

@TheIFS

Men and women at work: the more things change the more they stay the same?

Monday 6th December
09:30 - 10:30



Inequality

The IFS Deaton Review

Women and Men at Work

An IFS initiative funded
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Women and Men at Work



Economic
and Social
Research Council

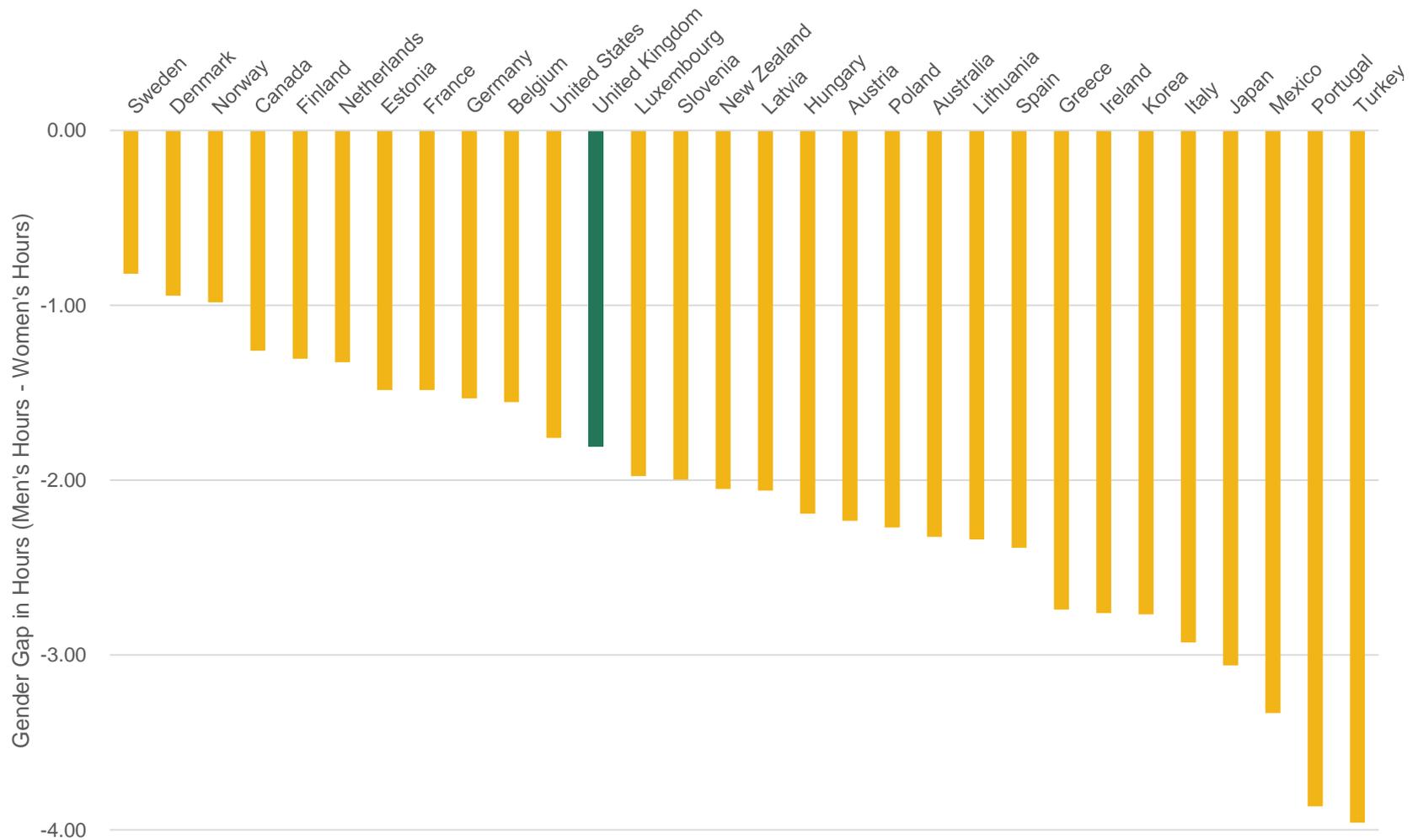
Introduction

- Aim: Explore patterns, causes and consequences of gender inequalities in work in the UK
- Huge gender gaps remain in work in the UK:
 - women doing the greater share of unpaid care work
 - men work for pay at higher rates and for longer hours
 - and are better remunerated for their work
- Today:
 - Outline magnitudes, patterns and trends
 - Dig into the potential causes of persistence
 - Touch on ways forward

Why do gender gaps matter?

- Inequalities in material living standards and economic vulnerabilities:
 - Women live in poorer households
 - Women consume a disproportionately low share of household resources
 - Low earnings leaves women vulnerable to economic dependence on men
- Losses in wellbeing:
 - Women miss out on intrinsic satisfactions of market work
 - Men miss out on intrinsic satisfactions of care work
 - Without men taking on a greater share of unpaid work at home, gains in women's employment may come at the expense of their leisure
- Implications for aggregate efficiency and growth

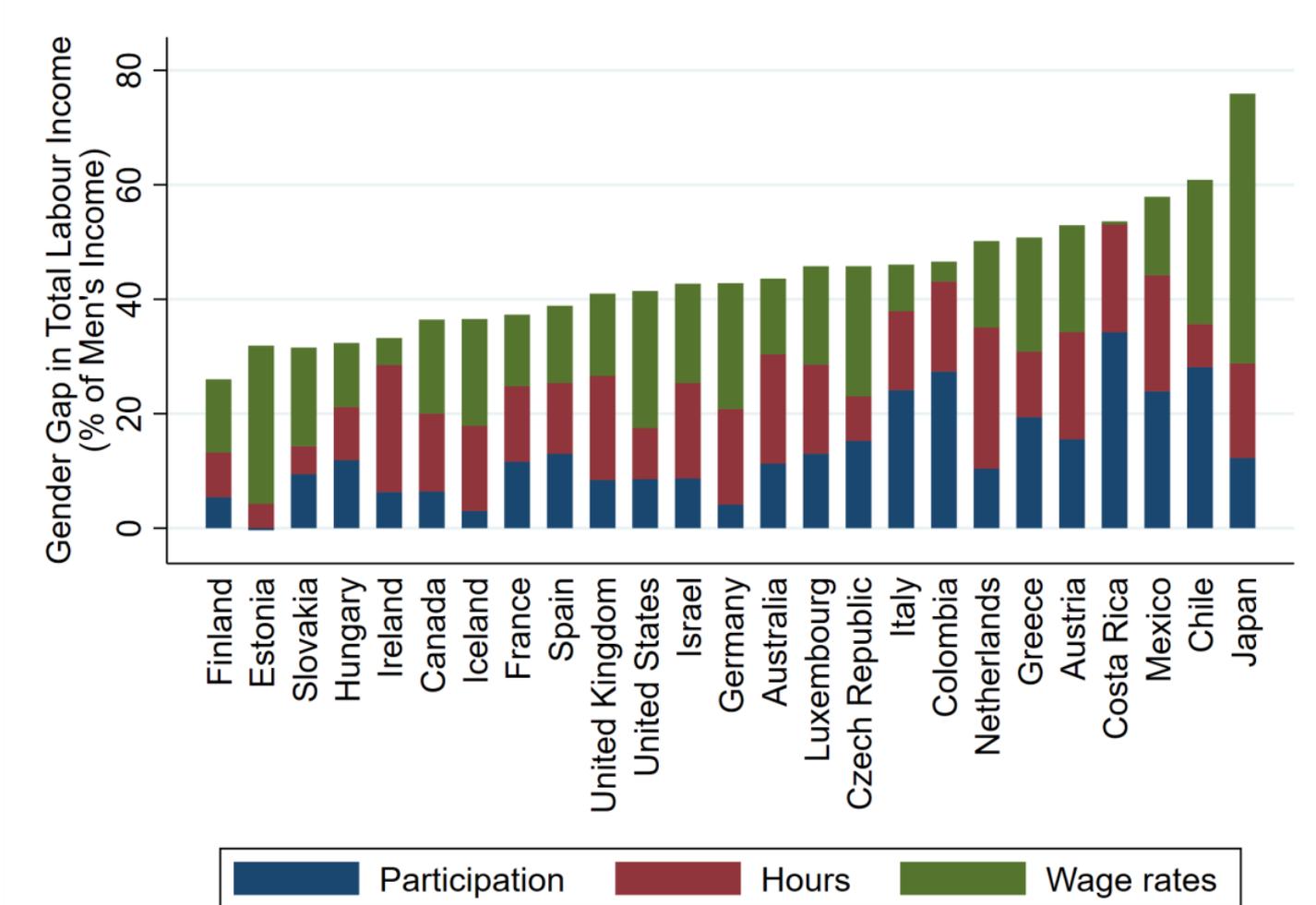
Gaps in Unpaid Work



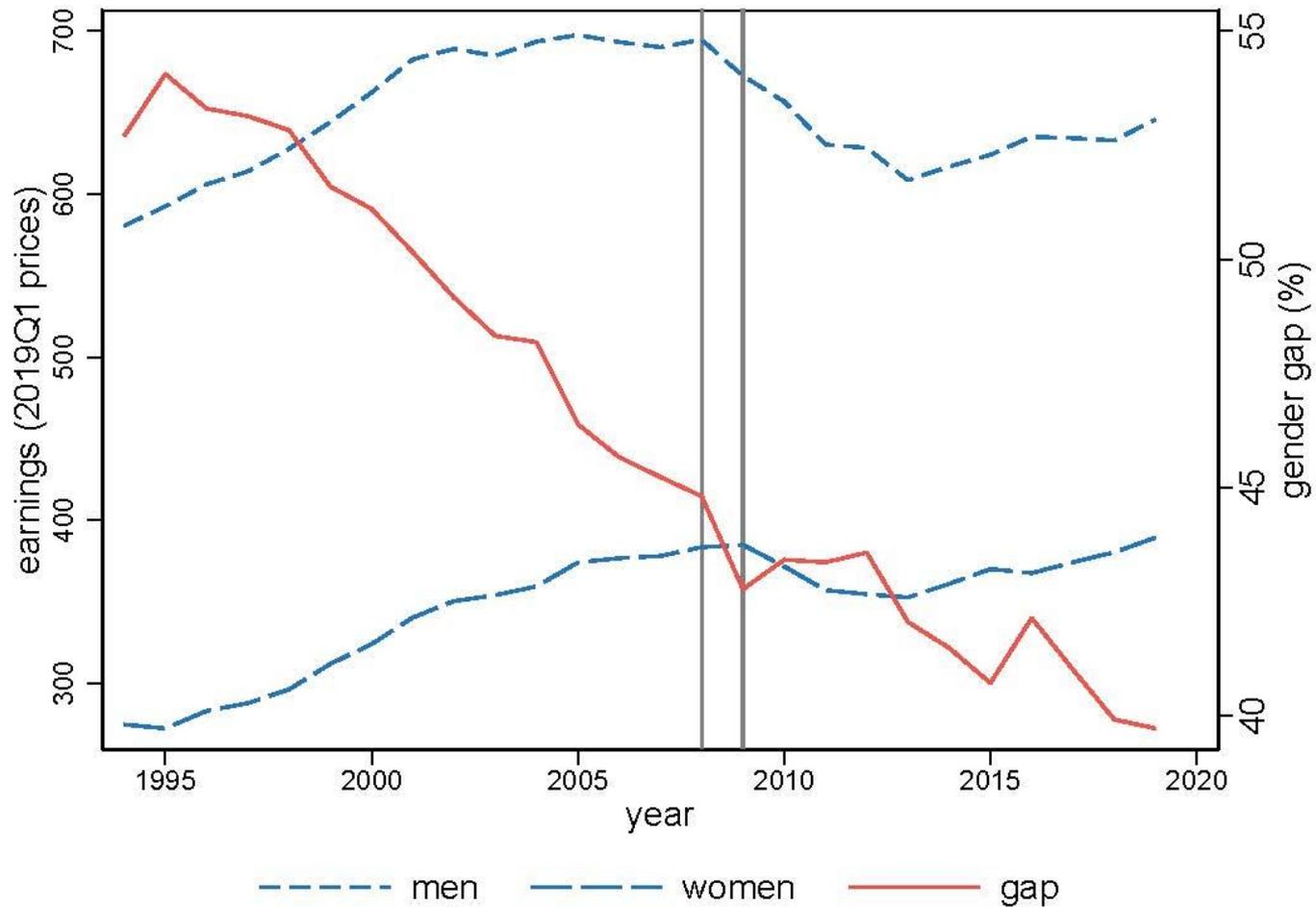
Gender Gaps in Paid Work

$$\begin{aligned} &\text{Total Earnings} \\ &= \\ &\text{Employment} \times \text{Hours} \times \text{Hourly Wage} \end{aligned}$$

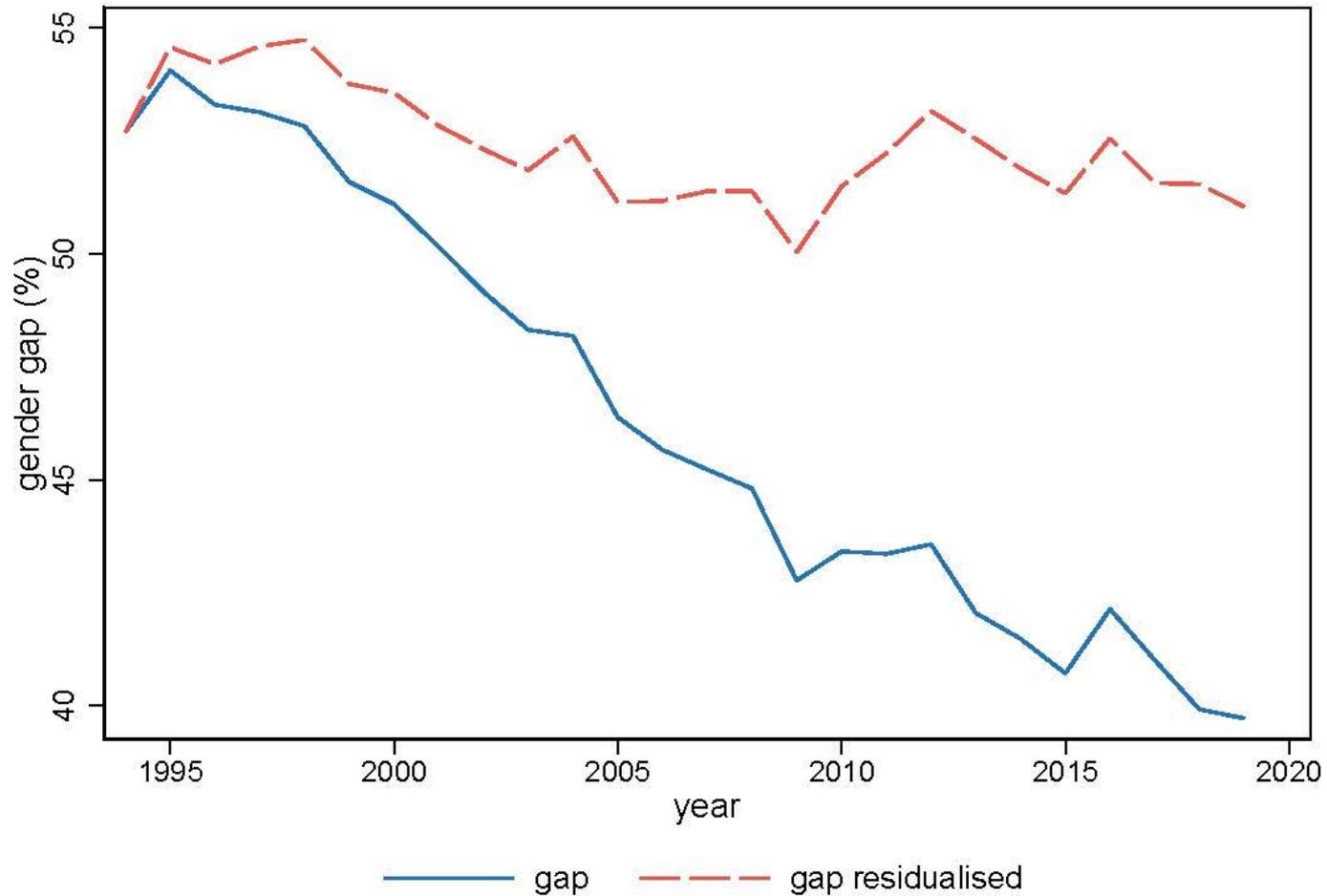
Gaps in Paid Work Across Countries



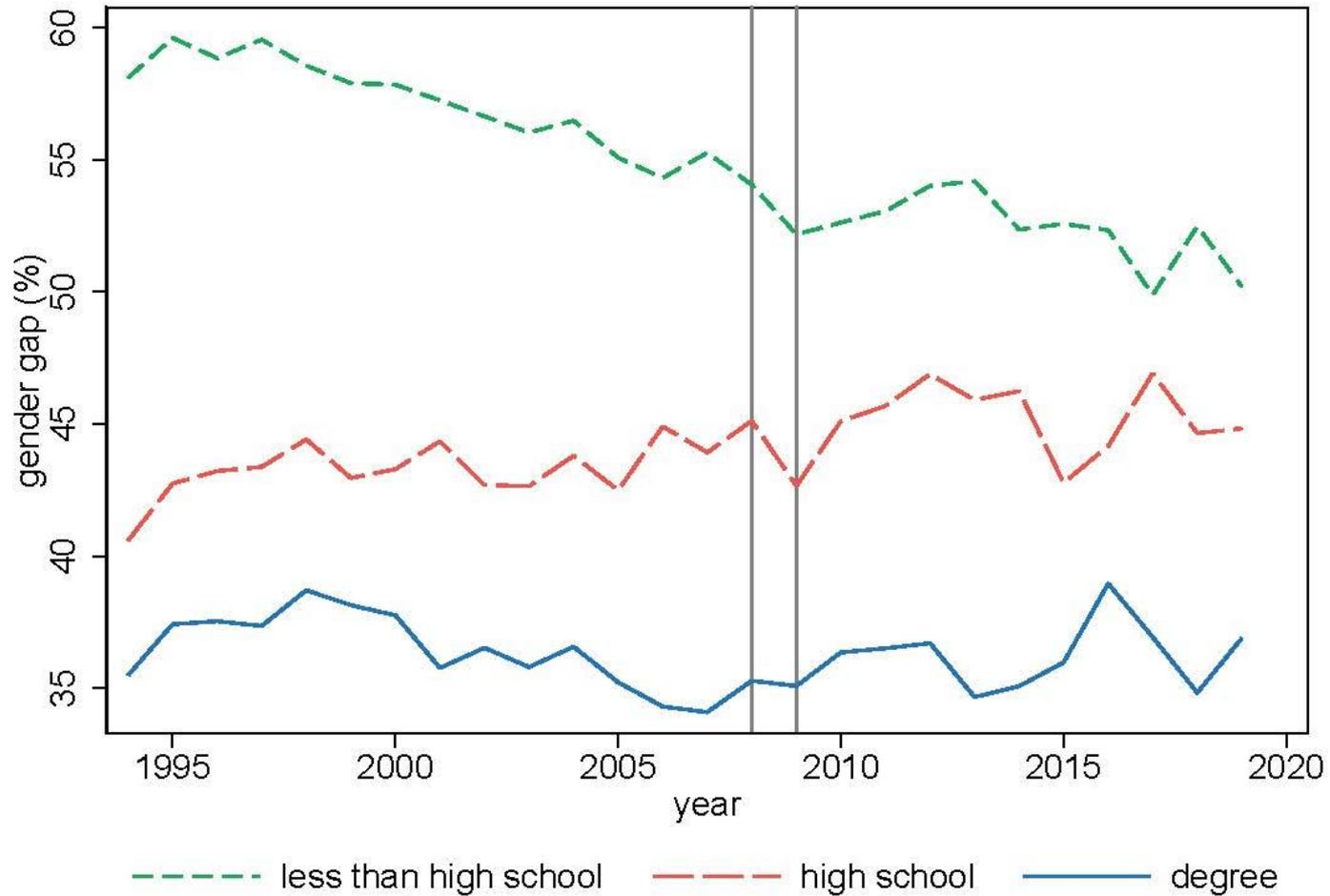
Earnings Gap over Time



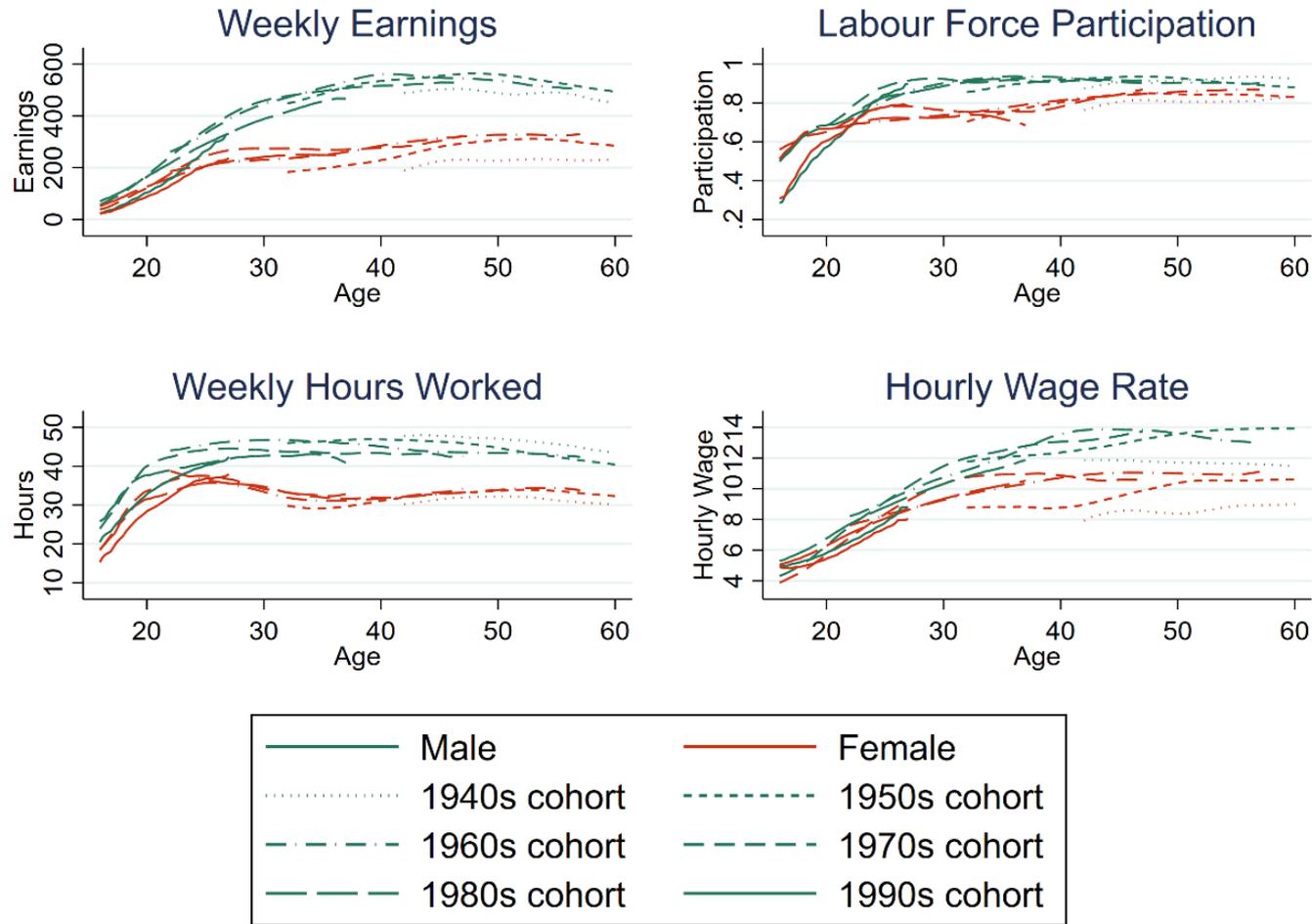
How much can education explain?



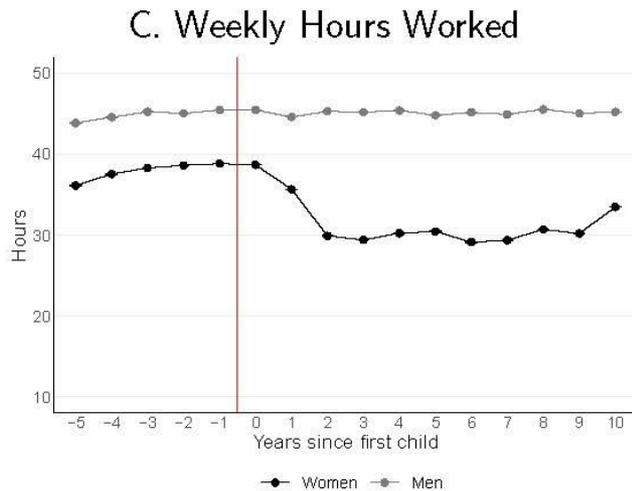
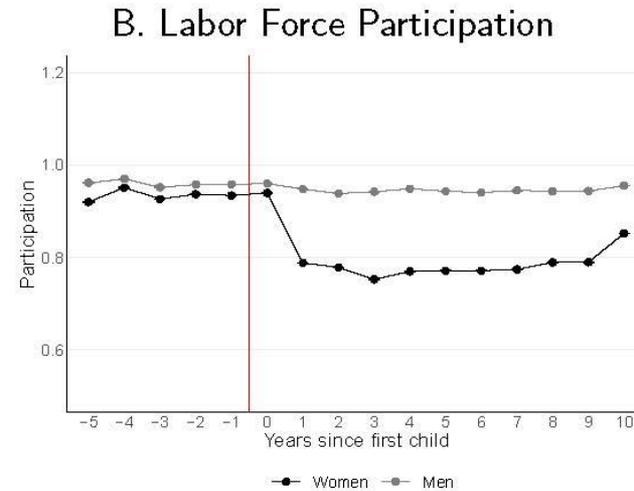
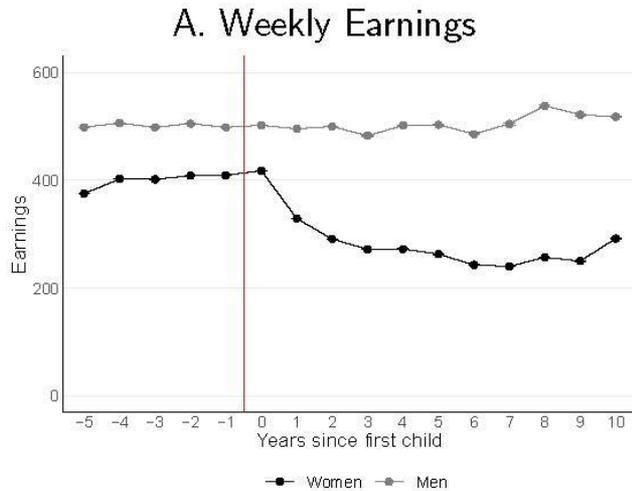
Gaps by Education



Gaps open up in the mid-20s



Exactly coinciding with parenthood



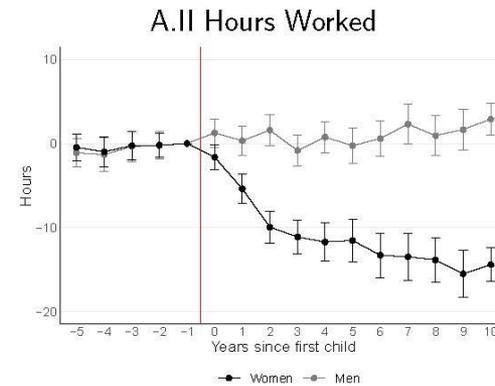
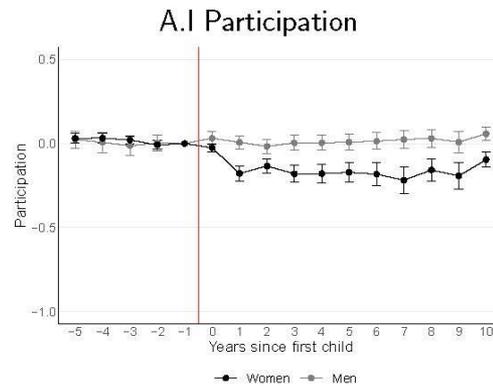
Why do these gaps open up?



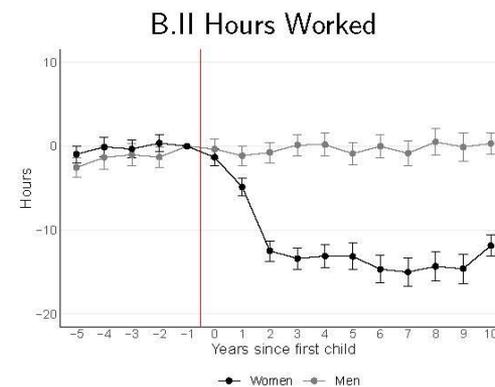
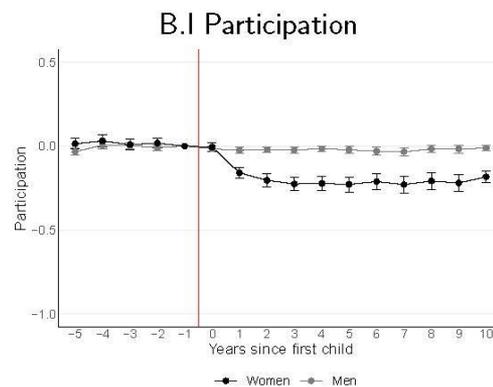
Why do these gaps open up?

Hypothesis 1: Comparative Advantage

A. Woman Earns More



B. Man Earns More



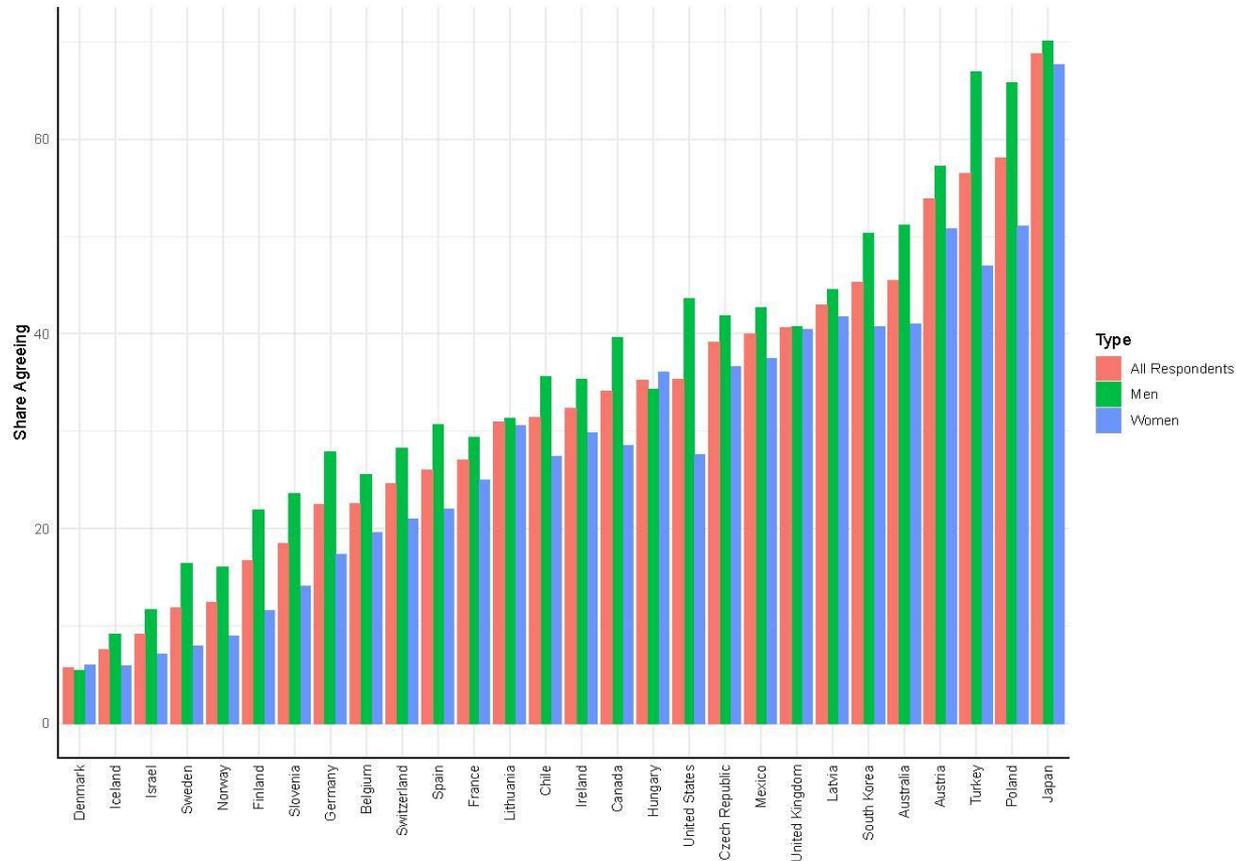
Why do these gaps open up?

Hypothesis 2: Policy Environment

- Many aspects of the policy environment reinforce the status quo.
 - e.g. parental leave, expensive childcare
- At the same time, the impacts of new policies aiming to increase gender equality have often been underwhelming
 - e.g. low take up of shared parental leave
- Gendered norms and fixed gender roles limit the impacts of many new policies

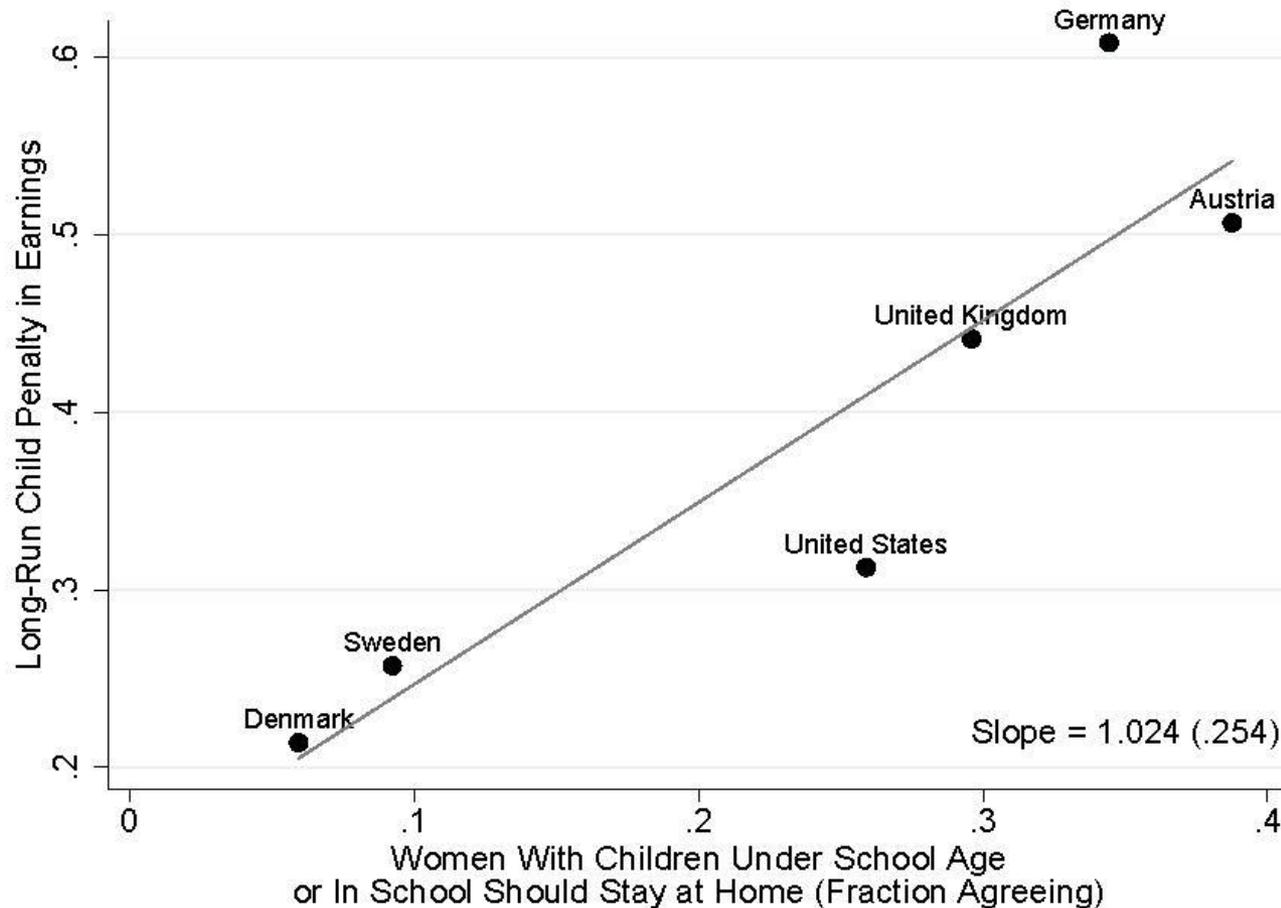
Why do these gaps open up?

Hypothesis 3: Traditional attitudes around gender roles



In the UK, 40% of adult men and women agree that 'A woman should stay at home when she has children under school age'

Attitudes towards gender are correlated with child penalties



A way forward?

- Attitudes and social norms are not immutable.
- May change when a critical mass of people make choices outside of the existing norm
- Ambitious policies could have outsized impacts if they both:
 - address the financial and practical constraints to gender equality
 - begin to shift norms around the sharing of work
- Successful policies may even pay for themselves by putting women's and men's talents to better use.

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