

# Gender Equity and Subjective experiences of (un)paid labour: New solutions to low fertility?

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# Based on previous papers

Mills & Begall 'Sex Preferences for Children of Parents: Intentions and Behaviour across Europe'

Mills, Mencarini, Tanturri, Begall 'Gender equity and fertility intentions in Italy and the Netherlands'

# Research Problem

- low fertility in many industrialized countries
- failure of classic (economic) theories to explain
- **focus of policies generally only on government**
- **gender equity theorized (e.g., McDonald) but rarely examined empirically**

When focus only on NUMBER of (un)paid hours, educational level of women, etc. - **MISS:**

- **mechanisms** linking (un)paid work and fertility
- importance **individual autonomy/control in workplace**
- importance of **subjective experience & proportion of housework**
- importance of societal **gender equity**

# Research Question

What is the impact of:

- 1) the **amount** of women's paid and unpaid household labour + level of education,
- 2) subjective **experiences** of control/stressfulness in paid labour and housework, and,
- 3) level of **gender equity** in a society on a women's **fertility intentions** in Europe?

# Data & Methods

## Data

- European Social Survey (ESS), wave 2, 2004/5, 25 European countries, module on family work & well-being
- Women 40 and under in partnership
- Global Gender Gap macro-indicator
- [OECD data – level female part-time work]

## Methods:

- Single-level and multilevel logistic regression models of fertility intentions

# Central Variables

**Dependent variable:** Fertility intentions child within next 3 years(dichotomized)

**Standard variables:**

- Age, age2, educational level respondent + partner, number of previous children

**Gender equity measurement:**

- [Global Gender Gap Index](#) – macro-variable

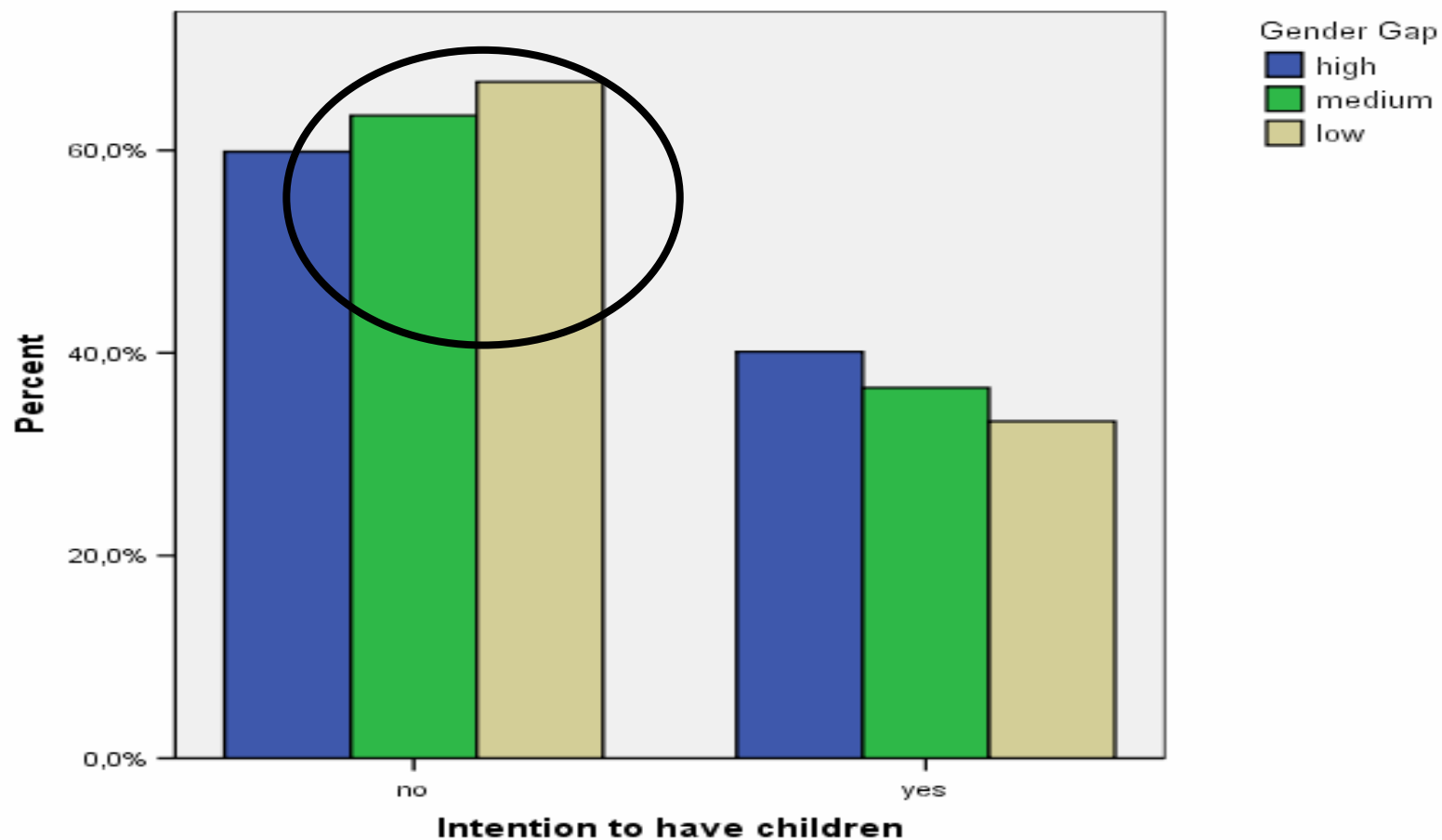
**Household labour variables:**

- hours of household work
- [share of household work](#) (<75%; >75%),
- [housework stressful](#) (strongly agree/agree, neutral, strongly disagree/disagree)

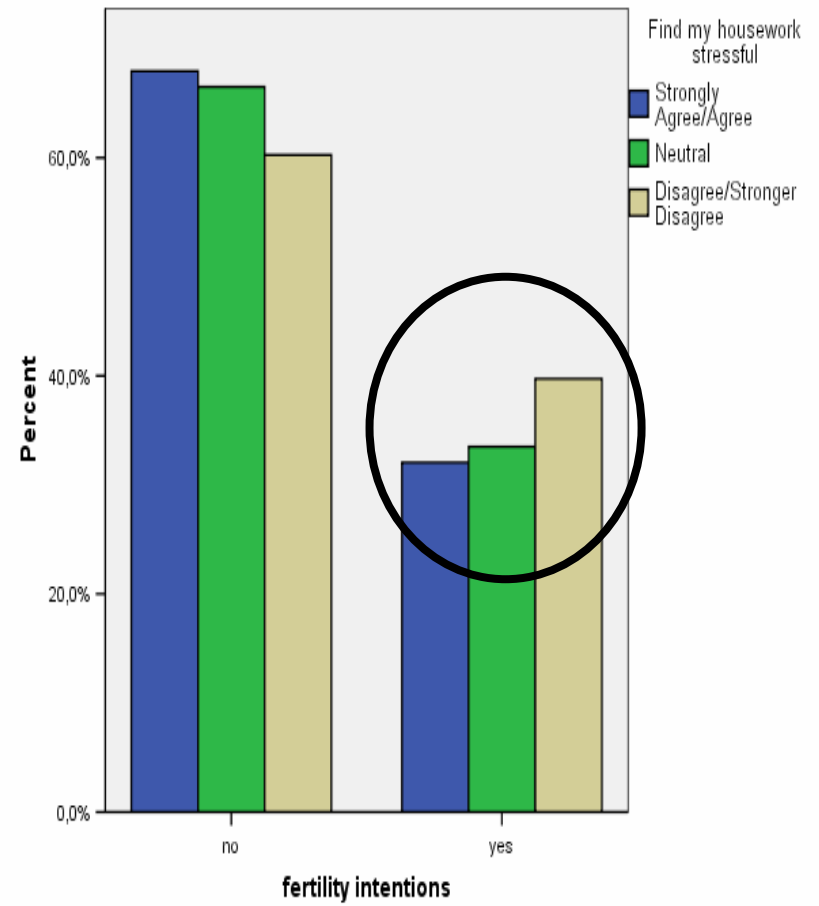
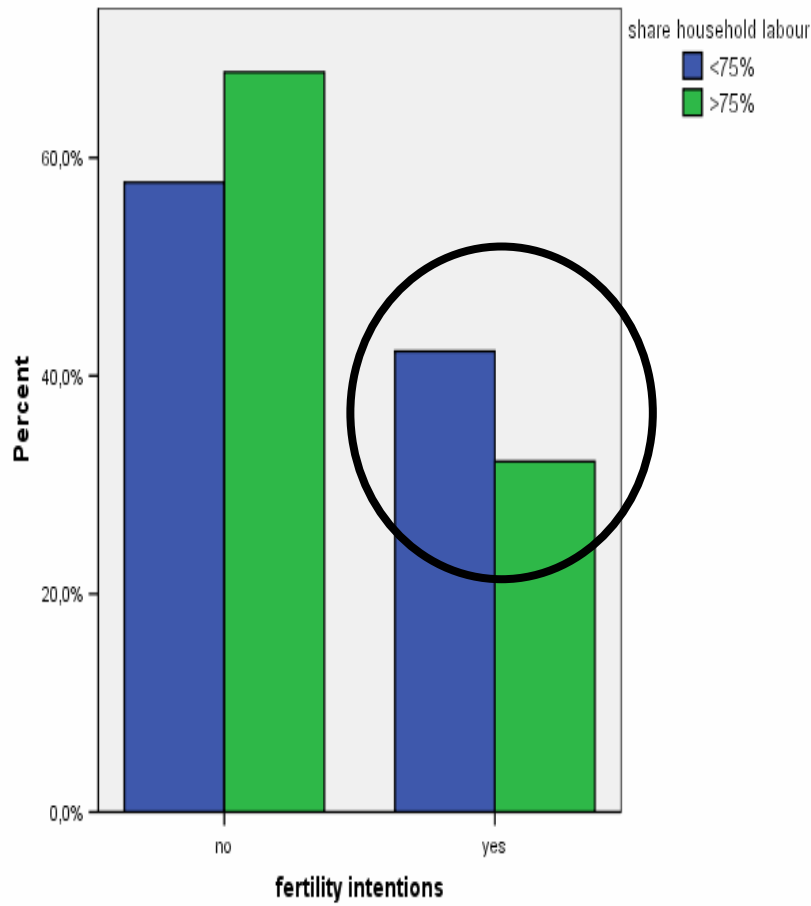
**Paid labour variables:**

- work hours, [control over work & policy](#) (combined variables, cronbach's alpha .79)
  - Allowed to decide how daily work is organised
  - Allowed to influence policy decisions about activities of organisation
  - Allowed to choose/change pace of work


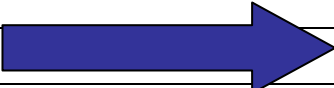
# Impact Gender Equity on Fertility Intentions



# Impact division household labour and subjective stressful experience of housework

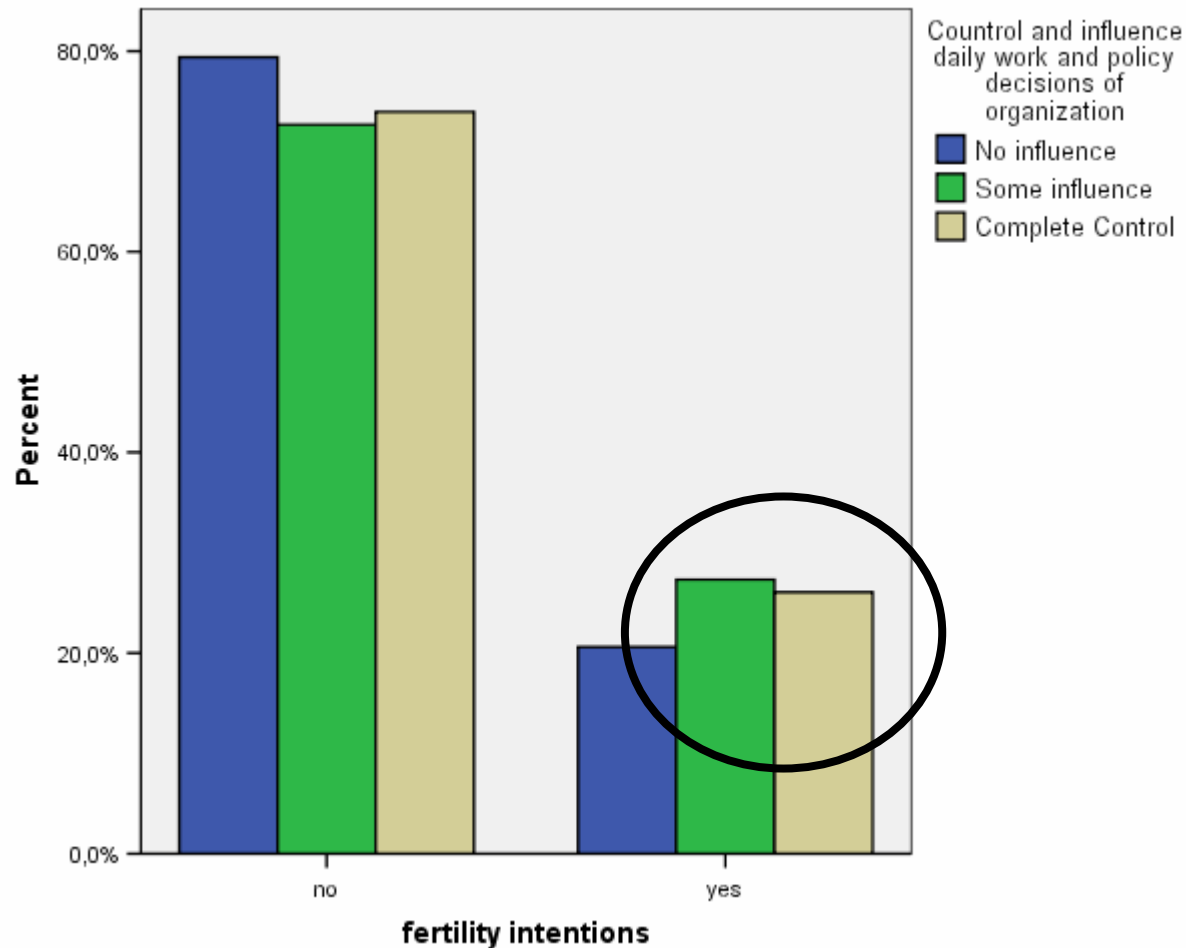


# Gender equality and subjective experience of housework matters

Variables	Exp(B) Model 1	Exp(B) Model 2
Gender gap (ref=low)		
High equality 	1.554***	1.465***
Medium equality	1.151	1.093
Hours household work by respondent	0.998	0.999
Share household work by respondent (ref=<75%)		
>75% household work	0.982	0.979
Housework stressful (ref=strongly agree/agree)		
Neutral		1.166
Strongly disagree/disagree 		1.251*

Controlling for: age, agesq, number of children, educational level woman + partner, work hours, control over work & policy

# Impact autonomy in daily work & organization policy



# Control over work and organizational policy raises fertility intentions

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Exp(B) Model 1</b>	<b>Exp(B) Model 2</b>
<b>Work hours (ref=30+)</b>		
Not working	1.357	1.431
1-20 hours	0.774	0.801
21-30 hours	1.102	1.116
<b>Control over work &amp; policy (ref=no influence)</b>		
Some influence		1.363**
Complete control		1.543***

Controlling for: age, agesq, number of children, educational level woman + partner, hours of household work, share of household work, gender gap, housework stressful

# Multilevel model & welfare regime comparisons

Next stage of research:

Multilevel logistic regression model: level 2 variance shows moderate variance by country

Do fertility intentions vary by welfare regimes?

# Fertility intentions by welfare regime

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Exp(B)</b>
Welfare regimes (ref=social-democratic)	
Southern	0.966
Liberal	2.389***
Conservative	0.808
Post-socialist	0.669***

Controlling for: age, agesq, number of children, educational level woman + partner, work hours, control over work & policy, hours of household work, share of household work, gender gap, housework stressful

# Conclusion:

## What raises fertility intentions?

- Higher levels of societal **gender equity**
  - **Welfare regime/cross-national** differences
- BUT ALSO MESO-LEVEL POLICY:**
- Not only the unequal division of household labour, but **subjective attitudes towards housework**
  - Not overall work hours of women, but their:
    - **Feeling of control** over the organization of their daily work
    - Feeling that they **influence policy decisions** within organizations