. For MUPYME Project we have chosen a particular analytical proposal, contained in the working document "[Guidelines for the analysis of the transfer Model of the experience and the abilities acquired in the household to the economic activity outside it: from the management of the household economy to the management of small and micro enterprises](#)". This document was prepared by the Spanish Federation of Popular Universities (FEUP), coordinating organization of MUPYME Project, as a starting point on which to start working. The reasons that this work procedure is chosen are presented below:

1. We have tried to fulfil each requirement and to follow each recommendation provided by the social sciences in order to develop the socio-occupational research.
2. We have set standards to define the target of our study.
3. We have selected a set of tools that can be also used in the social research of the labour economics field.
4. We have adapted the tools to the aim of our research. In this way we have redesigned the research methodology, which have been adapted to our aims according to specific standards.
5. We have created a team of analysts that have been trained in two stages: online phase, by remote exchange of ideas, and face-to-face meetings, like the [workshop](#) performed in Madrid under the Project Kick-off meeting.
6. The team has socialized with their peers in their respective spaces, what has been a key part of the techniques acquired within the project development. There has been a

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transfer of knowledge to support the work of the technicians responsible for the execution of the field research.

7. Research teams have improved their analytical competences by getting into the target group's reality. Learning by doing; getting in touch with the target group's reality has made an impact on the analytical capacity of the research team, who has always had guidance and technical resources in case of ambiguity or doubt.
8. The exchange of knowledge and techniques among the participant technicians has been continuous, so the research group's homogeneity has been ensured.
9. The middle and final results have been shared with the rest of the participants in order to analyse them critically and to strengthen the role of the member researches. The work performed by each participant has circulated among the whole team, so there has been a general enrichment and we have also made the most of the research's base material.

These efforts have been made for one reason, which is inherent to the project: **to deal with the household work phenomena as objectively as possible** and to carry out the analysis according to the requirements of the labour economy research.

The household work is likely to be distorted. We have been obliged to address this matter in the most orthodox way, since it is part of the experience of all of us and is the result of a social labour organization that distributes different roles based on gender and attaches mainly the household work to women. This organization tries to hide the fact behind the status recognition, which has no economic content.

We have tried to approach the subject of our research just as the pertinent technicians would do upon the implementation of the labour factor in the steel industry or in the financial services' provision.

To develop training plans –which are the ultimate goal of the MUPYME Project, that is, to ease the transfer of experiences from the household to the SME– it is necessary to have a **technical knowledge well above the everyday life banality, and to know what is the household work and which skills and abilities are developed within this socioeconomic context.**

Therefore, it could be said that the reason why we have chosen this analytic approach is because of the commitment that all the participants have assumed, taking into account the importance of the effort required to achieve the household work emancipation and being aware of the



enormous social achievement that this would entail. Something that concerns everyone is to transfer the knowledge acquired in the household to the social system, thus we act with the utmost responsibility and we use the technical resources we have consider to be more suitable for the purpose.

Otherwise, we hope that the technical knowledge acquired can be implemented in the general social research and that it turns into one of the resources that these institutions of adult training and lifelong learning have, which conform the group of partners of the MUPYME Project.

## Working method

All the partners participating in the field research development have followed a specific methodology that let us homogenize the research process. This hasn't been an imposed model, but it has emerged from discussion among all participants. Taking into account the different social realities in which the housewives live, different economic and political environments, we propose the following selection, meeting, observation and drafting methodology:

1. We have **defined our research target profile**: Housewives from the social environment in which the institutions participating in the MUPYME Project work.
2. We have created a protocol to get in **contact with the selected group** of housewives  
Rejection due to anomalies, impossibilities or denial.
3. **Memorandum of understanding**: To communicate the election, the research goals and the collaboration level required.
4. To organize the **observation encounters**. To fix the date and other accompanying circumstances.
5. Development of participant **observation in situ**.
6. Revision to complete the items and attached information to the participant observation.
7. To **record the data** that will enrich the observation, as photos, videos, audio files, etc.
8. Completion of the **patterned templates designed** to record the participant observation.
9. Drafting of the report attached to every observation report.



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10. Drafting the **general report** of each partner related to their final result of their researches
11. Finally, this report is the document containing all the peculiarities of the research field activity consisting in the household work observation carried out by all the MUPYME partners.

You can check how all this methodology is been applied through the [WORKSPACE](#) from website: [www.mupymeproject.eu](http://www.mupymeproject.eu).

## 6. Focus Group

### The research target

All the details of the observation can still be consulted in the website project (see [www.mupymeproject.eu](http://www.mupymeproject.eu)). Each partner has a particular section in the website where all the gathered information has been uploaded. There you can find the guidelines for the participant observation, the tasks' record and the findings report containing reflections and comments related to every experience.

Here we are going to highlight only some of the general details that let us identify the research target.

Five housewives per partner (except FEUP, Spain, which doubles the number of research subjects) have participated in this experience voluntarily. That means that 40 women have been analysed in their houses while doing the household work.

They are between 30 and 60 years old, and that means that we have selected young mothers and women helping and living with the offspring of their own children. The cross-generational view provides lot of information for the research.

The case study of the research target covers almost all the information related to the women's situation, for example marital status; single, married, divorced or widowed women address the responsibilities of their homes.

The biographical information plays an important representation role for this target. There is a group of refugees and displaced women due to several reasons; the war or the territorial

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belligerence has turned their lives into a continuous improvisation that has an impact on the performance of the household tasks.

## 7. Common problems

### Sociological profile

There is something extraordinarily shocking in the household work research. The sociological profile of the research subjects (broadly representative) provides a plural and open sociological framework.



With the exception of the fact that all the research subjects are women, the rest of the sociological characteristics are very different. These women belong to very different social strata because of their location, type of house, income level or studies. Their marital status, family responsibilities, social role within their communities, cultural habits, etc., constitute a target group which is characterized by the femininity and has one thing in common: **They perform the household work very homogeneously.** The group of women shows a highly integrated behaviour within the household work goals, the tasks, the techniques and the abilities developed to fulfil the aims.

This is the common link, since even though they are very different individuals they carry out very similar tasks and they also have common responsibilities, to the point that they seem interchangeable, that is housewives from different origins could carry out their work in any other house and do it efficiently.

This may seem to be a paradox, but actually it is a finding that opens the doors of our perception of **the household work phenomena in order to see it not as a singularity but**



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as a **technical body with abilities, knowledge and experiences** that gives the proper qualification to the people that perform it.

Otherwise, concerning their social identity, characteristics and peculiarities, we can highlight the following ones:

1. Almost all the women come from medium or small cities or villages. The local life is imposed on the cosmopolitan ways of life. The social structure and social networks are not very visible in the large population centres. Therefore it is **a group having a strong social connection**. The new information and communication technologies shorten their distances from all kinds of information, resources, supplies or contacts. This is not part of the everyday life of this people but it is completely true that their relation with these new technologies expands its experiences network and broadens their life expectations.
2. The general self-esteem is low. The achievement awareness related to their work is scarce. They know how hard are their tasks due to the big effort they have to do and because they affirm that sometimes they need help, which does not always arrive. The participation of their husbands, parents or children is low and they only get involved when they have to carry out basic household tasks. In this way they share with other freelance workers a **feeling of loneliness and abandonment** which is difficult to face.
3. They are not aware of the level of qualification or of the acquired skills. This happens because of two reasons; the first one is because of **the lack of social and institutional acknowledgement**, and the second one is because of they have acquired their skills through their experiences and thanks to their parents, who gave them household responsibilities. They don't seem to be aware of the fact that they do really have a special qualification and that they are professionals. They think they only fulfil a social and historical commitment.
4. However, due to the changes in the social structure there have been some alterations in this traditional way of addressing the household activity and the tasks' allocation. The new gender developments concerning the legislation, the expansion of the social networks, which are related to the women's discriminatory treatment, the education and the adult training centres, aid groups and associations, and centres supporting different dependences, are raising women's awareness. There are lot of women interested in the aims of these institutions and it seems that to **get in touch with these humanistic goals has an impact on their own perception of themselves** and of the way of progressing inside and outside the household.

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5. The training and the improvement of the economic and social circumstances seem to be closer to her expectations. For their parents and grandparents the education was something distant and far from their daily lives, but now there are lot of women participating in activities coordinated by social and training institutions. The new technologies are opening new paths that didn't exist before. There are lot of housewives that use the ICTs to get trained and informed. The appliances' tutorials and instruction manuals provide useful knowledge. The internet and other modernised ways of acquiring knowledge are now spread in the training field.
6. However, the overstrain, which improves their skills and knowledge status, is a sociological characteristic that must be highlighted. The objective possibilities are scarce, so they have to be self-trained and use uncommon resources that have arisen spontaneously in their contexts. The access to the **systematic training is still complex and scarce**, scarcer than what its initiative seems to request. Therefore, we think that its involvement in social processes of experiences, emotions or help exchanges is present in the target collective of our research.
7. Those women living in special circumstances, those who live in communities which are atypical or far from cities having a large population, show an activist character well above the average. So their willingness to respond to the critical conditions of their situation and to face collectively to the peculiarities of their shortcoming, can be defines as a sociological characteristic. **Activism is a rational way to face difficult situations**, taking advantage of the group strengths that are beyond the individual subject limits. There's no need to say that this sociological characteristic is very important for the the confidence we have in these women to turn their household experience into a regular economical experience.
8. The resignation from work outside the household is always present. In the most part of the cases the housewives didn't' had working experience. Other women left their jobs when the household work required more effort, for example to take care of the children or to take care of the family members that need help because of the old age or illness.
9. The retirement is also marked by other causes, for example, due to the difficulty in maintaining the external work, because of commercial or social causes, the housewives seem to take a step back isolate themselves into the household instead of exploring other areas. That is, the household management becomes a refuge.
10. Then, this is an active refuge, it is a family welfare production that gives the performers satisfaction and a dynamism degree that can't be found in other retirements field (such as unemployment). The most part of these women find a living space within



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the household economy, that despite the limitations for the personal growth it offers time and space for happiness and commitment.

11. Something reflected in the strengthening of the neighbourhood relationship and in new forms of participation consisting of women's networks support, is activism. Cultural activism is a trend observed especially in areas having a large population or medium-large.
12. Even though the household is mature production unit, and very resistant to changes, it is possible to notice some modernized and innovative characteristics. The new technologies, well incorporated albeit basic way, are promoting a new way of conceiving the household work and a new way of performing it. The profit and information search on the internet is introducing some progress in the general innovation. The training, the relationships strengthening, the search and selection of purchases' processes, the tutorials for the equipment maintenance, etc., are opening a new path towards an adapted innovation, which we think will derive in a more ground-breaking innovation process.

## 8. Cases of study and findings

### To objectify the household work through performance

The household work, from an analytic point of view, provides some specific elements that turns against logic. Given that we all, analysts and even those who are not, have household experiences and we master some of the skills needed to deal with this environment, it is very attractive for us to address our little and partial knowledge about this phenomena to define it and try to understand it. The MUPYME partners have decided to address this distortion source by which the partial experiences are imposed on the real and deep knowledge of the household work.

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*Klitos Symeonides (CAEA), MUPYME Project partner, during one of the observations made to housewives in Cyprus.*

We have provide ourselves with job observation tools ([A. inglés GUIDELINES FOR THE PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION RECORD OF THE HOUSEHOLD WORK.docx](#)) that guarantee that in our documents the main job described within the household economy sphere, “housewives”, refers to a complete taxonomy and mechanism that explains everything that is relevant to understand this job.

We are going to divide the household job composition by making an observation regarding how it is performed. We have done it in more than 40 cases through the wide European geography, since it has been represented by the MYPUME partners living in 7 different countries.

The observation records can be consulted in the work section related to each MUPYME partner, which is available on [www.mupymeproject.eu](http://www.mupymeproject.eu)



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## 1. JOB IDENTIFICATION

### 1.1.- Job name

The job has been identified as housewife in all the cases. There is no doubt about the name it should receive, and although it may seem a minor action we shouldn't forget that to give a name is the first step for identifying and respecting the existence of something.

### 1.2.- Identification code

The *International Standard Classification of Occupations* (ISCO 08) doesn't include any disaggregated item that sets the household work within the recognized jobs' tables. This fact is well known all the analysts participating in the MUPYME Project. We have tried to set up some parallels between the items belonging to the aforementioned International Standard Classification of Occupations, taking into account the characteristics of the different approaches to the household work.

Thus we have been able to verify that some elements from the household work are very close to the **5120 code**, which refers to the kitchen work, to the **1311 code**, which refers to agriculture and forestry management, and to some other related to the SMEs' management. They are also very close to 2221 code (nursing), code 531 and 532, which are related to the children and dependent people's care. They are also closed indirectly to the code 121, related to the business services and administration management.

Our efforts aim not to introduce the household work as a category in the ISCO, but to reveal that upon the household work performance there are lot of similar elements related to other recognized professional activities.

This means that, from our own job definition, it can be appreciated that there is a big similarity between the household work and the work executed outside the household economy.



### 1.3.- Hierarchical and organizational relationships of the job

There is no job that can be completely understood if we don't observe its complex organizational structure and if we don't realize which one is its position within the chain of linked jobs that allow achieving the production goals of each particular case.

The "housewife job" is usually performed in an autonomous way, even in an isolated environment. This is only an evocative point of view, since the woman is working alone at home. However the output is always related to other activities that take place before and after the work performance.

This lonely nature of the household job may remind us to the company managers, who spend lot of time developing tasks alone but who are always connected to the reality of the organization they're bound to. The tasks and micro tasks that the manager has to execute don't have a goal itself, but a relationship with the organization's goals. This is also happening in the household, that is, lot of tasks are executed in loneliness and haven't got a goal itself; they only have sense if they're bound to the organization, which is the family in this case.

Therefore, the productive social relationships of the job are influenced by the purpose of the household social organization. The bulk of the household economic activities are planned and executed from this job that we call housewife, but due to its connection to the family life development other members of the family, friends or neighbours usually help. However, this collaboration with the job does not even change it, because, as we have observed, only the tasks requiring big efforts and having a share responsibility are the ones connecting the job performer to other members of the household.

Furthermore, the household is an economic unit, a social unit. Depending on the cultural or geographical areas, the household is par excellence the social unit, and it has a very important role in the life and social net of the environment where it is involved. This turns the household guide activity into a strong social component. In this circumstance the housewife becomes a person of proactive public relations. Her tasks go from the household to the collaborative social sphere in the same way that the brands and firms' managers do to congresses and fairs to defend and promote their product.

Even that there are different levels, some housewives don't seem to get adapted to the environment outside the household. The truth is that most of the housewives we have observed have good relationships with their neighbours, close and distant relatives. We even say that it is an open and flexible job that sometimes implies having a big exposition to others, which is the opposite of the loneliness we first mentioned.



## 2. GENERAL DEFINITION OF THE JOB

The “housewife” job can be defined, as any other job, by its productive goal, its execution methodology, the technological stage and the basics skills needed to perform it. We will hereafter analyse each one of these characteristics.

**The job goal** for its performers is the family care. This includes cleaning, cooking, education, maintenance, purchases task, etc. All these tasks are available in the tasks tables attached to each women observation. The most important thing to mention is that the tasks required to execute the job properly are connected among them, so any task has an isolated goal; they acquire a productive value when combined with other tasks. Cooking can't be understood without purchasing, the family organization can't be understood without cleaning, the children care can't be understood without education. This goals' variety may reminds us to the managerial tasks of the SMEs.

**The methodology** of the job is isolated and connected with the environment and interacting with it continuously. This breaks the isolation within the job performance due to its relationship with the family, neighbours, suppliers, etc. We can say that the job implies the execution of different tasks and actions that must be carried out within an isolated environment because it is required by level of concentration of the tasks. This fact is not the only one defining the job, because this isolation and feeling of loneliness disappear upon the contact with third parties.

**The technological stage** is heterogeneous. There is common equipment for every “housewife” and some characteristics that will be present in some parts of the job and absent in others. The fixed part of the equipment is related to what we usually call the installation: the house, the rooms and departments, the kitchen, electrical installation, the water pipeline, etc. Within this set of common elements we should also take into account the kitchen tools, cleaning tools, etc. In this section we should also mention the basic machinery, for example fridges, ovens, washing machines, dishwashers, vacuum cleaners, etc.

The variable part of the technological stage is connected to the social context in which the job is performed. Some households are settled in a traditional lifestyle that has hardly incorporated advanced communication technologies. On the opposite there are some households that have incorporated digital technologies to carry out the management and communication tasks, for example computers, smartphones, platforms, etc.



As in the enterprises we can notice that, from the technologies implementation point of view, a division between mature households (and enterprises) and others that have been renewed. However, as in the enterprises case, the coexistence of these two possibilities is not exclusive. You can success following a technology implementation methodology or not. The most important thing is that the job goal and its methodology don't even change as a consequence of the presence or absence of advanced technologies.

**The autonomy and responsibility level of the job** has been mostly classified as medium/high by the observed housewives. In the opinion of many of the analysts linked to this research, this self-definition is affected by the modesty derived from the habit. The household tasks' execution requires the maximum autonomy; the housewife hardly has someone to negotiate with the tasks' execution, except her own sense of responsibility. This multiplies the self-responsibility binomial. Given that this is perceived as a set of repetitive acts, the glamour fades and the opinion about them decreases.

In other words, in the eyes of the job analysts, the housewives job implies a high level of autonomy and a committed responsibility, but the executants doesn't seem to appreciate that. Only the cultural and anthropological arguments can help to understand this difference in the interpretation.

### 3. INHERENT QUALIFICATION FOR THE HOUSEWIFE JOB.

To use a professional language we should think about three structural elements: Qualification, Certification and Occupation.

In a very generic and introductory sense we can say that the **professional certification** is related to the training and educative level of the person. The **professional qualification** is built on the professional certification, but it also implies having certain theoretical/practical knowledge, that is, an experience gained through a professional exercise that can't be reduced to the academic certification.

The **Occupation**, the third element of what we have called professional structure, identifies the professional exploitation, that is the he professionalism materialization (knowledge/skills/experience) in a particular place and in a particular time.

The occupation is basically the productive behaviour, that is the professional "ethos", what we do, how we do it, and why we do it. This behaviour can be described in two different ways. It

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can be defined in terms of tasks or productive purposes, but basically it is defined in terms of employment. In some cases the occupation performance meets a combination of some elements, tasks definition plus labour goals.

The present technological and organizational development tends to make obsolete a professionalism conception based primarily on a methodized job, in order to promote the transformation capacity draw from the professional qualification or an autonomous capacity to achieve the production goals (intermediate or final).

Then, in every occupation we can find a number of productive “gestures” that meets closed performing criteria (to measure with the gauge, to write with the computer, to clean before soldering, to design sketches before executing the proper task, etc.). Especially in the directive or managerial occupations require having a wide range of open skills. In general, the ideal method for these occupations focuses on open standards. However, there is some professional behaviour that doesn't require pure practical criteria.

The relation between “Occupation” and “Qualification” is very complex. They are strongly connected. In some cases, this relation meets a certain identification of contents, while in other cases there is a very clear separation between contents substantivizing the occupation, the aptitudes, attitudes and knowledge that bring the qualification to life. The situation varies greatly according to the diversity of occupations.

With this we want to say that apart from being very useful for the analysis and the professionalism comprehension, ***the Qualification and Occupation are two concepts elastically related and sometimes are difficult to separate.*** In some cases the occupation performance replaces the qualification (intensive work with a direct labour force); in other cases, and it seems





to be a historical trend of progress in implementing the labour factor, the qualification exceeds the requirements of the job performance.

This is for us the most distinct characteristic of the household work, that is to create a professional qualification that is well above the requirements of the tasks development, in order to carry out a correct household operation.

**An expert in the household tasks execution acquires, in our point of view, a professional qualification that exceeds the limit of household activity and is transferred with a particular suitability to the SME's management world.**

The third element, the professional Certification, consists of a set of theoretical and practical knowledge that require a certain level of professional training. The Certification is the easiest element to identify from the training or the professionalism. Given that it is similar to the level of education and training, the accreditation of being in that training situation is enough.

## **1.- The Certification**

This section doesn't require a depth treatment. The women that have participated in the field research have academic accreditation of all kinds. Their certifications are mostly in the intermediate sections of the respective curricula of their countries.

The certifications that are connected to the level of professional qualification are in the level 2 of those identified by the CEDEFOP (European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training). Certainly, within this group we can find women having university's degrees and other advanced tertiary academic certification.

The connection between the housewives and the residence place tends to decrease the certifications' level in the rural areas, and tends to increase it in the developed areas. But it is not always like this. There are an important number of housewives that were involved in tertiary training processes in capital areas but then they returned to their origin villages in order to run the household, having performed or not their respective jobs.

The casuistry and the certifications, the achieved academic accreditation is that much varied, that trying to introduce this matter as a variable factor of the analysis of the household job rather refers to the socio-demographic analysis that to the study of working methods and their socialization through the training.



In any training curriculum of any of the countries that make up the partner group of the MUPYME Project the formal regular or irregular training of **any kind that bring people closer to the household knowledge is considered.**

## 2.- The housewife job

As we have mentioned previously in this report, the occupation that defines the housewives' job **is a kind of open and flexible occupation (in space and time)**. The tasks are executed in the limited in the spatial universe despite of the false appearances that the household may have. You may only know or notice some tasks. In the same that the some of the manager gestures having a higher productive value are outside the company area, this also happens within the household. A big part of the added value to their work is, curiously, not produced at home.

To carry out the *housewife* job we need first to talk about the **knowledge and the skills needed** to perform it. They are uncountable and we have registered a lot of them. We are going to sum up in several examples what, in our point of view, is necessary to execute the kitchen and food providing tasks, and we are going to relate it with their respective basic skills.

- Nutrition and dietetics (dietary composition of food and its food value)
- Basic emergency techniques.
- Specific technical vocabulary
- Health, hygiene and food safety
- Food microbiology (development of bacteria, yeasts and mould and their conditioning factors).
- Plating and decorating kitchen.
- Gastronomy and cooking prescriptions.
- Technology of raw materials used in kitchen.
- Confection process of kitchen products
- Operation and maintenance of kitchen products.
- Operation and maintenance of equipment and utensils.
- Packaging and storage of kitchen products.

This knowledge generates a series of competences (we should not forget that this is our goal) that define the occupation.

By using the same group of tasks as an example model, we propose a knowledge related to the kitchen tasks that derives in the following competences:



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- To check the characteristics and quality of raw materials and ready meal products.
- Cleaning and portioning raw materials and separate and account for waste.
- To pack and store the raw materials.
- To prepare the ingredients by consulting the datasheets and respecting the food hygiene.
- To identify and determine the quantities of raw materials and other ingredients necessary for the confection products, consulting revenue and technical specifications.
- To select and prepare the necessary equipment and appliances, consulting revenue and technical specifications and respecting the conditions of hygiene and use.
- To carry out the cleaning and preparation of raw materials to be used in the dining confection.
- To interpret prescriptions and confectionary food, given the temperature and time of confection.
- To cook the prepared compositions in the appropriate time and quantities.
- To divide the food into portions.
- To make the respective décor.
- To keep the conditions of hygiene and to use equipment and utensils, by using the appropriate techniques and products, in accordance to the conservation and hygiene standards.

Abstracting the specific scenario, the described skills involve knowledge that is transverse and present in almost every tasks and micro-task carried out at home.

We are aware that the knowledge and competences disaggregation we have done may perplex many readers of this report (mainly when we count only the competences related to the kitchen tasks), but the occupation we refer to, that is the housewives' work, is still a world to discover, since it has been hidden a long time, and that's why we don't know it.

### **3.- The Qualifications**

The professional qualification linked to the housewife job performance implies the acknowledgment of what is done, how it is done, which productive intensity it requires, the necessary initiative, the execution management and autonomy, and other characteristics that we have analysed, by means of designing an information table regarding the most important tasks for the executants.

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The base of the acknowledgement has been followed by a file or a guideline for the tasks record. Thus we have classified the operations that have been carried out during the household professional activity.

These files are designed depending on the target that each one of these have. When the target is to improve the production process we tend to give details of every movement affecting the aforementioned production process and to determine the technologic framework in which the action and the tools are developed. When the target is to improve the security, the guideline focuses on the identification of the risk parameters and on the use of protective measures...and so on.

In our case we have developed a file or guideline for the **tasks record related with the decision-making process**, a decisive element regarding the management factor. Therefore, we pay special attention to data used for the decision-making process and its impact on the evolution of household activity.

We start from the tasks structuring which comprise generic activities in the household, and an approach

to its equivalent in the SMEs economy.

In generic sense we can set up the following groups of tasks:

**1.- Cleaning and maintenance.** This refers to the activities related to cleaning and maintaining the household (to sweep, to scrub, to clean the windows, to do the laundry, to iron the clothes, to tidy the wardrobes...). It can be compared to the maintenance tasks of the systems and installations in the SMEs economy.

**2.- Care of the family unit.** This refers to the activities related to the care of the personal aspect of the unit members, including the healthcare and the emotional state care. It can be compared to the tasks of Security, Leadership and Motivation.



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**3.- Expenses and Incomes Management.** This refers to the activities related to the management of incomes (salaries and other incomes) and expenses (payments and economic forecasts). These tasks can be compared to the activities executed in the enterprise field (profit and loss account management).

**4.- Stock.** This refers to the activities related to the control of the inventories state regarding food, furniture, consumer staples, etc. It can be compared to the stock management tasks and logistics tasks.

**5.- Incomes distribution and expenses control.** This refers to the activities related to the decisions that enable the correct management of incomes and expenses (that it, how much it is spend and when it is spend). These tasks can be compared to strategic activities executed within the enterprise (when and how much it is invested).

**6.- Purchases and relation with the suppliers.** This refers to the activities related to the purchases and provisions for the household members. These activities can be compared to the purchase management and the suppliers' classification in the SMEs field.

**7.- Environment impact.** This refers to the tasks related to the assessment of the use of certain products and also to recycling, recovery and reuse of every type of household products. These tasks can be compared to the SMEs economy.

**8.- Education and training.** This refers to the activities related to the children education and support to other relatives and neighbours. It can be compared to the management and development tasks of human resources and the SMEs economy.

**9.- Decision-making process and conflicts resolution.** This refers to the activities related to choosing certain actions in the daily life of the household activity. Everyday appear new situations which require a quick decision-making in addition to thoughtful decisions taken by consensus among members of the household. These are tasks which are assigned to the executive management of a SME.

The tasks record file is the following one (exemplified).



TASK	EXECUTIVE	MANAGEMENT	LEVEL OF DECISION	CRITICISM	IMPACT	CORRESPONDENCE	TIME
To pay the car insurance	Partial (20%)	Partial (80%)	Share	Three	Financial area. Family mobility.	Files management. Maintenance.	5% of the working hours.

<b>TASK</b>	A brief description of it shall be done and it shall be assigned to the tasks group. For example: to do the laundry to the cleaning group of the household.
<b>EXECUTIVE</b>	To identify if it is an executive task carried out by the performer.
<b>MANAGEMENT LEVEL</b>	To identify if the task requires a planning, time estimates, resources identification, to measure the impact, etc.; especially if it implies the starting up of third parties' activities (family, administration, friends, suppliers, etc.).
<b>LEVEL OF DECISION</b>	If the task requires the unilateral decision-making or if it is shared. In that case, by who?
<b>CRITICISM</b>	To know the urgency of the decision-making.
<b>IMPACT</b>	To what, who or how the decision-making affects.
<b>CORRESPONDENCE</b>	This identification parameter is the most complex to be established, since it is about setting up the correspondence of this task with its equivalent in the economics field outside the household.
<b>TIME</b>	Percentage of the total time assigned to this task.

By following this household qualification acknowledgment standard, we have designed a table gathering all the tasks we have recorded in our research. The table contains all the tasks that have been recorded in the household work observation or that have been mentioned by the



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housewives upon reflecting on the tasks and operations executed within the household and that could not be recorded during the observation.

In order to make a proper use of this table and of the information it contains we have organized and synthetized all the tasks classified according to the executive elements they have in common and the productive goals. If we wouldn't have done it in this way, the big amount of suggestions or executive methods would have made the information to be unmanageable. This also happens upon the directive or managerial job performance: all the performers have the same goal, but each one of them customize and execute their tasks according to non-explicit criteria. Once more, we can say there are no differences between the household economy and the economy outside the household.

CORRESPONDENCE TO THE SMES	TASKS EXECUTED WITHIN THE HOUSEHOLD
<p><b>Cleaning and Maintenance/ Installations and Equipment Maintenance</b></p>	<p>Bed-making</p> <hr/> <p>To sweep</p> <hr/> <p>To clean specific elements, for example: glass and tiles</p> <hr/> <p>To change the sheets</p> <hr/> <p>Dusting</p> <hr/> <p>Cleaning the bathroom, kitchen and other special rooms</p> <hr/> <p>To wash the dishes</p> <hr/> <p>Washing and hanging out the clothes</p> <hr/> <p>To iron and to tidy the clothes</p> <hr/> <p>To arrange the wardrobes</p> <hr/> <p>To tidy the rooms</p> <hr/> <p>To make maintenance operations related to the informatic and electronic equipment</p> <hr/> <p>To make maintenance operations related to the household appliances</p> <hr/> <p>To make maintenance operations related to the vehicle</p> <hr/> <p>To take care of the plants and to maintain the garden</p>



<p><b>Family Care/Security, leadership and motivation</b></p>	<p>To arrange the bathroom for the children or for dependent persons</p> <hr/> <p>To visit the doctor</p> <hr/> <p>To take care in the unexpected moments (babies and elderly)</p> <hr/> <p>Complementary support (Homeworks, Storytelling)</p> <hr/> <p>To go over the daily experiences</p> <hr/> <p>Accompanying to events</p> <hr/> <p>To attend the school meetings</p> <hr/> <p>To have the clothes prepared for the next day</p> <hr/> <p>To plan the purchases</p> <hr/> <p>To plan the menus for the week, taking into account the family necessities</p> <hr/> <p>To monitor and care for the family diet</p> <hr/> <p>To launch and promote the tasks execution in order to promote the physical and intellectual benefit of the family</p> <hr/> <p>To organize the family meetings</p> <hr/> <p>To cook</p> <hr/> <p>To take the children to the school</p> <hr/> <p>To provide energetic resources for the household (to get firewood)</p> <hr/> <p>To care for the pets</p>
<p><b>Stock Control and Logistics</b></p>	<p>To write a shopping list and to know which products are missing</p> <hr/> <p>To repair the furniture</p> <hr/> <p>To repair and replace the kitchenware</p> <hr/> <p>To select the cleaning products</p> <hr/> <p>To plan wholesale purchases, and weekly, monthly or yearly purchases</p> <hr/> <p>To respect the cleaning and hygiene standards</p> <hr/> <p>To fix, repair and tailor clothing</p> <hr/> <p>To set up the need of fuel and other household items</p>



<p><b>Incomes distribution and expenses control /Accounting</b></p>	<p>To check the bank balances and movements</p> <hr/> <p>To sort out and prioritize the fix and temporary expenses each month</p> <hr/> <p>To pay non direct debit bills</p> <hr/> <p>To pay after-school or sport activities</p> <hr/> <p>To manage the annual tax return</p> <hr/> <p>Select the financial resources to plan the expenses</p> <hr/> <p>To set up a household savings strategy</p> <hr/> <p>To distinguish the leisure expenses and other replaceable items</p> <hr/> <p>To rent family resources in order to obtain extra income</p>
<p><b>Purchases and relation with the suppliers / Purchases Management</b></p>	<p>To go the shops and markets</p> <hr/> <p>To decide and choose the shops and markets</p> <hr/> <p>To make frequent purchases</p> <hr/> <p>To make special purchases as shoes, clothes and seasonal purchases</p> <hr/> <p>To make proper calls to the insurance companies, Banks, etc.</p> <hr/> <p>To negotiate the rates and conditions and to evaluate other offers</p>
<p><b>Environment Impact / Environment Management</b></p>	<p>To study the purchases' characteristics, that is, if they are ecologic or sustainable products</p> <hr/> <p>To analyse and assess the products' labels</p> <hr/> <p>To recycle the containers, packages and bottles</p> <hr/> <p>To use water, heat, electricity, etc. In a responsible way</p> <hr/> <p>To reuse and recycle the household furniture and fittings</p>



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<p><b>Education and training / Human Resources Development</b></p>	<p>To choose the school for the children's education and to decide the after-school activities they will attend to</p> <p>To help the children with the homework and to solve their scholar doubts and problems</p> <p>To participate in associations and civil movements (Students' Parents Associations, Elderly Care Associations, etc.)</p> <p>To set up education and behaviour rules and standards</p> <p>To set up the punishments and rewards</p> <p>To make decisions about changing the children's school if necessary</p>
<p><b>Decision-making process and conflicts resolution</b></p>	<p>To make long-term effective decisions. To make decisions under consultation</p> <p>To make urgent decisions alone</p> <p>Mediate conflicts which occur inside the family and outside the family sphere</p>
<p><b>Social and Neighbourhood Activism / Corporate social responsibility</b></p>	<p>To attend social meetings ( for example, the Refugee Committee)</p> <p>To belong to organizations, associations, cultural, religious, social and civil movements</p> <p>To attend social meetings</p>

Efficiently developing these tasks implies mastering a kind of knowledge that was summarize as follows within the housewives, entrepreneur women and technicians gathered in the workshop to exchange experiences in Florence.

- Supplying and control of raw materials;
- Care of rooms, equipments and tools;



- Planning the meals;
- Preparing the meals;
- Experience in negotiation;
- Handling school-family relationships;
- Looking after the social relationships of the members of the family;
- Autonomy in her choices;
- Capable of choosing what to buy for better the management of the domestic economy;
- Sharing the Work;
- Ability in making decisions

#### 4. JOB PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS

The performance of every kind of job implies to overcome determining factors related to the job organization and design. The organization and design are not changeable matters; they are not even a discretion of the designer or job manager. They are rather determined by the production goals and organizational context in which they are categorized and by the material and technological resources that come into play. We don't want to dwell further on this topic, which has been present during the workshops organized in order to prepare and conduct the research we present here.

The basic requirements for the job performance are related to the certification, the basic theoretical knowledge, the occupation, that is the demonstrable skills and abilities upon the job performance, and finally the qualification or a professionalism summary including the possibility of deploying the full potential of the job in different contexts. We have already put that on the housewife job record.

There is a set of requirements that every job has and that are located in an objectivity map which can only be analysed when we reflect critically on the job performance observation. In our research we have dealt with this matter, with the critical reflection on the objective requirements of the housewife job performance. We have executed them by dividing the determining factors into groups and following standard characteristics in the analysis of the job



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phenomena: intellectual requirements and abilities, social requirements, personality requirements, and other requirements related to the necessary effort.

We have shown it with the dominant graduation that the MUYPME analysts have selected for the more than 40 observations that have been carries out and that are available on the project website: [www.mupymeproject.eu](http://www.mupymeproject.eu)

### 1. Intellectual and psychological Aptitudes

Score from 0 to 3 according to the need for each required skill.

<b>0</b>	Inappreciable	<b>2</b>	Medium
<b>1</b>	Scarce	<b>3</b>	High

	0	1	2	3
<b>1.</b> General Intelligence required for the job				✓
<b>2.</b> Aptitude for solving problems				✓
<b>3.</b> Calculation skills			✓	
<b>4.</b> Ease of communication			✓	
<b>5.</b> Spatial aptitude			✓	
<b>6.</b> Creativity, ease of participation and originality			✓	
<b>7.</b> Concentration skills				✓
<b>8.</b> Movement coordination				✓
<b>9.</b> Manual Dexterity		✓		
<b>10.</b> Ability to differentiate colours		✓		



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11. Data, ideas or sentences memory			✓	
12. Spatial memory				✓
13. Response capability				✓

The housewife job characteristics, form an analytical and critical point of view, create a profile with specific intellectual and sociological skills related to the general intelligence, the problems' resolution, the concentration capacity or the ability to give answers.

Then, this is a typical manager or directive job profile that can be located in the 4 qualification level (in the CEDEFOP scale).

**2. Personality and Social requirements**

Score from 0 to 3 according to the need for each required skill.

<b>0</b>	Inappreciable	<b>2</b>	Medium
<b>1</b>	Scarce	<b>3</b>	High

	0	1	2	3
1. Easy of building personal relationships				✓
2. Ability to make quickly decisions				✓
3. Perseverance and method				✓
4. Self-control				✓
5. Leadership Ability				✓
6. Level of responsibility			✓	



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<b>7.</b> Organizational skills				
<b>7.1.</b> In the job itself				✓
<b>7.2.</b> Of the work of others		✓		
<b>7.3.</b> Administrative skills				✓
<b>8.</b> Adaptive capacity			✓	

When we check the job requirements we observe an area with a high social content and an important demand concerning the social relationships, the group decisions making, the leadership, the self-control, etc. All these characteristics are common to the managerial job of the SMEs and the big companies.

### 3. Job conditions and efforts

Score from 0 to 3 according to the need for each required skill.

<b>0</b>	Inappreciable	<b>2</b>	Medium
<b>1</b>	Scarce	<b>3</b>	High

	0	1	2	3
<b>1.</b> Physical strain				✓
<b>2.</b> Mental effort				✓
<b>3.</b> Nervous effort				✓
<b>4.</b> Hazardous effort			✓	
<b>5.</b> Toxicity		✓		



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6. Environmental aggression				✓
7. Risks				✓

The ergonomic requirements, those affecting the job performance because of its physical, environmental, and effort demands, create a profile more similar to managerial and directive jobs than to manual, craft or industrial production jobs. The physical effort, the exposure to certain risks, the environmental damage, and some other risks, are present in the requirements or exposure to which the described job is submitted.

Regarding the mental and physical requirements, the housewife job is an exception that must be taking into account when trying to bring it closer to the economy world existing outside the household.

We have to remind the most sceptic people that for the technicians and the insurance companies the household is the first place having accidents risk, and this is also considered by the **World Health Organization**.

#### 4. Standard work or craftwork

Given that we try to describe and characterize the household work, it is necessary to acknowledge which type of work it is. Which are the abilities that make up the household work execution.

The knowledge and skills implementation consists of two basic models. To implement the standardized workforce or the craftwork methodology. The history and the developments of the past centuries economy has been continuously transforming every type of production method. The result is a standard work model dominant in the industry, agriculture and in many of the services of our environment.

The standard model has been developed according to the efficiency and profitability achievement related to the costs minimization and the scale economy. The characteristic of this working model is that a complete break between the designer and the executer appears. In the standard model there is someone deciding what, when, how and with which responsibility grade the tasks should be carried out. On the other side we can find **the craftwork, which is non-**



**standard, and which main characteristic is, apart from the expertise in the tasks performance, the executer decision making skill on the content and purpose of the work.**

Is the household work a standard work model or rather a craftwork model? We think that it combined circumstances belonging to both models. In this sense, we can say that **it is a semi craftwork.**

The economic activity outside the household tends to develop according to the organization principles regulated by the standard production of objects, lots or flows. As a result, the production managers can set up a series of techniques and methods based on the resources and time consumption. This is the production standardization that enables the workforce implementation standardization.

It is not the case of the household activity, which has lot of tasks and procedures, but each action and gesture is unique and is produced within a non-specific time by any kind of designer, equipment ort installations. This workforce implementation and proper methods and techniques adoption inside the household activity implies having a high grade of discretion and ability to choose, which take the household work to a semi craftwork stage.

This is also a very important matter for the enterprises activity, since the most developed skill by the household work performers is the decision making skill on the time and reason to execute a task. These are the decisive bases on which the enterprises activity progresses.

The semi craftwork characteristic of the household tasks strengthen the skills and abilities related to the decision making process, which is the base of our work hypothesis.

## **5. The professionalism transfer.**

From the performance point of view, every job is sociable. Therefore we understand that the knowledge, skills and abilities needed for the job expert performance can be transferred. There are several ways to achieve this transfer. The training is always important, but in this case it plays a central role (for example: doctors); in other cases it plays an auxiliary role and aims to achieve skills (for example: airplane pilots), and in other it definitely plays a very marginal role, especially in craftworks and other jobs linked to creativity.

That said, we have to emphasize the socialization mechanism, that is training and that can appear in several ways; for example one could be the academic training.

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The model use in the specific training, in order to execute a determined number of tasks and activities, is typical of the industrial activity. The second model, guardianship or expertise that the professional experts have over the learners, is an ancient model that seems to be dominant in the socialization process of the skills needed to perform the household work.

We can find several alternatives combining both models between the pure training and the experimental learning, which are radical expressions of the professionalism socialization processes and methods. But the model master-learner model that gave such good results in the past is demanded again in the present days (coaching) in order to be able to transfer the sophisticated skills that avoid the mere fact of sharing knowledge and techniques.

The household and everything that needs the housewife's attention, demand something more than knowledge and technique from these housewives. The most part of the women we have observed made reference to their parents, grandparents and other family members that were for them the inspiration, knowledge and attitude resources, and that enable them to execute properly the household work.



This issue is crucial upon dealing with MUPYME Project goals, since we try to make a particular training plan addressed to the housewives in order to help them to go from the household



economy to the SME economy. Apparently their **habits and abilities to assimilate the knowledge and behaviour are related to the master-learner model**. Then it is not about creating training doses for the housewives, they wouldn't assimilate it. Therefore, we must try to focus our goals on the essential part of that transfer model, that is to share experiences and to refine the details.

The reason why the household job learning is a master-learner model is because it is not an exercise to demonstrate and show the credentials, but an activity in which the housewife gains her prestige and productive role due to her unquestioned authority (although unfortunately it is restricted to the household area) so that this authority consolidates during the exercise. What affects this is the result of a social action which has a moral character.

The master transfers the learner an operative knowledge and a moral authority based on the self-control and on the control of everything that is related to the professional exercise. This is the same that the housewives that perform their household work efficiently seem to have received.

## **6. The qualification acknowledgement.**

In general, for any kind of professional exercise the qualification acknowledgement is built on the qualification level (regulated training) of the performer and on her demonstrable experience. That means that, to give an example, a person can be acknowledged as a milling professional because of his or her studies related to the metallurgy, and also because he or she dominates the equipment use and have abilities to perform the milling tasks. His or her qualification is acknowledged because she or he has a training certification on metallurgy and is able to show his or her experience in the milling tasks.

This qualification acknowledgement model is not considered upon the housewife job acknowledgement. There are no educative guidelines to promote the necessary certification to perform the housewife job. In this way it is now possible to acknowledge the qualification level of the housewives draw on the regulated training the might have received. In fact in our research, as in the personal experience that all of us have within the household, we observe that there are housewives that have university and master degrees and that there are other housewives that have never been to school. This fact doesn't make them different from the professional point of view.

Does it mean that the training is not an important factor in the housewife job? Not at all, the training is an essential fact, but, as we mentioned before, **is a master-learner training model**



**because this type of socialization or knowledge transfer is characterized by women who transfer knowledge to other women.**

Furthermore there is no supporting document and this activity is developed within a private sphere that doesn't help the socialization process. The expertise transfer progresses with the hidden daily actions that increase the difficulty to acknowledge the professional qualification linked to the housewife job. The regulated or non-regulated training creates a context support the trained subject in the learning process and reinforces it. Learning is learning to be other person, and this, unfortunately, doesn't occur in the household expertise transfer, and as a consequence, this doesn't occur in the housewife job acknowledgment. The truth is that it is not that much radical, of course it occurs, the girl who takes her mother's advices and helps her with the household tasks is adding to herself new qualities, a new person, but she is not aware of herself because the own and social acknowledgement mechanism is not activated.

For this reason, in the MUYPME Project field research we have found lot of extraordinarily qualified **women who don't find it easy to recognize what they are**. This is an obstacle that must be overcome in the household economy sphere and transferred to other economic fields.

## **7. The performance improvement and the job training**

A basic element for the job acknowledgment is to analyse the dynamics, career, progress and the used enhancement mechanisms.

The housewife job seems to be a static job and to have the most part of the allocated tasks converted into continuous historical landmarks. The family care, the household cleaning and the needs providing are atavistic tasks.

However, some of the social transformations go towards a greater modernized work and a greater progress regarding the household economy. These transformations focus on a stage where the training aimed to improve the housewife job development makes sense, is demanded and desired. The phenomena we are referring to are social and technological, although both are mixed together in the household daily life.

The sociological phenomena are related to the women's role transformations in society. The birth control, its impact on the economy outside the household and its willing to create life alternatives outside the household, limits the time spent in the household tasks execution, and this has been faced with the a technological freedom of time. The tools, machinery, and robotic equipment that have been appearing along the XX century give more facilities and support to the emancipation spirit of women working exclusively in the household. Therefore, the



household is modernized. As a consequence, a lot of training needs for the household work execution arise: firstly, lot of needs related with the guarantee of the household tasks proper execution, and secondly, other needs related to the correct knowledge of the technological items, its maintenance and replacement.

Then, **the housewife job improvement is determined by the social evolution of the life model that women of our times have and by their aspirations to perform the job with the least possible effort.** The energies, even those addressed to the training, are rather spent on the improvement of the life outside the household conditions. Therefore, we can say that there is a clear demand to reward outside the household the social effort done concerning the housewives training. We, the MUYPMME partners, propose the SME economy sphere.

To sum up this last section we must underline that the housewives that have participated in our analytical experience claim on the one hand:

1. A **classic training** method to improve the conventional tasks performance.

And on the other hand:

2. **Specific training** to introduce technological changes in the household economy in order to free up time and to minimize the efforts.

All this aim to free up energy so that it can be applied outside the household.

Will be the SME, which experience is very close to the household, the appropriate place to apply the energy and the willpower that motivate women?

In MUPYME we think so, and we commit ourselves to work in order to achieve it.



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## 9. References

Every literary review, content and idea that gives us inspiration and knowledge for the development of the different activities within MUPYME Project is shared through the section "[What inspires us?](#)" on the project website: [www.mupymeproject.eu](http://www.mupymeproject.eu)