Although a trend to more equalitarian gender values was noted in all European countries in the last century, support for similar roles for women and men differs from country to country. Traditional gender roles assign the breadwinner role to the male partner and the homemaker role to the female partner. In modern and post-modern societies both women and men may assume both roles. Modernization and its correlates, such as industrialization, modification of family structure and increasing education, have been proven to boost support for gender equality (Inglehart & Welzel, 2005; Lesthaeghe, 1983; Wilensky, 2002). However, countries with similar levels of modernization have different orientations regarding gender values. While Scandinavian countries, like Sweden, Norway and Denmark, have higher orientations towards gender equality, in other highly developed countries, like Switzerland and Austria, people are less inclined towards gender equality.

Previous research has shown that not only does the level of modernization matter for support to gender equality, but that institutional factors have an impact as well. Family structure (Lesthaeghe 1983), women's employment (Wilensky, 2002), religious practices and religious denominations (Kalmijn, 2003) induce variation in the ways that people conceive gender roles in different societies. Moreover, family policies and practices regarding gender equality promoted in the former Soviet bloc by the communist regimes, shape gender roles in different ways, leaving an imprint on the gender values shared by the populations of these countries (Heitlinger, 1985; Voicu, 2010). These differences in societal institutions explain, at least partially, why modernization theory does not hold true in all societies with respect to gender values.

However, although previous research has generally addressed the impact of modernization or of institutional factors on gender values, gender
values have mostly been treated as a single dimension, without consideration for the different dimensions of gender values that are known to exist. The current chapter focuses on how modernization and several institutional factors impact on attitudes towards two dimensions of gender roles, namely, the traditional roles of women within the private sphere and gender equality on the labour market.

Therefore, this chapter addresses two research questions. The first asks how European countries differ regarding attitudes towards gender roles. Although Kalmijn (2003) approached the same topic, the European Values Study (EVS) dataset collected in 2008 allows the investigation of attitudes towards gender roles in all European societies, and provides a better understanding of how these attitudes differ from one country to another. The second research question focuses on how modernization versus institutional factors shape attitudes regarding the traditional role of women in the private sphere and beliefs regarding equal access of both sexes to the labour market. While the two sets of attitudes refer to different life domains, we assume that the factors considered exert a different impact on the two dimensions and we expect a different effect of the institutional factors on the two dependent variables analysed. The current analysis uses data from 44 European societies covered by the 2008 EVS. We employ multilevel regression models to test the combined effect of individual and country-level factors influencing gender values.

The first section of this chapter is dedicated to a literature review on the effect of modernity versus the effect of institutional factors on attitudes towards gender roles, comprising at the same time, explanations related to the effect of control variables. The second section presents the data, the indicators and the methods used to test the hypotheses. The third part describes the results. In the final section, some conclusions are drawn and recommendations for further research are provided.

**Gender equality: Modernity versus institutional factors**

Modernity is considered to be the main factor conducive to gender equality. Different approaches emphasize different effects of modernization on attitudes towards gender roles. Among these, an increased general level of affluence and industrialization and reduced fertility rate are considered to be main factors boosting support for gender equality.

Inglehart and collaborators relate increasing gender equality and equalitarian gender values to rising affluence during modernity and post-