

## **The Division of Housework and Re-partnering in Europe: Does Re-partnering Lead to a More Equal Division of Domestic Tasks?**

Mariona Lozano<sup>1</sup>, Joan Garcia-Roman<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Centre d'Estudis Demogràfics, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain

### **Abstract**

This study analyses traditional and non-traditional arrangements of housework among men and women in dual-earner couples according to their union rank, i.e., first union or re-partnerships. Past evidence showed that unequal sharing of housework is associated with marital conflict and it lowers relationship satisfaction, which may lead to divorce. However, housework divisions among re-partnered individuals has been less studied. We use the second wave of the Gender and Generation Survey (N=9,346.) Results showed that re-partnered respondents were more likely to have non-traditional divisions of housework than those in their first union. In particular, re-partnered men seemed to be more different than males in first unions. Differences among women were smaller. Therefore, findings suggest that past experiences may be important for gender equality at home, and changes in men's contribution to domestic work seem to be an important part of the equation.

**Keywords:** Dual-earners, Housework sharing, Re-partnering, Family roles, Gender

## **Introduction**

Women's entry into the labor market has reshaped patterns of family formation and the division of domestic work. Past literature has examined the effects of this change on women's roles within the family, and on marriage stability and divorce (Esping-Andersen & Billari, 2015). So far, unequal sharing of housework has been proved to be associated with divorce, as well as with depression and marital dissatisfaction among couples and especially among women (Coltrane, 2001; Ruppaner et al. 2018; Normal et al., 2018). In general, the impact of unbalanced housework, or partners reporting unequal division of housework, has been studied among couples or individuals in their first relationship. However, divorce rate has raised considerable in the last decades, and studies on the consequences of housework sharing on relationships quality and divorce have multiplied (Ruppaner, et al., 2018; Lively et al., 2010; Bellani et al., 2017; Mencarini & Vignoli, 2018). Yet, little is known about patterns of housework arrangements among re-partnered individuals, and whether past experiences may have influenced the division of housework in subsequent unions. If unequal divisions of housework are leading to divorce, are individuals in subsequent unions more likely to equally share housework with their new partners?

In this paper, we study the association between the division of housework and union rank among individuals in dual-earner couples. We focus on dual-earners because they may be more likely to suffer from role strain and conflict caused by having to balance paid and unpaid work. One of the most consistent findings in the family literature is that women's increased participation into the labor market has increased rates of marital dissatisfaction (Booth et al., 1986; Greenstein, 1995, and more recently Killewald, 2016). Reasons for this association lie on the increased females' economic independence from their husbands, and the stress and role conflict associated with balancing the demands of

paid work and family when both members of the couple work (Frisco & Williams, 2003). In most cases, women in dual-earner unions remain responsible for the bulk of the housework and childcare, and these multiple roles can contribute to marital conflict (Greenstein, 1995), increasing the likelihood of marital dissolution (Ruppanner, et al., 2018).

Finally, our study is limited to housework, and do not consider childcare because the two differ in terms of nature of the activities, and the predictors of them (Bianchi & Raley, 2005; Coltrane & Adams, 2001; Mannino & Deutsch, 2007). Commonly, household labor has been conceptualized as the group of domestic unpaid chores done within the family to satisfy the needs of its members and maintain the home. It has usually included tasks such as cleaning the house, dishwashing, grocery shopping, preparing daily meals, repairing and maintaining outdoors spaces and the household, etc. In general, these tasks have been classified into stereotypically female routine tasks and stereotypically male interment tasks. The first one refers to those domestic activities that are on-going, nondiscretionary, and very timing consuming. The second group includes occasional and more flexible chores, that are also less time consuming. Most recent studies on housework have focused exclusively on routine tasks (Batalova & Cohen, 2002; Pinto & Coltrane, 2009; Cunningham, 2007; Lachance-Gzrela & Bouchard, 2010). These have claimed that focusing on the division of stereotypically female tasks allow us to determine the extent of egalitarianism in the sharing of household responsibilities.

To sum up, this study aims to explore if re-partnered individuals are less likely to have a traditional division of housework than those in their first union. This is a relevant question since past literature have shown that unequal division of housework lead to divorce, but the extent to which partners report egalitarian sharing of domestic work in subsequent unions remains largely untested. The underlining assumption is that given

previous negative experiences, people would seek more egalitarian patterns in subsequent relationships.

## **2. Background Section**

### 2.1. The division of housework in first and higher-order relationships

Past research has found that women's increased labor force participation is associated with increasing rates of divorce (Bremmer & Kesselring, 2004). Although this is not the only aspect associated with marital dissolution, females' working hours and couples' division of household work have shown to have strong consequences for relationship quality (Coltrane, 2001; Gupta and Ash, 2008; Frisco and Williams, 2003). Indeed, unequal housework allocation has been found to be associated with divorce, and dissatisfaction (Ruppanner et al., 2018; Lively et al., 2010;). Bellani et al. (2017) compared West Germany and the United States in terms of the relative gender division of labor and the risk of marriage dissolution. They concluded that male breadwinner model remained as the most stable arrangement, especially in Germany where, unlike the US, most couples were not concerned about domestic equality. Mencarini and Vignoli (2018) studied the Italian case, and found that women's employment becomes detrimental to union stability only when their male partners' contribution at home is small.

Explanations for the association between housework arrangements and marital conflict lie in the role-strain faced by dual-earner couples when having to juggle with multiple responsibilities (Lively et al., 2010; Norman et al., 2018; Prince-Cooke, 2006), and perceptions of equity and fairness with a given housework arrangement that may vary according to gender (Frisco & Williams, 2003; Baxter & Western, 1998). The role strain faced by women in dual-earner couples is associated with gender-specific expectations

within societies (Perrone et al., 2009). Women, even if working long hours, are still responsible for the majority of housework and childcare, and these multiple responsibilities can contribute to stress and conflict (Baxter & Tai, 2016). These unequal division of housework between dual-earner partners decreases marital quality, and may lead to divorce, and especially in couples where women are disadvantage and take disproportionate housework shares (Ruppaner et al., 2018). Norman and colleagues (2018) found a nonlinear relationship between fathers' involvement in housework and childcare and union stability, but it was moderated by mothers' employment status.

A few studies, mainly qualitative, have explored the impact of previous relationships on household labor arrangements and egalitarian attitudes. Clarke (2005) used data from in-depth interviews with remarried women aged 50 and over, and found that compared to their first relationship, women viewed their second unions as the one they wished to have had in the first place. Walzer (2008) analysed the narratives of men and women interviewed during 1980s to describe gender patterns and behaviors associated to divorce. She concluded that divorce changed traditional expectations of gender, and evoked critique and revision of previous meanings of gender. Lucier-Greer and Adler-Baeder (2011) used a longitudinal sample of married individuals from the US. They examined the change in gender attitudes over a 20-year period distinguishing by marital transition experiences and found that, although the shift in gender roles between first and second marriages was documented, the magnitude of the change was modest. Across time, those who divorced showed a significant, albeit modest, shift toward more egalitarian gender attitudes. Finally, the literature also suggested that men and women have different economic, emotional, and familiar motivations to remarry. Men seem to be more likely to remarry than women (Payne, 2015), and scholars pointed out that divorced

men may seek a wife to take care of household duties such as cooking and cleaning (Ganong & Coleman, 2017).

## 2.2. The gendered reporting of housework

When studying the association between the division of housework and union rank, we also expect variations between men and women. On average, men's housework has gone up over time, but women continue to perform the greatest share (Bianchi & Milkie, 2010; Craig & Powell, 2018). Moreover, recent trends show a slowdown in men's participation in housework and the convergence is stalled (Kan et al., 2011; Sullivan et al 2018). In addition, men and women do not perceive housework, and time devoted to domestic chores, in the same way. Different conceptions of housework respond to the fact that it is not a consistent and clearly defined concept. Unlike paid employment, which can be defined through the amount of work done in exchange of a salary, unpaid housework is usually defined as a set of tasks, not clearly pre-defined. In addition, survey respondents may feel pressure to report a level of housework participation that agrees with the normative gender roles (Kan & Pudney, 2008). For example, in dual-earner couples where husbands are dependent on wife's salaries, women may increase their participation in housework to compensate their deviation from the normative gender identity (Greenstein, 2000; Bittman et al., 2003). Therefore, we expect that re-partnered women will still be more likely to report traditional divisions of housework than re-partnered men.

Past studies have also shown that men and women who hold less traditional ideas about gender roles have more balanced division of housework (Askari et al., 2010; Aassve et al., 2015; Cunningham, 2007). Hence, reporting of housework share among re-partnered men and women would also be influenced by their own perceptions of gender. Gender roles are those behaviors and attitudes prescribed and assigned to males and

females by the broader culture solely on the basis of gender (Bartley, et al., 2005). Nitsche and Grunow (2016) found that egalitarian gender attitudes predict more equal patterns of housework arrangement over the life course. However, Lewin-Epstein et al. (2006) concluded that each partners' ideology affects their own time spend in housework, but not that of their spouse. Jansen et al., (2016) compared the division of housework and the perceived fairness of this division across 29 countries, and found that in more egalitarian countries, men and women tended to be more unsatisfied with unfair divisions. Finally, Pessin (2018) explored the association between gender norms and marriage dynamics in the US, and she found an inverted U-shaped relationship between gender attitudes and divorce over time. When traditional gender norms were predominant, an increase in equal attitudes towards gender was positively associated with marital instability. Once egalitarian attitudes were more common among men and women in the US, the relationship between equality and divorce became negative. To our knowledge, whether re-partnered individuals differ from those in their first unions not only in terms of housework arrangements, but also in their attitudes towards gender egalitarianism, is still less clear.

### 2.3. Region variability

In this paper we study two different models of welfare state, Western/continental European countries, and Eastern European countries. In Western countries, increased women's labor force participation correlated with an increase in divorce rate (Cooke, 2006; Poortman & Kalmijn, 2002). In Eastern European countries, where there is a longer history of female employment (Härkönen, 2014), marriage remains more secure and the age at first marriage is lower (Coleman, 2013). We expect that given these differences in union patterns, re-partnered individuals in the East would be more selected and were more

similar to re-partnerships in the West, whereas differences in traditional housework arrangements would be higher among first unions.

In Western Europe, most of the countries witnessed a raise of women's labor force participation during the first decades of the 20th century, and social policies adjusted to this change (Esping-Andersen, 2009). In Eastern Europe, women tend to be overburdened with multiple roles (Fodor & Balogh, 2010). Moreover, the structural changes that took place after the collapse of the socialist regimes were not followed by a shift to less traditional gender ideologies in Eastern countries (Spéder & Kapitány, 2014).

#### 2.4. Other control factors

There are other important factors that might influence the division of housework among people in their first or higher-order relationship. Although they are not the main focus of this research, they are included in the analysis in order to control for the potential associations.

First, cohabitation has been associated with more equal sharing of domestic work than marriage. Most re-partnered individual tend to cohabit for a long time before re-marrying again, or they remain unmarried, being cohabitation more common among re-partnerships than in first unions. Numerous studies have demonstrated that married and cohabiting individuals differ in their values and gender ideologies and that cohabitation fosters a greater sense of individualism and a weaker commitment to traditional roles compared to marriage (Baxter et al., 2010; Björnberg, 2001). Cherlin (2004) argued that cohabitation may offer more freedom to negotiate gender roles as it comes without the institutional constraints that accompany marriage. The idea that cohabitating couples are more egalitarian with respect to the division of labor has been corroborated by empirical studies (Davis et al., 2007; Domínguez-Folgueras, 2013; Meggiolaro, 2013). Second, job schedules may increase the negative perceptions of balance if workers do not have enough



control over their schedule, or they have to manage their own workloads and time (Beham & Drobic, 2009). Third, the presence of children may also affect the division of housework. Previous research has documented that the division of labor tends to become more traditional after the transition to parenthood, and levels of conflict between work and family life may increase as well (Dew & Wilcox, 2011). However, some of the stress may be alleviated by hiring external help with domestic work.

Finally, those who decide to engage in a new relationship after a break up may differ from those who do not (Jensen et al., 2015). Family of origin factors, such as parental conflict and divorce, can also increase the acceptance of divorce, and individuals' willingness to entry into a second union (Amato, 1996; Amato & Booth, 1991; Booth & Edwards, 1992)<sup>1</sup>. Several other factors, such as personality, can also contribute to selection into re-partnering (Amato, 2010; Sweeney, 2010). In addition, among re-partnered couples the amount of unpaid work may increase due to the presence of multiple children, common and step-children, and those in this situation could eventually be more likely to share domestic work to compensate for the extra work. If the total amount of work increases, partners may choose to divide responsibilities between them to alleviate some of the stress.

### **3. Research questions and hypotheses**

Taking into account the previous literature, we formulate the following hypotheses:

**Hypothesis 1:** We expect re-partnered individuals to be less likely to report traditional divisions of housework. However, we anticipate differences between first and higher-

---

<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, our data do not gather parents' union history, and childcare is not available for all countries. However, we added information on the age, number and type of children (i.e.: common or step children) in the household to control for the variability in family care needs between first and second unions.

order unions to be higher among men than women. This is because, as previous literature showed, women, compared to men, tend to report more traditional divisions of labor regardless of their union rank.

**Hypothesis 2:** We expect differences between respondents in first and higher-order unions to be moderated by gender attitudes. Regarding housework sharing, re-partnered individuals with more traditional gender attitudes will be more similar to first unions, and also traditional gender values. On the contrary, re-partnered men and women with positive attitudes towards gender egalitarianism will be those with lower odds to have traditional divisions of housework.

**Hypothesis 3:** More egalitarian arrangements are expected in Western European countries compared to Eastern regions, in general. However, re-partnered individuals in Eastern countries will have similar odds of reporting traditional divisions of housework than those in Western regions and also re-partnered. On the contrary, differences in the likelihood of reporting traditional arrangement will be higher among respondents in their first union living in Eastern regions compared to those in Western areas and in first relationship.

#### **4. Data and Method**

Data come from the second wave of the Generation and Gender Survey (GGS). This is one of the two pillars of the Generation and Gender Program (GGP), which is designed to improve our understanding of demographic and social development and of the factors that influence these developments. We use the second wave surveys (2008-2009). 6 countries participated in total, and we have selected 6 of them: Austria, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, France, Germany and Lithuania. These countries represent at least two different

cultural patterns: The Eastern European countries is more traditional whereas those in Western Europe tend to record more egalitarian values and less traditional patterns of housework sharing (Moreno-Colom, 2017).

We restricted our results to respondents in dual-earner households, either married or cohabiting, aged 16-64. Although the surveys allow us to gather an accurate picture of household members, partners were not interviewed and their information was reported by the respondent. The division of household tasks is available only for co-resident couples, meaning that nonresident partners were excluded from our analysis. We only included different sex partnerships, and kept paid-employees or self-employed, removing full-time students, family workers, or those in other categories. Our sub-sample contained information on 9,346 individuals (Austria=1855; Bulgaria=3,020; Czech Republic=821; France=2188; Germany=935; Lithuania=641).

#### 4.1. Dependent variables

Our dependent variable is a dichotomous measure of whether the couple has a **traditional division of household labor** (coded as 1) or not (coded as 0). To build this indicator, we used four tasks representing traditional female household tasks. Traditional divisions refer to those where women are in charge of all, or the great majority of the household chores. We decided to include only female-typed tasks because they are more routine and time-demanding. The chores retained were: cooking daily meals, doing the dishes, going grocery shopping, and vacuum-cleaning the house. The original question was “who in your household does the task?” and had 5 possible answers: “Always or usually respondent, always or usually partner, equally shared, someone else living in the household, someone else not living the household”. For each task separately, we recoded the answers into three new categories: 1) Mostly women, when female respondents or female partners always/usually performed the task, 2) Equally shared, 3) Mostly men. If

the task was done by someone not living in the household, we classified it as “equally shared” since neither respondents nor partners did it. However, those cases when someone else living in the household performed the task were excluded. We argued that if children did some of the chores, most probably an adult would have been in charge to look after them, especially for younger children. As these situations could be very diverse, and we cannot control for this variety<sup>2</sup>, we decided to drop these cases.

In a second step, we created a new variable expressing the overall division of household by grouping these tasks<sup>3</sup>. Those cases where females were doing all the tasks were classified into traditional. In addition, when three of them were performed by a female, it was also considered as traditional. All other situations were classified as non-traditional.

#### 4.2. Main independent variables

**Union rank:** The GGP questionnaire contains information on family and partnership trajectories, and we distinguished between respondents in their first union from those who are re-partnered, following separation or divorce.

**Type of country:** We have grouped the countries in our study in two groups: Western European countries (France, Germany and Austria) and Eastern European countries (Bulgaria, Czech Republic and Lithuania).

**Attitudes on gender egalitarianism<sup>4</sup>.** We created an index derived from a set of statements for which the respondent expressed his or her agreement, answering on a 5-

---

<sup>2</sup> In the questionnaire, respondents are asked “who else in the household also do housework”. In some countries, it is possible to link the specific task with the person who does it (when the respondent reported that “someone else living in the household does it”). However, in other countries this is not possible. Therefore, we decided not to include this information in the analysis, and dropped the observations. The number of cases were small in the four country subsamples.

<sup>3</sup> We performed a Cronbach’s alpha test to identify whether the four tasks were closely related. It was 0.63, which we considered consistent.

<sup>4</sup> The reliability of this set of items on gender attitudes was tested through Cronbach’s alpha, and the score was 0.59

point scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. These statements were (1) In a couple, it is better for the man to be older than the woman, (2) if a woman earns more than her partner, it is not good for the relationship, (3) on the whole, men make better political leaders than women do, (4) Women should be able to decide how to spend money without asking partner, (5) Looking after the home/family is just as fulfilling as working for pay, (6) if parents divorce, it is better for the child to stay with the mother than with the father, (7) when jobs are scarce, men should have more right to a job than women. The final index ranged from 0 to 35, being 0 highly traditional attitudes towards gender and 35 the most egalitarian attitudes.

#### 4.3. Control variables

First, we added a control for the presence of children and age of the youngest child, and distinguished between couples with no children (resident or not), those with children where the youngest was aged 0-5, and couples with children aged 6 or older. In addition, we distinguished couples with only common children from those with common children and his/hers from previous relationships, and couples with only step children. We included both biological or adopted children that live in the respondents' household.

We also included information on whether the household had hired domestic help, and included information on age and education level of the respondents. We created a variable distinguishing respondents who were married than those who were cohabiting with their current partner. In addition, we took into account the regularity of the work to know whether respondents had a regular schedule throughout the year or it varied. This was a dichotomy variable that took 0 for regular schedules and 1 for irregular, self-employed was added as separate category since they do not report working schedules. Information on working hours and income was added too. Respondents reported their working hours and salary, as well as that of their partners. Combining this with the sex of

the respondents, we created two variables indicating the gap between men and women within the household. Working hours had 4 different categories: (1) both worked the same number of hours per week, (2) she worked more than him<sup>5</sup>, (3) He worked between 0-29 hours more than her, (4) He worked 30 hours or more than her. Finally, by measuring the net monthly income in each country, we created a 3-category variable indicating whether both members of the union earned (1) the same, (2) He earned more, or (3) she earned more.

#### 4.4. Methods and modelling strategy

We used a series of logistic regressions to measure the probability of having a traditional division of household for respondents in different union rank. Formally, we calculated:

$$p(x) = \frac{1}{1 + e^{-(\beta_0 + \sum_{i=1}^m \beta_i X_i)}}$$

Where, p is the probability that an individual report a traditional division of housework as a function of a set of our predictor variables, and X is the observed individual characteristics. We expressed the results in odds ratio, calculated as the exponential function of the logistic regression:

$$OR = e^{(\beta_0 + \sum_{i=1}^m \beta_i X_i)}$$

To test traditional divisions of housework, we run five different models. First, Model 1 served as the baseline model and it estimated the overall relationship between traditional division of housework and respondents' union rank. In Model 2, we included all control variables. These models were aimed to test our first hypothesis predicting lower odds of reporting traditional division of housework among re-partnered individuals. In Model 3, we added the interaction effect between union rank and respondents' gender

---

<sup>5</sup> In previous analyses, we distinguished how many hours she worked more than him, but the majority worked a few hours more, and only a few cases worked more than 30 hours compared to their male partners.

in order to test the second part of Hypothesis 1, suggesting smaller differences in the odds of reporting traditional sharing among re-partnered men women than among those in first union<sup>6</sup>. Later, Model 4 included the interaction effect between union rank and attitudes towards gender egalitarianism to verify our second hypothesis, which points at re-partnered respondents with less positive gender attitudes to be more likely to have traditional divisions of housework. Finally, in Model 5 we tested the interaction effect between union rank and type of country to explore differences across regions. In addition, using the coefficients obtained from the models we will compute predicted probabilities for the propensity of reporting traditional division of housework and gender attitudes in each region.

## 5.. Results

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics for the analytical sample. Most respondents were in their first union (82.5 percent). However, second unions were more common in Western countries than in Eastern regions (26 and 7.9 percent respectively). In addition, our subsample included more women (59 percent) than men, and slightly more respondents from Western countries (53.3 percent) than Eastern Europe. Traditional divisions of housework were found in 53 percent of cases in their first union, and 37.3 percent of respondents in their second union<sup>7</sup>. This difference was statistically significant (p-value=0.002).

[Insert Table 1 here]

---

<sup>6</sup> Initially, we run the analysis was run separately by men and women since there are gender differences in reporting share of domestic housework (Kan & Pudney, 2008). However, results were not significantly different between men and women, and running regression models using the whole sample allowed us to test for the interaction between union rank and gender.

<sup>7</sup> Descriptive percentages in columns are not shown in the table, but are available upon request.

Table 2 displays the odds ratios of reporting a traditional division of housework (i.e: women perform the majority of, or all, female-typed domestic tasks). Hypothesis 1 predicted that the association between union rank and traditional arrangements of domestic work would be significant for those in subsequent unions compared to first union, and that women would be more likely than men to report traditional arrangements. Overall, the direction of the relationship between union rank and traditional division of housework went in the expected direction, and those in higher-order rank unions were less likely to report a traditional sharing (model 1). Once the rest of the study variables were included in the equation, the association continued to be significant and it went in the expected direction, showing that re-partnered individuals had 31 percent lower odds of reporting a traditional sharing (model 2). Thus, the data provided some supporting evidence for Hypothesis 1. As predicted, women were almost 2 times more likely than men to report a traditional division on housework.

[Insert Table 2]

Model 2 also shows that egalitarian attitudes favor less traditional sharing of domestic work. A 1-point shift on the scale 0-35 of the gender attitudes index decreased the odds of having a traditional division by 5 percent. Moreover, respondents in Eastern European countries had significantly higher odds of reporting traditional sharing of domestic work than those in Western regions. In addition, couples with children, and those where men worked 30 hours or more than women were significantly more likely to have traditional divisions. Interestingly, couples with multiple children at home, both from current and previous unions, were more likely to have traditional divisions of domestic work. Nonetheless, the association did not reach statistical significance. Model 2 also shows that in couples where women earn more than men, or they make the same, the odds of reporting traditional division were lower than those where men had higher



wages. Finally, we see that the more educated, the less likely to report traditional division, and those who hired domestic help also had lower odd to share housework traditionally. Married respondents were also more likely to report traditional division of domestic labor than those who cohabited.

Model 3 adds interaction effects and test whether the association between union rank and sex of the respondent. Compared to men in first unions, re-partnered men had 38% lower odds of reporting traditional division of housework, and women were more likely to be the main responsible for domestic tasks both in first unions (OR=1.74, p-value<0.001), and subsequent relationships ( $0.61*1.74*1.23=1.32$ , p-value<0.01). However, for the latter the odds were smaller, pointing at re-partnered women being in more equal households, as far as domestic work is concerned. To ease the interpretation, we estimated the probabilities of reporting traditional divisions of domestic tasks from Model 3, in the presence of interaction effects between union rank and sex of the respondent. This is shown in Figure 1. We see that the proportion of women reporting traditional arrangements was higher than men, both among first and subsequent unions, and in both cases, the proportion of those who reported traditional divisions was lower in subsequent unions than in first relationships. Differences between men and women were bigger among re-partnered individuals, because the proportion of men decreased by 10 percent over the 8 percent decrease among women

[Insert Figure 1]

In model 4, we included the interaction effect between union rank and attitudes towards gender roles. Results showed no differences between first and subsequent unions when respondents' attitudes towards gender increased, confirming our hypothesis that people in first and second unions with higher positive gender attitudes would be more similar in their likelihood to report traditional division. Finally, in Model 5 we added the

interaction effect between region and union rank. Results showed that compared to respondents in their first union living in Western European countries, those in subsequent unions in Eastern countries were 10 percent more likely to report traditional divisions of housework ( $0.68 * 1.50 * 1.09 = 1.10$ ,  $p\text{-value} > 0.05$ ). This was smaller than the odds of respondents in Eastern countries and in first union, who were almost 2 times more likely to report traditional sharing ( $OR = 1.50$ ,  $p\text{-value} > 0.001$ ). Therefore, our third hypothesis is confirmed. As shown in figure 2, estimated probabilities from Model 5 show that the proportion of respondents in Eastern countries reporting traditional sharing of domestic work was higher than those in Western countries regardless of union rank. However, differences among subsequent unions were higher, as well as the variance within regions.

[Insert Figure 2]

## **6. Discussion and Conclusion**

This paper aimed to explore housework arrangements among re-partnered individuals, and claimed that they would be more likely to have non-traditional divisions of domestic work compared to people in their first union. Using data from the second wave of the GGP, we provided empirical evidence of a more egalitarian division of housework among re-partnered individuals in Europe. We compared 6 countries in Eastern and Western Europe, and found that re-partnered individuals were less likely to report traditional divisions of housework. Hence, we confirm our first hypothesis.

Second, when considering gender differences, we found that compared to men in first unions, men in subsequent unions were more likely to have non-traditional divisions of household. Indeed, the proportion of men reporting traditional sharing was higher among those in first union than those in subsequent relationships. Differences among

women were also found, but they were smaller. This result may suggest that men's contribution in domestic work varies greatly between first and subsequent union. One explanation could be that the total amount of work at home increases among re-partnered couples due to the presence of multiple children, common and step-children, and men in these situations may be more prone to step it in order to alleviate some of the stress.

Third, regarding gender attitudes, our results showed that those with more egalitarian attitudes towards gender roles were less likely to report traditional divisions of housework. However, we found no differences between unions according to gender attitudes. Therefore, our second hypothesis was not validated as we did not find gender attitudes to moderate the relationship between union rank and the reported division of housework between partners. This seems to indicate that changes in attitudes towards gender do not necessarily change after divorce or break-up, however the cross-sectional nature of our data did not allow us to validate this hypothesis.

Finally, we found significant differences across countries. In general, respondents in Eastern European countries tended to be more likely to report traditional sharing, as expected, and among re-partnered individuals we found a lower proportion of respondents reporting traditional divisions of housework. Hence, we confirmed our third and final hypothesis.

Overall, our results show that second unions tend to be more egalitarian in Europe, and re-partnered men and women seem to be more prone to equally share housework than those in their first unions. Different theoretical comments have to be mentioned here. First, we did not find evidence that gender egalitarian attitudes alter the association between union rank and housework sharing, therefore less traditional divisions of domestic tasks among re-partnered individuals does not necessarily translate into having more positive attitudes towards gender egalitarianism compared to those in first unions.

Our results are consistent with previous findings in the US. For example, Clarke (2005) and Walzer (2008) also found that remarried men tend to spend more time on household labor than men in first marriages, while the opposite happens for women, and thus leading to a more egalitarian division of housework allocation. However, contrary to Lucer-Greer & Adler-Baeder (2011), who found that individuals in second unions have been shown to adhere to less traditional gender roles, our results did not seem to indicate this change. Nonetheless, we have to remain cautious in interpreting the effect of gender attitudes in subsequent unions' division of housework, since our data is cross-sectional and therefore we cannot track changes in attitudes before and after divorce or break-up.

To sum up, our findings suggest that past experiences may be important for gender equality at home, and changes in men's contribution to domestic work seem to be an important part of the equation. We showed that respondents in second unions were less likely to have traditional arrangements than first unions, but their gender attitudes did not seem to moderate this relationship. However, given the cross-sectional design of our analysis we did not explore this hypothesis, which remains as a future line of research. Even though the GGS has a panel structure, there were not enough cases between wave 1 (2004-2005) and wave 2 (2008-2009) who divorced/separated and re-partnered/re-married in between.

Finally, aside from the aforementioned limitations of our study, our data had two additional drawbacks. First, respondents' participation in domestic work is measured through their own perceptions, and therefore we cannot measure the real number of hours devoted to chores but rather the reported engagement. Moreover, partners' information is also reported by respondents, and therefore there could be both overestimation and underestimation of each partners' contribution.

## References

- Aassve, A., Fuichi, G., Mencarini, L., Mendola, D. (2015). What is your couple type? Gender ideology, housework sharing, and babies. *Demographic Research*, 32(30): 835-858.
- Amato, P. R. (1996). Explaining the intergenerational transmission of divorce. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 58, 628-640.
- Amato, P. R. (2010). Research on divorce: Continuing trends and new developments. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 72, 650-666.
- Amato, P., & Booth, A. (1991). The consequences of divorce for attitudes toward divorce and gender roles. *Journal of Family Issues*, 12, 306-322.
- Askari, S.F., Liss, M., Erchull, M.J., Staebell, S.E., Axelson, S.J. (2010). Men want equality, but women don't expect it: Young adults' expectations for participation in household and child care chores. *Psychology of women quarterly*, 34: 243-252.
- Bartley, S.J., Blanton, P.W., Gilliard, J.L. (2005). Husbands and wives in dual-earner marriages: Decision-making, gender role attitudes, division of household labor, and equity. *Marriage and Family Review*, 37(4): 69-94.
- Batalova, J.A., Cohen, P.N. (2002). Premarital cohabitation and housework: Couples in cross-national perspective. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 64(3): 743-755
- Baxter J., Tai T. (2016) Inequalities in Unpaid Work: A Cross-National Comparison. In: Connerley M., Wu J. (Eds) *Handbook on Well-Being of Working Women*. (pp-653-671). International Handbooks of Quality-of-Life. Dordrecht: Springer.
- Baxter, J., Haynes, M., Hewitt, B. (2010). Pathways into marriage: cohabitation and the domestic division of labor. *Journal of family issues*, 31(11): 1507-1529.
- Baxter, J., Western, M. (1998). Satisfaction with housework: Examining the paradox. *Sociology*, 32(1): 101-120.

- Beham, B., Drobnič, S. (2010). Satisfaction with work-family balance among German office workers. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 25(6), 669-689.
- Bellani, D., Esping-Andersen, G., Pessin, L. (2017). When equity matters for marital stability: comparing German and US couples. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*. 35(9): 1273-1298.
- Bianchi, S.M., Milkie, M.A. (2010). Work and family research in the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 72:705-725.
- Bianchi, S.M., Raley, S.B. (2005). Time allocation in families. In S.M. Bianchi, L.M. Casper, R.B. King (Eds.) *Work, family, health, and well-being* (pp.21-42). Philadelphia: Erlbaum.
- Bittman, M., England, P., Sayer, L., Folbre, N., & Matheson, G. (2003). When does gender trump money? Bargaining and time in household work. *American Journal of Sociology*, 109, 186–214.
- Björnberg, U. (2001). Cohabitation and marriage in Sweden – Does family form matter? *International Journal of Law, Policy and the Family*, 15(3): 350-362.
- Booth, A., & Edwards, J. N. (1992). Starting over: Why remarriages are more unstable. *Journal of Family Issues*, 13, 179-194.
- Booth, A., Johnson, D.R., White, L.K., Edwards, J.N. (1986). Divorce and marital stability over the life course. *Journal of Family Issues*, 7:421-442.
- Bremmer, D., Kesselring, R. (2004). Divorce and female labor force participation: Evidence from times-series data and co-integration. *Atlantic Economic Journal*, 32(3): 175-190.
- Cherlin, A. J. (2004). The deinstitutionalization of American marriage. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 66(4): 848-861.

- Clarke, L. (2005). Remarriage in later life: Older women's negotiation of power, resources, and domestic labor. *Journal of Women and Aging*, 17: 21-41.
- Coleman, D. (2013). Partnership in Europe: its variety, trends and dissolution. *Finnish Yearbook of Population Research*, XLVIII, 5-49.
- Coltrane, S. (2001). Research on household labor: Modeling and measuring the social embeddedness of routine family work. *SAGE Family Studies Abstract*, 23(3): 275-407.
- Coltrane, S., Adams, M. (2001). Men's family work: child-centered fathering and the sharing of domestic labor. In R. Hertz, N.L. Marshall. *Working Families: The transformation of the American home* (pp.72-102). Berkley and Los Angeles: University of California Press
- Cooke, L.P (2006). Doing gender in context: household bargaining and the risk of divorce in Germany and the United States, *American Journal of Sociology*, 112(2):442-72.
- Craig, L., Powell, A. (2018). Shares of housework between mothers, fathers and young people: routine and non-routine housework, doing housework for oneself and others. *Social Indicators Research*, 136(1): 269-281.
- Cuningham, M. (2007). Influences of women's employment on the gendered division of household labor over the life course: Evidence from a 31-year panel study. *Journal of Family Issues*, 28, 422-444.
- Davis, S. N., Greenstein, T. N., & Marks, J. P. (2007). Effects of Union Type on Division of Household Labor Do Cohabiting Men Really Perform More Housework? *Journal of Family Issues*, 28(9), 1246-1272.
- Dew, J., Wilcox, W.B. (2011). If Momma Ain't Happy: Explaining Declines in Marital Satisfaction Among New Mothers. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 73, 1-12

- Domínguez-Folgueras, M. (2013). Is Cohabitation More Egalitarian? The Division of Household Labor in Five European Countries. *Journal of Family Issues*, 34 (12): 1623-1646.
- Esping-Andersen, G. (2009). *The incomplete revolution. Adapting to women's new roles*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.
- Esping-Andersen, G., Billari, G.C. (2015). Re-theorizing family demographics. *Population and Development Review*, 41(1): 1-31
- Fodor, É., Balogh, A. (2010). Back to the Kitchen? Gender role attitudes in 13 East European countries. *Zeitschrift für Familienforschung – Journal of Family Research*, 22(3): 289-307.
- Frisco, M. L., & Williams, K. (2003). Perceived Housework Equity, Marital Happiness, and Divorce in Dual-Earner Households. *Journal of Family Issues*, 24(1): 51–73.
- Ganong, L., Coleman, M. (2017). Courtships in Stepfamilies. In L.H., Ganong, M. Coleman, M. *Stepfamily relationships: Development, dynamics and interventions*. (pp.61-84) New York: Kluwer Academic/Plenum. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition
- Ganong, L.H., Coleman, M. (2017). *Stepfamily relationships: Development, dynamics and interventions*. New York: Kluwer Academic/Plenum. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition
- Greenstein, T. N. (2000). Economic dependence, gender, and the division of labor in the home: A replication and extension. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 62: 322–335.
- Greenstein, T.N. (1995). Gender ideology and perceptions of the fairness of the division of household labor: Effects on marital quality. *Social Forces*, 74: 1029-1042.
- Gupta, S., Ash, M. (2008). Whose money, whose time? A nonparametric approach to modelling time spent on housework in the United States. *Feminist Economics*, 14(1): 93-120.



- Härkönen, J. (2014). Divorce: trends, patterns, causes and consequences. In J. Treas, J. Scott, M. Richards (Eds) *The Sociology of families*. West Sussex (UK): Wiley Blackwell.
- Jansen, L., Weber, T., kraaykamp, G., Verbakel, E. (2016). Perceived fairness of the division of household labor: A comparative study in 29 countries. *International Journal of Comparative Sociology*, 51(1-2): 53-68.
- Jensen, T.M., Shafer, K., Guo, S. (2015). Differences in relationship stability between first and second marriages: A propensity score analysis. *Journal of Family Issues*, 38(3): 406-432.
- Kan, M. Y., Pudney, S.(2008). Measurement error in stylized and diary data on time use. *Sociological Methodology*,38: 101–132
- Kan, M. Y.,Sullivan, O., Gershuny, J.(2011).Gender convergence in domestic work: Discerning the effect of interactional and institutional barriers from large-scale data. *Sociology*, 2: 234–251
- Killewald, A. (2016). Money, work, and marital stability: Assessing change in the gendered determinants of divorce. *American Sociological Review*, 81(4): 696-719.
- Lachance-Grzela, M., Bouchard, G. (2010). Why do women do the lion's share of housework? A decade of research. *Sex Roles*, 63(11-12): 767-780.
- Lewin-Epstein, N., Stier, H., Braun, M. (2006). The division of household labor in Germany and Israel. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 68(5): 1147-1164
- Lively, K.J., Carr Steelman, L., Powel, B. (2010). Equity, emotion, and household division of labor response. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 73(4): 358-379.
- Lucier-Greer, M., Adler-Baeder, F. (2011). An examination of gender role attitude change patterns among continuously married, divorced, and remarried individuals. *Journal of Divorce and Remarriage*, 52(4): 225-243.

- Mannino, C.A., Deutsch, F. (2007). Changing the division of household labor: A negotiated process between partners. *Sex Roles*, 56(5-6): 309-324
- Meggiolaro, S. (2013). Household Labor Allocation Among Married and Cohabiting Couples in Italy. *Journal of Family Issues*, 20, 1-26.
- Mencarini, L., Vignoli, D. (2018). Employed women and marital union stability: it helps when men help. *Journal of Family Issues*, 39(5): 1348-1373.
- Moreno-Colom, S. (2017). The gendered division of housework time: Analysis of time use by type and daily frequency of household tasks. *Time & Society*, 26(1): 3–27.
- Nitsche, N., Grunow, D. (2016). Housework over the course of relationships: Gender ideology, resources, and the division of housework from a growth curve perspective. *Advances in life course research*, 29: 80-94.
- Norman, H., Elliot, M., Fagan, C. (2018). Does fathers' involvement in childcare and housework affect couples' relationship stability? *Social Science Quarterly*, 99(5): 1599-1612
- Payne, K. P. (2015). The remarriage rate: Geographic variation, 2013. National Center for Family & Marriage Research. Retrieved from [http://www/bgsu.edu/content/dam/BGSU/college-ofarts-and-sciences/NCFMR/documents/FP/Paybe-remarriage-rate-FP-18-08.pdf]
- Perrone, K. M., Wright, S. L., & Jackson, Z. V. (2009). Traditional and Nontraditional Gender Roles and Work—Family Interface for Men and Women. *Journal of Career Development*, 36(1): 8–24.
- Péssin, L. (2018). Changing gender norms and marriage dynamics in the United States. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 80(1): 25-41.
- Pinto, K.M., Coltrane, S. (2009). Division of labour in mexican origin and anglo families: Structure and culture. *Sex Roles*, 60(7-8): 482-495.

- Poortman, A-R., Kalmijn, M. (2002). Women's labor market position and divorce in the Netherlands. Evaluating economic interpretations of the work effect, *European Journal of Population/Revue Européenne de Démographie*, 2002, 18:175-202
- Prince-Cooke, L. (2006). "Doing" gender in context: Household bargaining and risk of divorce in Germany and the United States. *American Journal of Sociology*, 112(2): 442-472.
- Ruppner, L., Brandén, M., Turunen, J. (2018). Does unequal housework lead to divorce? Evidence from Sweden. *Sociology*, 52(1): 75-94.
- Spéder, Z. and Kapitány, B. (2014). Failure to Realize Fertility Intentions: A Key Aspect of the Post-Communist Fertility Transition. *Population Research and Policy Review*, 33(3): 393-418.
- Sullivan, O., Gershuny, J., Robinson, J. (2018). Stalled or uneven gender revolution? A long-term processual framework for understanding why change is slow. *Journal of family theory and review*, 10(1): 263-279.
- Sweeney, M. (2010). Remarriage and stepfamilies: Strategic sites for family scholarship in the 21st century. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 72, 667-684
- Walzer, S. (2008). Redoing gender through divorce. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 25, 5-21.

**Table 1** Frequency distribution of Categorical Variables (%)

		<i>First Union</i>	<i>Re-partnership</i>
Western European	France	77.7	22.3
	Germany	94.7	5.3
	Austria	82	18
East/Central European	Bulgaria	66.4	33.6
	Lithuania	90.4	9.5
	Czech Republic	83	17
<hr/>			
Male		81.2	18.8
Female		82.2	17.8
<hr/>			
Age (mean)		41.5	40.3
<hr/>			
Both work same hours		87.1	12.9
Woman works more hours per week		79.8	20.2
Man works 0-29 hours more per week		79.8	20.2
<hr/>			
Employees regular schedule		81.7	18.3
Employees irregular schedule		82.5	17.5
Self-employed		82.1	17.9
<hr/>			
Couples Without children		67.2	32.8
Couples with youngest child aged 0-5		79.4	20.6
Couples with youngest child aged 6 or older		87.2	12.8
<hr/>			
Help for domestic work		82.4	17.6
<hr/>			
Primary or lower secondary		88.6	11.4
Secondary		77.1	22.9
University		84.5	15.5
<hr/>			
Man earns more		81.4	18.6
Woman earns more		78.3	21.7
Equal		54.7	45.3
<hr/>			
Common children only		87.7	12.3
Common children and former partner		40.8	59.2
From previous only		41	59
No children		68.7	31.3
<hr/>			
Attitudes on Gender egalitarianism (mean)		22.9	24.5
<hr/>			
Traditional division of household tasks		87.1	12.9
<hr/>			
N		9,346	

Source: GGS, wave 2. Note: \*\*\* p<0.001, \*\* p<0.01, \* p<0.05, + p<0.1

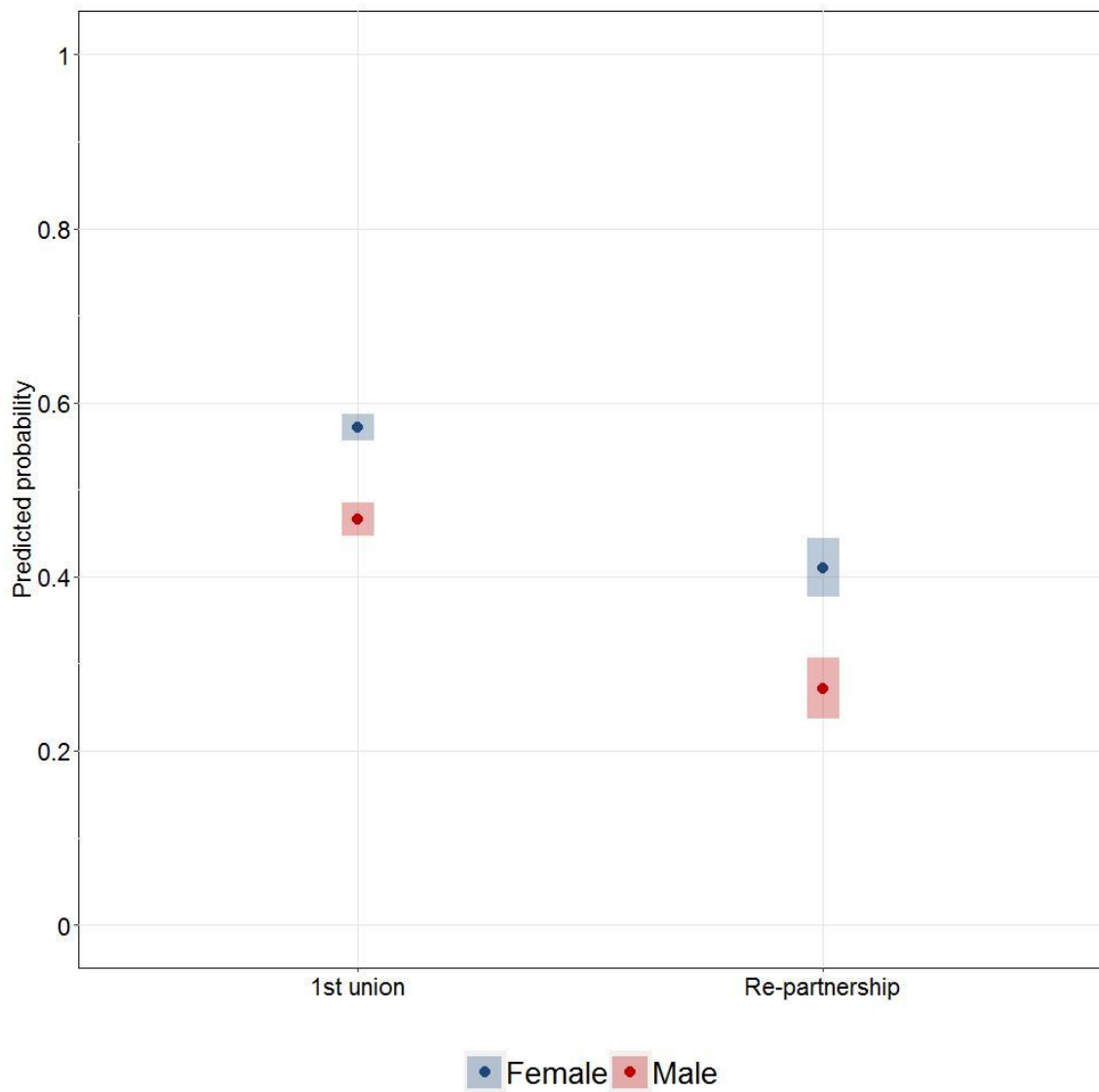
**Table 2.** Odds ratios of **traditional division of housework** among respondents in dual-earner couples

Variables		Model I	Model II	Model III	Model IV	Model V
Union rank (ref=1st union)	Re-partnered	0.48***	0.69***	0.62***	0.70	0.67***
Type of country (ref=Western)	East		1.51***	1.51***	1.51***	1.50***
Gender (ref=Male)	Female		1.80***	1.74***	1.80***	1.80***
Gender roles attitudes	roles		0.95***	0.95***	0.95***	0.95***
Union rank*Gender	Re-partner*Female			1.23**		
Union rank*roles	Re-partner*roles				1.00	
Union rank*Type of country	Re-partner*East					1.09**
Children status (ref=No Children)	youngest 0-5		1.86+	1.75	1.86+	1.85+
	youngest 6 or older		2.03*	1.91+	2.03*	2.01*
Domestic Service (ref=Do not have)	yes		0.59***	0.59***	0.59***	0.59***
Education (ref=Primary)	Secondary		0.80**	0.80**	0.80**	0.80**
	University		0.63***	0.63***	0.63***	0.63***
Age respondent			1.02***	1.02***	1.02***	1.02***
Type of union (ref=cohabiting)	Married		1.20*	1.20*	1.20*	1.20*
Hours of work (ref=Equal hours)	Woman works more per week than men		0.86+	0.86+	0.86+	0.86+
	Man works 0-29 hours more than woman		1.04	1.04	1.04	1.04
	Man works 30 hours or more than woman		2.02***	2.02***	2.02***	2.02***
Work schedule (ref=Regular)	Employees irregular		1.21	1.21	1.21	1.21
	Self-employed		1.47***	1.47***	1.47***	1.48***
Income (ref=Men earns more)	Woman earns more		0.82**	0.81**	0.82**	0.82**
	Equal		0.87*	0.87*	0.87*	0.87*
Type of children (ref=All common)	Common children and from previous		1.01	1.00	1.01	1.00
	From previous only		0.93	0.91	0.93	0.93
	No children		1.23	1.15	1.23	1.22
Constant		1.09***	0.70	0.76	0.70	0.71
N		8,705	8,611	8,611	8,611	8,611

Source: GGS, wave 2. Note: \*\*\* p<0.001, \*\* p<0.01, \* p<0.05, + p<0.1

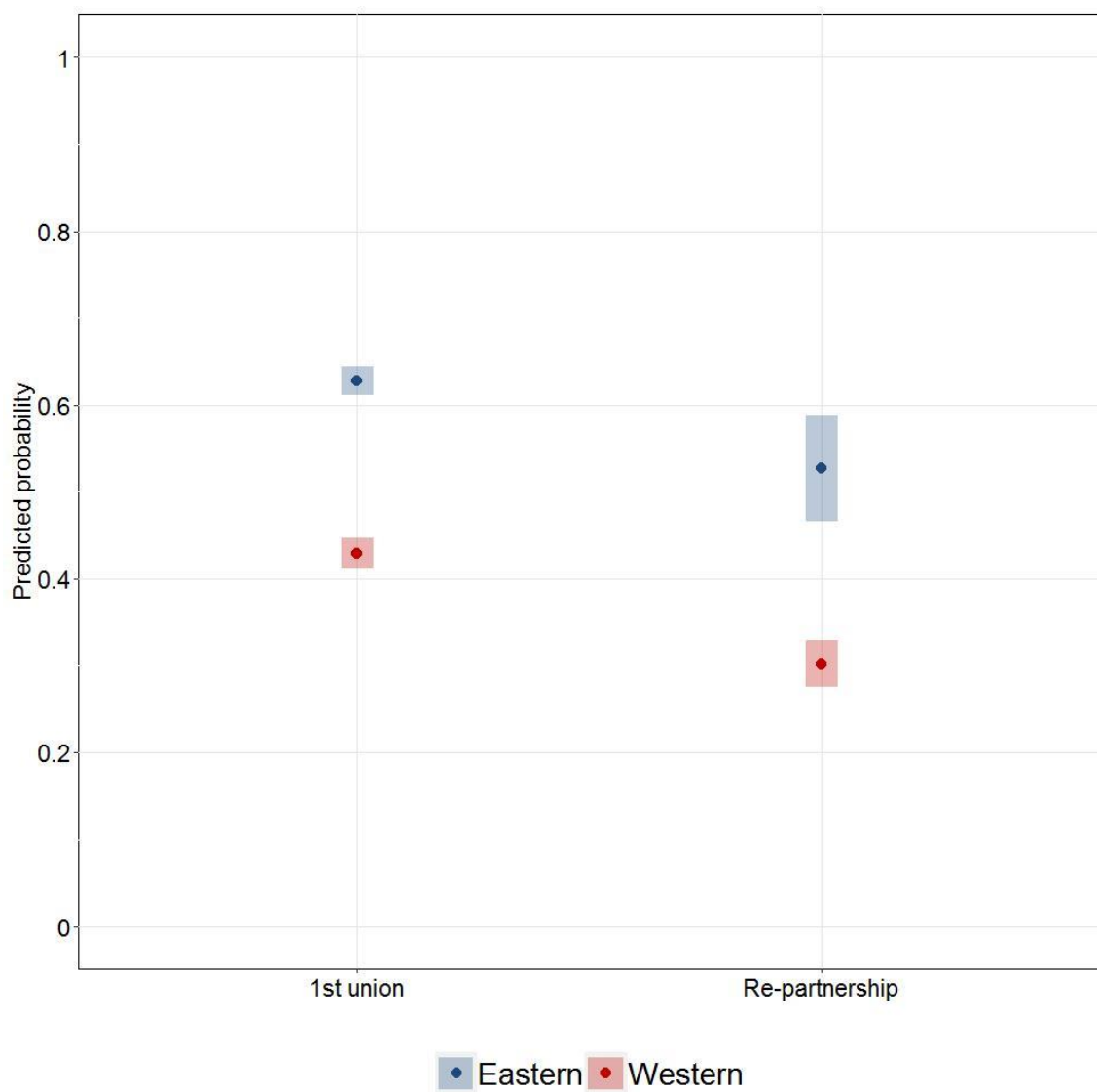


**Figure 1.** Estimated probabilities of reporting traditional division of housework (compared to not) from Model 3



Source: GGS, wave 2

**Figure 2.** Estimated probabilities of reporting traditional division of housework (compared to not) from Model 5



Source: GGS, wave 2