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Gender and the Division of Household Labor in Older Couples:

A European Perspective

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Abstract: Using micro-data from the 2004 'Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe' (SHARE), this study investigates the division of household labor in older couples (aged 50+) in a cross-national perspective. Across ten continental European countries, we find considerable variation in the overall distribution of housework between partners. One may roughly distinguish between more egalitarian countries in northern Europe and more traditional countries in the southern parts of Europe. A multivariate analysis shows that the observed spatial pattern is neither due to differences in population composition, nor due to country-specific effects of individual characteristics. We do find a significant effect of macro-level gender inequalities on couples' division of housework, though. In addition, our analysis suggests the presence of relevant further, though unobserved contextual effects. The paper concludes with suggestions for future research.

Keywords: gender; division of household labor, older couples, Europe, SHARE

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Introduction

Research on ‚productive aging' is growing rapidly (cf. O'Reilly & Caro 1994; Morrow-Howell et al. 2001). Most of the related literature deals with involvement of the elderly in volunteering (e.g., Caro & Bass 1995; Erlinghagen & Hank 2005), grandparenting (e.g., Pebley & Rudkin 1999; Vandell et al. 2003) or other work usually performed for parties *outside* the individual's household. However, work performed *within* one's own household also has a substantial economic value. Without home production, one would have to buy substantially more household services on the market (cf. Stoller & Cutler 1993; Hank 2001, for example). While gender differences in other types of unpaid or informal work are also recognized (e.g., Herzog & Morgan 1992), they are particularly pronounced in the division of housework between spouses. Despite some changes across cohorts, with more recently born women doing less and their male partners doing somewhat more (both relative and total), men generally contribute at most one third of 'core' housework tasks until today (e.g., Bianchi et al. 2000; Breen & Cooke 2005; Shelton & John 1996).

Several studies dealing with post-retirement changes in couples' division of household labor show that the total amount of housework done may increase after retirement for both men and women, but that the traditional pre-retirement pattern largely persists (e.g., Dorfman 1992; Solomon et al. 2004; Szinovacz 2000). So far, however, the division of household labor in older couples has not been analyzed in a cross-national perspective. Recent investigations for the general population strongly suggest that macro-level factors, particularly gender inequalities, play a significant role for the distribution of housework between spouses (e.g., Breen & Cooke 2005; Davis & Greenstein 2004; Fuwa 2004). Using data on couples aged 50 and older, derived from the new 'Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe', the present paper investigates the relationship between societal context and the division of routine household labor in ten continental European countries. Before we present our empirical analysis, we will briefly review the linkage between micro- and macro-level aspects of 'gender' and housework.

Gender and the division of housework

Various economic models play a prominent role in much of the literature on household labor. While the *new home economics'* approach, put forward by Becker (1981), proposes that men and women specialize in order to maximize household utility or efficiency, the *resource-bargaining power* perspective focuses on power relations in the family (based on, for example, educational or income differentials between the partners), and the *economic dependency* model is centered around the assumption that women are 'forced' to exchange household labor in return for economic support from a male breadwinner (cf. Brines 1993; Greenstein 2000, for example). These theories are compatible with general formulations of the *relative resource* hypothesis (a person with higher income will do less housework) and the *time availability* hypothesis (a person who spends more time in paid work will spend less time in housework), "which are putatively gender neutral, emphasize choice, and assume that housework allocation is governed by the rules and principles of exchange relations" (Coltrane 2000: 1214; see also Shelton & John 1993: 304ff.).

However, it has been suggested that "women's employment, time availability, resources, conscious ideology, and power do not account for why wives still do the bulk of family work" (Thompson & Walker 1989: 857) regardless of demographic or life-course characteristics. The partners' *gender* appears to be so influential that it is often considered to be the single most important determinant of the division of household labor. Theories on *socialization-gender role attitudes*, for example, contend that people socialized to believe in gender segregated work will conform to those beliefs (e.g., Coverman 1985; Thompson 1993). Thus, men and women with 'traditional' attitudes are expected to share less housework, whereas men and women with 'nontraditional' attitudes are expected to share housework more equally. It is assumed that people are 'automatically' socialized into rigid gender roles from childhood onwards, going along with the development of relatively fixed attitudes and/or deeply gendered personalities. These strict assumptions are rejected by more recent gender construction theories that incorporate the *symbolic and performance dimensions of gender* (cf. Shelton & John 1993: 312). "Doing specific household tasks

provides opportunities to demonstrate to oneself and to others that one is a competent member of a sex category with the capacity and desire to perform appropriately gendered behaviors" (Coltrane 2000: 1213). Thus, housework does not only produce household commodities, but also gendered identities throughout the life-course.

Gender ideology determines what a proper gender role is. Just as gender ideologies vary across individuals (e.g., Greenstein 1996), the social construction of gender is highly context dependent and varies across nations or cultures, for example. Mason (1997: 158) defines the *societal gender system* as "the socially constructed expectations for male and female behaviour that are found (in variable form) in every human society. A gender system's expectations prescribe a division of labour and responsibilities between women and men and grant different rights and obligations to them." Resulting *macro-level gender inequalities* – that may be promoted or ameliorated by the welfare state (Orloff 1996; see also Geist 2005) – materialize in various spheres (cf. Huber 1990), such as the educational system (e.g., Jacobs 1996), the labor market (e.g., Chang 2000), or the political arena (e.g., Elder 2004). Naturally, they are also reflected in spouses' division of work in the family (e.g., Sarkisian & Gerstel 2004; Sundström & Duvander 2002; Thompson & Walker 1989) and in the household. Thus, Coltrane (2000: 1208) suggests that the almost universally observed pattern of household labor "can only be understood by attending to the symbolic significance of household labor in the social construction of gender and by analyzing the social, cultural, economic, and political contexts in which men and women form families, raise children, and sustain households."

Starting from Baxter's (1997) five-country study – covering the United States, Sweden, Norway, Canada, and Australia – a number of studies have explicitly investigated the division of housework in advanced industrialized societies from a *cross-national perspective* (for an analysis of less developed countries see, for example, Sanchez 1993; 1994). A universal finding is that wives' contribution to household chores is still greater than their husbands', even in the most egalitarian countries (e.g., Davis & Greenstein 2004). More differentiated insights can be derived from recent work using multilevel

modeling. Batalova & Cohen (2002), for example, who focus on the role of premarital cohabitation, can show that national cohabitation rates in countries with higher levels of overall gender equality have equalizing effects on couples' division of housework regardless of their own cohabitation experience. Fuwa (2004) elaborates on the role of macro-level gender inequalities, arguing that "male control over the political economy and male dominated ideologies at the macro-level may act as 'discount factors' against the power of individual women's resources" (p.752; see also Blumberg 1984). Thus, she expects that individual-level factors will have weaker effects on the division of household labor for women who live in countries with less pronounced gender equality – and vice versa. Using the same data source (the 1994 International Social Survey Programme; ISSP) and selection of 22 countries on which the study by Batalova & Cohen (2002) is based, Fuwa (2004) indeed finds that women living in less-egalitarian countries benefit less from their individual assets in the negotiation over housework. This is supported by an analysis of a subset of countries participating in the ISSP, which shows that equal sharing of household tasks is particularly rare in countries with a conservative welfare state regime, independent of the partners' relative resources, time availability, or gender ideology (Geist 2005).

To our knowledge, though, no cross-national research has been carried out yet that pays particular attention to the gendered division of household labor in *older couples*. Filling in this gap for continental Europe, our study complements recent time-use research pointing to significant inter-gender and inter-country differences in time-use patterns at older ages (cf. Croda & Gonzalez-Chapela 2005; Gauthier & Smeeding 2003). It also adds a European perspective to the so far almost exclusively U.S. centered literature on the division of housework in later life, particularly after retirement. And finally, it investigates possible interactions between couple characteristics and the household's country of residence in determining patterns of household labor.

Method

Data

The data for our study are drawn from the first public release version of the 2004 'Survey of Health, Aging and Retirement in Europe' (SHARE; see http://www.share-project.org for more information). SHARE is modeled closely after the U.S. 'Health and Retirement Study' (HRS) and it is the first European data set to combine extensive cross-national information on socio-economics status, health, and family relationships of the elderly population (see Börsch-Supan et al. 2005). The data contain information on some 22,000 individuals aged 50 or older from 15,000 households in ten countries, representing Europe's economic, social, institutional, and cultural diversity from Scandinavia to the Mediterranean (Sweden, Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, France, Switzerland, Austria, Italy, Spain, and Greece – further data are currently being collected in Belgium and Israel). Probability samples have been drawn in each participating country; the average household response rate in the face-to-face part of the survey is 55 %, ranging from 38 % in Switzerland to 69 % in France (a thorough description of methodological issues is contained in Börsch-Supan & Jürges 2005). Our analytic sample was restricted (a) to respondents living in a marital or non-marital union at the time of the interview and (b) to couples where at least one partner filled out the survey's self-completion questionnaire (which includes the question on which our dependent variable is based). This results in a total of 4,391 observations (see *Table* 1 for details).

[Table 1 about here]

Variables

This paper deals with 'routine housework' (Coltrane 2000: 1210). The construction of the *dependent variable* modifies Davis & Greenstein's (2004) measure, taking advantage of the fact that SHARE provides *both* partners' assessment of who takes the primary

responsibility for routine household chores. This is a major improvement over existing data sets such as the ISSP. The (generic) English version of the SHARE questionnaire asks "Who in the couple takes or took the main responsibility for *cooking, cleaning the house, laundry and ironing*?" with five answer categories: 'myself only', 'myself mainly', myself and my partner equally', 'my partner mainly', 'my partner only' (coded 1 through 5). Since this question was asked to both partners, responses were recoded in order to distinguish 'husbands' from 'wives'. To account for possible discrepancies in spouses' responses (cf. Kamo 2000; Lee & Waite 2005), we use the mean of their respective answers, ranging from 1 (both partners agree that the wife does all housework) to 5 (both partners agree that the husband does all housework).[1] Values larger than 3, which indicate that the male partner does the main share or even all of the housework, are observed for less than two percent of our sample.

On the right-hand side of the regression, we use a set of 'standard' *micro-level control variables* including the partners' age, education, (gross) income, employment status, and health, as well as information on the partners' marital status and family responsibilities. These variables shall cover those dimensions that previous studies have shown to be relevant for the distribution of housework between spouses – such as relative resources, time-availability, and (to a lesser degree) gender ideology – but which are not the primary focus of this study. Our main concern is the role of societal factors for older couples' division of household labor. Following Batalova & Cohen (2002) as well as Fuwa (2004), we use the United Nations' Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM; see UNDP 2004) as a core measure of *macro-level gender inequalities*. GEM is an index based on the percentage of parliamentary seats held by women, the percentage of female administrators and managers, the percentage of professional and technical workers who are women, and women's share of earnings income. It ranges from 0 to 1, where higher scores represent greater levels of empowerment for women. Since GEM is not available for France, however, we alternatively utilize for all SHARE countries two of its elements, the

[1] In 95 percent of our observations, both partners report the same or a neighboring answer category.

percentage of parliamentary seats held by women and the female-male wage ratio, as indicators of gender inequalities. See *Table 1* for descriptive statistics.

Analytical strategy

Since our dependent variable is derived from a set of ordered responses, ordered logit models are used in the analyses. We follow a stepwise procedure (see *Table 2*): *Model 1* contains only couple characteristics, pooled across all countries, to which we add – in *Model 2* – a dummy variable that distinguishes the five countries with the highest proportions of older couples sharing housework equally from the remaining five countries (see below). In *Model 3*, our set of explanatory variables is supplemented by the percentage of females in the parliament and the female-male-wage ratio. *Model 4* uses GEM as an indicator of gender inequalities, which implies that France is excluded here. Finally, using the same variables as in *Model 3*, separate regressions for countries with lower and higher proportions of couples sharing housework equally are run in *Model 5* and *Model 6*, respectively.[2]

Empirical findings

Before we present our multivariate results, we will briefly discuss some main *descriptive findings*, displayed in *Figure 1*. First, there is an obvious north-south divide in the gender division of labor in the SHARE countries. This is reflected in the distribution of the proportion of couples where the partners share household tasks equally (including cases where the husband does more). While, for example, in Greece and Spain less than 10 percent of couples aged 50 and older exhibit an equal division of labor in the household, this is the case in about 17 percent of Dutch, German, and Swedish couples. The top rank is held by the Danes, where one out of four couples shares core household tasks equally.

[2] An alternative to our strategy of estimating separate regressions would have been to estimate a random coefficient model, for example. In recent years, this kind of multilevel modeling has become quite popular in social science research (cf. Teachman & Crowder, 2002, for example).

Second, there is strong indication for a close relationship between the division of household labor in older couples and macro-level measures of gender inequalities. Plotting the proportion of couples with an equal division of housework against the proportion of female members of parliament, against a country's female-male wage ratio, and (excluding France) against GEM reveals a clear positive association. The five countries with the highest proportions (15+ percent) of older couples sharing housework equally – France, the Netherlands, Sweden, Germany, and Denmark – are also the ones with the highest proportions of female members of parliament (30+ percent), the highest female-male wage ratios (50+ percent), and the highest scores of GEM (.8 or more). A noteworthy outlier is France, with a fairly equal gender division of housework but a low percentage of parliamentary seats held by women.

[Figure 1 about here]

We now turn to the *multivariate analysis* (see *Table 2*; note that positive coefficients indicate a larger share of the male partner in total housework). As expected, older couples (i.e. those with a higher mean age) exhibit a more traditional pattern of housework, as do those with a higher age difference between the partners. The respective coefficient, which is statistically significant in *Model 1*, becomes insignificant in subsequent models, though. Both, male and female higher education, which is likely to be positively correlated with less traditional gender ideologies, contributes to a more gender equal division of housework (e.g., Coltrane 2000: 1221). Household income has a non-linear effect on men's participation in household tasks: we find that the contribution of the male partner is lowest in the households with the lowest and highest income quintiles. The effect of relative income is asymmetric: men with a lower income than their (female) partner tend to do somewhat more housework than those having about the same income as their partner (where equal income is defined as being in the same income quintile), but the difference is not statistically significant (cf. Bittman et al. 2003). However, if the wife earns less than her

husband, the husband's share in household duties is significantly lower than in couples with about equal income.

The number of children and men's participation in the labor force also decrease males' participation in household chores. If, however, the female partner engages in paid work her husband's share of household labor increases. The same holds if the woman has retired, which – at first glance – might seem to be a surprising result, contradicting findings of previous studies (e.g., Szinovacs 2000). In our model, however, the reference category consists of women who are neither gainfully employed nor retired. Since these are mostly housewives, retirement in our model is an indicator of women's previous labor force participation, which is likely to facilitate a somewhat more equal division of housework between the partners even after retirement (assuming continuity in household roles; e.g., Dorfman 1992: 163f.).[3] Male retirement tends to be negatively correlated with the dependent variable, but significantly so only in *Model 1*.

Limitations by health problems are not significant, if they affect men, but they do result in a stronger engagement of the husband in household duties, if the female partner's health is limited. Living in a non-marital union, which is said to go hand in hand with less traditional gender ideologies, strongly increases men's participation in housework (see Batalova & Cohen 2002; South & Spitze 1994). Family obligations have an effect on older couples division of household labor in the sense that men caring for parents (and/or grandchildren) also take larger responsibilities within their own household. If the female partner helps the parent generation, which has been shown to reduce women's paid work hours (e.g., Spiess & Schneider 2003), husbands tend to perform less housework. As a final 'couple-level' control variable, we use information on whether only the male or only the female partner answered to the question on the division of housework. Consistent with previous studies (e.g., Kamo 2000), men's involvement in household chores is reported to

[3] In all models, the coefficients of the 'in the labor force' and 'in retirement' variables are significantly different from each other (both for males and for females). While this provides some indication for postretirement changes in the division of household labor, these changes are obviously too small as to affect the basic distribution of work between men and women.

be stronger if the informant is a man himself, while it appears to be significantly weaker if only the wife's response is available.

The coefficient of the 'country group' dummy variable introduced in *Model 2* provides strong indication that beyond the micro-level determinants discussed above, contextual factors play an important role in shaping older couples' division of housework. Households located in the northern parts of Europe (including France), i.e. in countries with an overall higher level of gender equality in the distribution of housework, are – independent of individual characteristics – significantly more likely to exhibit an equal sharing of household labor than their counterparts in Switzerland, Italy, Austria, Spain, and Greece. *Model 3* shows that some of this can be attributed to cross-national differences in measures of gender inequality. However, unlike the proportion of women in parliament, the female-male wage ratio does not exhibit a statistically significant effect. Despite the particularly strong outcome of GEM in *Model 4* (without France), though, the 'country group' dummy still remains significant, which suggests the presence of relevant (unobserved) context effects beyond those that can be directly attributed to macro-level gender inequalities.

In the final step of our analysis, we estimate separate regressions for countries with lower (*Model 5*) and higher (*Model 6*) proportions of couples sharing housework equally. A Chi-squared test (the results of which are displayed in the last column of *Table 2*) provides only limited evidence that the effect of the micro-level determinants of housework distribution differs systematically between the two groups of countries. Statistically significant differences (at the 10-percent-level) are found for total household income, relative income, the number of children, and the number of living parents of the husband. Differences between the coefficients of 'only male response available' and 'only female response available' are marginally significant. However, both groups of countries differ significantly in the size of the full gender difference (i.e. the difference between male and female coefficient).

Specifically, we find that the hump-shaped relationship between household income and the gender division of housework persists in both types of countries, but that the location of the hump is somewhat different. In countries with a less gender equal overall distribution of housework (*Model 5*), the maximum male participation in household labor is at the fourth quintile, whereas the maximum in more gender equal countries (*Model 6*) is at the second quintile. Concerning relative income, it is interesting to note that men earning less than their female partners participate relatively more in housework tasks if they live in a country with a commonly less traditional division of household labor. The number of children and the number of the husbands' surviving parents have a significantly negative effect on male housework participation only in the group of countries with a less equal distribution of housework. Finally, the gender-specific reporting bias (i.e. the difference between responses of men and women to the division of housework question) is larger in the less egalitarian countries. – With regard to the macro-level variables, we find significantly larger positive coefficients of women's share of parliamentary seats and the female-male wage ratio in countries with a generally lower participation of men in housework. This result suggests that the effect of greater macro-level gender equality levels off beyond a certain threshold.

[Table 2 about here]

Discussion

Using micro-data from the new 'Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe', this study is the first to investigate the division of household labor in older couples in a cross-national perspective. Across continental Europe, we find considerable variation in the overall distribution of household labor. One may roughly distinguish between more egalitarian countries in northern Europe (such as Sweden and particularly Denmark) on the one hand, and more traditional countries in the southern parts of Europe, above all Spain and Greece. Since we are dealing with cohorts born 1954 or earlier, it is not surprising to

find a generally lower level of men's participation in housework than might have been expected from studies which are representative for the whole population (e.g., Davis & Greenstein 2004: 1265).

A multivariate analysis shows that the observed spatial pattern is neither due to differences in population composition, nor due to country-specific effects of relevant individual characteristics, such as education or employment status. The latter finding is different from Fuwa (2004), who provides evidence that relevant individual-level factors have weaker effects on the division of household labor for women who live in countries with less pronounced gender equality. The lack of support for the 'macro-level discount factor' argument in our study may result from a common baseline level of gender equality in our sample of ten countries, which might be too high as to allow the identification of effects such as those revealed in Fuwa's analysis of 22 more diverse nations. We still find a significant effect of macro-level gender inequalities on couples' division of housework (see also *Figure 1*). Even when controlling for individual characteristics of the household, couples living in countries with higher scores of GEM (or its elements) are more likely to exhibit an equal sharing of household labor. Rather than by aggregate income differentials between the sexes, this effect seems to be driven by the proportion of parliamentary seats held by women.

Discussing the mechanisms, through which these variables may work, Batalova & Cohen (2002: 753) suggest that "[n]orms about the division of labor may […] be affected by women's visibility in positions of public authority and prestige." This points to the role of broader *cultural* mechanisms in shaping cross-national variations in the division of household labor – and indeed our analysis suggests the presence of relevant further, though unobserved contextual effects. Bianchi et al. (2000: 219) conclude that much of the increase in men's share of housework observed in younger U.S. cohorts is due to their increased willingness to perform this labor, which is likely to have resulted from "changed attitudes about what is expected, reasonable, and fair for men to contribute to the maintenance of their home [… as well as from …] cultural change in ideas about 'women's work'. It is

likely more acceptable for men to cook and clean, indeed, welcomed, for men to show competence at making a home-cooked meal, for example." Such inter-temporal cultural changes are visible as cross-cultural differences in our investigation.[4]

This study has some limitations, which call for further research. *First* and foremost, the current SHARE data only allow a cross-sectional view. That is, we cannot observe actual *changes* in housework after retirement. Our rough cross-sectional evidence as well as previous U.S. research suggests that such changes tend to be small. However, the magnitude of these changes is not only likely to increase in the future (when new generations of more highly educated women will enter retirement), but it is also likely to vary across national contexts. Exploiting such inter-temporal and inter-country variations should be a promising field for future research. *Second*, compared to the International Social Survey Programme, for example, the sample of countries currently represented in SHARE is relatively small. Particularly former Socialist societies are yet missing. Future studies of the division of housework in older couples should not only aim at an extension of the spatial and time dimensions of their analyses, though. They should, *third*, also try – at the *micro-level* – to account for complementary productive activities of elders (inside and outside their own home) and – at the *macro-level* – to include indicators that allow to develop a better grasp of the cultural factors contributing to the persistence of the gendered division of (household) labor.[5] While some suggestions in this latter regard have already

[4] A closely related issue concerns cross-national variations in 'equity points'. An unequal (i.e. not 50-50) distribution of household labor need not necessarily be perceived as unfair. However, only in the 1990s, research began to isolate conditions associated with labeling divisions of housework as 'fair' or 'unfair' (Coltrane 2000: 1223ff.). Recent work by Davis (2004) not only reveals cross-national differences in women's average perceptions of fairness of the division of household labor, but also shows that these are affected through a country's political and economic history as well as women's overall empowerment.

[5] This is not to say that economic factors, contributing to greater gender material equality, would be irrelevant (cf. Breen & Cooke 2005).

been put forward (such as national cohabitation rates, used by Batalova & Cohen 2002), much more systematic work needs still to be done.

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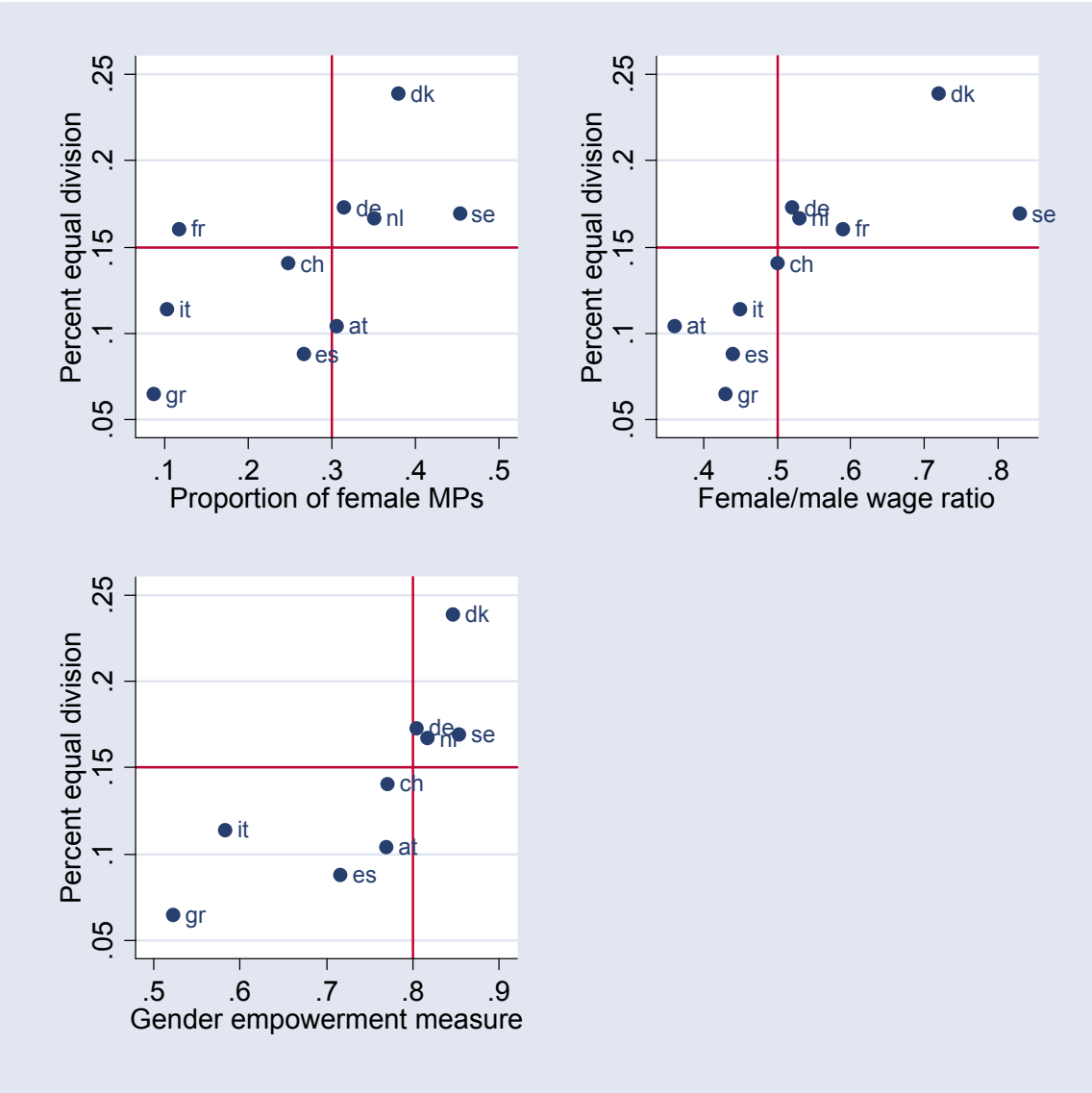
Tables & Figures

Figure 1: Share of couples with egalitarian division of household labor across Europe



Source: SHARE 2004 (Release 1), authors' representation.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics

	Austria	Germany	Sweden	Netherlands	Spain	Italy	France	Denmark	Greece	Switzerland
Ordered dependent variable										
Proportion of couples, equal division[a]	0.104	0.173	0.170	0.167	0.088	0.114	0.160	0.239	0.065	0.141
Independent variables – Couple level										
Couple's mean age	62.340	62.888	63.787	62.303	65.268	63.075	60.967	61.213	60.436	63.347
Male-female age difference	3.009	2.508	2.873	2.704	2.795	3.632	2.871	3.025	5.694	2.847
Male, high educational degree[b]	0.272	0.369	0.297	0.252	0.069	0.081	0.189	0.335	0.217	0.306
Female, high educational degree[b]	0.141	0.236	0.311	0.132	0.035	0.093	0.168	0.378	0.142	0.189
Household income (natural log)	10.041	10.370	10.701	10.634	9.412	9.792	10.415	10.875	9.607	10.599
Male income < female income	0.103	0.099	0.188	0.096	0.055	0.058	0.119	0.163	0.054	0.107
Male income > female income	0.635	0.684	0.550	0.729	0.738	0.674	0.623	0.512	0.691	0.643
Number of children	2.099	1.941	2.517	2.431	2.709	2.152	2.397	2.342	2.080	2.238
Male in labor force	0.241	0.315	0.401	0.341	0.256	0.220	0.321	0.468	0.416	0.434
Female in labor force	0.199	0.295	0.446	0.259	0.130	0.155	0.347	0.465	0.213	0.378
Male retired from labor force	0.698	0.589	0.557	0.504	0.651	0.750	0.592	0.481	0.550	0.515
Female retired from labor force	0.468	0.429	0.464	0.147	0.135	0.373	0.358	0.422	0.242	0.393
Male limited by health problems	0.431	0.478	0.392	0.367	0.401	0.331	0.296	0.377	0.245	0.291
Female limited by health problems	0.426	0.503	0.427	0.476	0.487	0.387	0.326	0.404	0.249	0.342
Unmarried couple	0.040	0.047	0.080	0.039	0.075	0.016	0.037	0.078	0.012	0.046
Number of living parents, male	0.262	0.270	0.326	0.286	0.207	0.261	0.405	0.405	0.408	0.328
Number of living parents, female	0.349	0.410	0.399	0.411	0.311	0.350	0.559	0.510	0.629	0.487
Male helps parents	0.056	0.108	0.111	0.108	0.032	0.069	0.111	0.176	0.049	0.097
Female helps parents	0.077	0.148	0.183	0.190	0.072	0.104	0.161	0.251	0.124	0.107
Male cares for grandchildren	0.281	0.281	0.334	0.387	0.268	0.215	0.366	0.359	0.198	0.199
Female cares for grandchildren	0.337	0.330	0.411	0.442	0.349	0.306	0.429	0.400	0.228	0.224
Only male response available	0.037	0.032	0.096	0.065	0.023	0.065	0.026	0.049	0.029	0.051
Only female response available	0.049	0.030	0.103	0.078	0.023	0.049	0.045	0.065	0.044	0.015
Independent variables – Country level										
Proportion of female MPs	30.600	31.400	45.300	35.100	26.600	10.300	11.700	38	8.700	24.800
Female-male wage ratio	36	52	83	53	44	45	59	72	43	50
GEM	0.770	0.804	0.854	0.817	0.716	0.583	n.a.	0.847	0.523	0.771
N	427	594	623	695	347	432	380	370	591	196

[a] Share of couples with values equal to or larger than 3 for the 'division of housework' variable. [b] ISCED categories 4 or higher. – Source: SHARE 2004 (Release 1), authors' calculations.

Table 2: Determinants of couples division of housework – results of ordered logit models[a,f]

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	χ^2-Test (5)–(6)
Couple's mean age	-0.019**	-0.025**	-0.027**	-0.028**	-0.030**	-0.032**	0.848
	(3.59)	(4.66)	(5.05)	(5.09)	(3.86)	(4.22)	
Male-female age difference	-0.018**	-0.012+	-0.009	-0.003	-0.006	-0.007	0.943
	(2.95)	(1.87)	(1.40)	(0.50)	(0.64)	(0.80)	
Male, high educational degree	0.246**	0.178*	0.141*	0.187*	0.217+	0.112	0.453
	(3.53)	(2.54)	(1.99)	(2.57)	(1.82)	(1.26)	
Female, high educational degree	0.313**	0.228**	0.221**	0.190*	0.173	0.255**	0.628
	(3.96)	(2.87)	(2.76)	(2.30)	(1.18)	(2.64)	
Household income, 1st quintile[b]	-0.159+	-0.193*	-0.197*	-0.159+	0.041	-0.380**	0.026
	(1.79)	(2.16)	(2.20)	(1.70)	(0.29)	(3.20)	
Household income, 2nd quintile[b]	0.086	0.062	0.058	0.103	0.058	0.055	0.986
	(0.98)	(0.71)	(0.66)	(1.12)	(0.42)	(0.47)	
Household income, 4th quintile[b]	-0.007	0.013	0.010	0.081	0.356**	-0.275*	0.000
	(0.08)	(0.15)	(0.12)	(0.88)	(2.62)	(2.39)	
Household income, 5th quintile[b]	-0.197*	-0.151+	-0.142	-0.086	0.000	-0.268*	0.141
	(2.22)	(1.69)	(1.58)	(0.92)	(0.00)	(2.27)	
Male income < female income[c]	0.162	0.091	0.065	0.018	-0.196	0.183	0.080
	(1.59)	(0.89)	(0.64)	(0.17)	(1.08)	(1.46)	
Male income > female income[c]	-0.215**	-0.275**	-0.284**	-0.292**	-0.338**	-0.263**	0.597
	(3.14)	(3.99)	(4.12)	(4.03)	(3.06)	(2.91)	
Number of children	-0.083**	-0.090**	-0.098**	-0.115**	-0.195**	-0.035	0.001
	(3.80)	(4.11)	(4.45)	(5.02)	(5.50)	(1.23)	
Male in labor force[d]	-0.560**	-0.488**	-0.480**	-0.493**	-0.439*	-0.470**	0.907
	(4.75)	(4.12)	(4.03)	(3.96)	(2.03)	(3.23)	
Female in labor force[d]	1.000**	0.810**	0.773**	0.721**	0.755**	0.769**	0.936
	(12.36)	(9.83)	(9.27)	(8.29)	(5.58)	(7.02)	
Male retired from labor force[d]	-0.325**	-0.161	-0.117	-0.133	0.041	-0.188	0.412
	(2.65)	(1.30)	(0.94)	(1.03)	(0.18)	(1.22)	
Female retired from labor force[d]	0.432**	0.342**	0.339**	0.299**	0.250*	0.451**	0.227
	(5.73)	(4.50)	(4.41)	(3.77)	(2.15)	(4.11)	
Male limited by health problems	0.047	0.004	-0.025	-0.032	0.027	-0.049	0.546
	(0.80)	(0.07)	(0.41)	(0.51)	(0.28)	(0.64)	
Female limited by health problems	0.274**	0.219**	0.191**	0.180**	0.287**	0.118	0.164
	(4.75)	(3.77)	(3.28)	(2.96)	(3.06)	(1.56)	

(*continued next page*)

Table 2 (continued): Determinants of couples division of housework – results of ordered logit models[a,f]

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	χ^2-Test (5)–(6)
Unmarried couple	0.567**	0.501**	0.449**	0.472**	0.615*	0.287+	0.286
	(4.40)	(3.86)	(3.45)	(3.51)	(2.54)	(1.84)	
Number of living parents, male	-0.099+	-0.091	-0.069	-0.078	-0.227*	0.029	0.023
	(1.76)	(1.62)	(1.22)	(1.31)	(2.52)	(0.39)	
Number of living parents, female	0.057	0.063	0.082	0.104+	0.084	0.083	0.987
	(1.12)	(1.24)	(1.61)	(1.93)	(1.06)	(1.22)	
Male helps parents	0.357**	0.291**	0.280**	0.298**	0.394*	0.238+	0.433
	(3.47)	(2.82)	(2.71)	(2.73)	(2.04)	(1.93)	
Female helps parents	-0.109	-0.200*	-0.217*	-0.220*	-0.067	-0.306**	0.180
	(1.27)	(2.30)	(2.49)	(2.39)	(0.43)	(2.86)	
Male cares for grandchildren	0.180*	0.116	0.118	0.161+	0.227	0.057	0.388
	(1.99)	(1.27)	(1.29)	(1.68)	(1.55)	(0.48)	
Female cares for grandchildren	-0.056	-0.129	-0.143	-0.163+	-0.122	-0.159	0.843
	(0.64)	(1.45)	(1.62)	(1.76)	(0.88)	(1.35)	
Only male response available	0.537**	0.466**	0.419**	0.476**	0.718**	0.267+	0.109
	(4.28)	(3.69)	(3.30)	(3.68)	(3.27)	(1.71)	
Only female response available	-0.313*	-0.407**	-0.433**	-0.408**	-0.795**	-0.252	0.113
	(2.45)	(3.18)	(3.37)	(3.07)	(3.27)	(1.61)	
Country w/ more equal div. of labor[e]		0.804**	0.619**	0.287**			
		(13.24)	(7.38)	(3.12)			
Proportion of female MPs			0.020**		0.037**	0.015**	0.002
			(6.50)		(6.92)	(3.38)	
Female-male wage ratio			-0.004		0.039**	-0.005	0.000
			(1.31)		(3.34)	(1.23)	
GEM				3.449**			
				(8.41)			
Pseudo-R^2	0.039	0.051	0.054	0.060	0.046	0.033	
N	4,391	4,391	4,391	4,037	1,877	2,514	

[a] *Model 4* does not include France, since GEM is not available. *Model 5* is estimated for CH, I, A, E, and GR. *Model 6* is estimated for F, NL, S, D, and DK. [b] *Reference category:* household income, 3rd quintile. [c] *Reference category:* male income = female income. [d] *Reference category:* males (females, respectively) who are neither employed, nor retired. [e] The binary variable equals 1, if the respondent lives in F, NL, S, D, or DK, 0 otherwise. [f] Absolute value of z statistics in parentheses; + significant at 10%; * significant at 5%; ** significant at 1%. – Source: SHARE 2004 (Release 1), authors' calculations.

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