

Shaping the Future of Work:

Exploring Gender Inequalities in European Labor Markets through a Digital Competence Lens

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Abstract

- We explore gender inequalities in European labor markets.
- We focus on different skills compositions.
- We show that norms reflecting support for gender job equality, manifest a significant positive association with the "Digital Skills" index.
- The same norms manifest a significant positive association with the "Job Complexity" index.
- Norms do not confer a statistically significant effect on other skills

Motivation

- Gendered occupational and sectoral segregation persists, affecting working conditions, career advancement, and wage disparities.
- Cultural norms and educational choices, such as the under-representation of women in STEM fields, contribute to these disparities.
- Women are often excluded from the digital economy, being overrepresented in less complex internet uses and underrepresented in innovative digital tasks.
- Our research examines these disparities, considering the impact of cultural and gender norms across different European countries

Data

- ESJS2
- Eurostat
- European Social Survey
- World Bank

Methodology

We adopt multilevel models accounting for multilevel differences both at individual and regional level, to explore the tangible impact of regional gender norms on job skills requirements and related gender gaps, by uncovering the dynamics at different levels:

$$Y_{ij} = \beta_{0j} + \beta_{ij}X_i + \beta_j Z_j + u_{0j} + \epsilon_{ij}$$

β_{0j} = slope of reference group at the grand mean of exogenous macro variables reference context for level 1 (individual) and level 2 (regional)

β_{ij} = slope of level-1 individual variables X_i

X_{ij} = individual characteristics for each individual i in region j (level-1)

β_j = slope of level-2 regional variables Z_j

Z_j = regional variables (level-2)

u_{0j} = region specific random effect of the intercept

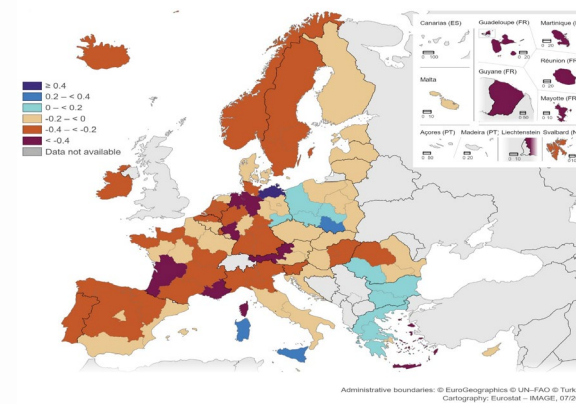
ϵ_{ij} = level-1 residual error

Level-1 and level-2 variables

X_{ij} : gender, education level, age, firm size, occupation and sector

Z_j : regional values of norms, regional GDP per capita, regional unemployment rate, regional female-male employment ratio (2020)

Gender gap in digital skill intensity



Regions with less sexist attitudes tend to have higher levels of these job skills.

Norms

- Men should have more right to jobs than women when jobs are scarce

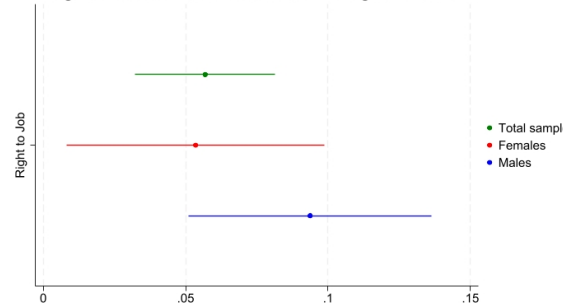
- Women should be prepared to cut down on paid work for the sake of family

Higher values indicate less agreement with these norms and thus less sexist attitudes.

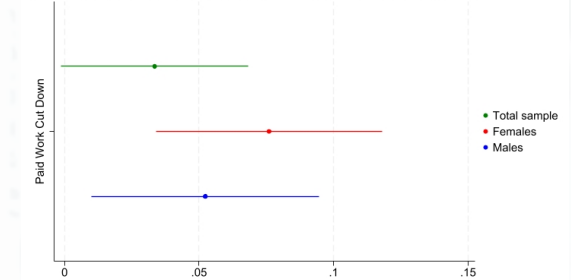
(1-5 scale: 1 = Agree strongly, ..., 5 = Disagree strongly)

Results

Marginal Effects from Multilevel Models: Digital skills scale



Marginal Effects from Multilevel Models: Job complexity skills scale



Conclusion and Policy

- We show that gender norms can have varying impacts on different dimensions of job skills, with some norms potentially fostering certain skills more than others.
- We aim to inform policy discussions, educational initiatives, and workplace practices that can contribute to a more inclusive and equitable future for all individuals, irrespective of gender, in the evolving landscape of the digitalized workforce.
- We emphasize the need for targeted training initiatives to enhance the more complex skills for females and labor market opportunities for women.

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