

Cross-national trends in housework and childcare: gender inequality and men's changing contributions

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Setting the scene

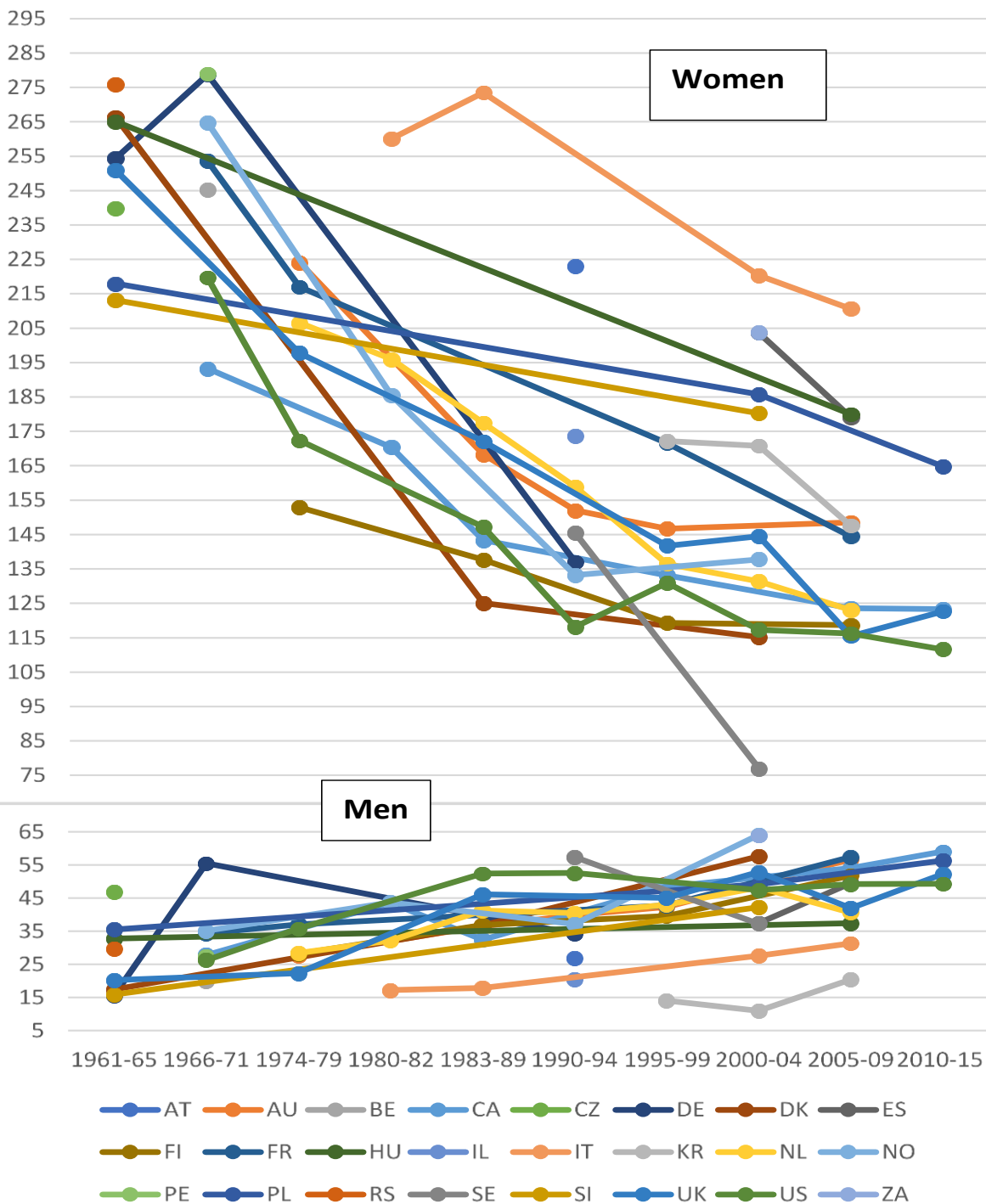
- Gender inequalities is part of the wider study of inequalities
- It intersects with other inequalities, such as class and race
- Gender differences in time use impact work-life balance for both women and men

The gender division of housework

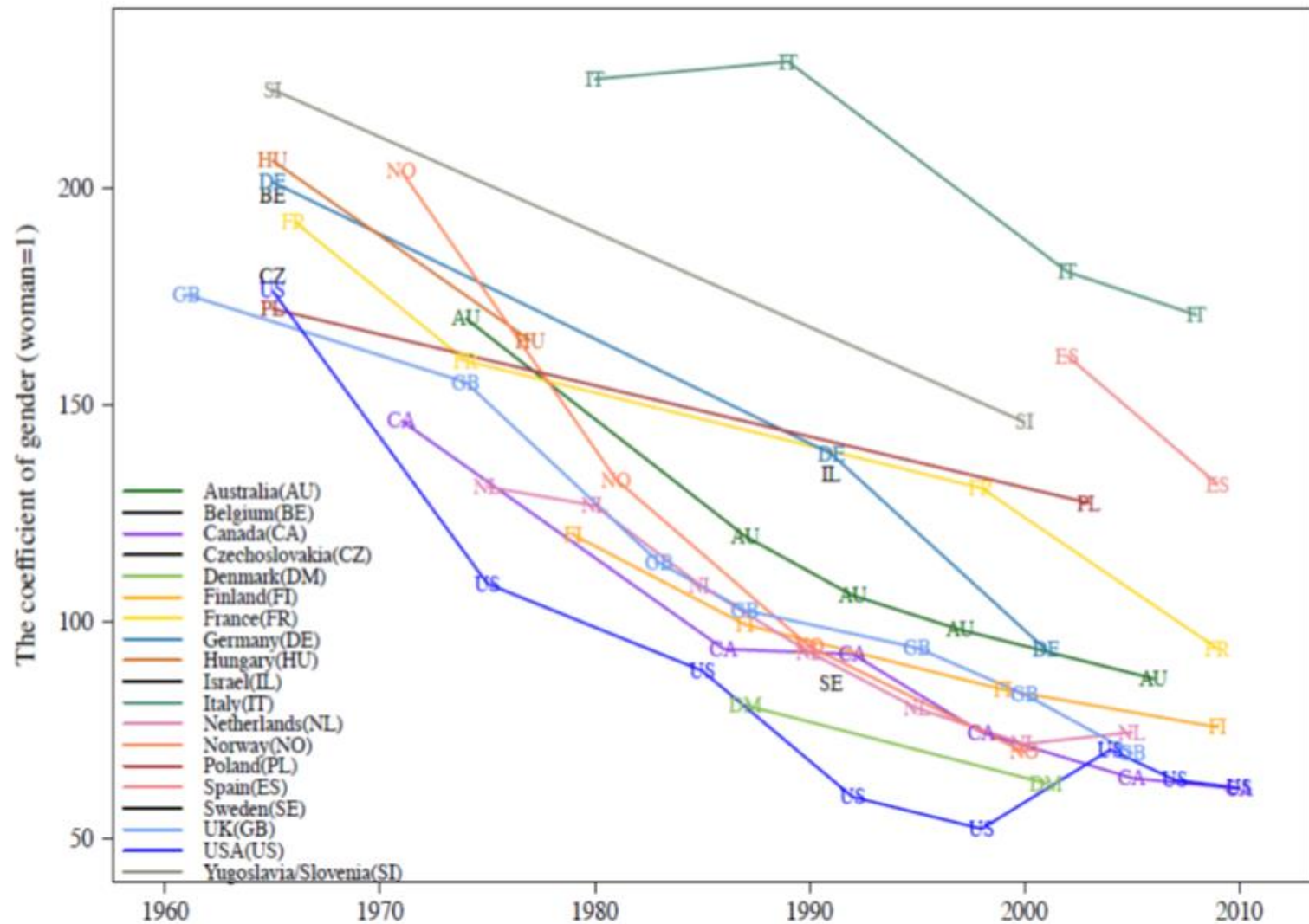
- Housework as a window into power relations within couples

Gender convergence over time

**Average minutes
per day in core
domestic work
from the 1960s to
the 2010s for 24
countries:
populations aged
20-59. Data: MTUS**

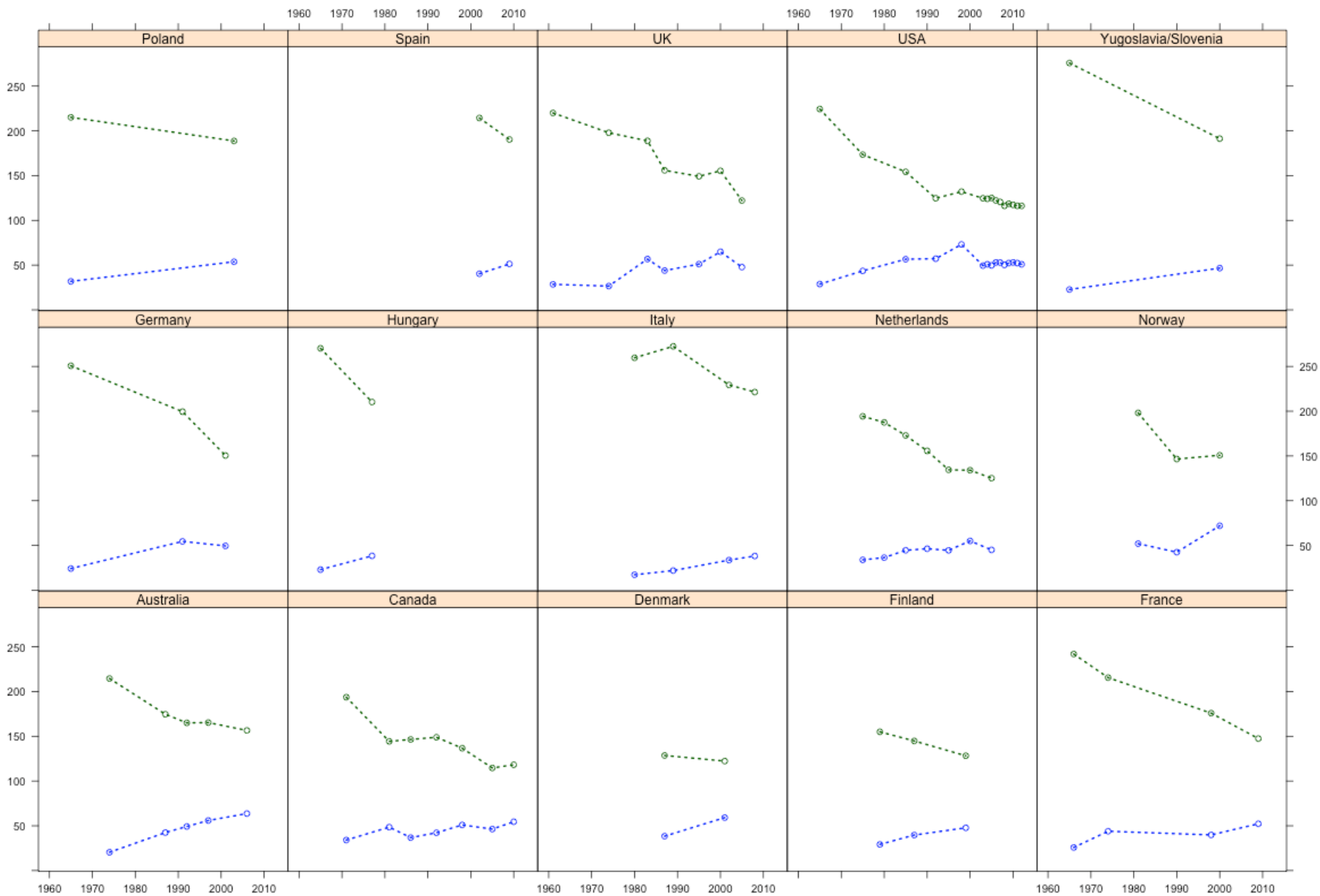


The gender gap in housework



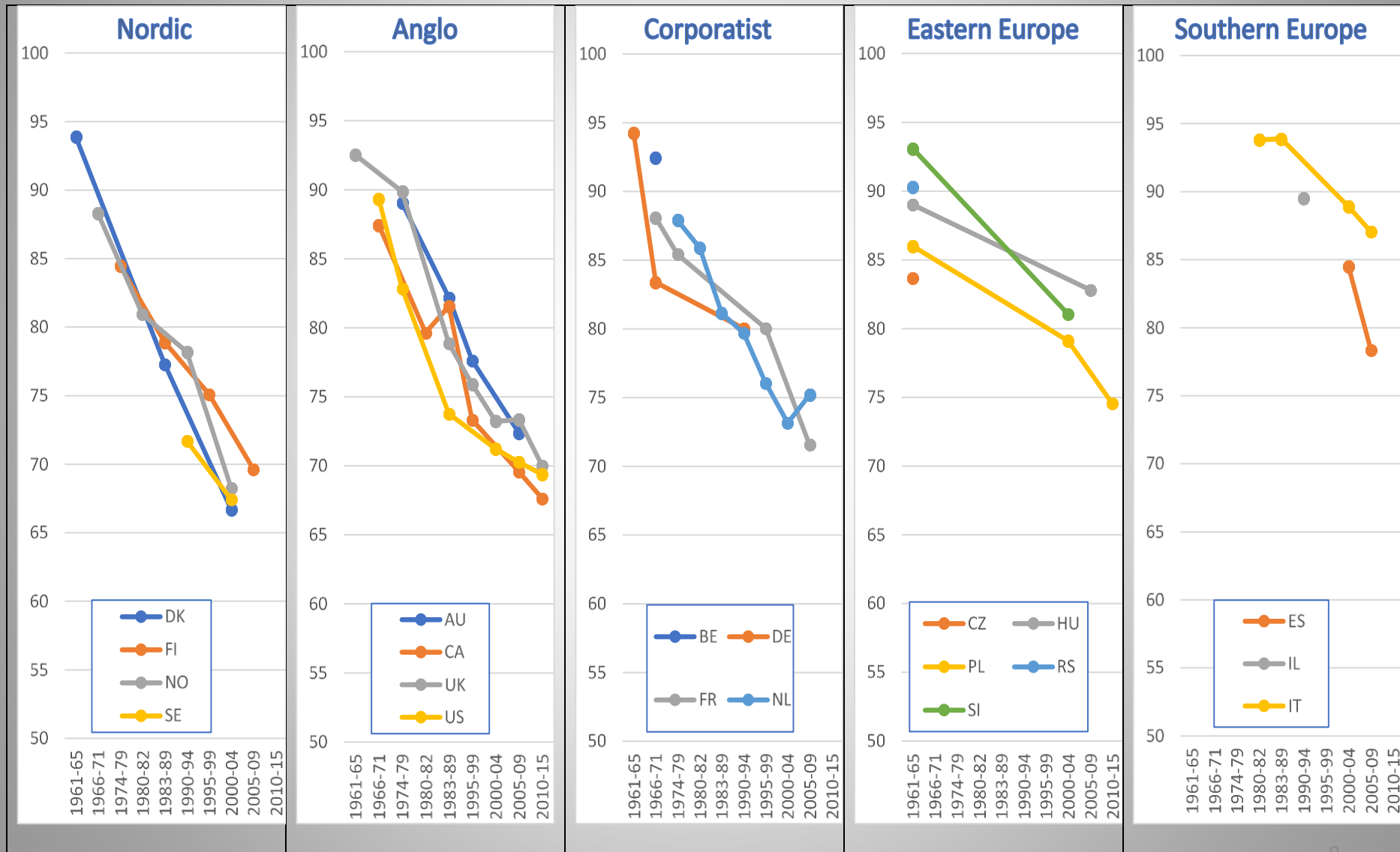
E. Altintas and O. Sullivan 2016. '50 years of change updated: Cross-national gender convergence in housework.' *Demographic Research* 35: 455-470

Food clean for all adults by country



Countries with less than 2 data points are excluded

Proportion of core domestic work done by women across time and regime type: MTUS, population age 20-59



Why are men's contributions important?

For children: Fathers' time investment has a positive effect on children's well-being (Amato & Gilbert 1999; Lamb 2010; Bornstein 2002)

For mothers: Men's involvement in domestic labour allows mothers to:

- Sustain their employment trajectories (Seiz 2014; Langer 2015)
- Combine childrearing and employment (McDonald 2000; Mills 2000)

For work-life balance for both women and men

- Widespread agreement that men, and fathers in particular, are contributing more over time

(Bianchi et al., 2000, 2006; Bittman, 2000; Gauthier, Smeeding & Furstenberg, 2004; Gershuny, 2000; Kan, Gershuny & Sullivan 2011; Sandberg & Hofferth, 2005; Sayer, 2005)

- The 'two halves' of the gender revolution (Goldscheider, Bernhardt and Lappegard, 2015):
 - First half (C20) saw rise in women's employment and engagement in the public sphere
 - Second half (in progress) involves move towards men's engagement in the domestic sphere.....

Father's contributions to domestic chores and child care

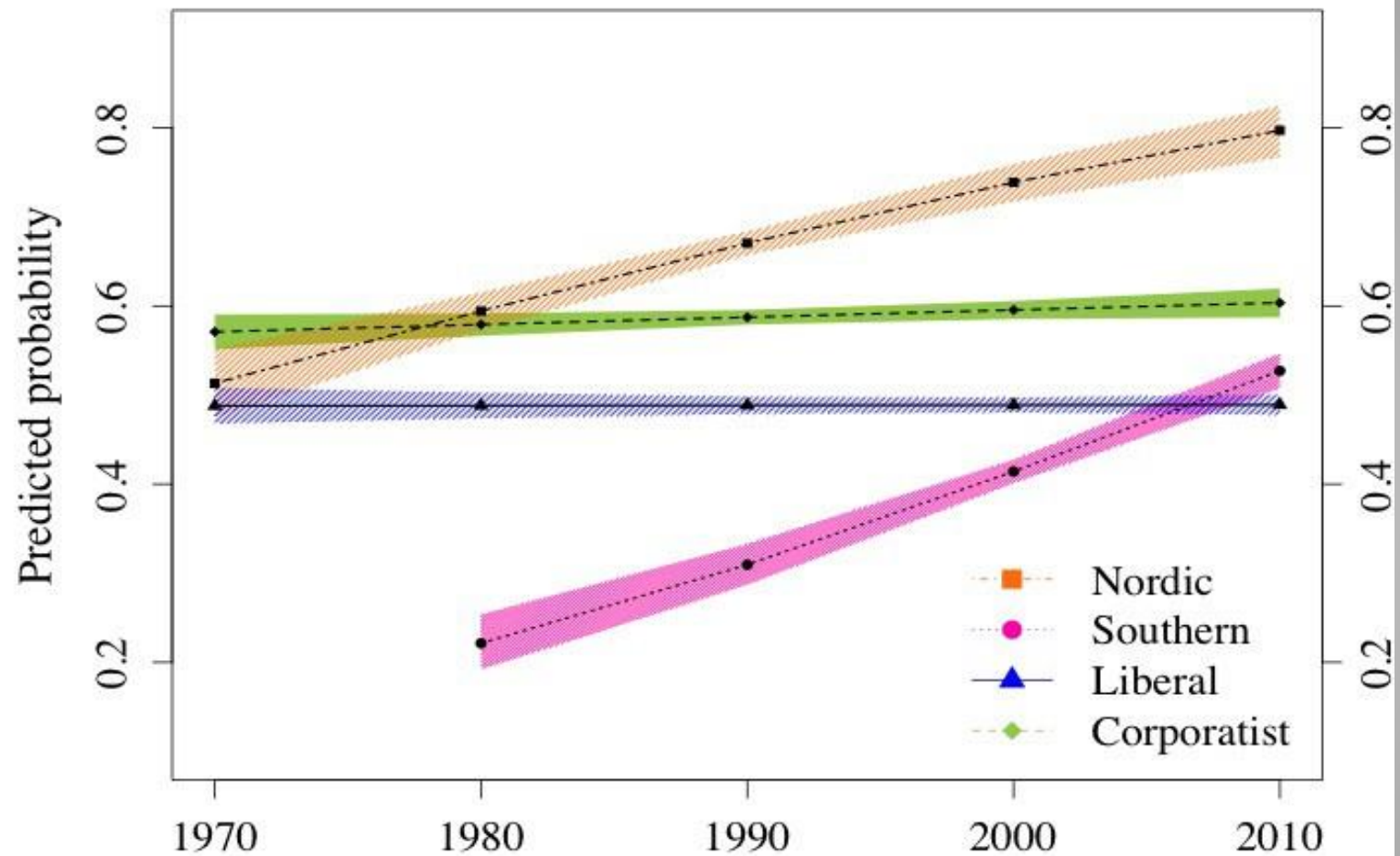
We:

- sampled fathers aged 20-49 with children aged under 5 in the household
- Distinguished 'involved' fathers

E. Altintas and O. Sullivan (2017). *Social Politics*.

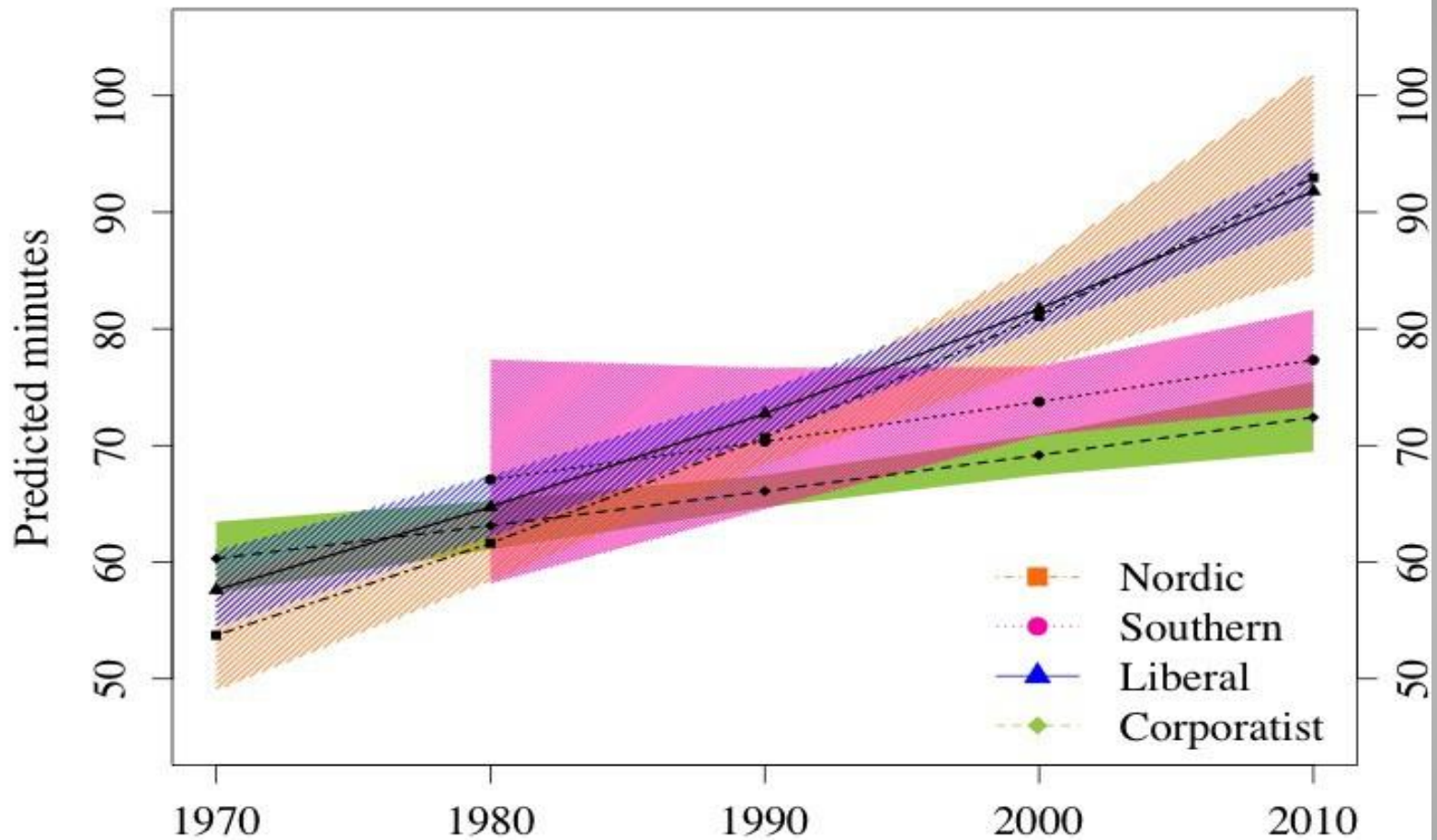
'Trends in fathers' contribution to housework and childcare under different welfare policy regimes'.

Predictions: Housework



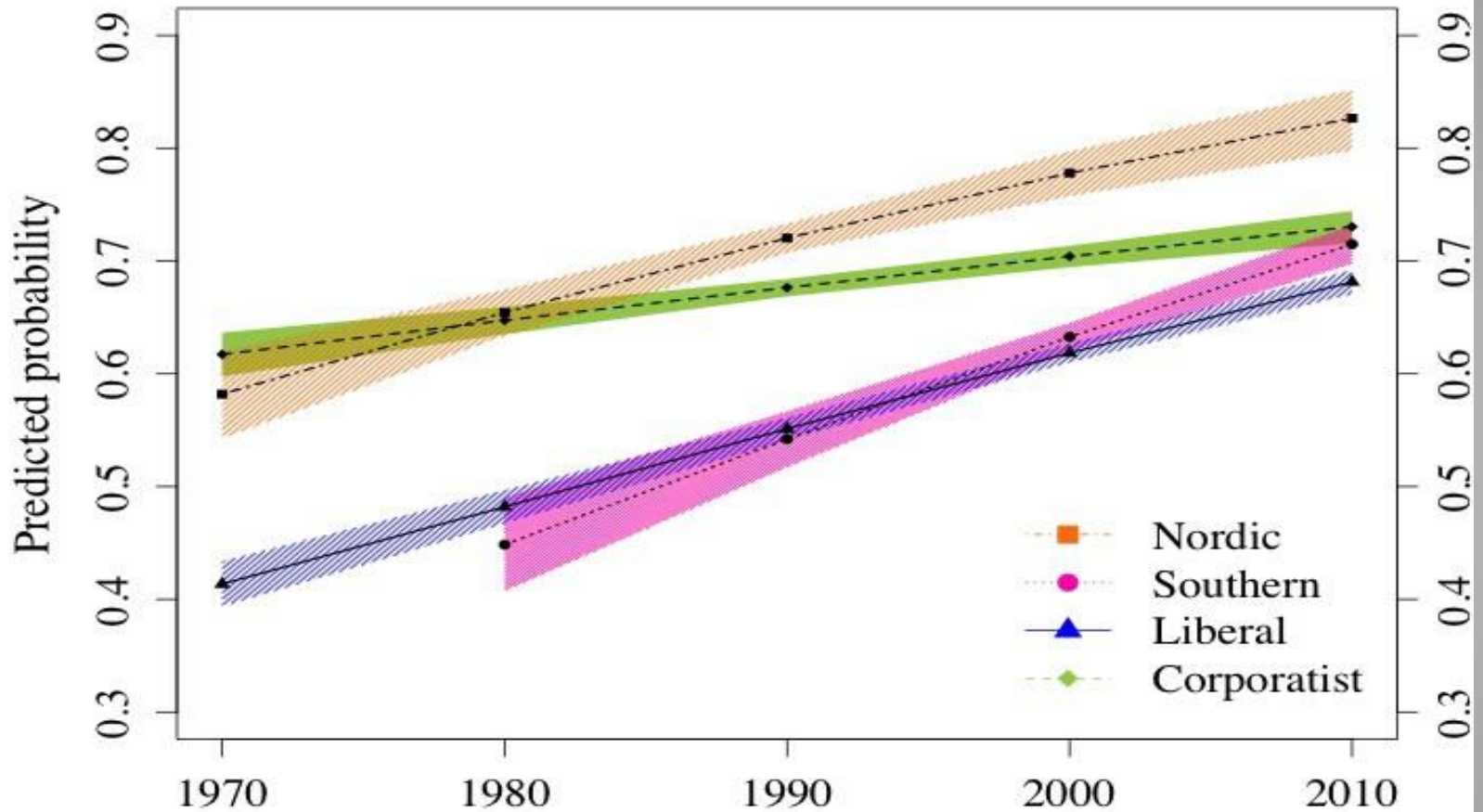
Predicted probability of reporting 15+ minutes of housework

Predictions: Housework



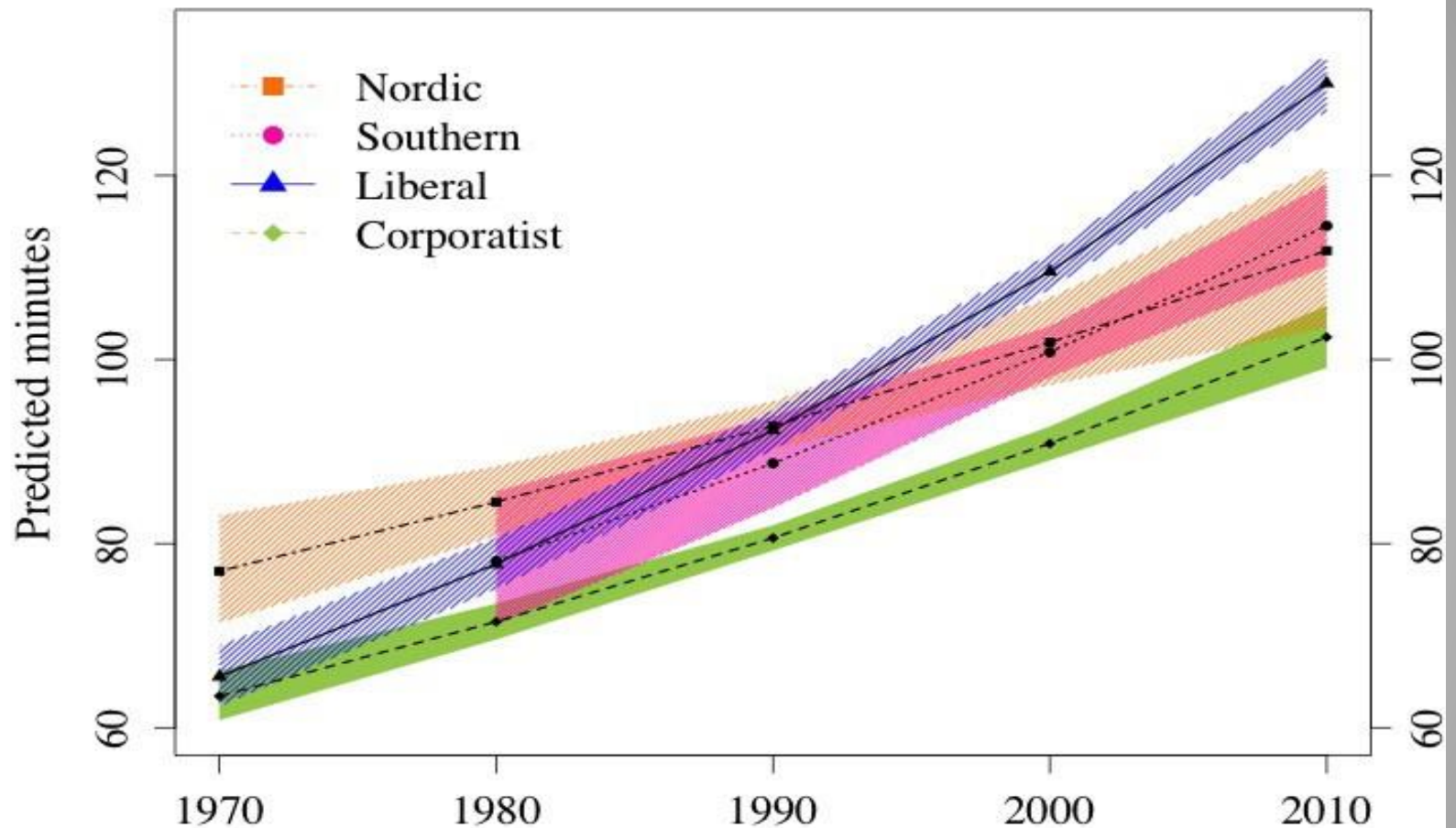
Predicted minutes in housework (*involved fathers*)

Predictions: Childcare



Predicted probability of reporting 15+ minutes of childcare

Predictions: Childcare



Predicted minutes in childcare: *involved* fathers

- Social policies; the gender division of family time reflects differences in policy structures (Cooke & Baxter 2010; Davies & Greenstein 2004; Fuwa 2004; Fuwa & Cohen 2007; Hook 2006, 2010; Knud & Waerness 2007; Treas & Drobnic 2010).
- As these policy structures advance (through introduction of more parental leave – particularly targeted paternity leave) fathers begin to contribute more

- Gender ideology (countries with more gender-egalitarian attitudes have a more equal gender division of labour)
 - here the increase in fathers' contributions is about the *social diffusion* of more egalitarian norms and behaviour (particularly across educational levels), from more traditional to more egalitarian gender relations and attitudes
 - (Braun & Scott 2009; Geist and Cohen 2011; Esping-Andersen & Billari 2015)

Looking to the future

- Firstly, there is the ongoing increase cross-nationally in the time that fathers are spending with their children.
- - in large part voluntary.....

(e.g.

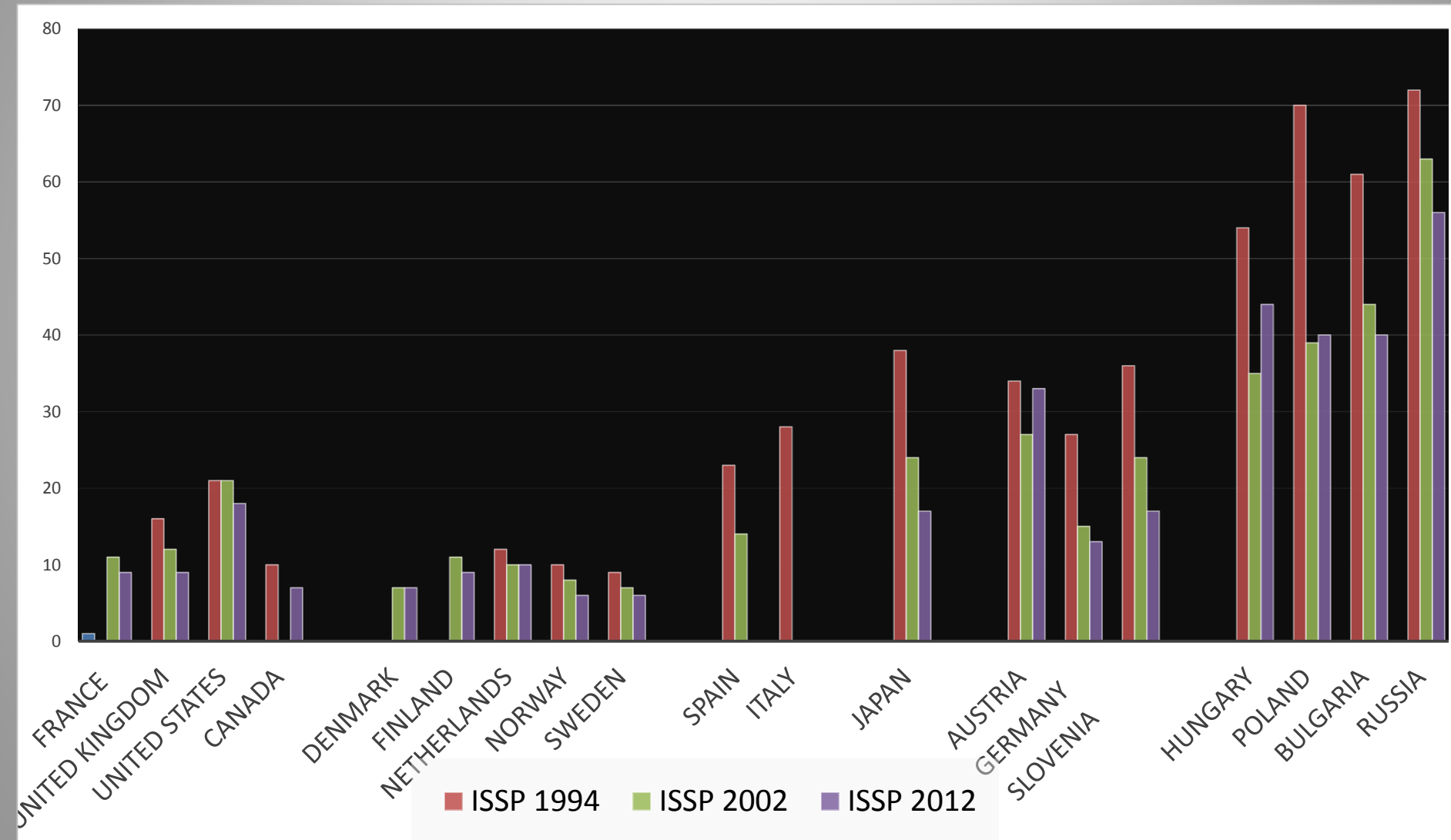
2018 Deloitte Millennial Survey: www.deloitte.com/MillennialSurvey.

2017 Working Families and Bright Horizons. Modern Families Index.
<https://www.workingfamilies.org.uk/news/2017-mfi/>)

- Secondly, and relatedly, the slow but positive changes in attitudes about work-family gender equality, particularly among younger cohorts of men.
- **E.g.** Braun, M., & Scott, J. In M. Haller, R. Jowell, & T. W. Smith (Eds.), *The International Social Survey Programme, 1984–2009: Charting the Globe* pp. 358–377. (Routledge, 2009).

“A man’s job is to earn money; a woman’s job is to look after the home and family.”

% men aged 20-49 agreeing: ISSP 1994, 2002, 2012

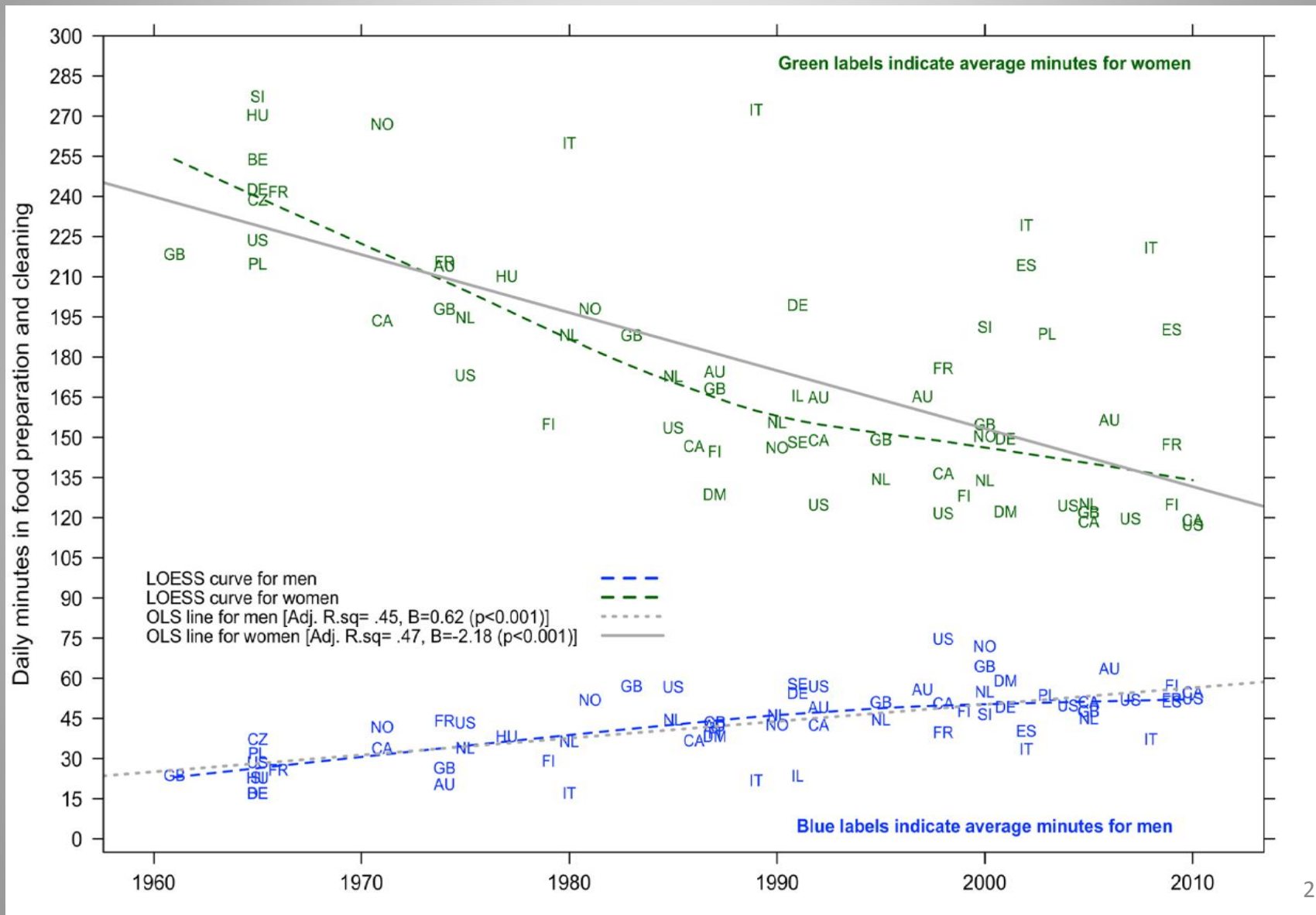


- Finally, the experience of Nordic countries may serve as a model. There, the trend in the gender division of housework and care shows signs of continuing in the direction of greater gender equality.
- Pailhé, A., Solaz, A., & Stanfors, M. Paper prepared for the workshop “Caregiving responsibilities across the life course: An international perspective”. Lund May 31 – June 1 (2017).

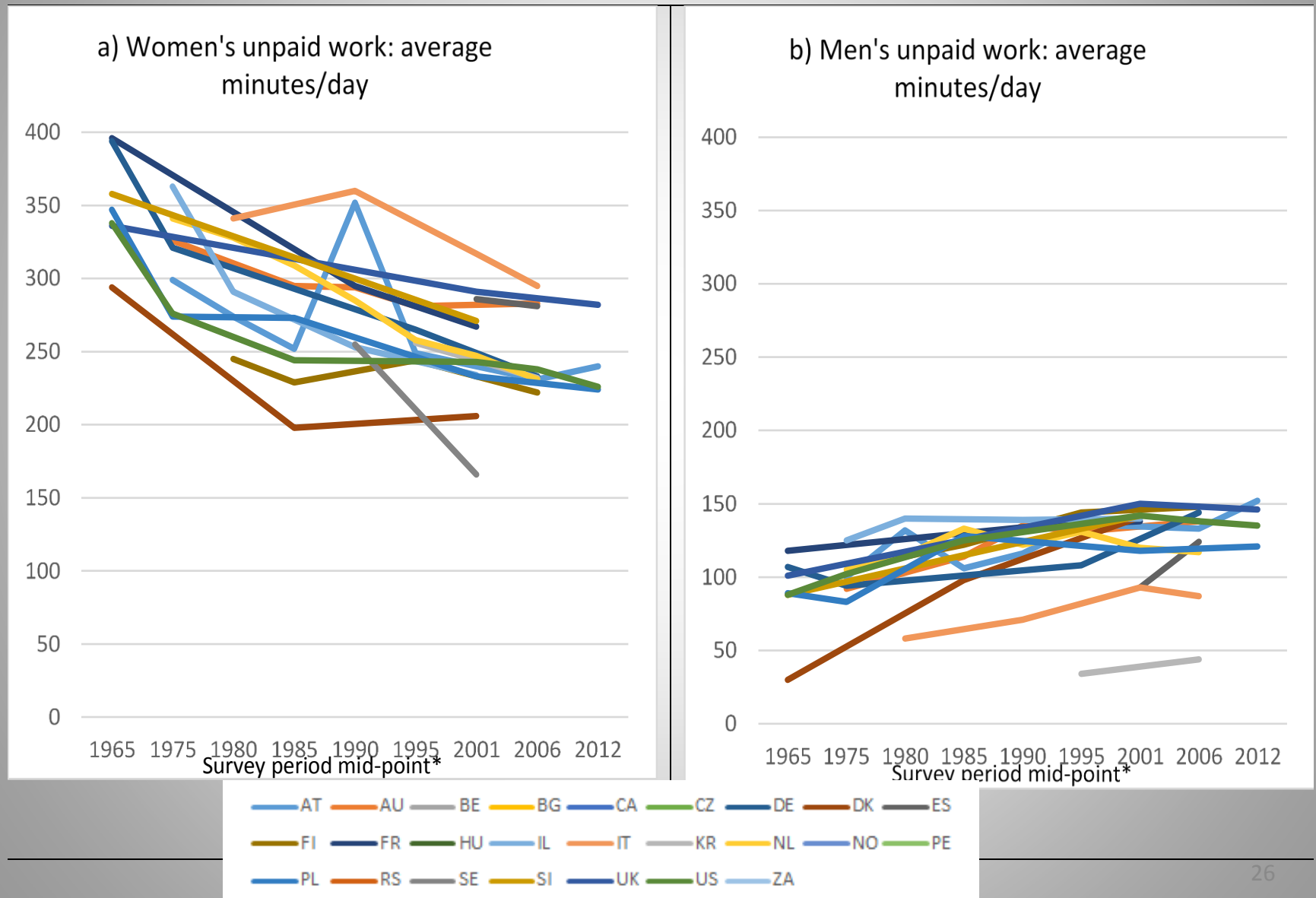


Thank you

Average minutes in core housework: Women and men aged 18+ (MTUS 1961-2011)



Average minutes per day in unpaid work and care from the 1960s to the 2010s for 25 countries: populations aged 20-59. Data: MTUS

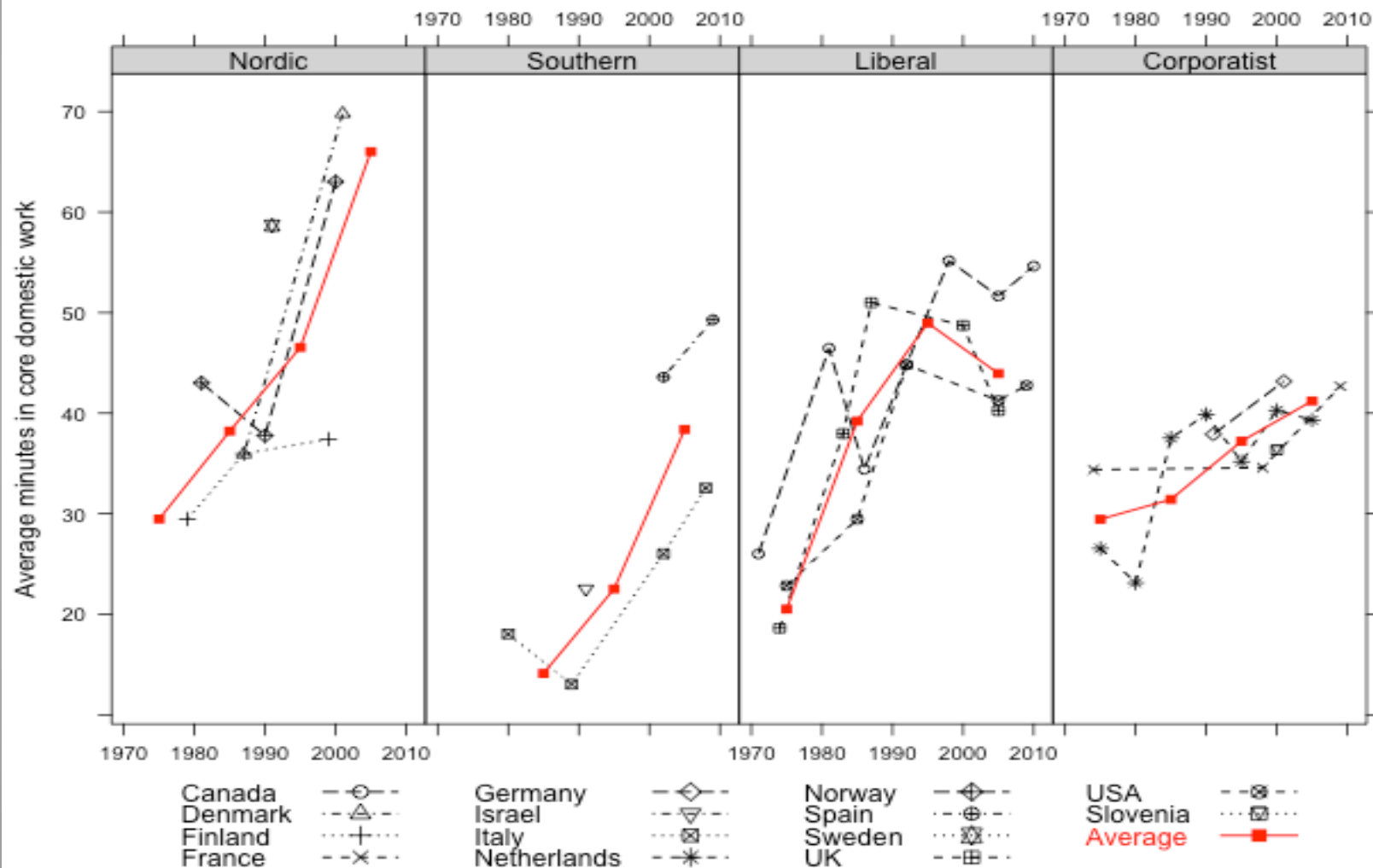


Survey years by country and regime type

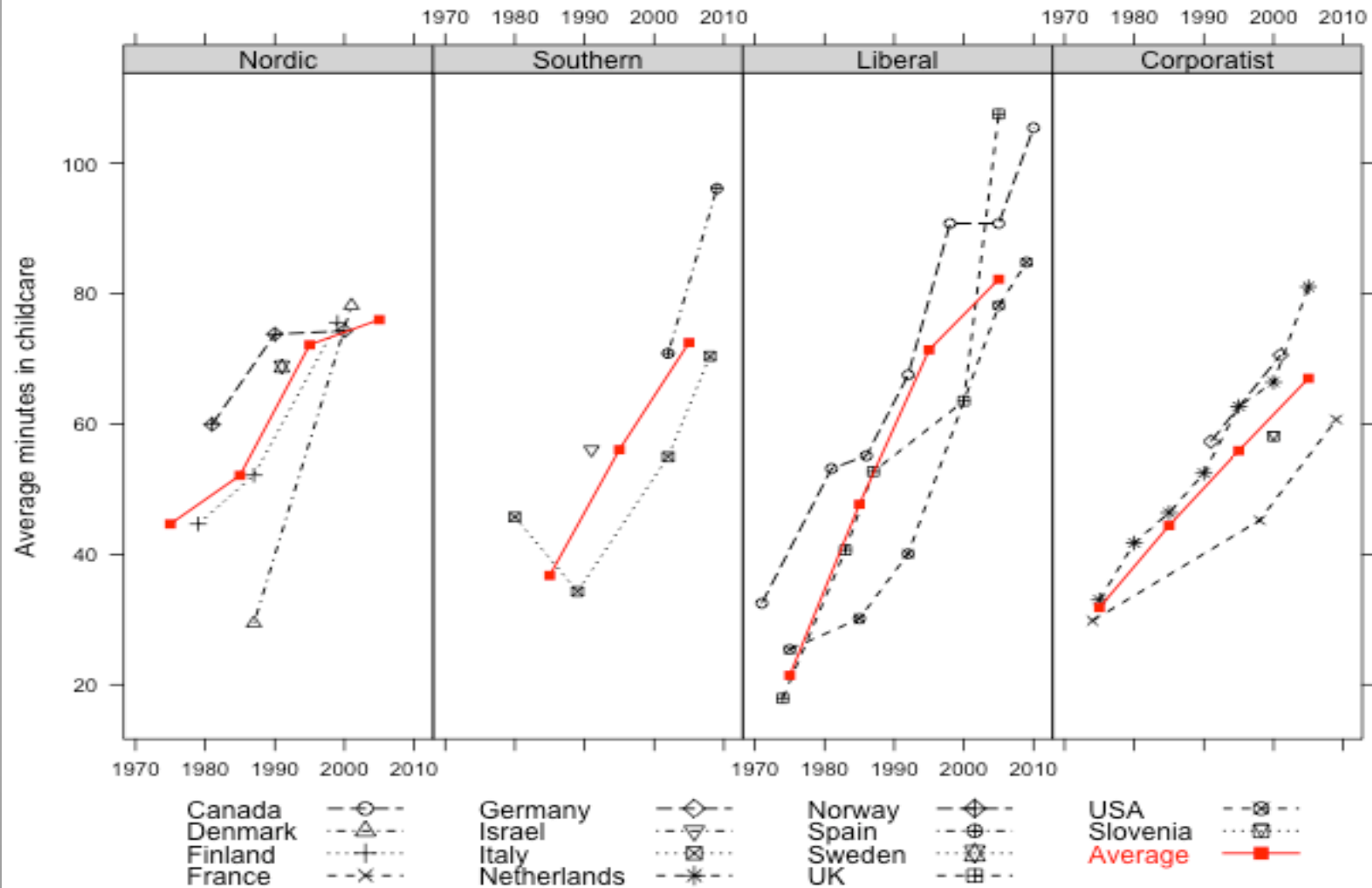
Countries	Survey years	Regime
Canada	1971 ^a , 1981 ^a , 1986 ^a , 1992 ^a , 1998 ^a , 2005 ^a , 2010 ^a	Liberal
UK	1974 ^e , 1983 ^d , 1987 ^c , 2000 ^c , 2005 ^c	Liberal
USA	1975 ^a , 1985 ^a , 1992 ^a , 2005 ^a , 2009 ^a	Liberal
Denmark	1987 ^c , 2001 ^d	Nordic
Finland	1979 ^c , 1987 ^c , 1999 ^c	Nordic
Norway	1981 ^d , 1990 ^d , 2000 ^d	Nordic
Sweden	1991 ^c	Nordic
Spain	2002 ^b , 2009 ^c	Southern
Israel	1991 ^{d,e}	Southern
Italy	1989 ^a , 2002 ^a , 2008 ^a	Southern
France	1974 ^b , 1998 ^c , 2009 ^c	Corporatist
Germany	1991 ^b , 2001 ^c	Corporatist
Netherlands	1975 ^d , 1980 ^d , 1985 ^d , 1990 ^d , 1995 ^d , 2000 ^d , 2005 ^d	Corporatist
Slovenia	2000 ^b	Corporatist

a 1-minute diary; b 5-minute diary; c 10-minute diary; d 15-minute diary; e 20-minute diary

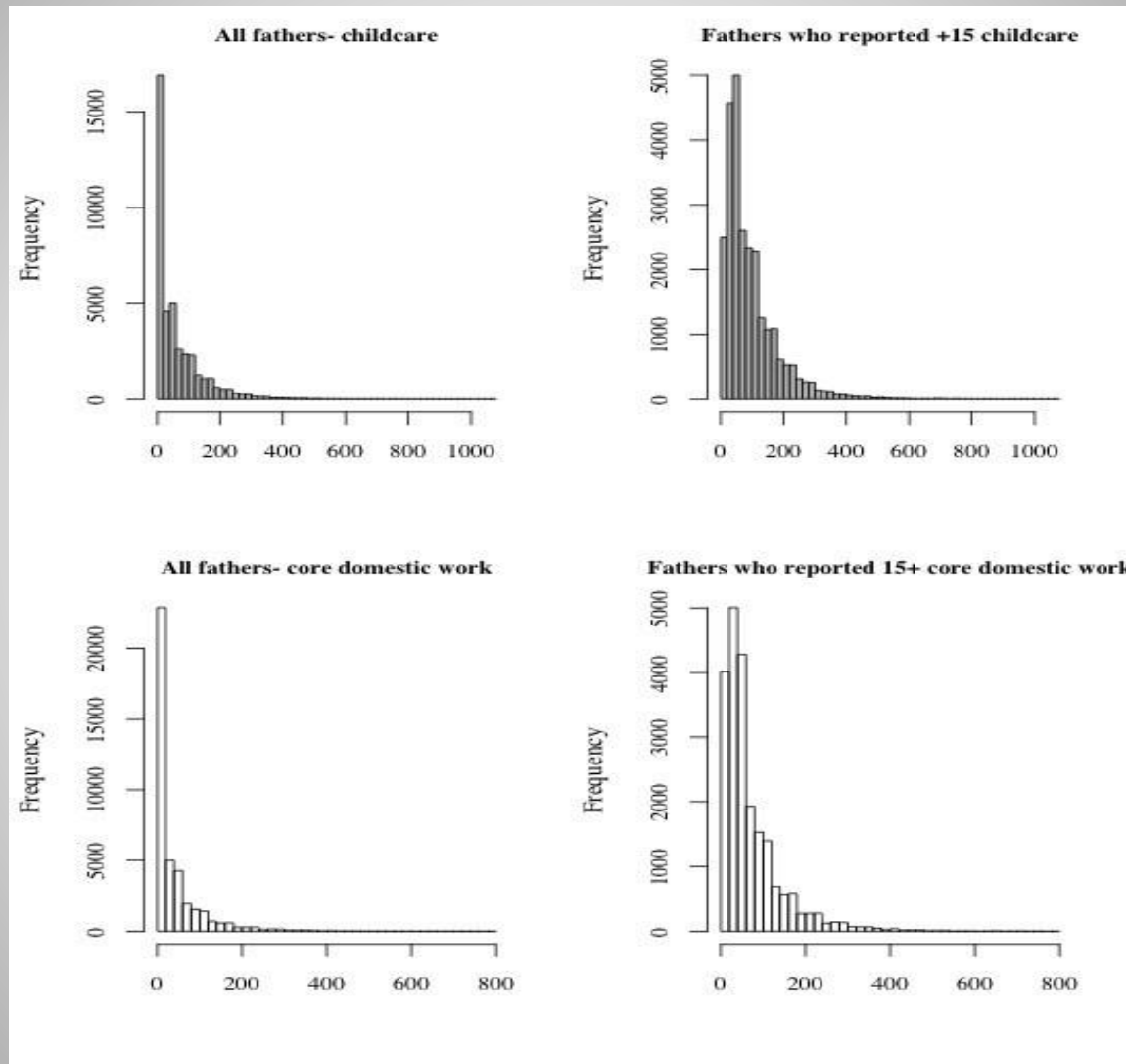
Average minutes in core domestic work: all fathers aged 20-49



Average minutes in child care: all fathers aged 20-49



Distribution of the dependent variables



1. Trends by Educational level

- Educational level has long been considered one of the most important factors influencing men's participation in domestic labour: more highly educated husbands do more housework and, particularly, child care

(decade reviews: Coltrane 2000; Bianchi & Milkie 2010; Bianchi et al 2012; Lachance-Grzela and Bouchard 2010)

Focus here on comparative cross-national trends in fathers' time in domestic chores and child care over the same 50-year period up to end of first decade of C21.

- Data: Multinational Time Use Study (MTUS): 14 countries between 1970-2010. N=40514 (diary days)
- Sample: Married/ cohabiting 20-49 year old men with one child under 5 living in the household

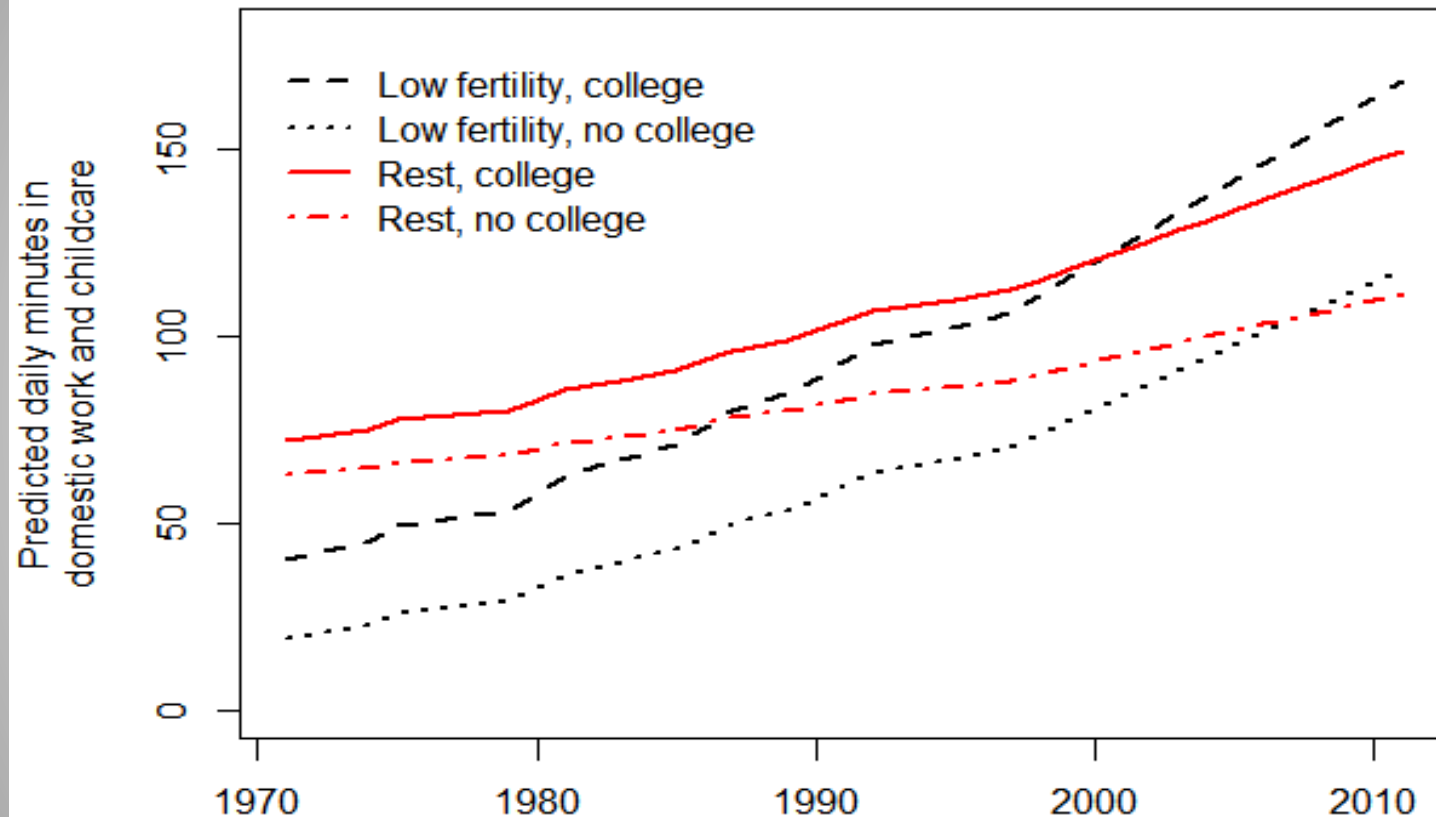
Method:

- Dependent variable = fathers' minutes in core domestic work + child care
- OLS regressions including interaction effects between low fertility country and time; college degree and time; college degree and low fertility country
- Control variables: age, age squared, N of children; employment status, marital status and day of week

Survey periods and number of diary days; fathers aged 20-49 with at least one child aged under 5: MTUS

	1970-5	1976-84	1985-9	1990-4	1995-9	2000-4	2005-11
Canada	236	212	647	534	496		
France	521				800		1507
UK	1214	679	415			874	
USA	572		137			2229	5826
Denmark			230				
N'lands	868	1302	1764	1575	1701	567	728
Norway		562		476		490	
Finland		814	846		444		
Sweden				694			
Italy			837			928	
Germany				1988		1322	
Slovenia						545	
Spain/ Basque				302	327	1994	242

Predicted daily minutes* in core domestic work and childcare by educational level and country fertility status

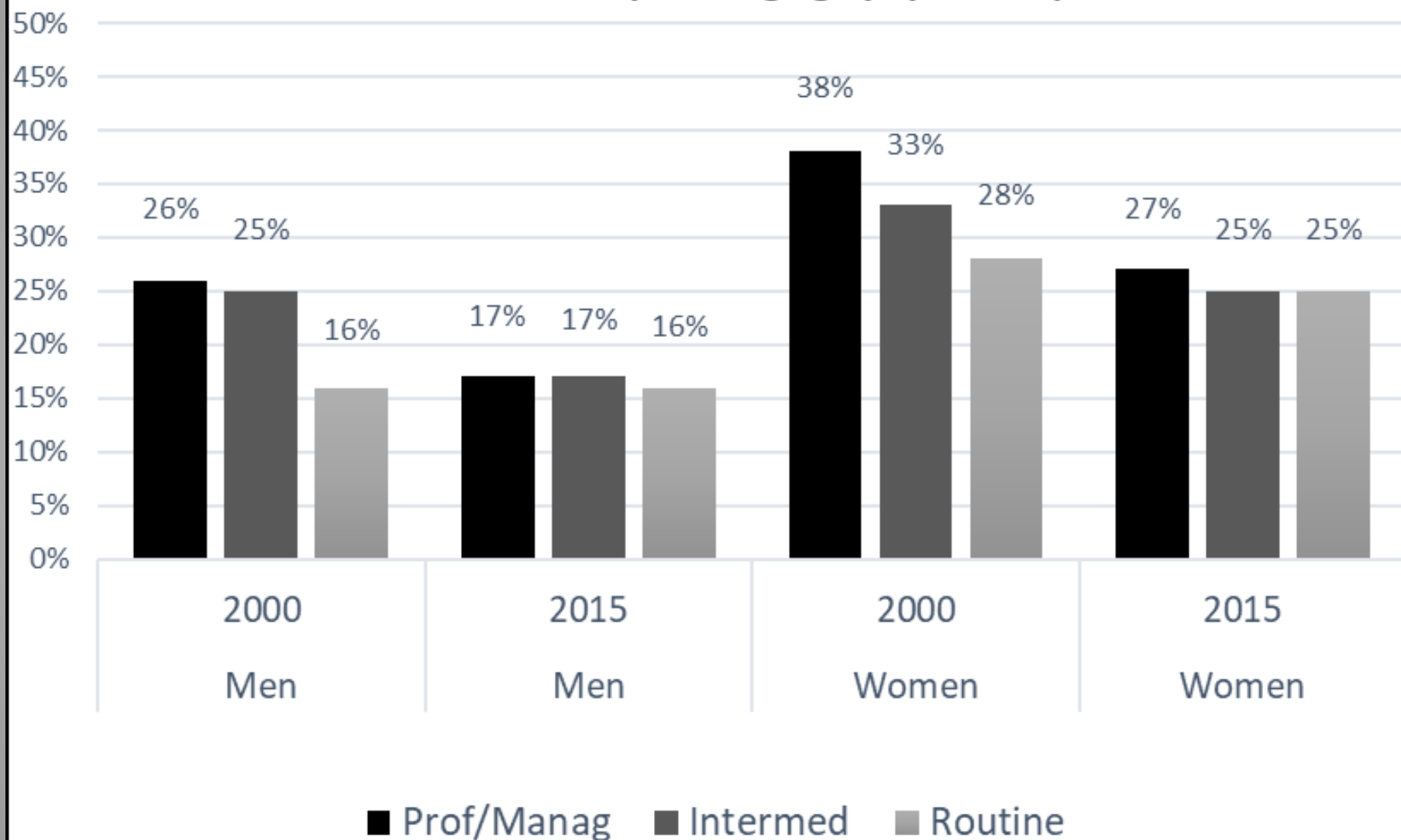


*The figure shows predicted minutes in the activity for a thirty-four year old employed and married father with two children on an average day. These values represent the average categories of age, employment status, marital status and number of children.

Summary

- There were significant recent increases in the contributions of younger, more highly educated fathers in those very low fertility countries which are now experiencing upturns in fertility.
- The pace of these increases exceeded that found in the comparison group of other industrialized countries: a 'catch-up' effect.

Percentage feeling 'always rushed' by SEC and gender: UK 2000 and 2015 TUS (working age population)



- **Policy measures:** implementation of measures in support of genuine work–family flexibility (including the reduction of working hours).
- This would permit couples to stagger their hours of paid work in order to care for their children or other dependents, reducing the need for one parent – usually the woman - to stay home or reduce their employment hours.
- There is evidence that shorter, more flexible working practices and greater diversity are what working millennials want to see in their workplaces.
- 2018 Deloitte Millennial Survey: www.deloitte.com/MillennialSurvey.
(Findings are based on the views of more than 10,000 millennials questioned across 36 countries).

- The introduction of high-quality, available and affordable early childcare facilities. Policies should be targeted at enabling an easier return to employment for both partners, on a gender-level playing field, well before their children reach school age.
- In countries where quality care is both available and affordable, leaving young children in these facilities is the norm. In countries where they are not, there is inevitably pressure on one parent – in practice almost always the woman - either to remain at home herself over a period of several years, or to return to limited part-time work, or to rely on assistance from family members (usually other women).

- The establishment of meaningful periods of take-it-or-leave-it paternity leave.
- In countries where dedicated father leave was introduced – most notably in Iceland, take-up of the full 3 months by fathers is as high as 65%.
- Men who stay home to care for children not only spend more time in childcare, they also do more housework.
- The experience of the Nordic countries shows that, once fathers are visible, out and about with prams and pushchairs in the playgrounds, drop-in centres and the streets, changes in hearts and minds start to happen.
- Eydal, G. B. & Gíslason, I. V. International Network on Leave Policies and Research Iceland Country Report (2017).

- A sea-change is unlikely to happen without simultaneous changes in the ideology of traditional masculinity and associated workplace expectations. The notion that “real” men don’t want to do “feminine” things like care or housework is changing, but these conceptions have proved far harder to shift than the opposite idea that women can do things that were traditionally thought of as “men’s work”.
- Related to this is the challenge posed by traditional workplace management cultures and expectations. Old-fashioned management cultures praise dedication to the job - construed as working long fixed hours, and being constantly available, with work always taking priority over family. Men who fail to conform to this expectation are regarded, like women, as less reliable and less promotable.
- Haas, L., Hwang, P. & Russell, G. (eds.) *Organizational Change and Gender Equity: International Perspectives on Fathers and Mothers at the Workplace* (Sage, 2000).