

# CHILD AND ADULT DEPRIVATION IN RECONSTITUTED HOUSEHOLDS

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# BACKGROUND

- Households do not equally share resources among their members
- In Europe generally...
  - Within couples Men > Women (Bennet, 2013; Guio and Van den Bosch, 2020)
  - Between generations Children > Adults (Gábos et al. 2011)
- Gap: We know little about the factors that shape intra-household distribution of resources → *Intra-household inequalities: child and adult deprivation in Europe*



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# WHY STUDY INTRA-HOUSEHOLD INEQUALITY

- Under-estimating inequality
- Poverty measured at the household level: miss-estimating poverty
- Understanding intra-household processes of resource allocation to design appropriate policies
  - Who goes without?
  - Which factors affect resource allocation?
  - How do households prioritise between competing needs?
- With individual/age data: what do poor children/adults lack?

# RECONSTITUTED FAMILIES AND HOUSEHOLDS

- Reconstituted families, formed by a (married, registered or cohabiting) couple and at least one non-common child, are increasingly common (UNECE, 2011)
- Reconstituted couples tend follow more individualised patterns of resource sharing compared to first partnerships (Vogler, 2005; Bennett, 2013), associated with higher risk of deprivation (Barcena-Martín et al., 2019)
- Impact on children access to resources ?
  - Children with step-siblings tend to fare worse, regardless of whether they live with two biological parents (Thomson and McLanahan, 2012; van Eeden-Moorefield and Pasley, 2013)
  - On leaving home children of re-partnered parents receive less (financial) support (Lopez-Turley and Desmond, 2011; Henretta et al., 2014, 2018)
  - More 'willingness to invest' in biological children compared to step children/other (Antfolk et al., 2017)

# RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESES

Do reconstituted HH show different patterns of resource allocation than intact HH?

- RQ1. Do reconstituted households show different patterns of resource allocation by age than intact households?
  - H1 Children living in intact CHH are more likely to be *prioritised* than children in reconstituted CHH
- RQ2. What is the association between gender and deprivation in reconstituted households?
  - H2 Women are more likely to be deprived compared to men
- RQ3. Are there geographical variations in the observed patterns?
  - H3.1 Households prioritise children across welfare regimes
  - H3.2 Reconstituted households are poorer across regimes, with larger penalties in Southern and Eastern Europe

Adults  
vs  
Children

Adults  
vs  
Adults

Welfare  
Regimes

# METHODS

- SILC 2014 ad-hoc module Material Deprivation → Unique module
  - Advantages vs expenditure analyses
    - Wider range of items allocated to HH members
    - Outputs/Need satisfaction: Difference in need & cost of items between HH members
- 22 European Countries (No register countries, No UK, IE, MT)
- Intact versus reconstituted couple households (CHH)
  - Reducing variability by excluding extended and single adult HH
- Sample size 22,383 CHH (918 reconstituted = 4%, 0,2 – 13%)

# MEASURES

- Reconstituted couple household: couple, at least one non-common child
- Deprivation – enforced lack of 2+/3+ items
  - Age specific as...
    - Needs are age specific
    - Only age specific = avoid artificial overlap within households
  - Child index (11 age specific items, alpha EU 0,843)
  - Adult index (6 age specific items, alpha EU 0,815)
- Parenthood self-defined, may include both biological and adopted children

# DATA IN THE AD-HOC SILC MODULE

- SILC data, some limitations
  - X-sectional (ad-hoc modules)
  - Heterosexual couples (only 20 same sex couples recorded, 2 with children)
  - Children are assigned to a single household
    - Children with shared custody are likely to be members of multiple households
    - Adults may have children in other households (no info)
- Collection child data (ad-hoc module)
  - Children aged 2-15
  - No information on individual children: unable to compare siblings/step-siblings
  - Adult respondents for child items (Lau et al., 2019; Main, 2019)
    - Knowledge of child access to resources
    - 'Do not want'



## FINDINGS 0: HOUSEHOLDS PRIORITISE CHILDREN'S NEEDS

Table 1 Intra-household inequality in by welfare regime (% couple households)

| Welfare Regime | Both Dep | Dep Adult | Dep Child | Not Dep | Total |
|----------------|----------|-----------|-----------|---------|-------|
| West           | 5        | 11        | 1         | 83      | 100   |
| South          | 13       | 14        | 2         | 71      | 100   |
| East           | 20       | 11        | 5         | 64      | 100   |
| Total          | 11       | 12        | 2         | 75      | 100   |

# FINDINGS I: CHILD DEPRIVATION

- RQI. Do reconstituted households show different patterns of resource allocation by age than intact households?

Table 2. Child deprivation by family type and region (2+ threshold)

|         | West | South | East | Total |
|---------|------|-------|------|-------|
| Intact  | 5    | 15    | 24   | 13    |
| Reconst | 9    | 24    | 48   | 18    |
| Total   | 6    | 15    | 25   | 13    |

Source: SILC-2014

- Reconstituted CHH are poorer (+ low income, deprivation, difficulty to make ends meet)

## FINDINGS I: INTRA-HH PATTERNS ARE SIMILAR

- HI Children are less likely to be *prioritised* when living in intact CHH compared to reconstituted CHH.

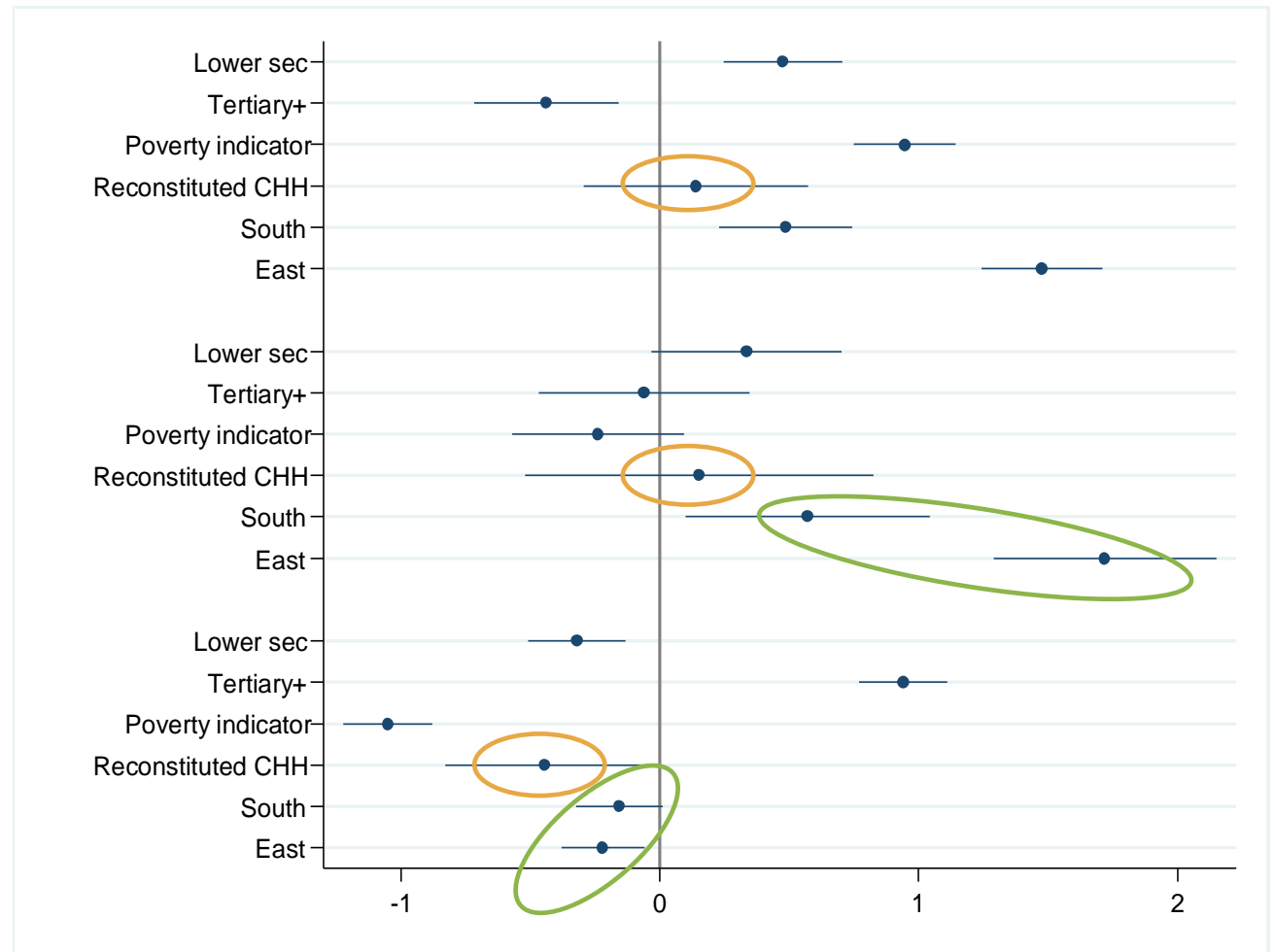
Table 3. Intra-household deprivation patterns CHH (%)

|                            |        | All Dep | Adults<br>Dep | Child<br>Dep | Not Dep | Total |
|----------------------------|--------|---------|---------------|--------------|---------|-------|
| No differences<br>observed | Intact | 11      | 12            | 2            | 75      | 100   |
|                            |        | 44      | 47            | 9            | -       | 100   |
|                            | Recons | 16      | 16            | 3            | 65      | 100   |
|                            |        | 46      | 47            | 7            | -       | 100   |
|                            | Total  | 11      | 12            | 2            | 75      | 100   |
|                            |        | 44      | 47            | 8            | -       | 100   |

Source: SILC-2014

# FINDINGS I: MULTINOMIAL REGRESSION CHILD VS ADULT

- Reference: Adult only deprivation
- No evidence of differences in the allocation of resources between intact and reconstituted households
- Model results robust to 3+ threshold, interactions  $wreg\#recons$ , regime specific models



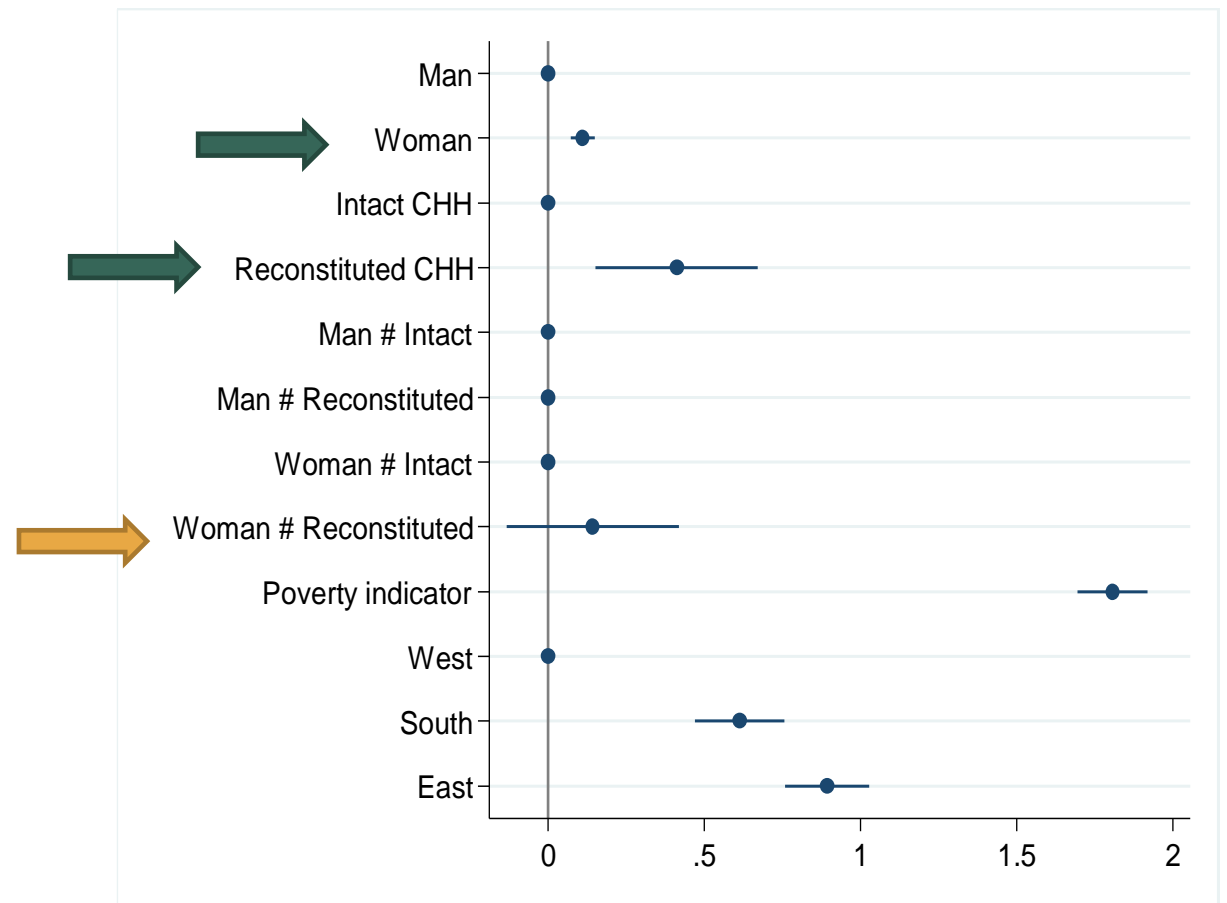
## FINDINGS 2 GENDER INEQUALITY IN DEPRIVATION

RQ2. What is the association between parenthood and deprivation in reconstituted households? How does it intersect with gender?

- Small gender differences in couples
  - Inequality: Only in 6% of households (5% with a 3+ threshold)
  - 2/3 of these women are deprived
- Robust to use of enforced vs. all lacks

## FINDINGS 2 LOGISTIC REG. ADULT DEPRIVATION AND GENDER

- Women at higher risk of deprivation – but differences are small
- Reconstituted households at higher risk of deprivation
- No significant additional risk for women in reconstituted households
- Correlation gender/parenthood (80% live with mother)



# DISCUSSION

- Children (and Adults) in reconstituted CHH are more likely to be deprived than those in intact CHH
- Reconstituted CHH are poorer (+ low income, +deprivation, +difficulty to make ends meet)
- No evidence of less prioritisation of children in reconstituted households
  - All prioritise children? No or small differences during childhood?
  - Measures? No difference in deprivation vs. difference in income/expenditure measures
  - Reporting issues? Reconstituted HH do report high (child) deprivation
  - Individual child data would allow testing for differences between siblings

# DISCUSSION

- Small gender differences in couple households (Guio and Van den Bosch, 2020)
  - Women at higher risk of individual deprivation
  - No evidence of added penalty in reconstituted HH
- Welfare Regimes:
  - Lowest deprivation and child only deprivation Western Europe
  - More adult only deprivation in Western Europe – Why?
  - Highest deprivation + child only deprivation in Eastern Europe (but still minority) – Why?
  - Higher deprivation for women across regimes (but small N)



# RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESES

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# CONCLUSIONS

- Households strive to protect children from the consequences of poverty → Child Guarantee
  - But in 13% of CHH children are deprived of age specific items (vs 26% of adults)
  - And children are also affected by the conditions of the households in which they live
- Poverty interventions to target (children in) reconstituted households
- Higher risk of child only deprivation in Eastern Europe → extend analysis

# THANK YOU!

- WORK IN PROGRESS...

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- More on the Project:
- **Lanau, A.** (Forthcoming) 'Child poverty and intra-household inequality during economic recession', *Revista Española de Investigaciones Sociológicas*.
- **Lanau, A.** and Fifita, V. (2020) 'Do households prioritise children? Intra-household deprivation a case study of the South Pacific' *Child Indicators Research*, 13(6), pages 1953-1973. DOI:10.1007/s12187-020-09729-5

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TABLE 3. Intra-household deprivation patterns by country (% households with children). Full index 2+ threshold

|       | Congruous Deprived | Incongruous Protected | Incongruous Exposed | Congruous Non-deprived | Total |
|-------|--------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|------------------------|-------|
| RO    | 55                 | 14                    | 8                   | 23                     | 100   |
| BG    | 52                 | 13                    | 8                   | 27                     | 100   |
| HU    | 34                 | 18                    | 3                   | 45                     | 100   |
| EL    | 23                 | 25                    | 2                   | 50                     | 100   |
| RS    | 23                 | 23                    | 3                   | 50                     | 100   |
| LV    | 22                 | 16                    | 5                   | 57                     | 100   |
| LT    | 15                 | 22                    | 2                   | 61                     | 100   |
| PT    | 19                 | 11                    | 4                   | 65                     | 100   |
| CY    | 18                 | 10                    | 6                   | 66                     | 100   |
| ES    | 16                 | 13                    | 3                   | 68                     | 100   |
| IT    | 14                 | 15                    | 2                   | 68                     | 100   |
| PL    | 13                 | 14                    | 4                   | 69                     | 100   |
| SK    | 15                 | 9                     | 5                   | 71                     | 100   |
| HR    | 10                 | 12                    | 2                   | 76                     | 100   |
| DE    | 7                  | 14                    | 2                   | 77                     | 100   |
| BE    | 11                 | 10                    | 1                   | 78                     | 100   |
| FR    | 8                  | 13                    | 1                   | 78                     | 100   |
| AT    | 9                  | 11                    | 1                   | 79                     | 100   |
| EE    | 7                  | 7                     | 3                   | 83                     | 100   |
| CZ    | 8                  | 6                     | 2                   | 84                     | 100   |
| CH    | 3                  | 9                     | 0,5                 | 87                     | 100   |
| LU    | 4                  | 7                     | 1                   | 88                     | 100   |
| Total | 15                 | 14                    | 3                   | 68                     | 100   |



# CHILD AND ADULT DEPRIVATION ITEMS

| Short label         | Wording   |
|---------------------|---|
| <i>Child items</i>  |   |
| New clothes         | Some new not second hand clothes                                    |
| Shoes               | Two pairs of all-weather shoes                                      |
| Fruit and veg       | Fresh fruit and vegetables daily                                    |
| Meat                | One meal with protein daily   |
| Books               | Books appropriate for their age                                     |
| Outside games       | Equipment for outdoors activities (e.g. bike, rollers)              |
| Toys                | Toys to play inside (educational toys, board games, computer games) |
| Leisure             | Take part in leisure activities (sport, music)                      |
| Celebrations        | Celebrations in special occasions                                   |
| Friends             | Having friends over from time to time                               |
| Holiday             | A week holiday away from home                                       |
| <i>Adult items</i>  |   |
| Clothes             | Some new not second hand clothes                                    |
| All weather shoes   | Two pairs of all-weather shoes                                      |
| Friends             | Having friends or family over monthly                               |
| Leisure             | Take part in leisure activities (cinema, sport, music)              |
| Money for self      | A small amount of money to spend on one-self                        |
| Internet (personal) | Internet connection for personal use                                |



## FINDINGS 2.0 GENDER INEQUALITY IN DEPRIVATION

RQ2. What is the association between parenthood and deprivation in reconstituted households? How does it intersect with gender?

Individual deprivation by gender (enforced and all lacks) (%)

|                       | Enforced lack |       | Any lack |       |
|-----------------------|---------------|-------|----------|-------|
|                       | Man           | Woman | Man      | Woman |
| Couple + Children     | 19            | 21    | 31       | 33    |
| Not couple + Children | 28            | 33    | 44       | 49    |
| Couple                | 14            | 15    | 40       | 41    |
| Not couple            | 20            | 23    | 40       | 49    |

- Small gender differences in couples & larger in non-couple HH
- Robust to use of enforced vs. all lacks
- Partially a result of questionnaire/presence of spouse?

