

# Segregated Domestic Labor and Gender Inequality: A Cross-national Perspective

Joan García Román, Ariane Ophir

Centre d'Estudis Demogràfics

## Background

- In all countries women do more housework than men ( Kan et al, 2011; Pailhé et al, 2021)
- Last decades, the gender gap in housework has decreased (Kan et al, 2011; Altintas & Sullivan, 2016)
  - Women do less
  - Men's contribution has increased, but not to compensate women's reduction
- Recent studies points out a general slow down in the convergence's process (England, 2010)
- More egalitarian societies have a more equal distribution of household labour (Geist & Cohen, 2011; Kan et al, 2022)
- Housework continues to be segregated (Kan et al, 2011)
  - Women investing more time in routine “female-typed” tasks, such as cleaning or cooking
  - In comparison, men invest more time in non-routine “male-typed” tasks, such as repairs
- Level of housework segregation was associated with partners' perception of relationship quality and egalitarian division of labor (Carlsson et al, 2022)

# Objectives & Research questions

## Objectives:

- 1) Provide the most recent estimates of time investment in domestic labor across 15 countries, detailed by task
- 2) Investigate the levels of sex segregation by type of task across countries and its relationship to gender inequality in unpaid work and overall gender inequality

## Research questions:

- 1) How does gender inequality in specific tasks are associated with overall gender inequality in housework
- 2) How does overall investment in total housework is associated with sex segregation in housework
- 3) How do levels of sex segregation of housework tasks are associated with overall gender inequality

## Data & Methods

- Harmonized European Time Use Survey (HETUS)
- 2010 Round. Surveys conducted between 2008-2015
- 15 countries: Austria (AT), Belgium (BE), Estonia (EE), Finland (FI), France, (FR), Germany (DE), Greece (GR), Hungary (HU), Italy (IT), Norway (NO), Poland (PL), Romania (RO), Serbia (RS) Spain (ES), United Kingdom (UK)
- We select population younger than 65 years all who are in couples living with children under age 18.
  - HHTYPE=6 or 7
  - **N=74,630**
- Questionnaires
  - Household questionnaire
  - Individual questionnaire
  - Diary of activities: All activities carried out during 24 hours in 10-minutes interval

# Data & Methods: Dairy of Activities

Time	<b>What were you doing?</b> <i>Record your main activity for each 10-minute period from 07.00 to 10.00!</i>  Only one main activity on each line! Distinguish between travel and the activity that is the reason for travelling.	<b>What else were you doing?</b> <i>Record the most important parallel activity.</i>  Indicate if you used, in the main or parallel activity, a computer or internet. You do not need to record the use of a computer or internet during working time.	<b>Where were you?</b> <i>Record the location or the mode of transport</i>  e.g. at home, at friends' home, at school, at workplace, in restaurant, in shop, on foot, on bicycle, in car, on motorbike, on bus, ...	<b>Were you alone or together with somebody you know?</b>  Mark "yes" by crossing					
	Alone	Partner	Parent	Household member up to 9 years	Other household member	Other persons that you know			
07.00-07.10	Woke up the children		At home	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
07.10-07.20	Had breakfast	Talked with my family	↓	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
07.20-07.30	--"	--"		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
07.30-07.40	Cleared the table	Listened to the radio		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
07.40-07.50	Helped the children dress	Talked with my children	↓	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
07.50-08.00	Went to the day care centre	--"	On foot	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
08.00-08.10	Went to work	Read the newspaper	Bus	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
08.10-08.20	Went to work	--"	--"	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
08.20-08.30	Work	↗	Workplace	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

## Data & Methods: Activities

### Housework (311-371)

- Food (311): Food preparation, baking and preserving
- Clean (312-322): Dish washing, cleaning dwelling, cleaning garden
- Laundry (330-339): Laundry, ironing, handicraft and producing textiles, etc.
- Repair and maintain (323-329, 351-359): heating and water, arranging households good and materials, house construction and reparations, making, repairing and maintaining equipment, vehicle maintenance, etc.
- Gardening and pet care (341-399): Gardening, caring for pets, walking the dog, etc.
- Household Administration (361-371): Shopping, commercial and administrative services, household management, etc.

## Data & Methods: Measures

- Estimates of total time spent on housework and time spent in each tasks by women and men
- Standardize score for each tasks and gender

$$Zscore_{xyz} = \frac{Time_{xyz} - Mean_{yz}}{sd_{yz}}$$

- Inequality Indicator for each task by country

$$Inequality\ Indicator_{xy} = \frac{Women's\ Time_{xy} - Men's\ time_{xy}}{TimWomen's\ Time_{xy} + Men's\ time_{xy}}$$

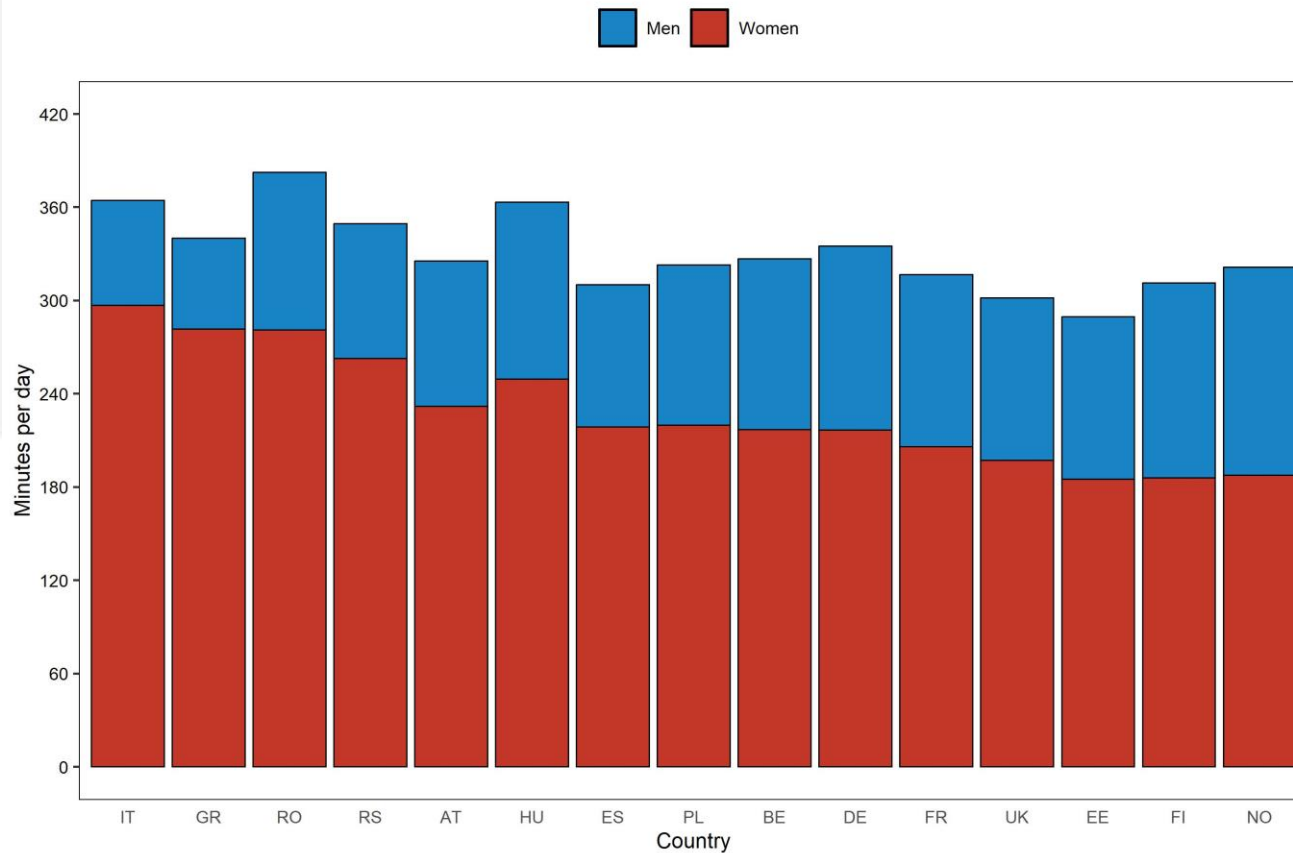
## Data & Methods: Measures

- Segregation Index by country

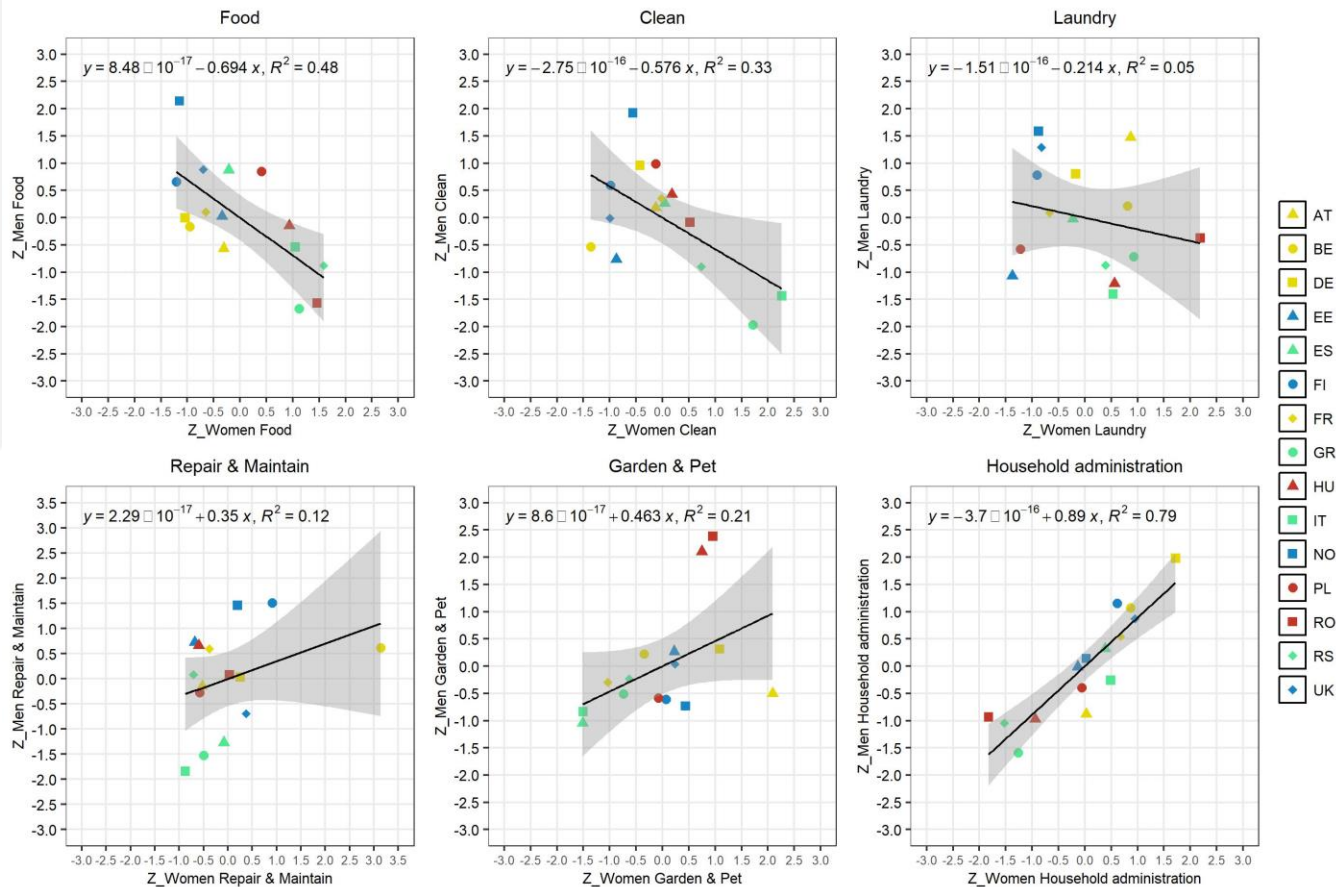
$$\text{Segregation Index}_x = \sum_{y=\text{task}} \text{Abs}(\text{Inequality Index}_{xy} * (\frac{\text{Time}_{xy}}{\text{Total Hw}_x}))$$



## Results: Total housework



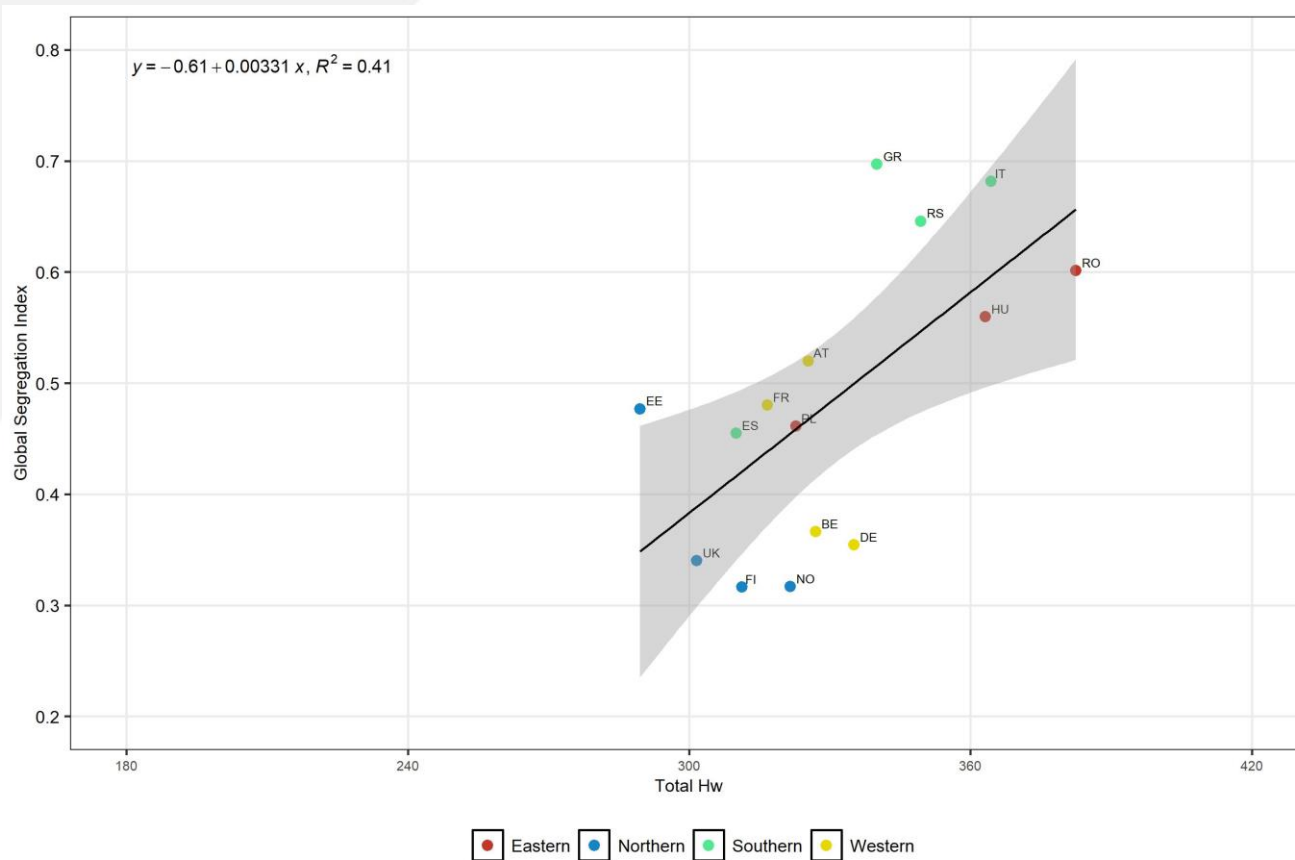
# Results: Zscores by task and gender



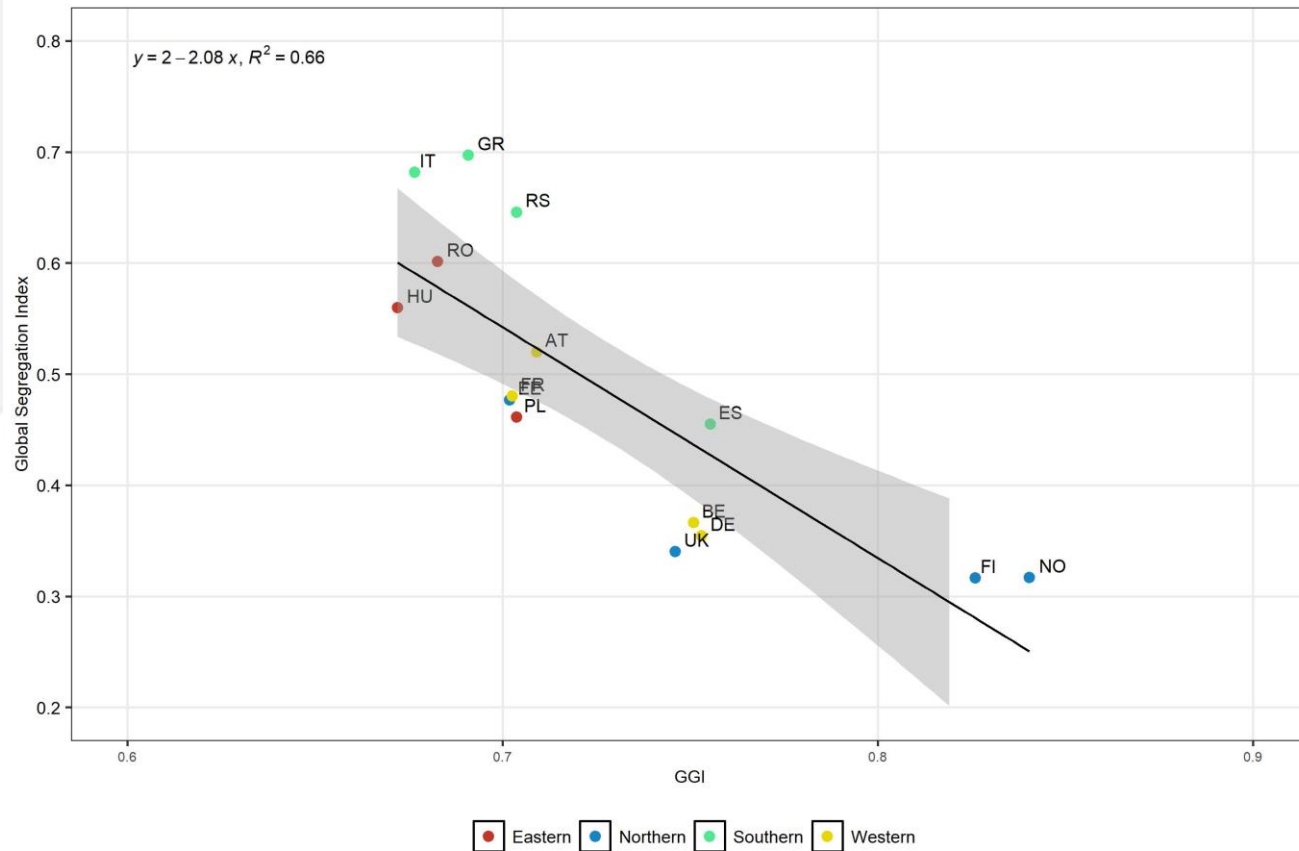
# Results: Inequality indicators and Segregation Index



## Results: Segregation Index and total time on housework



## Results: Segregation Index and Global Gender Gap Index (GGI)



## Conclusions

- Large differences in total housework by country, and also by task
- More segregation in tasks in which women do more. Lower inequalities in tasks that men do more
- Segregation is higher in countries where individuals spent more time in housework
- Segregation is higher in less egalitarian countries
- Segregation is higher in Southern and Eastern Europe, with the exception of Spain and Poland. Lower in Nordic countries (except Estonia), Belgium and Germany
- Meaning of segregation. 'Masculine task' have become more neutral, 'feminine tasks' are still segregated

# Thank you

Joan García Román

[jgarcia@ced.uab.es](mailto:jgarcia@ced.uab.es)

Ramón y Cajal Researcher (RYC2018-024808-I)

Centre d'Estudis Demogràfics-CERCA



**CED**<sup>®</sup>

*Centre d'Estudis  
Demogràfics*

 @CEDemografia

Consorci Members



**Generalitat  
de Catalunya**

**UAB**

Universitat Autònoma  
de Barcelona

## Results: Time spent by task and gender

